

St. Stephen

SAINT OF THE MONTH

Age Level: All ages

Recommended time: 10 minutes

What you need: St. Stephen (**page 51** in the children's activity book)

Activity

Read aloud the story of this month's saint to your children. You may also want to show them the full page saint image. While you are reading or sometime the next day, have them complete the coloring page on **page 52** in the children's activity book.



Biography of St. Stephen

STEPHEN was a Jewish man who became one of the first Christians. He was full of wisdom and faith from the Holy Spirit. The disciples of Jesus ordained him a deacon. He had the task of taking care of widows who became Christian. The Bible also tells us that Stephen worked miracles and that he was full of grace and power.

Some Jewish men who hated Christianity tried to argue with Stephen, but they could not outsmart the wisdom he received from the Holy Spirit. They were so angry that they bribed other men to falsely accuse Stephen of telling lies about the Old Testament prophet Moses.

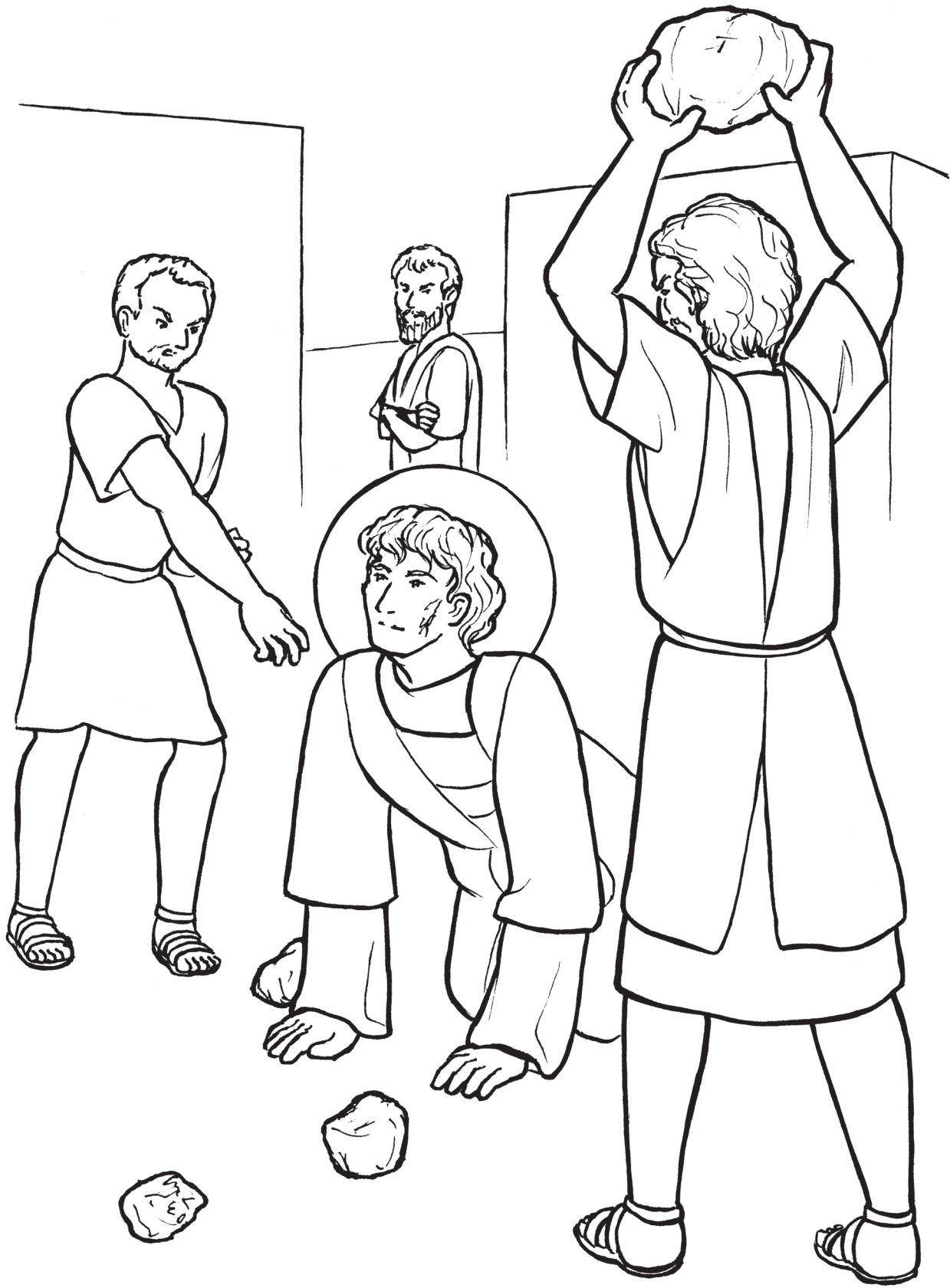
On these false accusations, Stephen was brought to the Jewish court. He defended himself by telling the story of Moses. Moses saved the Israelites from

the pagan Egyptians. But the Israelites betrayed Moses and God by worshipping a pagan idol. Stephen told the Jewish men that, like Moses, every Old Testament prophet was betrayed and persecuted by the Jews, even though the prophets tried to tell the Jewish people about Jesus. When Jesus came, He was also betrayed, persecuted, and killed by Jewish people, including by the men who arrested Stephen.

Then the Jewish men were filled with rage because they did not want to hear the truth. Stephen looked up, and he saw Heaven, with Jesus standing at the right of God the Father. Stephen told the men what he saw, but they refused to listen. They dragged him out of the city and threw stones at him. Just before he

died, Stephen prayed that Jesus would be merciful to the men who were killing him. A martyr is someone who is killed for his or her religious faith. St. Stephen was the

first martyr of the Church. His life shows us what it means to live out all seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.



ST. STEPHEN