

**DECEMBER 26,
SAINT STEPHEN, DEACON AND MARTYR: MASS**

For use with the First Lesson

Adapted from *The Vocabulary of the Church* (1960):

Cyre'nians

sigh-REE-ni-uhns

Cilicia

si-LISH-ee-uh

The First Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles

And 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. Then they secretly instigated men, who said, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and they came upon him and seized him and brought him before the council, and set up false witnesses who said, "This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the

law; for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place, and will change the customs which Moses delivered to us.” And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel. And the high priest said, “Is this so?” And Stephen said: “Brethren and fathers, hear me. As your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it.” 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.” And he knelt down and cried

with a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

The Reader concludes The Word of the Lord.

Psalm 31: 1–5

At Said Mass the Reader says

Please join me in reading Psalm 31, verses 1 through 5, found in the red Prayer Book on page 622.

(The Reader repeats the above information as needed.)

At Sung Mass the Reader says

Please join me in reading Psalm 31 as found in the service bulletin.

- 1 In you, O LORD, have I taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame; *
deliver me in your righteousness.

- 2 Incline your ear to me; *
make haste to deliver me.

- 3 Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe,
for you are my crag and my stronghold; *
for the sake of your Name, lead me and guide
me.

- 4 Take me out of the net that they have secretly set
for me, *
for you are my tower of strength.
- 5 Into your hands I commend my spirit, *
for you have redeemed me,
O LORD, O God of truth.

The Gospel Acclamation

The Reader leads the appointed acclamation.

Reader Alleluia.

People Alleluia.

Reader Blessed is he who comes in the name of
the Lord;
the Lord God shines upon us.

People Alleluia.

The Reader returns to his or her seat.

The Holy Gospel

The Minister says

The Lord be with you.

People

And also with you.

Minister

✠ The Holy Gospel of our Lord
Jesus Christ according to
Matthew.

People

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees, “Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from town to town, that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of innocent Abel to the blood of Zechari'ah the son of Barachi'ah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. Truly, I say to you, all this will come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! Behold, your house is forsaken and desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’ ”

The Minister says

The Gospel of the Lord.