

**THE 2<sup>nd</sup> DAY OF THE MONTH OF AUGUST**  
**COMMEMORATION OF THE TRANSLATION OF THE RELICS OF THE HOLY**  
**PROTOMARTYR AND ARCHDEACON STEPHEN.**

**AT VESPERS**

At "Lord, I have cried ...," 6 Stichera, three in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: "O most glorious wonder ...":

**O** Stephen, first among the martyrs to suffer, \* foundation of those who minister as deacons, \* elect of the apostles: \* with unwaning light do thou illumine \* those who celebrate \* thy radiant festival with splendor, \* bestowing grace and mercy upon thy servants, O martyr, \* guiding them to everlasting life \*\* by thy supplications.

**O** Stephen, martyr of Christ, \* receiving upon thy head a crown of graces \* in accordance with thy name, \* having adorned thy neck with a necklace of virtues as with one of gold, \* thou didst become a most wise habitation of wisdom, \* which thou didst cherish, \* laying it up as something thou didst love; \* wherefore, thou hast been honored \*\* with glory and grace.

**O** most honored Stephen, \* first of the martyrs to suffer, \* crowned with glory and grace, O apostle, \* when thou wast stoned \* thou didst offer to our King and God \* a precious crown, noetic and of greater value \* than gold and precious stones. \* Sweet are thy deeds and name. \*\* Remember thou all of us.

And three Stichera, in Tone II, the composition of Anatolius:

**F**irst among deacons and first among martyrs wast thou shown to be, O all-holy Stephen; for thy path was to holy things, and thou didst lead many martyrs to the Lord. Wherefore, heaven was opened to thee, and God appeared to thee. Him do thou entreat, that our souls be saved.

**I**n sanctity wast thou clothed, O blessed Stephen, protomartyr and proto-deacon, converser with the angels. Intercede with the sinless Savior and Lord, and pray for us.

**L**et us honor the proto-deacon Stephen, the protomartyr and valiant favorite of Christ; for, standing in the midst of the iniquitous, he beheld the Son at the right hand of the Father.

Glory ..., in Tone VI, the composition of Anatolius:

**F**irst among martyrs and deacons wast thou shown to be, O apostle Stephen, adornment of spiritual athletes, confirmation of the faithful, glory of the righteous. As thou standest before the throne of Christ, the King of all, ask thou that those who celebrate thine honored memory be deemed worthy to be cleansed of their sins and to inherit the kingdom of heaven.

Now & ever ..., Theotokion, or this Stavrotheotokion in Tone VI:

Spec. Mel.: "On the third day ...":

**Stavrotheotokion:** Upon seeing Thee crucified, O Christ, \* she who gaveth birth to Thee cried aloud: \* "What is this strange mystery that I see, \* O my Son How is it that Thou diest?, \* suspended upon the Tree, \*\* O Bestower of life?"

At the Aposticha, Stichera from the Oktoechos and Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

**The composition of Cyprian:** Rejoice in the Lord, O crown-bearer Stephen, thou emulator of the Master; for thou wast the first martyr of Christ our King and didst abolish the deception of the iniquitous Jews; and thou prayest unto the Lord on our behalf.

Now & ever ..., Theotokion, or this Stavrotheotokion in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: "O most glorious wonder ...":

**Stavrotheotokion:** Beholding Thee O Lord Jesus, \* nailed upon the cross and voluntarily accepting the passion, \* the Virgin Mother cried aloud: \* Woe is me, O my sweet Child! \* how dost Thou wrongfully endure such wounds? \* O compassionate Physician \* and healer of the infirmities of mankind, \* Thou hast redeemed all from corruption \*\* by Thy tender compassion.

**Troparion, in Tone IV:**

**F**or the sufferings which thou didst endure for Christ God, \* thy head hath been crowned with a royal diadem, \* O Stephen, first among those who have suffered; \* for, having denounced the insanity of the Jews, \* thou didst behold thy Savior at the right hand of the Father. \* Him do thou therefore entreat \*\* on behalf of our souls.

After the dismissal of vespers, the priest vesteth in phelonion and the deacon in sticharion, and, accompanied by candles and censer, they bear the precious Cross into the sanctuary, whilst the Troparion "Save O Lord, Thy people ..." and the Kontakion are chanted; and it is placed upon the altar table.

## AT MATINS

Both canons from the Oktoechos, with eight Troparia, without their Martyria; and the canon of the protomartyr, with six Troparia, the acrostic whereof is: "I crown the protomartyr with hymns," the composition of Theophanes, in Tone VIII:

### ODE I

**Irmos:** **T**he wonderworking staff of Moses, \* striking and dividing the sea in the figure of a cross, \* once drowned Pharaoh the pursuing charioteer, \* while it saved the fleeing people of Israel \* as they fled on foot, \* chanting a hymn unto God.

**S**tanding before the Master, illumined with the radiant brilliance of the Spirit and with thy supra-natural sufferings, O crown-bearer Stephen, most noetically rich crown of the martyrs, enlighten those who hymn thine endurance.

**A**s first among the spiritual athletes to run the race and head of the assembly of the martyrs, O glorious and wondrous Stephen, thou wast deemed worthy to behold Him Who setteth the contest extending to thee a divinely woven wreath of victory on His life-bearing right hand.

**A**s Thou alone art a Treasury of goodness, O Savior, Thou didst show forth from the bosom of the earth a priceless treasure, riches which cannot be squandered, a possession which cannot be taken away: the relics of Thy protomartyr Stephen.

**M**anifestly illumined with angelic splendor, O protomartyr Stephen, foremost among the deacons, the place where thou wast hidden was revealed by angelic hymns, and, full of spiritual fragrance, thou hast been truly honored as is meet.

**Theotokion:** **O** most immaculate one, thou hast given birth unto the divine Word of the Father, Who before was incorporeal, yet became incarnate for our sake. O abode of virginity, vessel of purity, and temple of sanctity, O Bride of God, Sovereign Lady of the world!

### ODE III

**Irmos:** **O** Christ fortify me on the rock of Thy commandments, \* Thou who in the beginning didst establish the heavens with understanding \* and didst establish the earth upon the waters, \* for there is none holy save Thee, O only Lover of mankind.

**T**hou wast shown to be a sacred speaker of divine mysteries and a theologian, disputing with the assemblies of the Jews and mightily denouncing their godlessness and their disposition which opposeth God, O most excellent martyr Stephen.

**C**ome ye all, and together let us honor with divine hymns the protomartyr of Christ, the first to minister as deacon, the converser with angels, who hath splendidly shown to the martyrs the threshold of the course.

**T**he first of the martyrs, the first of those who were chosen to serve as deacons, appeareth as a treasure hidden in the earth; and he hath filled the world with divine fragrance and the Church with rich gifts.

**R**esurrect my mind which hath been slain, through the activity of life which was preached by thee, O wise one, to hymn thine honored solemnity, and deem me worthy to follow in thy footsteps, O blessed Stephen.

**Theotokion:** **T**hou hast been shown to be the portal of the noetic Orient, the Most High, Who appeared on earth, O Virgin; for through thee, O most pure one, the Word hath entered in unto us, to save all from ignorance.

**Sedalion, in Tone I: Spec. Mel.: "Thy tomb, O Savior...":**

**O** apostle of Christ, first among deacons, wise protomartyr, chief among the martyrs: having sanctified the ends of the earth by thy sufferings, thou hast enlightened the souls of all by thy miracles. From all misfortunes deliver those who honor thee, O most laudable Stephen. **(Twice)**

**Glory ..., Now & ever ..., Theotokion in Tone I:**

**O** most holy Virgin, hope of Christians, with the hosts on high do thou unceasingly beseech God to Whom, in a manner surpassing understanding and all telling, thou hast given birth, that He grant forgiveness of all our sins and correction of life unto those who with faith and love ever glorify thee.

**Stavrotheotokion:** **U**pon seeing the Lamb and Shepherd hanging dead upon the Tree, \* the unblemished ewe-lamb, cried aloud, weeping \* and exclaiming maternally: \* "How is it that Thou dost willingly endure abasement and sufferings \* which surpass all telling, \*\* O my Son, and supremely good God?"

#### **ODE IV**

**Irmos:** **T**hou, O Lord, art my strength and Thou art my power, \* Thou art my God and Thou art my joy, \* Thou Who, while never leaving the bosom of Thy Father, \* hast visited our poverty. \* Therefore with the Prophet Habbakuk I cry unto Thee, \* 'Glory to Thy power, O Lover of mankind!'

**O** glorious protomartyr who art full of faith, divine power and grace, today thou hast poured forth for us streams of fragrant myrrh, a fountain welling forth a river of divine blessings, and thou hast opened unto us a sweet torrent.

**T**he feast day of the protomartyr hath been made manifest unto the imperial city as sacred, splendid and harmonious, truly full of light and spiritual gladness, preserving the dominion of the honored Church and dispelling the audacity of the barbarians.

**T**hou hast received a good inheritance as is fitting, O blessed Stephen, and where Christ the King of all is, there hast thou made thine abode; for thou hast been shown to be His minister, working signs and wonders with power and granting healing unto the sick.

Stephen, the great preacher of the Truth, the true champion of suffering, hath been planted as an upright and steadfast pillar of the Church, and stretcheth from the earth even unto the heavens, enlightening all the ends of the earth with the radiance of piety.

**Theotokion:** O Savior and Redeemer of all, Thou art the new Adam, superseding the first Adam, born of the Virgin, who supersedeth Eve, our first mother, replacing death with true and immortal life. Wherefore, knowing her who gaveth birth unto Thee to be the Theotokos, all we, the faithful, call her blessed as is meet.

#### ODE V

**Irmos:** O Light never-waning, \* why hast Thou turned Thy face from me \* and why hath the alien darkness surrounded me, \* wretched though I be? \* But do Thou guide my steps I implore Thee \* and turn me back towards the light of Thy commandments.

The vain council of the iniquitous Jews didst thou denounce with true boldness; and, covered by the stones which they cast at thee, O divinely eloquent Stephen, as a victor thou wast taken up into the heavens by the Spirit.

As one as comely as the dawn hast thou been revealed to the world, O glorious Stephen, driving away the darkness, dispelling the illusions of the demons, and healing the sufferings of the infirm and the sores of their spiritual ailments, O divinely inspired one.

Rejoicing noetically with the angels, O blessed one, thou dost truly sanctify the ends of the earth by thine arrival and grace, fragrant with the sweet scent of spiritual myrrh, delivering us from misfortunes and temptations.

**Theotokion:** Possessed of maternal boldness toward thy Son, O all-pure one, abandon not thy kindred care for us, we pray; for thee alone do we Christians set before the Master to intercede mercifully for our cleansing.

#### ODE VI

**Irmos:** Cleanse me, O Savior, \* for many are mine iniquities; \* lead me up from the abyss of evils I pray Thee, \* for unto Thee have I cried, \* and Thou hast hearkened unto me, \* O God of my salvation.

Being like unto the angels in thy desires, thou didst acquire an angelic bearing, O blessed one; and rejoicing and dancing with them, save those who hymn thee.

The power of thy divinely inspired words manifestly fell like a loud clap of thunder upon the ears of the iniquitous and darkened their visage, O blessed one, who art pleasing unto God.

Thou wast deemed worthy to see the glory of the Father and the co-essential radiance thereof, O Stephen, and He awarded thee with splendid crowns for thy sufferings.

**Theotokion:** The only-begotten Son, Who was invisible from before the ages, in the latter days became thy firstborn: the God of my salvation, Who, through thee, became visible in the flesh, O Mother of God.

#### Kontakion, in Tone VI:

Thou wast the first to be sown on the earth \* by the heavenly Husbandman, O most laudable Stephen, \* and thou wast the first on earth to shed thy blood for Christ, O blessed one; \* first hast thou been to be crowned with the wreath of victory in the heavens, \* O first among spiritual athletes, \*\* crown-bearer, and first among martyrs.

**Ikos:** Beholding the blooms of paradise, which fill the whole world with their comely fragrance, I marvel at their strange appearance; for amid the image of winter many blossom forth, which is a thing strange for flowers. And the martyr of Christ who was first to blossom forth hath become a gateway for those who suffer under the law and who flower amid the deep winter of torment, for he hath shown the straight path to all who wish to suffer thus. Thou art the initiator of the contest, who wast revealed in thy pangs, O crowned one, to be the first among the martyrs to suffer thus.

#### ODE VII

**Irmos:** Once in Babylon the fire stood in awe \* of God's condescension; \* for which sake the youths in the furnace, \* dancing with joyous steps as in a meadow, chanted: \* O God of our fathers, Blessed art Thou!

The flow of thy blood hath opened the portals of heaven and hath shown thee standing before the Judge of the contest, Who extendeth to thee a crown; wherefore thou dost cry aloud: Blessed is the God of our fathers!

Seizing the divinely manifest one like wild beasts, the murderers slew him with their hands which were defiled by murder, whilst he prayed earnestly for those who were slaying him, chanting: Blessed is the God of our fathers!

With the law didst thou upbraid the iniquitous, being a lawful emulator of the Savior, and didst show them to be opposed to God; and, stoned to death by them, thou didst chant: Blessed is the God of our fathers!

**Theotokion:** Having conceived the Timeless One within time without knowing wedlock, O pure one, thou hast given birth unto the Word, Who before was incorporeal, but received flesh from thee, O Virgin. To Him do we chant in unison, crying aloud: Blessed is the God of our fathers!

#### ODE VIII

**Irmos:** In his wrath the Chaldean Tyrant made the furnace blaze, \* with heat fanned sevenfold for the servants of God; \* but when he perceived that they had been saved by a greater power \* he cried aloud to the Creator and Redeemer; \* 'ye children bless, ye priests praise, \* ye people, supremely exalt Him throughout all ages'.

**R**esplendent with supra-natural radiance, O most excellent Stephen, the angelic visage of thy countenance showed forth the grace which issued forth from thee and which was richly hidden within thy soul. Wherefore, thou didst cry aloud: Ye children bless; ye priests hymn; ye people supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

**O** crown-bearer Stephen, with the sprinkling of thy blood cleanse thou the pangs of my soul and my sinful wounds; for unto thy merciful aid and Christ-like character do I have recourse, crying aloud: Ye children bless; ye priests hymn; ye people supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

**A** crown of graces, of which thou art the namesake, hath been placed upon thy precious head by the impartial Judge, Whom thou didst piously proclaim to be the Creator, God and King of all, crying out unceasingly: Ye children bless; ye priests hymn; ye people supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

**I**nto the hands of the Creator didst thou surrender thy spirit, and, rejoicing, the hosts of heaven received as a thee as a true friend, who, before on earth, wast equal to the angels and hast now joined their choirs, unceasingly chanting: Ye children bless; ye priests hymn; ye people supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

**Theotokion:** **T**hou wast a vessel of unwaning Light, O all-pure one, for thou gayest birth unto the Light of those who are in darkness and shadow and Who illumineth all with the grace of the knowledge of God. To Him do we, the faithful, unceasingly chant: Ye children, bless; ye priests, hymn; ye people, supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

### ODE IX

**Irmos:** **H**eaven was stricken with awe, \* and the ends of the earth were filled with amazement, \* for God hath appeared in the flesh, \* and thy womb was rendered more spacious than the heavens. \* Wherefore, the ranks of men and of angels \* magnify thee as the Theotokos.

**T**he initiator of the sufferings of the martyrs, who hath brightly shown the straight path of torment which leadeth to the heavens, the protomartyr Stephen summoneth all in spirit to divine gladness, to partake of light and to share in sanctity.

**C**aptivated by the love of Christ, and emulating His meekness and words, Stephen said: "Lay not this sin to the charge of my murderers, O Lord; but receive my spirit, O Good One, and deem me worthy to inherit the divine kingdom and the ineffable food which are with Thee!"

**C**omely and angelic of men, full of wisdom and faith, shining with rays of divine splendor, with thy mouth of godly speech thou didst theologize like a river, making proclamations in a godly manner, O divinely blessed one; wherefore thou hast received a heavenly inheritance.

**T**hou wast crowned with a wreath of graces, surrounded by the choirs of the martyrs; and, standing before Christ, the Judge of the contest, pray thou on behalf of us who celebrate with splendor thy truly radiant festival, O blessed one, and deliver us from misfortunes.

**Theotokion:** O all-immaculate Lady, Mother of God, as the merciful intercessor for all Christians, deliver thy suffering servants from misfortunes and temptations, and heal those who are afflicted with the wounds of cruel transgressions and are held fast by grievous pangs.

**Exapostilarion: Spec. Mel.: "Thou hast visited us ...":**

The casting of stones hath woven for thee a transcendent wreath of incorruption, and the drops of thy blood have dyed for thee a robe of royal purple, O excellent Stephen, first among martyrs.

**Theotokion:** O holy and most pure Lady, who alone hast not known wedlock, our salvation and hope: beseech thou our Redeemer, Who was born of thee, that He save the world from falsehood, misfortunes and tribulations.

**On the Praises, four Stichera, in Tone IV:**

**Spec. Mel.: "As valiant among the martyrs ...":**

Assembling mystically, \* O ye that love the feasts of the Church, \* let us celebrate today \* the prayerful and honored memory of the protomartyr, \* thereon receiving healing \* through his precious gifts; \* and let us cry aloud: O rightly hymned martyr, \* pray thou that they that celebrate thy memory \*\* be delivered from misfortunes.  
(Twice)

The stones which were cast at thee \* were like steps and stairs on the ascent to heaven; \* and, ascending thereon, \* thou didst behold the Lord \* standing at the right hand of the Father, \* extending to thee the crown, whereof thou art the namesake, \* in his life-bearing right hand. \* And thou standest nigh unto Him, as one right victorious \*\* and foremost among those who have suffered.

Having illumined thy thought with spiritual grace, \* thou wast shown to be like an angel in demeanor, O Stephen, \* when thy body shone with inner radiance \* and thy spiritual splendor was manifest \* unto those who looked upon thee, \* for which cause thou didst receive sight of the Light \* when the heavens \* were most gloriously opened unto thee, \*\* O first and boast of the martyrs.

**Glory ..., in Tone IV:**

Stephen, the good beginning of the martyrs, full of grace and power, working signs and great wonders amongst the people, was slain, stoned by the iniquitous; yet he shone forth like an angel, and beheld the glory of Thee, Who wast crucified for our sake, standing at the right hand of power, and he was taken up into the heavens by the Spirit of grace. Wherefore, abiding with the choirs of the angels, he prayeth that our souls be saved.



Now & ever ..., Theotokion, or this Stavrotheotokion in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: "As valiant among the martyrs ...":

**Stavrotheotokion:** Upon beholding Thee, \* the Lamb and Shepherd, upon the Tree, \* the ewe-lamb who bore Thee lamented, \* and maternally exclaimed to Thee: \* "O most desired Son, \* how is it that Thou art suspended upon the tree of the Cross? \* How is it that Thine arms and legs are nailed \* by the iniquitous ones, O long-suffering Word, \*\* and that Thou hast shed Thy blood, O Master?"

At the Aposticha, the Stichera from the Oktoechos;

Glory ..., in Tone II, the composition of Cyprian:

**O** protomartyr, apostle and first deacon, portal of the martyrs and glory of the righteous, boast of the apostles: standing before the Sanhedrin, thou beheldest the heavens opened, and the Son of God standing at the right hand of the invisible Father. Wherefore, shining forth in countenance like an angel, with joy thou didst cry out concerning those who were stoning thee to death: "Lay not this sin to their charge!" And now ask thou cleansing of sins and great mercy for those who with love praise thee.

Now & ever ..., Theotokion, or this Stavrotheotokion in Tone V:

Spec. Mel.: "Rejoice ...":

**D**esiring that all receive salvation, O my sinless Christ, Thou wast pleased to pay a great price, Thy precious blood, for our deliverance. Wherefore, beholding Thee nailed, Thy Mother, lamenting, rent her hair, saying: "O Child, mine all-immaculate Lamb, Who desirest to deliver the world by Thy precious blood, how hast Thou set to whence I cannot see, O never-setting Sun, Who grantest unto all enlightenment, peace and great mercy?"

## AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, eight Troparia: four from the Oktoechos, and four from Ode III of the canon to the Protomartyr.

**T**hou wast shown to be a sacred speaker of divine mysteries and a theologian, disputing with the assemblies of the Jews and mightily denouncing their godlessness and their disposition which opposeth God, O most excellent martyr Stephen.

**C**ome ye all, and together let us honor with divine hymns the protomartyr of Christ, the first to minister as deacon, the converser with angels, who hath splendidly shown to the martyrs the threshold of the course.

**R**esurrect my mind which hath been slain, through the activity of life which was preached by thee, O wise one, to hymn thine honored solemnity, and deem me worthy to follow in thy footsteps, O blessed Stephen.

**Theotokion:** **T**hou hast been shown to be the portal of the noetic Orient, the Most High, Who appeared on earth, O Virgin; for through thee, O most pure one, the Word hath entered in unto us, to save all from ignorance.

### Troparion, in Tone IV:

**F**or the sufferings which thou didst endure for Christ God, \* thy head hath been crowned with a royal diadem, \* O Stephen, first among those who have suffered; \* for, having denounced the insanity of the Jews, \* thou didst behold thy Savior at the right hand of the Father. \* Him do thou therefore entreat \*\* on behalf of our souls.

### Kontakion, in Tone VI:

**T**hou wast the first to be sown on the earth \* by the heavenly Husbandman, O most laudable Stephen, \* and thou wast the first on earth to shed thy blood for Christ, O blessed one; \* first hast thou been to be crowned with the wreath of victory in the heavens, \* O first among spiritual athletes, \*\* crown-bearer, and first among martyrs.

**Prokeimenon, in Tone VIII:** Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, \* and their words unto the ends of the world.

**Verse:** The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament proclaimeth the work of His hands.

## THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES [6:8-7:60]

**A**nd Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people. Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of

Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake. Then they suborned men, which said. We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God. And they stirred up the people, and the elders. and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council, and set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law: for we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us. And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel. Then said the high priest, Are these things so? And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Haran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell. And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: But Solomon built him a house. Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest? Hath not my hand made all these things? Ye stiff necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it. When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man, standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

**Alleluia, in Tone:** The heavens shall confess Thy wonders, O Lord, and Thy truth in the congregation of saints.

**Verse:** God is glorified in the council of the saints.

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW [21: 33-42].

The Lord spake a parable saying: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: and when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying: They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves: This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him: He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them: Did ye never read in the Scriptures, the stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner, this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.

**Communion Verse:** Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.