

**Monday 26 December 2022**  
**St Stephen, the First Martyr – Feast**

*Liturgical Colour: Red. Year: A(I).*

**Readings at Mass**

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**Entrance Antiphon**

The gates of heaven were opened for blessed Stephen,  
who was found to be first among the number of the Martyrs  
and therefore is crowned triumphant in heaven.

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**Collect**

Grant, Lord, we pray,  
that we may imitate what we worship,  
and so learn to love even our enemies,  
for we celebrate the heavenly birthday  
of a man who knew how to pray even for his persecutors.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.

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**First reading**

**Acts 6:8-10,7:54-59**

**The martyrdom of Stephen**

Stephen was filled with grace and power and began to work miracles and great signs among the people. But then certain people came forward to debate with Stephen, some from Cyrene and Alexandria who were members of the synagogue called the Synagogue of Freedmen, and others from Cilicia and Asia. They found they could not get the better of him because of his wisdom, and because it was the Spirit that prompted what he said. They were infuriated when they heard this, and ground their teeth at him.

But Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at God's right hand. 'I can see heaven thrown open' he said 'and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.' At this all the members of the council shouted out and stopped their ears with their hands; then they all rushed at him, sent him out of the city and stoned him. The witnesses put down their clothes at the feet of a young man called Saul. As they were stoning him, Stephen said in invocation, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.'

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**Responsorial Psalm**

**Psalm 30(31):3-4,6,8,16-17**

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

Be a rock of refuge for me,  
a mighty stronghold to save me,  
for you are my rock, my stronghold.  
For your name's sake, lead me and guide me.

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

Into your hands I commend my spirit.  
It is you who will redeem me, Lord.  
As for me, I trust in the Lord:  
let me be glad and rejoice in your love.

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

My life is in your hands, deliver me  
from the hands of those who hate me.  
Let your face shine on your servant.  
Save me in your love.

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

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**Gospel Acclamation**

**Ps117:26,27**

Alleluia, alleluia!  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord:  
the Lord God is our light.  
Alleluia!

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**Gospel**

**Matthew 10:17-22**

**The Spirit of your Father will be speaking in you**

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Beware of men: they will hand you over to sanhedrins and scourge you in their synagogues. You will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the pagans. But when they hand you over, do not worry about how to speak or what to say; what you are to say will be given to you when the time comes; because it is not you who will be speaking; the Spirit of your Father will be speaking in you.

'Brother will betray brother to death, and the father his child; children will rise against their parents and have them put to death. You will be hated by all men on account of my name; but the man who stands firm to the end will be saved.'

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**Prayer over the Offerings**

May these offerings of our devotion today,  
be acceptable to you, we pray, O Lord,  
for they are prompted  
by the glorious commemoration of Saint Stephen the Martyr.  
Through Christ our Lord.

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**Communion Antiphon**

**Acts 7: 58**

As they were stoning Stephen, he called out,  
Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

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**Prayer after Communion**

For the many mercies which surround us  
we give thanks to you, O Lord,  
who save us through the Nativity of your Son  
and gladden us with the celebration of the blessed Martyr Stephen.  
Through Christ our Lord.