

ments at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” ⁶⁰And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

The Alleluia and Verse

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

The Holy Gospel

Matthew 23:34-39

³⁴[Jesus said:] “Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town, ³⁵so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of innocent Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. ³⁶Truly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

³⁷“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! ³⁸See, your house is left to you desolate. ³⁹For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

The Apostles’ Creed (p. 192)

The Hymn of the Day: 661 “The Son of God Goes Forth to War”

The Homily

Offerings are not gathered during Service today. While Pastor Messer prepares the Table for the Holy Supper, you may spend time prayerfully preparing to receive the Blessed Sacrament (you may wish to read through Luther’s “Christian Questions . . .” on pp. 329-330). If you wish to leave an offering, you may do so by placing it in the plate by the door as you depart after Service.

The Prayer of the Church

P Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

The Service of the Sacrament

(Communicants are to be in full confessional fellowship with the LCMS)

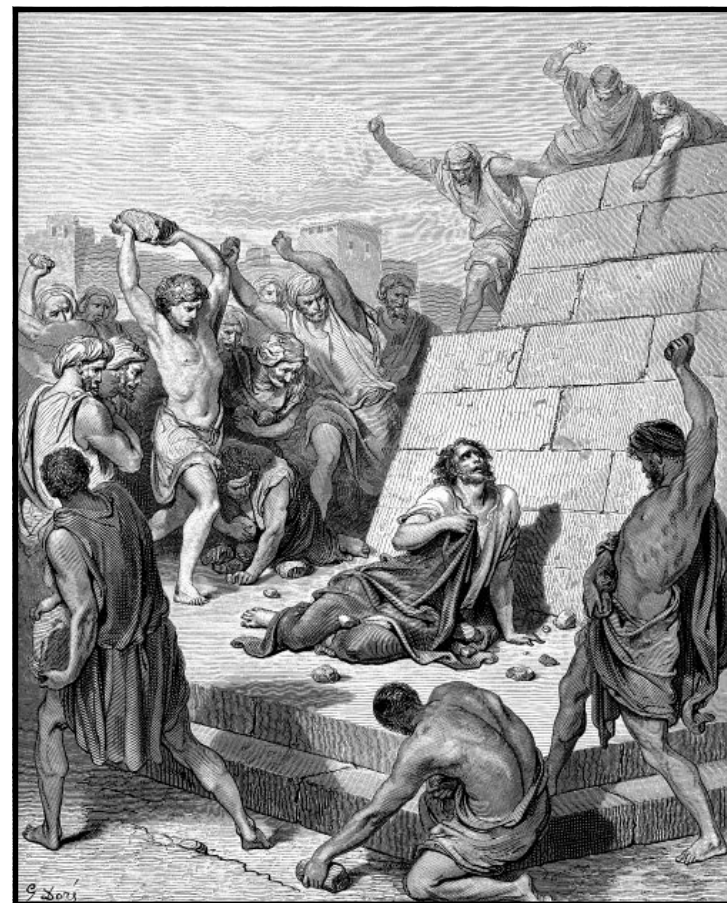
The Preface - Agnus Dei (pp. 194-199)

The Distribution

The Nunc Dimittis - Benediction (pp. 199-202)

Soli Deo Gloria!

St. Stephen, Martyr



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St. Stephen, Martyr

DIVINE SERVICE 3, PAGE 184

The Service of Preparation

(Upon entering the nave, silence should be observed to allow all the opportunity to prayerfully prepare for the presence of the Lord and the reception of His gifts)

Preparatory Prayers

Lord, I love the habitation of Your house and the place where Your glory dwells. In the multitude of Your tender mercies prepare my heart that I may enter Your house to worship and confess Your holy name; through Jesus Christ, my God and Lord. Amen.

Confession and Absolution (pp. 184-185)

The Service of the Word

The Introit

Ps. 31:1, 3, 5; antiphon: Rev. 7:14b

These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.

They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

**In you, O LORD, do I take refuge; let me never be put to shame;
in your righteousness deliver me.**

For you are my rock and my fortress;

and for your name's sake you lead me and guide me.

Into your hand I commit my spirit;

you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son*

and to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning,

is now, and will be forever. Amen.

These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.

They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

The Kyrie (p. 186)

The Gloria in Excelsis (pp. 187-189)

The Salutation and Collect of the Day (p. 189)

Heavenly Father, in the midst of our sufferings for the sake of Christ grant us grace to follow the example of the first martyr, Stephen, that we also may look to the One who suffered and was crucified on our behalf and pray for those who do us wrong; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

The Old Testament Reading

2 Chronicles 24:17-22

¹⁷Now after the death of Jehoiada the princes of Judah came and paid homage to the king. Then the king listened to them. ¹⁸And they abandoned the house of the LORD, the God of their fathers, and served the Asherim and the idols. And wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this guilt of theirs. ¹⁹Yet he sent prophets among them to bring them back to the LORD. These testified against them, but they would not pay attention.

²⁰Then the Spirit of God clothed Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, and he stood above the people, and said to them, "Thus says God, 'Why do you break the commandments of the LORD, so that you cannot prosper? Because you have forsaken the LORD, he has forsaken you.'" ²¹But they conspired against him, and by command of the king they stoned him with stones in the court of the house of the LORD. ²²Thus Joash the king did not remember the kindness that Jehoiada, Zechariah's father, had shown him, but killed his son. And when he was dying, he said, "May the LORD see and avenge!"

The Gradual

Ps. 34:9, 19, alt.

Fear the LORD, you his saints,

for those who fear him lack nothing!

Many are the afflictions of the righteous,

but the LORD delivers him out of them all.

The Second Reading

Acts 6:8-7:2a, 51-60

⁸And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people. ⁹Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and disputed with Stephen. ¹⁰But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking. ¹¹Then they secretly instigated men who said, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." ¹²And 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, ¹³and they set up false witnesses who said, "This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law, ¹⁴for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses delivered to us." ¹⁵And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel. ^{7:1}And the high priest said, "Are these things so?"

²And Stephen said: "Brothers and fathers, hear me . . . ⁵¹"You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. ⁵²Which 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, ⁵³you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it."

⁵⁴Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him. ⁵⁵But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶And he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." ⁵⁷But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. ⁵⁸Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their gar-