

THE FEAST OF ST. STEPHEN THE FIRST MARTYR AT THE PATRIARCHATE

The commemoration of St. Stephen the Archdeacon and First Martyr was celebrated by the Patriarchate at the place of his stoning in Gethsemane valley, south-west of the Theotokos' Tomb, on Tuesday December 27, 2017/ January 9, 2018.

St. Stephen was the first of the seven Deacons, elected by the first Church of Jerusalem in order to serve at the meals known as "love". St. Stephen was full of the Holy Spirit and preached that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ. The leaders of the Jews did not bear this lightly, took him to the Sanhedrin and when he confessed that he can see Jesus sitting at the right side of God's power, they condemned him, dragged him in the aforementioned place and stoned him to death, while he was praying for those who stoned him (Acts 5).

At the Holy Church by the stoning place, Vespers in the evening and the Divine Liturgy on the morning of the Feast were led by the Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod Most Reverend Archbishop Demetrios of Lydda, with co-celebrant Hagiotaphite Hieromonks and Deacons. The choir was led by the left choir singer of the Church of the Resurrection Mr. George Alvanos, and the services were attended by a congregation of nuns, pilgrims from Greece, Cyprus, Romania, Russia and local Arab-speaking people from Jerusalem. After the Divine Liturgy there was a prayer at the stoning place of the Saint.

The Episcopal entourage and the congregation were offered a reception at the hegoumeneion after the Divine Liturgy by the Hegoumen Archimandrite Epiphanos.

From Secretariat-General

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