**FIRST READING Acts 7: 51-end**

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Stephen said to the high priest and the council: ‘You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you are for ever opposing the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do. Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, and now you have become his betrayers and murderers. You are the ones that received the law as ordained by angels, and yet you have not kept it.’ When they heard these things, they became enraged and ground their teeth at Stephen. Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ‘Look,’ he said, ‘I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!’ But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’ Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, ‘Lord, do not hold this sin against them.’ When he had said this, he died.

**PSALM 119: 161-168**

**R** **Our help is in the name of the Lord,**

Rulers have persecuted me without a cause, but my heart stands in awe of your word. I am as glad because of your promise as one who finds great spoils. **R**

As for lies, I hate and abhor them, but your law is my love. Seven times a day do I praise you, because of your righteous judgements. **R**

Great peace have they who love your law; for them there is no stumbling block. I have hoped for your salvation, O Lord, and I have fulfilled your commandments. **R**

I have kept your decrees and I have loved them deeply. I have kept your commandments and decrees, for all my ways are before you. **R**

**SECOND READING Galatians 2: 16b - 20**

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Galatians

We have come to believe in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by doing the works of the law, because no one will be justified by the works of the law. But if, in our effort to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have been found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again the very things that I once tore down, then I demonstrate that I am a transgressor. For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

**GOSPEL Matthew 10: 17-22**

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

**Glory to you O Lord.**

Jesus said to the twelve: ‘Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.‘

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**