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Water Crisis (Abbot Tryphon)

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Our world is facing a water crisis that will likely see water replace oil as the basis for many wars throughout the world. The recent extreme drought in the State of Texas, with many ranchers being forced to sell off their cattle and fires raging out of control, demonstrates the fragility of our planet.

The amount of water required to produce food for the animals we eat is five hundred times more than the amount that would be consumed should we turn to eating only vegetarian diets. The increased use of groundwater has been compared to withdrawing money from a bank account without ever paying anything into it. Using up irreplaceable groundwater without depending on rainwater and surface water causes aquifers to compress, and can cause saline seawater to flow in to replace the used up fresh water.

Water was the source for the destruction of all living creatures upon the earth during the Great Flood that God sent down, sparing only Noah, his family, and the animals he'd gathered into the ark he'd been directed to construct by God. Water is also the source of the death of the old man, when we are taken down into the baptismal waters.

During Christ's baptism by John the Forerunner, the moment Christ entered the waters of the Jordan River all the waters of the earth were made holy. The Church commemorates this event each Theophany, when the Great Blessing of Waters takes place. At this time as well, all the waters of the world are made holy, sanctified by the Life Giving Cross of Christ. For a moment in time all the waters of the world become the River of Jordan. When the Great Blessing of Waters takes place on Theophany in the River Jordan, the water flows backwards for the only time during the entire year!

Water is sacred and life giving. It is a gift from God upon which all living things depend. It belongs to all of us and must be shared equally. We are all called as God's creatures to be good stewards of this life giving water.

By Fr. Tryphon, Abbot of All-Merciful Savior Monastery

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