



RAHAMIM
ECOLOGY
CENTRE

WATER RITUAL

ONE MERCY MISSION FORUM
EAST MELBOURNE, 5 MAY 2017



Image credit: [*'Sacred waterholes of the Western Desert: Martu waterhole', The Nature Conservancy*](#)

Set up:

1. 1 x large empty glass or earthenware bowl, 4 jugs containing water on a large table at the centre of the space being used, preferably outdoors
2. Internet access
3. Sound system ready to stream music from internet during the bringing together
4. 3 x readers + leader

Ritual

Leader invites participants to form a circle around the table.

Contextual reading / Reader: _____

[*Cath Newman, 'Sacred Waters', National Geographic*](#)

'Waters, religious historian Mircea Eliade explained in the 1950s, are "spring and origin, the reservoir of all the possibilities of existence; they precede every form and support every creation." So it has been since human history began and, by legend, before. The world, Genesis says, was brought to life by a God who created a "firmament in the midst of the waters."

Babylonians believed in a world made from a commingling of fresh and salt water. Pima Indians have said Mother Earth was impregnated by a drop of water. The cataclysmic flood that destroys a civilization is also an aqueous archetype and part of Hebrew, Greek, and Aztec cultures.

'The body thirsts. So does the spirit. "I must live near a lake," wrote Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung, who waded into the depths of the psyche and equated water with the unconscious. "Without water ... nobody could live at all."

'From our worldly entrance in a burst of amniotic fluid to the ritual washing of the dead (taharah in Judaism; *ghusl al-mayyit* in Islam), water flows through our lives, scribing a line between sacred

and profane, life and death. We are doused, dunked, dipped, sprinkled—and blessings flow, deep and wide as the River Jordan of Scripture, wondrous as the spring at Lourdes, cathartic as tears.'

Bringing together / Leader

I invite you all to take a few moments to consider the water in your life:

- A time when it played a role in a significant event, such as a baptism or a funeral
- A water-place of significance to you – a river, beach, lake, or bird bath in your garden through which you nurture life
- Tears you might have shed over a personal or shared grief, for Earth or the poor
- The cups of tea that symbolise our work in mercy
- The blood that runs in our veins, an ever-present reminder of our own indivisibility from all else that is

Holding this thought or memory in your heart, I then invite you to come and pour a little water from one of these jugs into the bowl.

'Didgeridoo Dreamtime with Gentle Healing Water Sound' is played during the bringing together.

Second reading / Reader: _____

For Indigenous Australians, water-places were sacred places in which wisdom was shared.

This morning we have created a symbolic water-place, by pouring out clean water, a potent representation of our indivisibility from the world we inhabit, our faith and our mission to care for the vulnerable and voiceless of Earth.

We infused the pouring out of this water with our precious individual thoughts and experiences, representing our labour, our very selves. And by bringing these elements together we have affirmed that this is a sacred space in which we will continue to share our wisdom and experience for the good of the mission of our Institute and those to whom we minister.

Prayer / Reader: _____

Spirit at the heart of creation, be with us during our gathering today, that we may ensure that our ministries continue to contribute to the Institute's mission in the same way that water nourishes all life, as we learn together how to respond to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor as a single cry.

Response / All

Amen.