

June 2026

Summer memories and praising God for the gift of rest.

Soon the end of the school year will be upon us and that long-awaited summer vacation begins. Summer will mean different things to different people. The simple joys of backyard BBQs and eating outside, picnics in the park, camping, swimming, visiting parks, movie nights, sleep-ins, road trips, biking, hiking, spontaneous playtime with the neighbour's kids, and the sort.

Summer for me as a young boy also meant quality family time spent with my mom and dad, brother and sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and oodles of cousins.

One of my more memorable summer trips was a family weekend in Watrous, Saskatchewan, and an incredible experience at Manitou Hot Springs Resort in Manitou Beach, where you could swim and relax in what only the then six-year me could describe as the world's largest hot bath swimming pool! I had never seen such a thing before. The hot springs with their geothermally heated deep underground, rising to the surface, emerging through fractures or porous rock, were an instant hit with me.

On that famous trip to Watrous, I unfortunately had my first encounter with the dreaded "tax man." My baba and dido, who were camping with us, gave me 25 cents, which was like \$5.00 today. I ventured into the candy shop and carefully picked out 25 cents of my most favourite sweets. The storeowner tallied up my treasure and blurted out, "That will be 27 cents." I quickly replied that I was six years old and knew how to count, thank you Ma'am! She retorted, ah, but there's two cents provincial sales tax. Who would have known! Alberta didn't have sales tax but Saskatchewan does. I've been in therapy ever since.

With summer looming, students and families, take the advice of my late mother, who would remind that six-year old boy who thought that summers last forever before one headed back to school, "Wait til you're my age, and you'll see how quickly time flies." You know, she was right, a lesson I learn over and over again as I grow older.

Students and families, let's look forward to a carefree summer, praising God for the gift of rest. Let's take a break from the pressures of the regular school routines and from our devices. Let's enjoy quality time with family and friends. Let's create new memories that we will treasure a lifetime and appreciate the simple, God-given joys that life has to offer. Let's make the most of our summer.

God bless!

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