

# SUMMER TRAVEL & VACATION

Summer is often a time of travel and vacation for many, and rightly so. Leisure, rest, and recreation are important parts of what it means to be human as healthy “recreation” should be viewed in terms of “re-creation.” This biblical view goes all the way back to Genesis, recognizing that our God, the Trinity, rested on the Seventh Day.

Healthy recreation and vacation time still very much includes prayer, because we cannot take a “vacation from our vocation.” Our fundamental vocation is to grow in holiness no matter if you are 7 years old or 77 years old. We cannot live out (or discern) our particular vocation well if we aren’t living out our fundamental call to holiness. This is why it is imperative that we make it to Holy Mass, even when we are traveling or on vacation. Missing Holy Mass, without grave cause, is a Mortal Sin. It is always a good idea to plan ahead! Some families that I know really well have provided me with some of their best-practices:

- Research a list of Roman Catholic Churches along your route, at your final destination, or nearby. Take the opportunity to see the beauty of the Catholic faith community in other local parts of the country. Some of the Church buildings themselves are pretty incredible.
- Get out of your comfort zone - depending upon your location, you might want to choose to go to Holy Mass in another language: Spanish, French, Latin, etc. As long as it’s a Catholic Church in communion with Rome, this can be a great opportunity to experience the universality of the Catholic faith - even though we may not fully “understand” the words that are spoken.
- Use [www.masstimes.org](http://www.masstimes.org) as a resource, but always remember to verify the Mass times. As we know locally, Mass times can and do change based on a number of factors - shortage of Priests, switching to a summer schedule, temporary change, etc. It is always good to verify Mass times through a parish website, parish bulletin, calling the local parish, or sending them a quick email. A little planning ahead will potentially save some headaches.
- Make a church visit part of your vacation itinerary. There are some beautiful historical churches in many parts of the country. Learn about the incredible early roots of our faith in America! Stop by to tour, to pray for a little bit, to light a candle, to teach your kids!

This list is by no means exhaustive so if you have creative ideas to make Prayer, Holy Mass, and our faith part of a vacation, share them with someone you know who is going on a trip!

Let us commit to keeping prayer apart of our vacations, that we may resist taking a “vacation from our vocation.” I ran across this wonderful prayer from [CatholicPrayerCards.org](http://CatholicPrayerCards.org), a “Prayer for a Good Vacation” that you might find beneficial in your travels, something that can be prayed together daily as a family!

*Heavenly Father, when your work of creation was complete, you rested. Lord, during my vacation from the cares and burdens of everyday life, please renew me physically, mentally, and spiritually. Help me to slow down and take delight in your magnificent creation and in all those I'll share this time with. Help me to embrace this period of leisure and regain strength to continue my journey through life. By leaving my work behind for these days, may I focus my gaze on you, and reflect on what is important in life. Remind me to pray each day since I'm taking this vacation with you, not away from you. May you keep me safe in my travels and protect me from all harm. May I be revitalized and refreshed so I may return to carry out my daily responsibilities with joy and newfound enthusiasm. Amen.*