

Blood of the martyrs, seed of the Church...

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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. ~ Today's Entrance Antiphon



"Thursday the 26th, St Stephen's Day. I (*St Paul of the Cross*) was in particular uplifting of soul, especially at Holy Communion; I wanted to go and die a martyr's death in a place where the adorable mystery of the Most Blessed Sacrament is denied. This wish has been given to me for some time past by the Infinite Goodness, but today I had it in a special manner; I had the desire for the conversion of heretics, especially in England and the neighboring kingdoms, and I offered a special prayer for that at Holy Communion...."

Fr Edmund, CP
Excerpt from: *Hunter of Souls:
A Study of the Life and Spirit
of St Paul of the Cross*

St Stephen

Jerusalem ~ + 35 AD

Protomartyr and Archdeacon

FEAST DAY – Dec 26



“Yesterday we celebrated the birth in time of our eternal King. Today we celebrate the triumphant suffering of His soldier. Yesterday our king, clothed in the robe of flesh, left His place in the virgin’s womb and graciously visited the world. Today His soldier leaves the tabernacle of His body and goes triumphantly to heaven. ... And so the love that brought Christ from heaven to earth raised Stephen from earth to heaven; shown first in the king, it later shone forth in His soldier.”

St Fulgentius of Ruspe, bishop

The first of all the martyrs in... Our Christian history ... St Stephen looked upon his foes... With love and sympathy ... Before the twelve apostles died ... He gave his life for Christ ... And in whatever way he could ... He always sacrificed ... To those in high authority ... He pointed out that they ... Enforced the laws which they had no ... Intention to obey ... He showed them their hypocrisy ... And did not fear his end ... As every pauper he had helped ... Became his special friend ... And as he loved the children of ... His boundless charity ... The final prayer before his death ... Was for his enemy.

From Poem Portraits of the Saints, James J. Metcalfe

[Click here: Saint Stephen - YouTube \(2 mins\)](#)

St Stephen, pray for us!