



## Divine Service Invocation and the Sanctity of Life

As we gather to receive God's gifts in His Divine Services to us, we affirm His presence among us in the Invocation of His Triune name. How does this proclaim the sanctity of life?

When we make the sign of the Cross during the Invocation, we remember that we are baptized into Christ's death and resurrection and are members of His body.<sup>1</sup> In Baptism, our Triune God bestows His name on us as we receive His gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the water of Baptism, "included in God's command and combined with God's Word," is quite literally "a life-giving water."<sup>3</sup>

God desires for all to come to this life-giving water.<sup>4</sup> This includes all children who are growing in their mothers' wombs, once they are born.<sup>5</sup> And He excludes no one, not even those with chronic illness or disability. "On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem weaker are indispensable."<sup>6</sup>

In his *Large Catechism*, Dr. Martin Luther (1483-1546) wrote, "... where God's name is, there must also be life and salvation."<sup>7</sup> In this way, the Invocation, like the entirety of the Divine Service, proclaims the sanctity of life from fertilization to forever. We affirm this in the presence of God and each other, as we answer, "Amen."

Every Sunday is truly Life Sunday!

### Notes:

1. Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 12:13
2. Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21; SC Baptism, Second
3. SC Baptism, First and Third (c.f. Titus 3:5-8)
4. 1 Timothy 2:3b-4
5. Mark 10:13-16. Consider also the following prayer for a pregnant mother and her baby:  
Lord of life, receive our prayer for <name of mother> and for the child she carries, that they may safely come to the time of birth. Grant that by water and the Word this child may be brought to new birth in Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
Source: *Lutheran Service Book Pastoral Care Companion* (St. Louis: CPH, 2007), p. 164
6. 1 Corinthians 12:22
7. LC IV 27