

## 'Mesi Goes for Water'



Mesi and her friends have been practising how to carry buckets on their heads, just like their mothers do. Each day after school, they put the empty

buckets on their heads and walk round and round the village. Then sometimes, for fun, they have a race to see who can run fastest without letting the bucket fall.

Today Mesi is very excited. Her mother has agreed that Mesi can go with her to the river. 'We will have to set off before the sun climbs too high in the sky,' her mother warns, 'otherwise the day will be too hot for us to travel.' Mesi puts an empty water bucket on her head and sets off.



There are lots of people walking along the road on their journey to the river. Some of Mesi's friends are there too. One of them is her best

friend, Enestina. Mesi and Enestina chat and talk as they go.

'Let's play races,' says Enestina.

'That's a good idea,' says Mesi.

'The winner will be the first person to reach the river,' says Enestina.

Mesi and her friends and their mothers walk and walk.

'Are we at the river yet, Mother?'

Mesi asks.

'Not yet, but soon,' her mother says, smiling.

Mesi and her friends are watching out for the river, because each one wants to be the first to get there. They walk on and on and on.



Finally, Mesi's mum gives her good news. 'Look,' she says, pointing ahead, 'there's the river.'

'Goodie!' shouts Mesi and her friends,

and they speed off, running as fast as they can. When all the water buckets are full, the mothers and their children sit on the ground under the shade of a tree.

After a short rest, Mesi and her mother and the others begin the long walk back to the village. The journey is much more difficult. This time Mesi finds she cannot walk so quickly. Her water bucket is small, but now it is full of water and it is heavy. But Mesi doesn't complain. She keeps her back straight and her head steady just as she had practised. She walks and walks. She is getting a little tired. She wonders if any of her friends are getting tired.

'Are we nearly home yet?' she asks her mother, hopefully.

'Not far now, Mesi,' her mother replies. Just

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then, Mesi sees the others taking their buckets down off their heads and setting them on the ground.

'We will stop here for a little rest,' her mother says.

'Will it always be like this, Mother?' Mesi asks. 'Will we always have to walk miles and



miles to get water?'

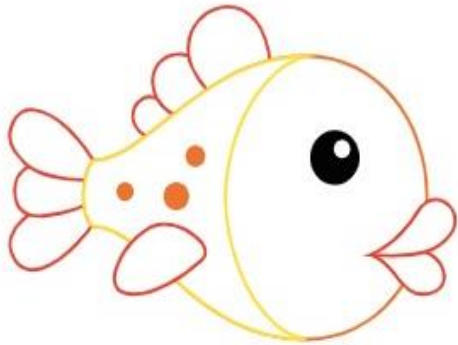
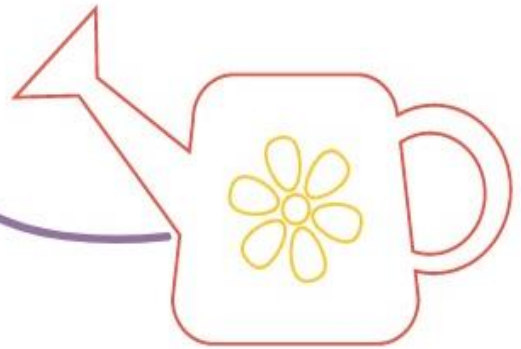
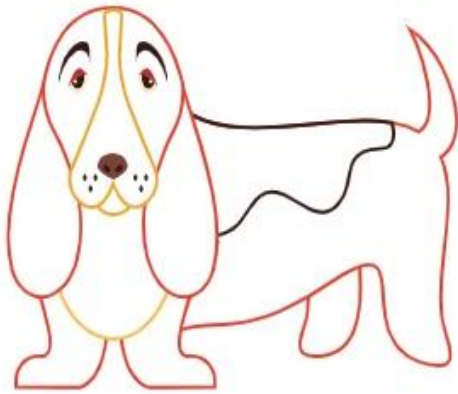
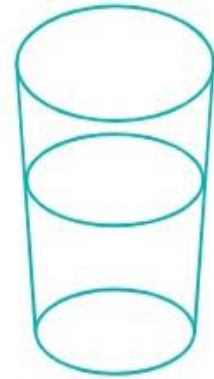
'It was like this for my grandmother and my mother and now me,' her mother answers. 'But I hope

things will be better for you and your children, Mesi.'



# Everything needs water

Match the pictures to show how all these things need water to live.



## 'Welcomed with Water'



'Mammy, where's Billie?' said Niamh.

'Billie the bear?' whispered Mammy. 'I don't know, sweetheart, where did you last have him?'

'It's ok,' said Dad, softly. 'He's right here, Niamh.'

Niamh smiled. 'Thanks Daddy!' she said.

Mammy, Daddy and Niamh were all sitting in the front row of the church with Auntie Julie and Uncle Ray. Niamh's new baby sister, Lucy, was asleep in Mammy's arms. Father José, the priest, was talking to them.

'What name do you give your child?' he asked.

Niamh turned Billie around to face the front of the church, so he could see what was going on. 'I picked her name, you know!' she whispered to the bear.



Father José then said, 'I now trace the cross on your forehead, and invite your parents and godparents to do the same.' Mammy, Daddy,

Auntie Julie and Uncle Ray traced a cross on Lucy's head using their finger. Lucy squirmed a little.

Niamh kept whispering into Billie's ear. 'Father José is really nice,' she said. 'He tells good stories and funny jokes.'

'And there's Mary,' she continued, pointing

to the statue in the corner. 'She's a mammy too. Her baby's name was ...'

'Niamh?' said Fr José.

Niamh looked up. Mammy, Daddy, Auntie Julie and Uncle Ray were walking away. 'It's time to welcome Lucy into God's family ... Are you ready?'

Niamh nodded. 'C'mon Billie,' she said, jumping down off the seat.



Niamh listened as Fr José asked Mammy, Daddy, Auntie Julie and Uncle Ray some questions about Lucy.

Then Mammy walked over to the big

font, and held Lucy over it. 'What's going on?' asked Niamh.

'Watch!' said Daddy.

'Billie! Watch!' said Niamh, turning her teddy around.

'Lucy Smith,' said Fr José, 'I baptise you in the name of the Father ...'

Niamh watched as Fr José poured water on Lucy's head, before he continued, 'And of the Son ...'

'And of the Holy Spirit,' whispered Niamh.

'And of the Holy Spirit,' said Fr José.

Everybody clapped. They were happy for Niamh, and for Mammy and Daddy, and especially for Lucy.

'Welcome to our family, Lucy,' said Fr José.

'Welcome to the family of God and to the family of the church.'



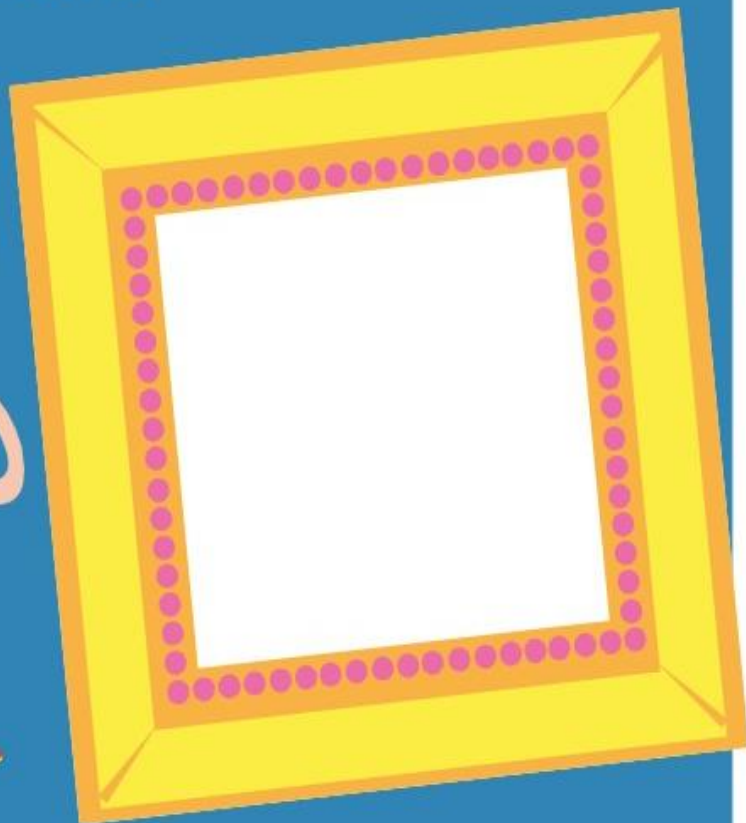
# My Baptism

Chat together about your Baptism.

*This week, we teach the children that, when a person is baptised, they are welcomed into God's family. Holy water is poured over their head in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*



## Here is a picture of my Baptism.



### Pray Together

Bless your child with holy water, if you have some. Otherwise, make the *Sign of the Cross* on your child's forehead, as you did on the day he/she was baptised.

## These people were there when I was baptised:

