

Walking for water: Garcia on next mission

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landlocked country of 14 million people with no access to clean water.

"If 10,000 people gave one dollar, an entire village has water," said Ina Anahata. "There are almost a billion people without access to clean water. You can hear the voices of future generations crying out."

The Peace, Water and Wisdom Walk, began May 11 at Burkina Faso's permanent mission at the United Nations building in New York and will end May 30 at the Unitarian Universalist Society in Bangor, Maine.

The couple said they asked Garcia to help and he jumped at the opportunity.

"Join us in prayer, or join us on foot," said the former Marine and police officer, now an ordained minister. "Help us bring bubbling springs from the depths of the earth to give a thirsty land water for life."

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raised in the Spanish Harlem section of New York. His mission began on Dec. 7, 1996, in San Francisco. Devastated by divorce, at the lowest point in his life, he said he prayed and asked God for help. The next thing he knew he was walking—walking, he says, to live. "I gave up my house, my car, my dog, everything, and started walking. I had \$48 in my pocket."

Garcia's first walk was for the Marines' Toys for Tots program, a three-leg voyage that took him 3,500 miles. "On the second day, the Marines were following me in Humvees," he said. He's been walking ever since, at a pace of

four to five miles per hour, generally logging about 50 miles a day. He goes through a pair of sneakers a month at a time. His calves ache, his toenails peel off from the constant contact with rubber. "I've been hit by sandstorms, mudslides and wild dogs," he said.

He said a medal given to him by Yasser Arafat's people in Palestine saved his life when he was held captive in Raffa. He walked in Iraq with 20,000 people, not immediately sure if the mob was following him or coming to kill him.

"I don't understand the madness," said Garcia. "It's just gone wild everywhere. Sometimes it all seems impossible."

But then Danny Garcia starts walking, having his daily conversations with God, buoyed by the people he meets.

For more information on the Peace, Water and Wisdom Walk, visit www.barkafoundation.org.

"Whatever we raise, I'm at peace," said Garcia.