



**The Translation of the Holy Relics
of Saint Stephen the First Martyr and Archdeacon
Which the Holy Church Celebrates on August 2.**

After the First Martyr had been stoned to death (see Dec.27), Gamaliel, his teacher, encouraged certain of the Christians to go by night and take up the Saint's body and bury it on his field, which was at a distance of some twenty miles from Jerusalem and was called by his name, "Kaphar-gamala," that is, "the field of Gamala," where Gamaliel himself was later buried. About the year 427, a certain pious man called Lucian, who was the parish priest of a church near to that field, received from God a revelation in a dream concerning the place where the first martyr was buried. He immediately made this known to John, the Patriarch of Jerusalem. Thus, coming to the place indicated, and digging there, they found a box with the word "Stephen" in Aramaic letters. On opening it, they took these most sacred relics and transferred them to Jerusalem with great honour and in the company of a very great multitude of the faithful.

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Dismissal Hymn. Fourth Tone
Be quick to anticipate

THE crown of the kingdom adorned the brow of thy head * because of the contest that thou hast endured for Christ God, thou first of the martyred Saints; * for when thou hast censured the Jews' madness, thou sawest * Christ thy Saviour standing at the right hand of the Father. * O Stephen, ever pray Him for us that He would save our souls.

Kontakion. Plagal of Fourth Tone

THOU wast the first to be sown upon earth by the Heavenly Husbandman, O all-famed Stephen; thou wast the first to shed thy blood on earth for Christ, O blessed one; thou wast the first to be honoured by Him with the crown of victory in Heaven, as the spearhead of the athletes, O first crowned champion of the Martyrs.



Saint Stephen's Gate