

Third Sunday of Easter



Easter is not just a single day of celebration but a season – 50 days inviting us into the mystery of God’s healing love. We put our faith in a Higher Power who has conquered death and offers us new life – not as a vague hope, but as a living promise.

For those of us who grew up in dysfunctional homes, this new life often feels hard to imagine. Many of us learned to survive by hiding our true selves, taking responsibility for others, or shutting down emotionally. Recovery invites us into an honest relationship with God, others, and ourselves. Like the disciples encountering the risen Christ, we are called to a personal relationship with Jesus, who meets us through community and the sacraments that restore and nourish us.

We have an Advocate in Christ who continually intercedes for us, binding together heaven and earth with mercy. In our healing journey, we slowly let go of perfectionism, self-reliance, and isolation, learning instead to trust God’s care for us. We grow in love for Him and for ourselves, embracing our true identity as beloved children of God.

The Resurrection reminds us that while we rejoice in Christ’s victory, we do not deny the pain of the past. Many of us have carried deep emotional wounds – fear, abandonment, shame – for years without knowing a way out. These burdens shaped how we saw ourselves and the world, often leading to patterns of distrust, control, or self-criticism.

Recovery asks us to do the hard but rewarding work of responding differently – to face the truth of our experiences while trusting that God can restore what was broken.

We see a powerful example of healing in Peter’s encounter with Jesus after the Resurrection:

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter,

“Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?”

Simon Peter answered him, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.”

Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.”

*He then said to Simon Peter a second time,
“Simon, son of John, do you love me?”
Simon Peter answered him, “Yes, Lord, you know
that I love you.”
Jesus said to him, “Tend my sheep.”
Jesus said to him the third time,
“Simon, son of John, do you love me?”
Peter was distressed that Jesus had said to him a
third time,
“Do you love me?” and he said to him,
“Lord, you know everything; you know that I love
you.”
Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.”*

Peter's healing didn't come through proving his worth, but through accepting love and being entrusted with a mission. Similarly, we don't need to earn our way into healing – we are invited to receive it and then share it by living authentically and lovingly.

Later, Peter declares, “We must obey God rather than men.” His courage came from trusting God over fear. In our lives, this means choosing to live out of truth rather than old survival patterns, relying on God's love rather than seeking approval from broken systems.

By continuing to trust God, face the truth of our stories, and take steps toward emotional and spiritual growth, we too are called to “feed His sheep” – to live as witnesses of hope, mercy, and renewal.

- How have you relied on God's help to face moments of fear, loneliness, or emotional pain rooted in your family experiences?
- In what ways have you been healed of unhealthy survival traits—such as perfectionism, people-pleasing, distrust, or self-reliance—through your recovery and surrender to Jesus?
- What second chances has Jesus given you to experience authentic love, trust, and emotional freedom?

Healing the Mind & Soul: A Catholic Approach to Psychiatry and Addiction

Webinar on Monday, May 5 at 7p ET/4p PT

- Featuring Catholic Psychiatrist Dr. Michael Ferri
- Gain insight into the overlap of psychiatry and addiction
- Learn how the Church's spiritual tools can complement mental health care in a truly integrated approach
- Free for CIR+ members otherwise \$10 to register
- This and all webinar recordings available on CIR+
- For more info and to register for the webinar visit **catholicinrecovery.com/webinars**

Sunday Mass Readings this Week

First Reading: Acts 5:27-32, 40b-41

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-12, 13

Second Reading: Revelation 5:11-14

Gospel: John 21:1-19