

WATER FOR YOUR SOUL: **The Baptismal Plunge with Christ**

Are you as pastor looking for a Lenten series taking your people to spiritual basics? Consider this possibility.

Lent in the pre-Constantinian church was a catechetical time to prepare people for baptism, a dramatic life-giving plunge into the waters on the eve of Easter. In the weeks prior to Holy Saturday, the candidate was growing into Christ with all that baptism would mean for faithful living in the world. Martin Luther himself would insist that we received enough in baptism to spend our whole life taking it in.

Based on Glenn Borreson's book, **WATER FOR YOUR SOUL: Living in Baptism Every Day**, this Lenten series is a catechesis on Christ's saving work in baptism. In the five weeks between Ash Wednesday and Holy Week, you as pastor may do one or more of the following:

- a) Preach on baptism's spiritual benefits using selected chapters from the book,
and/or
- b) Provide copies of the book to families for devotional reading during the week (available at a 40% discount on the book publisher's sales site, www.bbotw.com),
and/or
- c) Lead the book's readers in a group study of the chapters they read during the week. (a free study guide is available on the book's website, www.waterforyoursoul.com).

Here are themes for each of five weeks with the chapter suggested as an 8-10 minute meditation, followed by chapters for devotional reading and/or a group study during the week.

The Baptismal Plunge with Christ Who...

(1)	Gives Us the Good Life	Chapter 2.	The Inheritance	Read Ch. 1-6
(2)	Is One to Count On	Chapter 7.	Safe in the Waters	Read Ch. 7-12
(3)	Connects Us to People	Chapter 18.	Real People	Read Ch. 13-18
(4)	Helps Us to Change	Chapter 20.	Through the Waters	Read Ch. 19-24
(5)	Moves Us into the World	Chapter 30.	Into the World	Read Ch. 25-31

Suggestions: Incorporate photos, clipart, and words corresponding to the chapter text into a PowerPoint presentation and read the chapter in semi-darkness, perhaps as a dialog between two readers. Use the haiku at the end of the chapter for reflection, conversation, and prayer – if you can see this working in your setting.

Here are supports for the theme of each week too, offered as examples or possibilities for use within a liturgy of your choosing.

	Scripture	Hymn (ELW #)	Prayer
1.	I Peter 1:3-9	<i>Waterlife</i> (457)	St. Patrick's prayer, p. 13
2.	Romans 8:31-39	<i>Baptized in Water</i> (456)	Luther's Evening Prayer, p. 40
3.	I Cor. 12:12-26	<i>I'm Going on a Journey</i> (446)	St. Francis' prayer, p. 54
4.	Colossians 3:5-17	<i>This is the Spirit's Entry Now</i> (448)	Peace, no. 2, ELW p.76
5.	Ephesians 2:11-16	<i>Crashing Waters at Creation</i> (455)	Creation/New Creation, ELW p. 81

Suggestion: Position the baptismal font prominently and use the sign of the cross deliberately with a sentence on the theme the week. For example, week 1 might be: "For your gift of abundant life, Jesus, thank you. Help me live to the fullest. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son (+), and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." Encourage people to continue the sentence and sign of the cross in their devotions.