



# just add WATER...

stories for Harvest 2006 from the people of St Agnes'



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Harvest 2006 at St Agnes Longsight  
**Sunday 8th October 2006**

Early in 2006 the St Agnes' Mission & Action Group started to look at some small campaigns for better water supplies in Europe and the third world. Members of the group shared their own stories about water and it was suggested that we use these to form the background of our Parish Harvest celebrations.

These stories are printed in this booklet.

At the end of the booklet are some water facts taken from the WaterAid website.

Thank you to the following people who contributed the stories to this project.

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Please note that these stories remain the property of the individuals named and have been transcribed for use at the Harvest Thanksgiving Eucharist. Please do not copy or reproduce these stories in any form without first contacting us.

[www.stagneslongsight.org](http://www.stagneslongsight.org)

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‘In 1938 my grandparents moved from a council house with mains water to start up a poultry farm, a small holding in a place called Becklands - it was called this because of the beck. The place was about half a mile from the road with no water, no gas and no electricity supply. In 1940 following a very hot summer the beck began to slow up and the water supply altered. My uncle became ill through drinking this water and eventually he died as a result of typhoid. Following this my grandmother was taken ill. She died of a broken heart. My grandfather was ill, but he was taken to the isolation hospital, and he recovered. Afterwards water had to be brought from a tap in the village.’

‘As a kid growing up I didn’t have to go far for water, just to a spring which came up from under a rock. My father and a neighbour dug a pond from which we used to scoop up the water using a cup from the well and into a two gallon can and carry it short distance home. It was cool iced water fresh from the spring, and very clear. Sometimes we carried it on our head using a scarf or old shirt tied into a ring to carry the pot on my head.’

‘People who cultivated the sugar plantations, people like Tate and Lyle who owned the two biggest sugar factories in Jamaica with hundreds of acres, they made trenches about five foot wide and dug wells to bring the water up into the trenches. This was in the parish of Clarendon. People used this irrigation water to wash themselves and their clothes and to cook. It was slightly salty.’

‘when I was young - about 9 or 10 - my mum told me to help a nearby old lady by carrying her water for her every morning. I fetched the water every morning before going to school or to church, because she couldn’t do it herself. She paid me by giving me a goat - it was fantastic! It was a she-goat and she had one kid, so I had two goats that I looked after. When my brother was coming over to England in 1955 money was bad so I was asked to hand over the two goats. They were sold to the butchers and the money was given to my brother which was used to pay his package over. then he helped me over here later on in 1961.’

‘My mother grew up in Leeds in the 1920’s in a back-to-back with a shared tap and toilet. When she moved into a rented house they had their own outside toilet and their own running cold water inside.’

‘In Granville Place off Pollard Street, Ancoats in the 1930’s there was just one tap between the two families. The houses were known as dwellings. Then we moved to Long Lane and we had a tap to ourselves. Then we moved to Gorton where we had a bathroom and hot and cold water, and a toilet. Our neighbours next door were Mr Mitchell and his son, Charlie who gave my sisters, my brother and myself sweets.’

‘In the later 60’s, early 70’s I worked in Kenya just outside Nairobi. We had a bore hole just up the road which was ok for water. I visited a friend who had a small holding (maize, beans, pineapple etc.) who lived in a round thatched hut and fetched water from over the hill and down a valley to the stream. There was also a pit latrine, so we were ok for sanitation. It was away from the house.’

‘In Barbados - which is normally ok for fresh water - when I visited five years ago in 2001 the northern part of the country can run dry if there’s not enough rain. It ran dry while I was there so we had to go up the road to a stand pipe to carry buckets back in a car boot and have a wash. Tankers came round sometimes with water but we didn’t always know when they would come. If there were more tourists in that part of the country then probably there would be better water conditions.’

‘When I was young I lived on a mountain in Wales. To get water we had to carry buckets down the hill, across a road, up the hill the other side to a well, then go back again. When we had a bath, a zinc bath would be put in front of the fire, everybody would have a bath in the same water. With living on a mountain a stream came out of the rocks, so my Dad fenced round so the cows couldn’t get down. Then he made like a pond so some of the water would collect, and that made it a bit better because we could collect water from there.’

‘I have memories of my Father going to America on business. I must have been 6 or 7 years old in 1925/26. I do remember every evening we crowded round the piano to sing - while my mother played ‘Eternal Father strong to save ... for those in peril on the sea’ and we ended up in tears - my only knowledge of a boat being a rowing boat (as seen at the seaside) and in a Sunday story book, with Jesus walking on the water. So of course I knew he would be saved.’

## Key WaterAid facts *(some facts from the WaterAid website)*

- **1.1 billion people** in the world do not have access to safe water, this is roughly **one sixth** of the world's population
- **2.6 billion people** in the world do not have access to adequate sanitation, this is roughly two-fifths of the world's population
- **A child dies every 15 seconds** from water-related diseases. This amounts to nearly **6000 deaths**, or the equivalent of **20 jumbo jets crashing**, every day
- WaterAid projects providing safe water, sanitation and hygiene education cost just **£15 per head**
- The integrated approach of water, sanitation and hygiene reduces the number of deaths caused by diarrhoeal diseases by an average of **65%**
- The weight of water that women in Africa and Asia carry on their heads is commonly **20kg**, the same as the average UK airport luggage allowance
- **2.2 million people** in developing countries, most of them children, die every year from diseases associated with lack of access to safe drinking water, inadequate sanitation and poor hygiene
- At least **90% of drinkable water** in the world is underground. This source of water is increasingly threatened with depletion and contamination
- Since 1950 the world population has doubled but water consumption has increased six-fold
- Diarrhoea alone kills **1.8 million children** under five every year, but most cases can be prevented or treated
- It is **12%** more likely that children will attend school if water is available within 15 minutes rather than one hour's walk. **11%** more girls attend school when sanitation is available
- The simple act of washing hands with soap and water can reduce diarrhoeal diseases by over **40%**