

*20 April 2026 -- Monday of the 3rd week of Easter*

[Acts 6:8-15; John 6:22-29](#)

### H O M I L Y

Throughout the coming week, the first reading at Mass will introduce us to the beginnings of evangelization, with the death of the first martyr, Stephen, the persecution that then raged against the Church in Jerusalem and Judea, and, at the same time, the spread of the preaching to the Gentiles.

The opening chapters of the Acts of the Apostles have already shown us the beginnings of the organization of the early Church in Jerusalem. They have told us how the Apostles, in order to have more time for prayer and the ministry of the Word, appointed deacons for other duties, particularly the ministry of serving at the tables. In reality, the deacons, too, devoted themselves to the Word from the very beginning, for they were immediately called upon to bear witness to their faith. The first and most famous was Stephen, who became the first to die for the name of Jesus. Acts tells us that he was full of the grace and power of God and that he performed wonders and remarkable signs. Those who sought to argue with him could not stand up to him, for it was the wisdom of the Holy Spirit that inspired his words. It was precisely because of this wisdom and divine power within him that a brutal persecution arose against him and led to his death.

In our Gospel reading, also throughout this week, we shall read the second part of chapter 6 of Saint John, on the Bread of Life. We see, then, that it was by constantly remembering Jesus and nourishing themselves on the Bread of Life that the early Christians found the strength not only to live the Gospel but also to bear witness to their faith, and in many cases to bear witness to it even unto martyrdom. The first part of this chapter, which we read last week, recounted the feeding of the five thousand, after which Jesus withdrew to the mountain to pray before joining His disciples on the lake as they crossed over towards Capernaum.

Today it is the crowd that joins Jesus and His disciples on the other shore. Jesus immediately calls on them to purify their intentions. He reproaches them for not paying attention to the signs He performs—which are manifestations of divine power—but for following Him simply because they have eaten well and want more. He invites them to seek the food that endures and transforms into eternal life. This food is faith in the one whom God has sent. In reality, the whole of Chapter 6 of St John's Gospel on the Bread of Life is as much about Faith as it is about the Eucharist.

Document extrait du [site de l'abbaye Notre-Dame de Scourmont](#), qui se trouve sur le territoire de Forges, à sept kilomètres au sud de la ville de Chimay, en Belgique. Notre-Dame de Scourmont est une abbaye de l'Ordre Cistercien de la Stricte Observance.

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May we draw from this Eucharistic celebration the faith that will enable us to accomplish the 'works of God'

Armand Veilleux