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“After Jesus had fed the five thousand, his disciples saw him walking on the sea” (John 6:22).

Acts 6:8-15; John 6:22-29

The entire New Testament is, of course, a post-resurrection account of Jesus. The narrative of the life and death of Jesus is seen through the lens of his continued presence in the communities to form and sustain them in faith toward the end of the first century. Acts tells of St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, who imitates the pattern of Jesus’ own trial before the Sanhedrin, where he is transfigured like the Son of Man in Daniel and Ezekiel and then, like Jesus, put to death.

John’s Gospel tells of Jesus walking on water, an image that fulfills the Exodus crossing of God’s people from slavery to freedom and demonstrates the power of the resurrection to inspire the disciples to live fearlessly by passing through the waters of death to new life. No storm at sea can sink the primitive church as it navigates into history to offer hope to a storm-tossed world. The Eucharist is, in the words of Thomas Aquinas, our “pledge of future glory.” The waters of Baptism imprint on us the pattern of Jesus’ death and resurrection. The Eucharist is Jesus accompanying us, the “breaking of the bread” we celebrate with one another to remember him, our *viaticum*, “with us on the way” even unto death.

Easter faith is essential to Christian formation, which is why we are given a liturgical season of 50 days to prepare for Pentecost, the gift of the Spirit, who reminds us of

everything Jesus taught us by word and example about how to live full human lives inspired by love. Human experience is how we encounter God in all things. Grace perfects our human nature. Jesus calls us to find him the world, especially among the poor, the oppressed and abused. Whatever we do for them we do for him.

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