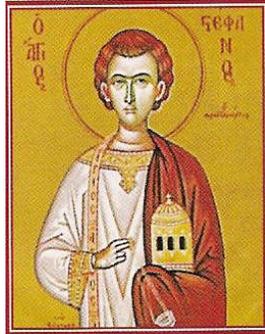


August 2

C. † Translation of the Relics of the Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen



The relics of St. Stephen, found incorrupt, **together with the relics of Sts. Nicodemus, Gamaliel and his son Abibus**, were transferred from Jerusalem to Constantinople on August 2, 428. At the present time the wrist of the right hand of St. Stephen is in the Trinity-Sergievsky Laura, in the Kelli of the Ven. Sergius. See Dec. 27.

Troparion, tone 4

**Your head was crowned with a royal crown
For the suffering you endured for Christ God,
O Protomartyr Stephen:
For having accused the Judaic outrage,
You beheld your Savior at the right hand of the Father:
Therefore pray for our souls.**

Kontakion, tone 6

**O All-Praised Stephen, you were the first to be sown on earth by the heavenly Husbandman;
O Blessed One; You were the first on earth to shed blood for Christ,
You were the first to receive the crown of victory from Him in the heavens;
O Protomartyr, You were the beginning of the Suffering Crowned Martyrs.**

Epistle: Acts 6:8-15; 7:1-5, 47-60; sel. 17 **Gospel:** Mt. 21:33-42; sel. 87.

+ Repose of the Holy Blessed Basil, Fool-for-Christ, and Wonderworker of Moscow

He was born of simple peasants in the village of Yelokhov, near Moscow. "From youth having rejected all carnal pleasures", at 16 years of age he left his parent's home and arrived in Moscow. Here having been guided to the steps "on a

path pleasing to God", he took up the asceticism of folly for the sake of Christ. Exhausting his body "through fasting and vigils", "never evading frost or the heat of the sun", Blessed Basil went about Moscow half-naked, "working for Christ in carnal nakedness", and endured such frost from which the ground was broken. Being "foolish to the world but wise to Christ" and always having "pure thoughts", he in every case guided each one to goodness. What is in allegories and signs, what is direct and open, that he foretold of misfortune in the punishment for sins, or of well-being in the reward for virtue. Sometimes he entered into taverns to save those perishing from drunkenness, others he guided to the good way in the streets and public squares and he even preached lessons in piety to the Tsar Ivan the Terrible himself. So, once at the service the tsar thought about how better to decorate the palace on Mount Vorobievo [Swallow Hills]. After the service Basil notices that the Tsar's mind was not in the temple and that in the temple he thought about everyday life. The Tsar confessed the sin and began to have even greater respect for God's fool. Quite often people heaped ridicule and beatings on Blessed Basil, but he "was wonderful in patience" and brought everything together with meekness. The Blessed One spent his nights on the church porch, engaged in prayer and thinking of God. God glorified the righteous man with the gift of insight and miracles. After a prayer by Blessed Basil before the Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God, not only Moscow but all Russia with it was saved from the invasion of Khan Geray in 1521. After 72-years of asceticism the Blessed One died in peace on August 2, 1552. Tsar Ivan the Terrible carried his body into the church for burial. St. Basil was buried in the Cathedral of the Protection of the Theotokos in Moscow, which is now called the Cathedral of Blessed Basil. His relics, resting in a hidden place, have become famous for numerous miracles. His commemoration was established in 1588.

Troparion, tone 8

**Your way of life, O Basil, was true and your chastity undefiled,
You subdued your body for the sake of Christ
In fasting and vigils, with cold frost and the warm sun,
In both snowy weather and rainy clouds,
And your face shone like the sun:
And now the Russian nation comes to you,
Kings and princes, and all the people,
Glorifying your holy Dormition:
Therefore pray to Christ God
To deliver us from barbarian bondage and internecine struggles,
And grant peace to the world and great mercy to our souls.**

Kontakion, tone 4

**Driven by the Spirit of God, All-Blessed Basil,
You shook off worldly rebellion
And you were hated in the disturbed way of life,**

**And you were disrobed of corruptible clothing
And were vested in the robes of passionlessness,
You fled from the snares of vanity holding the world,
And you were strange in your language,
And you chose heavenly riches instead of the earthly,
You adhered to the crown of patience,
And now, All-Blessed Basil,
Pray to Christ God for those who honor your holy memory,
That we may hymn you: rejoice, All-Blessed Basil.**

His Synaxis is done, where his relics lay.

Paramoia: 1) Wis. 5:15-24, 6:-3. 2) Wis. 3:1-9. 3) Wis. 4:7-15. **Matins Gospel:** Mt. 11:27-30; sel. 43. **Liturgy Epistle:** Gal. 5:22-26, 6:1-2; sel. 213. **Gospel:** Mt. 11:27-30; sel. 43.

Refer to the Ustav [Typikon] for August 2: after the dismissal of Vespers the priest vested in a phelonion, and the deacon in his Sticharion, with candle and censer, goes to bring the honorable Cross from the middle of church into the sanctuary. The priest, having censured the honorable cross, raises it with the platter on his head and brings it into the sanctuary through the Holy Doors. It is preceded by the deacon with candle who is censuring the Cross. In the sanctuary the priest lays the honorable Cross on the holy altar table and censes it cross-wisely. During these sacred actions the singers sing: "Save, O Lord" and "Voluntarily lifted up on the Cross".

Hieromartyr Stephen, Pope of Rome, and those with him, suffered for Christ in the year 257. St. Stephen was born in Rome and during the time of his papacy struggled successfully against the heresy of Novatus. Disappearing during the persecution of Emperor Valerian, St. Stephen zealously preached Christ and baptized many notable pagans, who subsequently became martyrs. The Emperor sentenced St. Stephen to death, who then was led into the temple of Mars for execution, but through his own prayer he destroyed this temple and then disappeared into the catacombs where he was killed by warriors at the holy altar table while teaching Christians. His relics now repose in the Temple of St. Sylvester in Rome.

Sanctification of the Temple of John the Theologian near the Great Church in Constantinople. This temple was built by Emperor Justinian (527-565). In it the memory of the following were celebrated: Martyr Trypho (Feb. 1), Eustratius and his troops (Dec. 13), Martyr Antipas (Apr. 11) and John the Warrior (July 30).

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Handbook for Church Servers**, 2nd ed. 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900) pp. 0267-0268
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