

THE BIG LENT WALK for water



Walk the
Blue Nile River
as a group!
Guide for
Community Groups



ETHIOPIA

Thank you for signing up for this year's Big Lent Walk for Water!

Please use this guide to accompany your group walk as you take on Blue Nile River – all 1450km of it!

The guide has reflections from Scripture and information about SCIAF's work in Ethiopia, where we are together bringing clean, safe water to rural communities. It also includes a sponsorship sheet to print off for your walkers, tips to track your walk, and ideas to get the most out of your Lenten effort.

CONTENTS:

- How to track your group walks
- How to fundraise for SCIAF through your Big Lent Walk
- Water Points: Reflections to help you and your group along the way



TRACKING YOUR WALK

With the Big Lent Walk for Water, you can take on the challenge your way! No matter what size your group, class or school is!

We have some tips and suggestions on how to complete the 1450km as a team here:



TIP 1

Set time for a weekly walk(s).

This may be 30 minutes or an hour, once or twice a week. If you stick to it, and agree together this is the day each week of Lent, then you will trek the Blue Nile in no time!



You can also choose to do your walk in a shorter time frame and use our reflections at your own pace



TIP 2

Track the walk online or offline!

You can use our walking tracker (page 11) to record the distance of each walk you do as a group, or print for individuals to use and count them each week.

TIP 3

Use your walks as a time for community building or reflection.



You can also use apps like Strava, MapMyWalk or StepsApp to record your weekly walks with your group



TIP 4

Be competitive.

If you have multiple groups taking part then make it a competition to see who can walk the Blue Nile River first! If you finish quickly, and are up for it, then head back to Ethiopia and try the distance again.

EXAMPLE GROUP SIZES TO REACH THE TARGET OF 1450KM BY EASTER

- If you have **30** people, on average each one would need to walk **8km** each week of Lent
- If you have **50** people, on average each one would need to walk **4.8km** each week of Lent
- If you have a larger group, for example a school of **200**, it would take each person just walking **1.2km** to walk the length of the Blue Nile river!

FUNDRAISING

By taking part in this challenge, not only are you raising awareness of the issue of access to clean, safe water for communities in Ethiopia, but you are also fundraising to ensure SCIAF can continue to support these communities by digging wells near homes, repairing pumps, and ensuring water keeps flowing.

You can fundraise through our JustGiving campaign by setting up your own page. You can also use the sponsorship form on page 8 for your walkers and encourage them to get sponsored by friends and family. We understand that times are tough – but even wee amounts can make a BIG CHANGE! If you're able to raise £1 per kilometre collectively, your group would raise £1450, more than enough to ensure SCIAF can provide water for a village!

- Use our reflection resources at sciaf.org.uk/weebox
- Share your progress with SCIAF on social media
- Get in touch with us via getinvolved@sciaf.org.uk



Ware, Ethiopia

WATER POINT REFLECTIONS

Use these reflections as you complete your walk to help your group understand why they are taking part in the challenge.

The start of your Big Lent Walk

"Life was difficult before the SCIAF project. We used to walk five hours just to get water. The place we fetched water from was unsafe – the cows and other animals drank from it. Even dead animals, like dogs, could be found in the water. Still, we had no other choice. We had to drink it. Sometimes it felt like drinking that water was worse than dying."

Hirit, Ethiopia



Hirit, Ethiopia

WEE BOX LEAD AND RESPONSE PRAYER

Leader: Sign of the Cross

Leader: We thank You for the gift of water that gives us life

All repeat

Leader: Bless the work of SCIAF and the people of Ethiopia

All repeat

Leader: Help us share Your love, like water, with those in need

All repeat

Leader: Teach us how we can better love our neighbour

All repeat

All together: Amen.

TO READ ALOUD

"Love for the poor – whatever the form their poverty may take – is the evangelical hallmark of a Church faithful to the heart of God."

Pope Leo XIV writes in *Dilexi Te*

"Jesus stood up and cried out, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" John 7: 37-38

"Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream" Amos 5:24

"I was thirsty and you gave me a drink; I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you looked after me; I was a stranger and you welcomed me"
Matthew 25:35-36

WATER POINT 1

When you reach 500km



Lielti, Ethiopia

“Water is Life”

Share this case study with your group and ask them to discuss how they would feel if they never had instant access to safe, clean water. Ask them what they think of Lielti’s life and how it compares to their life in Scotland.

“Before the well was constructed, we had to walk four hours to fetch water. We would go in groups, with friends, and most of the time we had to go before school. It used to take half a day just to collect water. But now that the well has been built, it only takes 30 minutes.

“I have a message for the people in Scotland. Before, we had to search so hard just to find water. In the dry season, we drank dirty water and we got really sick. We had to spend what little money we had on medicine.

“Now, we have time to go to school and we can afford to buy the things we need. But I know there are still others who need help.”

Lielti, 19, Ethiopia



WATER POINT 2

When you reach 1000km

“Refresh your soul”

By this point you all have walked more than 75% of the route. You would have walked through the Ethiopian Highlands and have crossed the border into Eastern Sudan.

SHARE THIS REFLECTION WITH YOUR GROUP:

**“He leads me beside still waters;
He restores my soul.” Psalm 23:2-3**

This verse invites us to pause on our journey so far. To breathe. To remember that the One who walks with us is also the One who restores us.

Water has always been a sign of new life in Scripture. It reminds us of our baptism, of being renewed and made whole in Christ. The same living water that flowed from His side on the Cross still refreshes us today, washing away fear and weariness, and reminding us that even in suffering, God brings hope and new life.

Psalm 23 reminds us that in the desert of everyday life – stress, doubts, loneliness – God’s invitation to the ‘still water’ is a call to pause, to listen, and to let His grace revive us.

As you rest, listen for the silence around you – the wind, your heartbeat, your breath.

In doing so we enter into the same ‘still waters’ that the Psalmist celebrates, entering into the life-giving flow of Christ’s love.

Berhan, Ethiopia



WATER POINT 3

When you reach 1450km



“Drops of hope”

Each step you have taken is a step forward to building a better world. As a group, you will have walked 1450km. That is about 1,850,000 steps between you all! It's incredible to have you join SCIAF and our community on this walk, and your steps and fundraising will make a big change and allow SCIAF to reach more people with access to basic human needs like clean water. Your efforts this Lent bring hope to the world. Thank you!

PLEASE READ THE WEE BOX 2026 PRAYER WITH THE GROUP:

God of Life-Giving water, we give you our praise.

We lift to you all those that seek water but do not find.

Quench their thirst and provide all that they need.

May we, the SCIAF family, continue to be a voice for those unheard;

A pillar of hope for our sisters and brothers.

We ask that you help us to play our part in building a world

where justice flows like a mighty river

Amen

BIG LENT WALK FOR WATER SPONSORSHIP FORM



Name:

My reason for taking part is:

I'm walking _____ miles/km to raise £_____

To sponsor me, please write your name, address and sponsorship amount below. **Thank you.**

PUT YOUR TAX TO WORK TO HELP PEOPLE FIND A WAY OUT OF POVERTY!

Gift Aid your donation and increase it by 25% at no cost to you.

By signing up to gift aid you agree that: I want all the donations I've made to SCIAF since 6 April 2021 and all donations in the future to qualify for Gift Aid until I notify you otherwise. I am a UK Income or Capital Gains taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax / or Capital Gains tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all of my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference. *SCIAF will reclaim 25p of tax for every £1 you donate.*

Your details will be used to process the donation and any gift aid as well as allowing us to evaluate our fundraising appeals overall. SCIAF will keep your details secure and never sell them. So that more money can reach some of the world's poorest communities, SCIAF does not send acknowledgement letters to thank individual sponsors.

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TOTAL amount

£

Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund

SCOTISH CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL AID FUND
SCIAC is the official relief and development agency of the Catholic Church in Scotland and a proud member of the Caritas family. 196 Clyde Street, Glasgow, G1 4JY. Tel: 0141 354 5555. Scottish Charity No: SC012302. Company No: SC197327.



BIG LENT WALK DISTANCE TRACKER

TOTAL MILES WALKED