

26 December

Red

Invitation to Confession

As Stephen rebuked God's people

for not listening to the word of God,

let us confess our stubbornness and sin which resist the Holy Spirit.

Kyrie Confession

You call us to listen to your voice

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

You command us to flee from idolatry.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

You ask us to forgive our persecutors.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Collect

Gracious Father,

who gave the first martyr Stephen

grace to pray for those who took up stones against him:

grant that in all our sufferings for the truth

we may learn to love even our enemies

and to seek forgiveness for those who desire our hurt,

looking up to heaven to him who was crucified for us,

Jesus Christ, our mediator and advocate,

who is alive and reigns with you,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever.

Lectionary

Principal Service

2 Chronicles 24.20-22

Psalm 119.161-168

Acts 7.51-end

Matthew 10.17-22

(or)

Acts 7.51-60

Psalm 119.161-168

Galatians 2.16b-20

Matthew 10.17-22

Second Service

Genesis 4.1-10

Matthew 23.34-end

Evening Psalms

Psalms 57, 86

Third Service

Jeremiah 26.12-15

Acts 6

Morning Psalms

Psalms 13, 31.1-8, 150

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia.

I see the heavens opened

and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.

Acts 7.56

Alleluia.

Intercession

Full of the Holy Spirit, let us approach the throne of grace,

and bring our prayers to Jesus the Lord.

Incarnate Lord,

you came down to earth from heaven

to embrace the pain and sorrows of our sinful world,

for the cause of truth.

We pray for all Christians who are persecuted ...

We pray for all who hold authority over people

as political or religious leaders,

that they may exercise their power with justice

and for the common good ...

We pray for those who use violence to silence their opponents ...

We pray for grace to witness to your truth with constancy and faith

and to bear the cost of following your righteous ways.

We pray for those for whom the joy of this holy season is overshadowed by pain, grief or failure ...

We remember all who have gone before us looking for the vision of your heavenly glory ...

We rejoice in our communion with Stephen

and all the saints and martyrs,

whose hope was in you, the Word made flesh

and with whom we for evermore are one.

Lord, receive our prayers

and perfect them by your heavenly intercession,

to the glory of the Father.

Amen.

Introduction to the Peace

Jesus said, 'In the world you face persecution.

But take courage; I have conquered the world.'

John 16.33

Prayer at the Preparation of the Table

Look upon us in mercy not in judgement;

draw us from hatred to love;

make the frailty of our praise

a dwelling place for your glory.

Preface

And now we give you thanks

for the example of your chosen servant Stephen;

as a deacon he preached the good news of your Kingdom;

he saw your glory, and as the first martyr

he committed his spirit to the Saviour.

Extended Preface

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere,

mighty creator, ever-living God,

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

For love of us fallen sinners

he most wonderfully and humbly chose to be made human,

and to take our nature upon him,

so that we might be born again by your Spirit

and restored in your image.

The love that brought him down to earth

lifted your martyr Stephen from earth to heaven.

By that love he spoke your word

with wisdom and the Spirit;

by that love he saw your glory

and Jesus at your right hand;

by that love he overcame the anger of his accusers

and forgave their cruelty;

by that love he committed his spirit into your hands

and won the crown of righteousness.

Therefore with all the angels of heaven

we lift our voices to proclaim the glory of your name

and sing our joyful hymn of praise:

Post Communion

Merciful Lord,

we thank you for the signs of your mercy

revealed in birth and death:

save us by the coming of your Son,

and give us joy in honouring Stephen,

first martyr of the new Israel;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Blessing

God give you grace to be faithful witnesses,
to see heaven opened
and the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

Acclamation

Stephen, full of grace and power,
did great wonders and signs among the people.

Precious in the sight of the Lord

is the death of his saints.

Short Passages of Scripture

Stephen, full of grace and power,
did great signs and wonders among the people.

Acts 6.8

I see the heavens opened
and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.

Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

Acts 7.56,59

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