

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Dear fellow redeemed, and especially you Audrey, Heather, and Pauline,

Our theme today is "healing."

In the Gospel appointed for today, Jesus took a deaf/mute man aside from the crowd,

put His fingers in the man's ears, spit and touched the man's tongue, and spoke.

Instantly, the man could hear and speak clearly.

Jesus restored to this man, not only what he needed for regular communication in this life, but especially what is desirable for receiving His Word and Sacraments, that is open ears, and what is useful for confessing that Word to others, that is, a loosed tongue.

Jesus' healings were the visible reversal of the effects of the corruption of sin.

While we do not regularly, nor often, see/recognize such miraculous displays of true healings as the Lord performed and allowed His apostles to perform,

He continues to heal the soul & conscience and prepare our bodies for the complete reversal of sin's corruption on the Last Day in the resurrection of the dead through the Office of the Public Ministry.

Today's text for our meditation focuses our attention on Jesus' continued tending and feeding His sheep and lambs through the Office of the Holy Ministry

as we meditate on how He tended and fed His apostle Simon Peter and prepared him again for his continued service among the Lord's flock as one of His ministers.

And as we have the blessing of installing three individuals into their office as teacher, and preparing for another school year to begin,

we will also consider how the Lord works through this office to support the Office of the Holy Ministry.

As follows in Jesus' name:

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs." He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the 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. Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go." (This He said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this He said to him, "Follow Me." (ESV)

This is Your Word, heavenly Father; sanctify us in the truth, Your Word is Truth. Amen. (John 17:17)

In our text, Jesus and 7 of His disciples had just finished breakfast. John reports,

John 21:14

This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after He was raised from the dead.

Simon Peter had been so excited to see his risen Lord Jesus yet again, he had jumped into the water from the boat they had been fishing in so that he could get to Jesus sooner.

But there was some unfinished serious business that Jesus had to attend to with Simon Peter.

Like a surgeon who recognizes that the cancerous lump under the skin may not hurt so much now, but will grow and destroy the body if left alone,

Jesus desired to remove all of the cancerous lump of guilt, fear, and doubt from Simon Peter, who had publicly denied Him just weeks before, not once but 3 times and with curses.

Note how Jesus addresses Simon Peter.

He doesn't use His own nickname for him, "Peter," "rock" who had given such a rock-solid confession about Jesus being **the Christ, the Son of the Living God**, a few months ago. Matthew 16:16

Instead, he calls him "Simon, son of John."

Genesis 18:27

"Son of John," reminds him that he is but mortal man, **dust and ashes** before God, as was Abraham, but also that he was a "son of Yahweh's grace" (John means "Yahweh is gracious").

"Simon" was his given name, the name of his circumcision and likely of his baptism as well.

The name means "listen" or "hear," calling on this man to listen carefully to the word of his Lord.

Note how Jesus asks the question three times, "**Do you love Me?**"

The 1st time, Jesus asks - "**Do you love Me more than these?**"

On the night Simon denied Jesus, he'd boasted, "**Even though they all fall away, I will not.**" Mark 14:29

Humbled, Simon makes no boast or comparison, saying simply, "**Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.**"

The 2nd "**do you love Me?**", like the first time, John uses a stronger Greek word for love.

It is not the self-seeking type of love, nor is it the brotherly type of love, but it is a self-sacrificing love.

Simon's second answer is the same as his first— he cannot bring himself to boast about having such a love since he had denied knowing Jesus and was not willing to sacrifice himself.

The 3rd "**Do you love Me?**" met Simon where he was at, using the same Greek word Simon had used.

This grieved Simon, recognizing the correspondence to his denials,

but now he responds with a bolder confession "**Lord, You know everything; You know that I love You.**"

But while Simon was grieved, he was also a source of relief.

After each of Simon's responses, the Lord called him to serve His people,

saying, "**Feed My lambs... Tend My sheep...Feed My sheep.**"

Jesus was not pushing Simon away, but calling him to repentance and faith,

and restoring him in and assuring him of his apostolic office of proclaiming salvation through Jesus.

This was not lost on Peter. His 2 epistles are filled with the same comfort of forgiveness and certainty

that he had received from our Savior, emboldening him to give and dispense that forgiveness

to God's sheep and lambs.

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Today, the Lord still calls men into the Office of the Holy Ministry.

As we heard only a month and a half ago at Pr. Lehne's ordination,

Jesus still speaks through His ministers to feed and tend His sheep and lambs,

to call you to repentance and comfort you through Jesus' salvation through His death & resurrection.

As the surgeon might examine his patient and show the patient his cancerous tumor,

so He puts the question to you, "**Do you love Me?**"

And as you look back at the week past, and consider the doubts and fears you have struggled with,

or should have been struggling with, but instead gave into...

and you consider your behavior and the words (and tones) which did not display

the fear and love of God that He expects, demands, and desires of you...

Then respond as Simon had, with a grieved heart... and then listen to your Lord.

He does not send you away in anger or bring these things to your remembrance to harm you,

but instead to give you full and final relief from them.

As Simon, son of John, the humbled mortal and the son of Yahweh's grace, stood before Jesus,
so stand before Him and listen and hear Him.

Jesus declares all your doubts and fears, the loveless words and actions and tones FORGIVEN,
atoned and paid for in full by His holy precious blood, shed for you.

...

The Office of the Holy Ministry, what we often call the Pastoral Office today, is for your comfort.
It is how the Lord continues to **tend** and **feed** His **sheep** and **lambs**.

This responsibility is so big and the work so broad that the Church also uses other supporting offices
to aid His ministers in caring out this work.

Today, we are installing three teachers, they are "teaching deacons,"

if you want to use Biblical terminology,

teaching servants taught and trained to a higher level of theological study

so that they may not only teach the grammar stages of reading, writing, and arithmetic,

but they will also teach and train, feed and tend, Jesus' lambs in the way of their Savior.

Our congregation's teachers support and serve, not only the Pastoral Office

but also *assist and strengthen Christian mothers and fathers in their God given responsibilities*

as they nurture and instruct their children, not just in the ABCs and 123s, Rite of Installation 2 Peter 3:18

but also instilling the fear and love of God as they **grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord,**

and as they nurture godly virtues that reflect a godly character and teach a Christ-like life.

Our teachers also serve, not only as instructors, but also as models and examples of what they teach.

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This is, of course, a high a lofty goal... but truly no pastor, teacher, or Christian is able to do this perfectly.

But then again, that imperfection also gives an example to the lambs and sheep as well.

Just as it is good for us to hear Jesus' conversation with Simon Peter, His correction and forgiveness,

so it is good for the lambs to see their pastors, teachers, parents, and fellow Christians

join in this ongoing conversation with their Lord as we gather together:

hearing His correction,

repenting of our sin before God and hearing and receiving God's forgiveness in the Divine Service.

This trains them to receive correction, apologize, forgive and be forgiven as the way of life, Joshua 24:14

that they may live with a clean conscience before God and **serve Him in sincerity and faithfulness.**

Audrey, Heather, and Pauline, as well as Chris, Emma, Emma, Linda, Megan, and Brent,

On behalf of our congregation, on whose behalf you are serving for this special work,

The Lord grant you all His grace and favor this year,

strengthening your fear, love, and trust in Him

and giving you perseverance, integrity, love, and wisdom in your labor and bless it abundantly.

The Lord open your ears to hear His word,

and loose your tongues to confess Him boldly to His lambs for their comfort and eternal joy.

In Jesus' name. **Amen.**

Soli Deo Gloria

When Jesus first met Simon, He gave him a new name, "Peter" the rock.

After that, he was often called, Simon Peter, especially by St. John.

Matthew 16:16

And it was Simon Peter who gave the bold confession, "**You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**"

And Jesus played with his new name, "**You are Peter, and on this rock I will build My Church.**"

That "rock" Jesus spoke of was solid confession of whom Jesus was.

Matthew 16:18

It was not the person of Peter that was the rock.

We see that very clearly on the night of Jesus' betrayal by Judas, when Jesus was on trial.

Remember it was Simon Peter who stood in the chief priests court and had denied knowing Jesus 3x.

And this after Jesus had even foretold it earlier that evening.

Three times Simon was called out for being Jesus' disciple.

Three times Simon denied it, even with curses.

No doubt that would haunt him, not only as he fled weeping from the court,

but through the next few days and weeks.

He had been called by Jesus to confess Him before men, not to deny Him.

And when Jesus was at His most vulnerable, Simon had left Him.

Did Jesus still count him as an Apostle, as a public minister to confess Him and preach on His behalf?

I wonder how Simon heard Jesus' pronouncements of forgiveness those first few sightings,
first on Easter and then the week after.

Did he hear Jesus clearly when He said, "Peace be with you,"

and with a sigh of relieve think, "I can be at peace"?

Or were Simon's ears plugged up by his conscience, questioning whether that peace was really for him,
the denier?

And what about when Jesus said, "**If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them;**

and if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."^{John 20:23}

Was Simon ready to go out and declare sins forgiven in Jesus' name?

Or was his tongue still bound and muted, wondering if Jesus was retaining his sin of denial?

All of that to get us to this wonderfully evangelical text of Jesus restoring Peter to the Apostolic office,
calling him again to be Jesus' public minister to the world.

Humility

Love

Authority

Sacrifice

By His Word- a reversal of effects of sin

Simon - 3x speaking to an apostle (called to go out)

Office of the Ministry

Helping office, as the installation says

Serving Church, Pastors, parents, & students

Receive, then give.

Receive -

With the assembly, with other Christians, especially those that have called you

Hear the same word that they are hearing

Hear it from the pastor they are hearing it from

Receive the Lord's Supper together with them.

In your own personal devotions.

All Christians are given this opportunity. It is how we receive Christ's Word daily'

But as those who will be especially tempted by the devil and your own flesh in how you speak
and treat Christ's lambs, even more so, is this important for you.

Continue your study in depth - take advantage of the Bible Classes offered at Church,

but continue studying yourself - take advantage of asking your pastors

So that you may have a good conscience,

both knowing what the Lord desires of you

and where to go when you are struggling and fail to do it.

Continue your study of The Lutheran Confessions: They are what you vow to uphold,

but even more, they are handed down to us as sources of comfort,

helping us to keep the teachings of Christ correct in our own minds,

so that we rightly understand God's Law and Gospel and apply it to ourselves and others.

Just as He tends to you, so you reflect upon those you are called to serve.

Give -

Word - Confess (to say the same thing)

Not just personal, but the Church's confession

Deed - Our lives are to conform to God's will.

Why is this all important?

because the lambs that you will care for are not your own.

Jesus calls them "My lambs."

He gives us the means, the tools, to care for them.

Follow Me.

He will provide for you as well.

Do you love Me more than these?

You know that I love you.

Thanks be to God who rejoices in you.

Often He simply spoke them. Sometimes, as in today's Gospel, He physically touched the recipient.
This is how the Lord even works today, sometim

But the body and soul, while separated at death are united in life.

What affects the one, affects the other.

Illness is accompanied by a depression of mood; joy gives renewed energy.

Guilt saps the life out of us, as King David states:

For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.

For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;

my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Ps. 32:3-4

While the cleansed conscience revives the body and soul, as David again says,

Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that You have broken rejoice. Psalms 51:8

Jesus' love for that man, His humility and sacrifice of time in serving this one man in need,
and the authority by which spoke and healed the man,