



receive when we are baptised and become part of the body of Christ. We still use the same ritual that John used. We pour water over the person's head, be they adult or a baby. And, of course some churches use total immersion for baptism, water used as a sign of forgiveness and cleansing. Of new life.

The use of water is a very powerful symbol. Life cannot exist without it. Did you know that the human body, that is you and me, is made up of seventy five percent water. We cannot live without it. It is a wonderful gift which I'm afraid we so often take for granted. You know those pictures charities such as Christian Aid or Water Aid or Action Aid sometimes produce of quite small children walking miles each day to collect water for the family home, well, I think that perhaps we should stick one up above our kitchen sinks to remind us how blessed we are. Water or lack of water can be a matter of life or death.

So to, of course, can too much water as we have seen so graphically in the tsunami tragedy. I'm not going to dwell on it. We've all seen the television news and read the newspapers and tried to comprehend the horror, the devastation, the sheer unimaginable scale of the disaster and given what we can to help in the relief operations. And one of the first things that was asked for, that is urgently needed, is water.

One thing I have noticed in the news recently is that there are little isolated stories of hope. A man picked up at sea after floating on a lump of wood for eight days. Fishermen digging their nets out of the sand and mending them. A group of local people cleaning up a school so the children can have some semblance of normality. I know these are really tiny efforts given the vast amount of work needed but it is a beginning, a renewal. If

we can do nothing else, we can support these people through our prayers.

They are our neighbours. When we are baptised, we enter into a new life. We have the example and teaching of Jesus to follow. He said 'Love your neighbour as yourself'. And so we have a duty to care for these people. In fact for all people, difficult as it may sometimes seem.

Being baptised is not just a matter of having water poured over you and everything in the garden is lovely. It is so much more. It through the waters of baptism that we experience God's grace, his love for us, his forgiveness, his acceptance of us as we are. He sends his Holy Spirit to guide and support us. We do not deserve it, we cannot earn it. It is God's gift to us. It is this gift we are called upon to share when ever and where ever we can, willingly, joyfully and with love. Thanks be to God.

*Enid Knight*

**The world cannot bury Christ.  
The earth is not deep enough  
for his tomb,  
the clouds are not wide  
enough for his winding-sheet.**

E Thomson

