St Stephen with St John Westminster

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Eucharist for the Feast of St. Stephen

10am

This prayer may be said

Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Opening Hymn

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you
and also with you.

Prayers of Penitence

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.

Silence

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.

May the God of love and power
forgive *you* and free *you* from *your* sins,
heal and strengthen *you* by his Spirit,
and raise *you* to new life in Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Collect

Let us pray

Silence

Gracious God,
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.
Amen.

Gloria in Excelsis

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Collect

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon *you*,
pardon and deliver *you* from all *your* sins,
confirm and strengthen *you* in all goodness,

and keep *you* in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

Old Testament Reading: 2 Chronicles 24.20-22

Then the spirit of God took possession of Zechariah son of the priest Jehoiada; he stood above the people and said to them, 'Thus says God: Why do you transgress the commandments of the Lord, so that you cannot prosper? Because you have forsaken the Lord, he has also forsaken you. 'But they conspired against him, and by command of the king they stoned him to death in the court of the house of the Lord. King Joash did not remember the kindness that Jehoiada, Zechariah's father, had shown him, but killed his son. As he was dying, he said, 'May the Lord see and avenge!'

This is the Word of God
Thanks be to God

Responsible Psalm: Psalm 119.161-168

R. Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

161 Princes have persecuted me without a cause,
but my heart stands in awe of your word.
162 I am as glad of your word
as one who finds great spoils.

R. Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

163 As for lies, I hate and abhor them,
but your law do I love.
164 Seven times a day do I praise you,
because of your righteous judgements.

R. Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

165 Great peace have they who love your law;
nothing shall make them stumble.
166 Lord, I have looked for your salvation
and I have fulfilled your commandments.

R. Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

167 My soul has kept your testimonies
and greatly have I loved them.

168 I have kept your commandments and testimonies,
for all my ways are before you.

R. Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

New Testament Reading: Acts 7.51-end

Stephen said, 'You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you are for ever opposing the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do. Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, and now you have become his betrayers and murderers. You are the ones that received the law as ordained by angels, and yet you have not kept it.'

When they heard these things, they became enraged and ground their teeth at Stephen. But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 'Look, 'he said, 'I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God! 'But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. 'Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them. 'When he had said this, he died.

This is the Word of God
Thanks be to God

Gospel Reading

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.

When the Gospel is announced the reader says

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew (10.17-22).
All **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; 18and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. 19When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; 20for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. 21Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children

will rise against parents and have them put to death; 22and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

At the end

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
All **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

The Creed

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Intercessions

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 …
Lord, in your mercy
All **hear our prayer.**

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 …
Lord, in your mercy
All **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who use violence to silence their opponents …
Lord, in your mercy
All **hear our prayer.**

We pray for grace to witness to your truth with constancy and faith
and to bear the cost of following your righteous ways.
Lord, in your mercy
All **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those for whom the joy of this holy season is overshadowed by pain, grief or failure …
Lord, in your mercy
All **hear our prayer.**

We remember all who have gone before us looking for the vision of your heavenly glory …
Lord, in your mercy
All **hear our prayer.**
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 God.
Amen.

And at the end

Merciful God,
accept these prayers

for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

Jesus said, 'In the world you face persecution.
But take courage; I have conquered the world.'

John 16.33

The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

All may exchange a virtual sign of peace.

Offertory Hymn

Good King Wenceslas looked out on the Feast of Stephen,
When the snow lay round about, deep and crisp and even.
Brightly shone the moon that night, though the frost was cruel,
When a poor man came in sight, gath'ring winter fuel.

"Hither, page, and stand by me, if you know it, telling,
Yonder peasant, who is he? Where and what his dwelling?"
"Sire, he lives a good league hence, underneath the mountain,
Right against the forest fence, by Saint Agnes 'fountain."
"Bring me food and bring me wine, bring me pine logs hither,
You and I will see him dine, when we bear them thither."

Page and monarch, forth they went, forth they went together,
Through the cold wind's wild lament and the bitter weather.

"Sire, the night is darker now, and the wind blows stronger,
Fails my heart, I know not how; I can go no longer."
"Mark my footsteps, my good page, tread now in them boldly,
You shall find the winter's rage freeze your blood less coldly."

In his master's steps he trod, where the snow lay dinted;
Heat was in the very sod which the saint had printed.
Therefore, Christian men, be sure, while God's gifts possessing,
You who now will bless the poor shall yourselves find blessing.

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
t is right to give thanks and praise.

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:

The president praises God for his mighty acts and all respond

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

The president recalls the Last Supper,
and one of these four acclamations may be used

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died:
Christ is risen:
Christ will come again.

The Prayer continues and leads into the doxology, to which all respond boldly

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

Our Father,
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

The president breaks the consecrated bread.

We break this bread
to share in the body of Christ.
Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.

The Agnus Dei may be used as the bread is broken

Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.

The president invites us to communion

This is Jesus is the Lamb of God

who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.

Prayers after Communion

Silence is kept.

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.

Loving God,
whether we are in your church or joining online from another place,
we give you thanks for restoring us in your image and
nourishing us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood.
Now send us forth a people forgiven, healed, and renewed;
that we may proclaim your love to the world and
continue in the risen life of Christ our Saviour. Amen.

The Dismissal

A hymn may be sung.

Unto us a boy is born!
The King of all creation,
Came he to a world forlorn,
The Lord of ev'ry nation.

Cradled in a stall was he
With sleepy cows and asses;
But the very beasts could see
That he the world surpasses.

Herod then with fear was filled:
"A prince," he said, "in Jewry!"
And all the little boys he killed
At Bethl'hem in his fury.

Now may Mary's son, who came
So long ago to love us,
Lead us all with hearts aflame
Unto the joys above us.

Alpha and Omega he!
Now let the organ thunder,
While the choir with peals of glee
Shall rend the air asunder.

The 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.

A minister says

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

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