

When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death : thou didst
open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.
Thou sittest at the right hand of God : in the glory of the
Father.

We believe that thou shalt come : to be our Judge.

We therefore pray thee, help thy servants : whom thou hast
redeemed with thy precious blood.

Make them to be numbered with thy Saints : in glory
everlasting.

O Lord, save thy people : and bless thine heritage.

Govern them : and lift them up for ever.

Day by day : we magnify thee;

And we worship thy Name : ever world without end.

Vouchsafe, O Lord : to keep us this day without sin.

O Lord, have mercy upon us : have mercy upon us.

O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us : as our trust is in thee.

O Lord, in thee have I trusted : let me never be confounded.

+ The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and
the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, evermore.
Amen.



The Parish Churches of S Philip
and S Augustine and S Matthew
with S Mary the Virgin Newcastle

Liturgy of the Word and Spiritual Communion for The Feast of Saint Stephen

Notes

This service is intended for use on Sundays and some feast days. It is a version of the Liturgy of the Word, which turns on the Our Father into an act of spiritual communion, undertaken in the words of the Anima Christi.

The bulk of the service inheres in the readings and the intercessions. These will be sent out each week.

The Te Deum is included at the end, since it is every day during the Christmas Octave. I have used the Tudor version, since the words have a greater umph.

+ In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

As Saint 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:

God our Father, You sent Your Son, full of grace and truth; forgive our failure to receive Him: Kyrie eleison.

Jesus our Saviour, You were born in poverty and laid in a manger; forgive our greed and rejection of Your ways: Christe eleison.

Your servant Mary responded joyfully to Your call; forgive the hardness of our hearts: Kyrie eleison.

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Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins and bring us to life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Yesterday the King was born as a man,
And today His servant is stoned to death.
For the sake of Christ Holy Stephen became the first martyr.

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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. Amen.

WE praise thee, O God : we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.
All the earth doth worship thee : the Father everlasting.
To thee all Angels cry aloud : the heavens, and all the powers therein.

To thee Cherubin and Seraphin : continually do cry,
Holy, Holy, Holy : Lord God of Sabaoth;
Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty : of thy glory.
The glorious company of the Apostles : praise thee.
The goodly fellowship of the Prophets : praise thee.
The noble army of Martyrs : praise thee.
The holy Church throughout all the world : doth acknowledge thee;

The Father : of an infinite Majesty;
Thine honourable, true : and only Son;
Also the Holy Ghost : the Comforter.
Thou art the King of Glory : O Christ.
Thou art the everlasting Son : of the Father.
When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man : thou didst not
abhor the Virgin's womb.

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In place of receiving Holy Communion, you should use the prayer over the page:

Soul of Christ, sanctify me;
Body of Christ, save me;
Blood of Christ, refresh me;
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O good Jesu, hear me.
Within Thy wounds, hide me.
Do not permit me to be separated from Thee;
From the malicious enemy defend me,
In the hour of my death call me
And bid me come to Thee,
That with Thy saints I may praise Thee;
For ever and ever. Amen.

It is appropriate that a time of reflexion follows. If, like the Vicar, you have a mind that easily lured by the frivolous and ephemeral, you might use the following to help stay on task:

O First Martyr and Apostle Of Christ,
Thou hadst fought the good fight.
And didst expose the perversion of the persecutors,
For when thou wast killed by stoning at the hands of wicked men,
Thou didst receive a crown from the right hand on high,
And didst cry out to God saying,
"O Lord do not charge this sin against them!"
Yesterday the Master came to us as a man,
And today his servant departs from life.

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Glory be to God on high.
And in earth peace, goodwill towards men.
We praise Thee, we bless Thee,
we worship Thee, we glorify Thee,
we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory,
O Lord God, heavenly King,
God the Father almighty.
O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ:
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.
Thou that takest away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.
Thou that sittest at the right
hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.
For Thou only art holy, Thou only art the Lord;
Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost,
art most high,
+ in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Let us pray:

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 lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit; God, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyre'nians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cili'cia and Asia, arose and disputed with Stephen. But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth against him. But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God." But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together upon him. Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. And as they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Be my strong rock, a fortress to save me, for you are my rock
and my stronghold; ♦ guide me, and lead me for your
name's sake.

Into your hands I commend my spirit, ♦ for you have
redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.

I put my trust in the Lord. ♦ I will be glad and rejoice in
your mercy.

My times are in your hand; ♦ deliver me from the hand of
my enemies, and from those who persecute me.

'Make your face to shine upon your servant, ♦ and save me
for your mercy's sake.'

A Reading from the Gospel according to Saint Matthew.

Jesus said to His Apostles, "Beware of men; for they will deliver you up to councils, and flog you in their synagogues, and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear testimony before them and the Gentiles. When they deliver you up, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. Brother will deliver up brother to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.

The Intercessions follow; these will include petitions from the weekly cycle; and may include the Covid 19 prayer in the notes; at the end:

These and the prayers of my Christian community I lay before God in union with our Lady, Saint Matthew, Saint Philip, Saint Augustine and all the saints:

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed by 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.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us Thy peace.