

Office of Readings

Saturday, December 26, 2026

Saint Stephen, the First Martyr

OPENING

O God, come to my assistance.

Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory 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.

INVITATORY

Ant. Christ the Savior is born. Come, let us adore him.

Come, let us exult in the Lord; let us shout with joy to God our salvation.

Let us come before his face with praise and exult in him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God and a great king above all gods.

For the Lord does not cast off his people; for in his hand are all the ends of the earth.

And the heights of the mountains belong to him.

For the sea is his, and he made it; and his hands formed the dry land.

Come, let us adore and fall down before God; let us weep before the Lord who made us.

For he is the Lord our God; and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.

Today, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

As in the provocation, according to the day of temptation in the wilderness,

where your fathers tempted me; they tried me and saw my works.

For forty years I was close to this generation, and I said: "They always err in heart."

And these people have not known my ways, so I swore in my wrath that they will not enter into my rest.

Glory 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.

Ant. Christ the Savior is born. Come, let us adore him.

HYMN

What Child Is This

What child is this, who, laid to rest,
on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
while shepherds watch are keeping?

PSALMODY

Psalm 61 *Trust Only in God*

Ant. Today Christ is born for us; glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.

Will my soul not be subject to God? For from him is my salvation.

For he himself is my God and my Savior; he is my supporter, I will no longer be greatly moved.

How long do you rush against a man? You all kill, as if at a leaning wall and a crumbling fence.

Yet truly they have planned to reject my price; I have run in thirst; they blessed with their mouth, and they cursed with their heart.

Yet truly be subject to God, O my soul; for from him is my patience.

For he himself is my God and my Savior; he is my helper, I will not be displaced.

In God is my salvation and my glory; he is the God of my help, and my hope is in God.

Trust in him, all the congregation of people; pour out your hearts in his sight.

God is our helper forever.

Yet truly, the sons of men are vain; the sons of men are liars in the scales, so that by vanity they are all deceived.

Do not trust in iniquity, and do not desire rapine; if riches abound, do not set your heart upon them.

God has spoken once, I have heard two things: power belongs to God,

and to you, Lord, belongs mercy; for you will render to every man according to his works.

Glory 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.

Ant. Today Christ is born for us; glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.

Psalm 62 *Seeking God in the Desert*

Ant. Today Christ is born for us; glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.

O God, my God, for you I watch at the break of day.

My soul has thirsted for you; in how many ways has my flesh longed for you.

In a desert land, without way or water, so in the holy land I have appeared before you, to see your power and your glory.

For your mercy is better than life; my lips will praise you.

In this way, I will bless you throughout my life; and in your name I will lift up my hands.

Let my soul be filled as if with marrow and fatness, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips.

I have remembered you upon my bed; in the morning I will meditate on you.

For you have been my helper, and under the cover of your wings I will rejoice.

My soul has adhered to you; your right hand has upheld me.

But they have sought my soul in vain; they will enter the lower parts of the earth;

they will be delivered to the power of the sword; they will be the portions of foxes.

But the king will rejoice in God; all who swear by him will be praised; for the mouth of those who speak iniquities has been stopped.

Glory 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.

Ant. Today Christ is born for us; glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.

Psalm 63 *My Soul Thirsts for You*

Ant. Today Christ is born for us; glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.

O God, my God, to you I watch at the break of day.

My soul has thirsted for you; in how many ways has my flesh longed for you.

In a desert land, without way or water, so in the holy land I have appeared before you, to see your power and your glory.

For your mercy is better than lives; my lips will praise you.

In this way, I will bless you throughout my life; and in your name I will lift up my hands.

Let my soul be filled as if with marrow and fatness, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips.

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Glory 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.

Ant. Today Christ is born for us; glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.

FIRST READING: SCRIPTURE

COLOSSIANS 2:9

For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness in him, who is the head of every ruler and authority.

RESPONSORY

V. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

R. and we have seen his glory.

V. Full of grace and truth,

R. we have seen his glory.

SECOND READING: PATRISTIC OR HAGIOGRAPHIC

Saint Irenaeus of Lyons

Against Heresies, Book 3

Recapitulation in Christ

This is why the Lord came in these last days to redeem us: to take on our condition and be born as a man of a woman. By this means he recapitulated in himself the long history of the human race, obtaining salvation for us in this very condition, so that what we lost in Adam, namely, our being according to God's image and likeness, we might recover in Christ Jesus. For it was not possible for Adam, once conquered and shattered by disobedience, to reform himself and obtain the prize of victory. Likewise, it was not possible for us to obtain salvation except through the victory of Christ. Therefore the Son of God, our Lord and God, being the Word of the Father and the Son of man, having become what we are, has made us what he is himself. He became the Son of Man to the end that man also might become the Son of God. The perfect goodness of God the Father consists in this: that our adoption as his children is real and true, that we who were alienated have truly been brought back.

TE DEUM

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CONCLUDING PRAYER

God of the incarnation, may the words we read and pray today enkindle in us a greater love for the one who was born for our salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Let us praise the Lord.
And give him thanks.