

The Tenth Sunday after Trinity

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Date: 09 August 2026

Preacher: Fr. Wade Miller

[0:00] St. Stephen is known in the church as the first Christian martyr. His death came around AD 3435, just a year or two after our Lord was crucified.

His feast day is on December 26, which has been celebrated by the church since the 4th century. Now you might be wondering why in the world are you talking about St. Stephen this morning? Well, it concerns why he was martyred and how his death relates to what we heard in our gospel reading of Luke chapter 19.

Stephen gave one of the greatest sermons ever recorded, surpassed only by our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. If I could give you some homework this week, I'd ask you to read his sermon, which is recorded in Acts chapter 7.

It's absolutely amazing, and it explains how we are to understand the Old Testament. I'm not going to go over his sermon this morning, but I want to highlight the fact that Stephen preached about how Jesus is the final temple.

[1:23] Stephen said that the earthly temple in Jerusalem pointed to Jesus. Therefore, the temple has been fulfilled. As a side note, that's why this whole idea of a third temple being built in Jerusalem, espoused by certain evangelical preachers in our day, is not only ludicrous, it's blasphemous.

The final temple is found in Jesus himself. Our Lord came and dwelt among us. His body, the temple, was destroyed by way of death upon a cross, but it was raised again on the third day in that glorious resurrection.

Therefore, the temple of God is not found in stones or mortar. It is found in Jesus. With that lengthy introduction, let us look at our gospel reading from Luke chapter 19.

Jesus laments over the destruction that is coming upon Jerusalem and the temple. He says they will not leave one stone left upon another.

He is speaking of what would happen and what did happen in A.D. 70. Roman soldiers under the commander of Titus Flavius ransacked, desecrated, and then finally destroyed the temple in Jerusalem.

[2:53] This destruction led to the end of the old covenant Jewish religion, which paved a new and innovative form of Judaism called rabbinic Judaism.

Here in our gospel reading of Luke chapter 19, we read, Now as Jesus drew near, he saw the city and he wept over it, saying, If you had known even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace, but now they are hidden from your eyes.

For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you, and close you in on every side, and level you and your children within you to the ground.

Why did this happen? Why was Jerusalem, why was the temple destroyed? Well, our Lord answers that question here in Luke chapter 19, verse 44, where we read, Our Lord says, Because you did not know the time of your visitation.

You did not know the time of your visitation. The point is that the people rejected Christ. And in rejecting Christ, the people rejected the final dwelling place of God.

[4:21] God does not reside in mere buildings or houses. The fullness of divinity is found in Jesus. He is the temple of God because he is God that has come in human flesh.

So what does this discussion about the temple have to do with us? We believe that the temple is fulfilled in Christ. So what are we to learn from this account in Luke chapter 19?

Well, we are grafted into Christ through baptism. We are incorporated into the body of Christ and are now the dwelling place of God.

Ephesians chapter 2, verses 20 through 22 says, Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Saint Peter reiterates this point as we read in 1 Peter chapter 2, verses 4 and 5. Coming to him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious.

[5:51] You also as living stones are being built into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Saint Peter says that we are to be offering spiritual sacrifices. And this is what we do at Mass. But this offering is to continue throughout our lives every day, offering ourselves as a living sacrifice to our God.

Saint Peter goes on to say in 1 Peter chapter 2, beginning at verse 9, But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, his own special people that you may proclaim the praises of him who called you out of darkness and into his marvelous light.

Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works, which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Saint Peter admonishes us, God's chosen people, which is what the church is, to abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul. In other words, we are called to control our bodies, bringing them under subjection to our Lord.

[7:37] We are to do the works of God, practicing the virtues of humility, kindness, patience, diligence, and hard work, exercising self-control and moderation.

Why? Why? Saint Peter says, so that we may glorify God in our bodies in the day of our visitation. Did you catch that?

Our Lord said in our gospel reading of Luke chapter 19 that the people were going to be judged because they did not know, or rather, they did not pay attention to the day of their visitation.

That point in history where God became man in the person of Jesus and dwelt among them. They rejected their God.

Likewise, we are to be preparing for our Lord's visitation to us. That time when Christ will come again as judge to conclude history.

[8:40] As baptized Christians who are now being built into a holy temple, we are to prepare for our Lord's coming by living humble lives, controlling our desires, our passions, bringing our bodies under the control of the Holy Spirit.

And we do this by living for God and seeking to glorify Him in our bodies. That our lives, our bodies, are a living sacrifice given to Him every day.

We are to offer our lives as sacrifices to God, seeking to worship Christ, the true temple that came from heaven.

as we now anticipate His final and glorious visitation to us. Amen. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Amen.