

Vacation Time

It's May, which means Memorial Day isn't far away, graduations are being planned, and vacations are in the works. Soon, assuming it warms up at least to what it was this winter, we'll be getting out the shorts, turning on the A/C, and enjoying summer activities, most of which, it seems, have something to do with bodies of water, either fish-filled or chlorinated.

As you journey (or relax at home) in this beautiful creation God has given us, I'd like to remind you of another creation, which is also closely tied to water. At your Baptism, whether it was recent or many decades ago, and whether you remember it or not, you were made a new creation in Christ. He washed away your sin, and the Holy Spirit made you pure throughout. And while Baptism is a once-in-a-lifetime event, that washing continues daily, better than time-released medication.

From Luther's Small Catechism:

What does such baptizing with water indicate?

It indicates that the Old Adam in us should by daily contrition and repentance be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and that a new man should daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

Where is this written?

St. Paul writes in Romans chapter six: "We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glow of the Father, we too may live a new life." [Rom. 6:4]

So since you have a new life, you can celebrate this forgiveness every day, regardless of whether you're home or not. I encourage you to recognize the blessings you're enjoying this summer, and respond to God in prayers of thanks. As well, don't neglect the spiritual blessings of God in favor of the other blessings. When you're not around on the weekend, find a church near your vacation spot. The LCMS website (www.lcms.org) has a Congregation Locator to enable you to find an LCMS church wherever you're going, or call me, and I'll help you out. Take your Bible with you, or, if you're staying in a hotel, take advantage of the one provided by the Gideons (Note: If you don't like the King James Version, you'll want to bring your own!). *Schedule* daily family devotions, reading together from the Bible, talking about what you've read, and praying together.

Our Lord has poured out His blessings on us, the greatest of which is full and complete forgiveness of sins, accomplished for us by Jesus Christ on the cross, and accomplished *in* us through His Word and Sacraments. Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! His love endures forever!