

Commentary on the Gospel for Mon, May 5th 2014

“While reading today’s passages I was struck by my perception of a juxtaposition between Acts and John’s gospel. In the first reading the events leading up to St. Stephen’s martyrdom are related. These events, at first glance, seem in contrast to the talk of “imperishable food” in John’s Gospel. A re-read touched me in a different way. Stephen is portrayed as being filled with “wisdom and the Spirit.” The question to me is how this happened in the face of death, and yet at the same time, he was able to still proclaim the Good News.

The answer to that may be found in John’s gospel. Stephen, as an early Christian, was able to partake in “the food that endures for eternal life.” John 16 begins the Bread of Life discourse in which Christ repeatedly tells His followers He is the Bread of Life and that His flesh is true food. If I understand that this powerful spiritual gift is available to me and has been to followers of Christ since the beginnings of the Church, I can have the same opportunity to attain the wisdom and courage Stephen had.

During the time between Triduum, during which we celebrate the Lord’s Supper, and Pentecost Sunday, I can feed on the food that endures for eternal life and be filled with the wisdom of the Spirit. During this time between Easter and Pentecost, I need to take the time to reflect on this gift and offer prayers of thanksgiving. “

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