

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Earlier this week, a WKBT television news report brought to my mind another option for us during this time of the Coronavirus pandemic: fishing! The announcer stated that many more persons have purchased fishing licenses this year than last year. In fact, a Milwaukee Journal Sentinel article from early July stated, "More than 1 million people have purchased Wisconsin fishing licenses this year, an increase of 18% from the same time in 2019..." (Paul Smith, July 4, 2020). That's a lot more fishing licenses, especially when kids 15 and under, those born before 1927, and active duty military on furlough or leave who are Wisconsin residents don't need a license ([dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing](http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing))!

My older brother enjoyed fishing with friends when he was younger. I recall him, at first, going out with a bamboo pole, fishing line, a few hooks, and worms he had found in our garden. I also have had parishioners at other churches where I have served, whom I would describe as avid fishermen. One of them went fishing practically every day! He would talk about fishing as a form of relaxation and an opportunity to think about his life. He saw it as a time to reflect on creation, on the beauty of God's earth, and to enjoy the peace and quiet.

Yet, there are also persons for whom fishing is less for relaxation and more for necessity. For them, a \$5.00 license allows them to provide food for their families for up to a whole year. It is a welcome gift, especially at this time when some persons have lost their jobs and/or money is tight.

As I mentioned in my sermon last Sunday, God provides for us. God provides us with life-giving water and God's word. God provides us with the life-giving water that we receive during our baptism. God provides us with life-sustaining water to drink. God provides us with life-sustaining water, where the fish we eat live and thrive. Let us thank God for the gifts of water, fish, creation, and God's word. They represent just a few of the many gifts that God provides for us each and every day. Thanks be to God.

Peace,

Pastor Cathy