
August 2007

The Messenger

of St James' Church, Texarkana, Texas

Why is Incense Used?

by Fr. Homer F. Rogers

Once upon, a time, in a far away land, before the days of Air-wick and indoor plumbing, people's houses would get musty, and the odors of cooked cabbage and garlic would cling to the walls and curtains, and on damp days a crowded house might smell like the locker room of a gymnasium. Folks discovered, probably at first by accident, that if they would burn certain fragrant resins and gums, the smoke would sweeten the air and make life indoors much more pleasant.

However, since these aromatic resins and gums were rare and costly, they were saved for those occasions when company was coming. Thus it came to be that burning incense became a sign of somebody important coming to the house. You walk in, and smell incense and say, "Who is coming?"

Royalty and the aristocracy had incense burned before them on all public occasions. If you wished to honor a friend, you burned incense when he visited you.

Incense was burned in temples and all places of public and private worship in honor of the God who was to visit the temple. It purified the place in anticipation of his visit. The Jews did this and the Christians took over the custom. "From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my Name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered in my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts." (Malachi 1:11).

It is instructive to notice the places in the Church service at which incense is offered. On the entrance into the sanctuary, at the beginning of the Mass, the

priest "censes" the altar to prepare it for the coming of God on the altar. Then he himself is "censed" by the thurifer because the priest himself is to become an instrument through which God acts in the service.

The bread and wine are "censed" at the offertory, because God is going to visit them and make them His habitation. Then the congregation is "censed" for they are going to receive, their communion--God is going to visit them.

They further are due honor in their own right as the Mystical Body of Christ through which (with the priest) God acts to consecrate the Holy Sacrifice.

At the moment of Consecration the bread and wine (becoming the Body and Blood of Christ) are again "censed" by the thurifer, because God becomes present there.

continued ...

Our Annual Summer Celebration ...

ST JAMES' DAY

(observed)

Sunday, July 15th

Quiet Mass in the church at 7:45am

Sung Mass in the church at 10:00am

followed by

A Barbeque at

The Rec Center @ St James' Day School

God is really acting through His priests. God is really present on our altars under the forms of bread and wine; God is really speaking to us through the reading of the Gospel, and finally God is really and actually present in the Christian who receives the Sacraments or hears His Word.

Incense is not used merely because it is pretty, or because it smells sweet, or because we like "high church" but rather because, as a living link with Christians and Jewish antiquity, it assures us that the early Christians believe as we believe, that when we gather together in His Name, God is in our midst, that we do not merely remember a dead Jew but have Communion with a living Christ, that

we do not merely long for a heaven that is "up yonder", or "in the sweet by and by", but adore an Eternal Lord who is "right here and now."

It adds to our service an atmosphere of mystery--and well it might. For it signifies an invasion of the Eternal into time, of the Infinite All Holy into the midst of His people.

So when incense is offered, it should properly awe and impress us, with the terrifying fact of the imminent entrance of Him who flung the stars into space and who

numbers the hairs of our heads, yet whose tender love is concerned with the sparrow's fall, who willed to be laid in a manger and nailed to a cross that you and I might know His love for all eternity.

Understanding its ancient meaning, as purification before the entrance of an important visitor, incense as the Church uses it is eloquent testimony and a vivid dramatization of the Church's most cherished beliefs and vital experiences: God's coming to man, really and actually, in man's worship of God.

Christian Education News

Mary Nell Short

Keys to the Kingdom K/4 – grade 5

Rotation Units 2007-2008

Bible Teachings (The "Hear O Israel"/Beatitudes)

Teach Us How To Pray (The Lord's Prayer)

Out of Egypt

The Lord's Supper (Lent)

Into the Promised Land

Road to Emmaus(Easter)

Good News! (The Annunciation)

Feasts and Festivals

Living the Good News – Grades 6 – 8

Individual Study Topics – Grades 9 – 12

Dates to Remember

July 23 – 27 - Vacation Bible School, 6 – 8 pm

August 26 – Rally Day

September 9 – Sunday School begins

September 12 – Faithweavers begins

Studies Show Importance of Fathers In Fostering Faith

by Terry Mattingly

When it comes to who fills the pews, every Sunday is Mother's Day in most mainstream American churches.

And what about Father's Day? That can be a touchy subject for pastors in an era in which men who religiously avoid church outnumber active churchmen roughly three to one. Worship just doesn't work for millions of ordinary guys.

"What churches are doing isn't getting the job done. Mom is having to take the kids to church because Dad doesn't want to go," said Marc Carrier, co-author, with his wife, Cynthia, of "The Values-Driven Family."

"That leaves Mom in charge of the spiritual upbringing of the children, which means faith is a Mom thing and not a Dad thing. ... So why is little Johnny -- who is 25 and has his first child on the way, whether he's married or not -- never in church? The odds are that his father was never in church."

Church attendance among men had already fallen to 43 percent in 1992, according to the Barna Group, which specializes in researching trends among Evangelicals. Then that number crashed to 28 percent in 1996, the year before the Promise Keepers movement held its "Stand in the Gap" rally that drew a million or more men to the National Mall -- one of the largest gatherings of any kind in American history.

No one involved in national men's ministries believes that those stats have improved. That's one reason why a nondenominational coalition wants to hold a "Stand in the Gap 2007" rally on Oct. 6, hoping to gather 250,000 men at the Washington Monument and on the Ellipse, just south of the White House.

The American numbers are sobering, noted Carrier, but they are nowhere near as stunning as another set of statistics in an essay entitled "The Demographic

Characteristics of the Linguistic and Religious Groups in Switzerland," published in 2000 in a volume covering trends in several European nations. The numbers that trouble traditionalists came from a 1994 survey in which the Swiss government tried to determine how religious practices are carried down from generation to generation.

Apparently, if a father and mother were both faithful churchgoers, 33 percent of their children followed their example, with another 41 percent attending on an irregular basis and only a quarter shunning church altogether.

But what happened if the father had little or no faith? If the father was semi-active and the mother was a faithful worshipper, only 3 percent of their children became active church members and 59 percent were irregular in their worship attendance -- with the rest lost to the church altogether.

If the father never went to church, while the mother was faithful, only 2 percent of the children became regular churchgoers and 37 percent were semi-active. Thus, more than 60 percent were lost.

This trend continued in other survey results, noted Carrier. The bottom line was clear. If a father didn't go to church, only one child in 50 became a faithful churchgoer -- no matter how strong the mother's faith.

"These numbers are old and they are from Switzerland,

but they're the only numbers that anyone has," said Carrier. "Someone needs to find a way to do similar research in America to see if the same thing is happening here. This is shocking stuff."

At the height of the Promise Keepers movement, researchers did study one related trend in churches that began emphasizing ministry to men, said the Rev. Rick Kingham, president of the National Coalition of Men's Ministries, a network of 110 regional and national groups.

Surveys found that if a father made a decision to become a Christian, the rest of the family followed his example 93 percent of the time. If a mother made a similar decision, the rest of the family embraced the faith 17 percent of the time, he said.

"It seems that when a man takes that kind of spiritual stand it usually affects everyone else in the whole constellation around him, including his family and even other men that he knows," said Kingham, who is helping organize Stand in the Gap 2007.

No one wants to minimize the importance of faithful mothers, he said, but it's clear that "fathers play a unique and special role in helping their children develop a living faith -- especially their sons. ... There's no way to deny that."

Did you know? Fr Anderson sends out a weekly "knee-mail" with the latest news from St James.' If you are not getting this e-mail, you're not on our mailing list. Please send a blank message to therector@stjamestxk.org and put KNEE MAIL in the subject line.



Vacation Bible School is coming and we need your help!

Adults- make plans now to volunteer to make this year a Splashin' good time!!

Children - have Mom and Dad mark their calendars so you don't slip
and miss the fun!!

Volunteers are needed to lead the classes. Please contact Sharon Maynard
if you would like to help. 903-223-8758 or knsmaynard@valornet.com

St. James VBS
Dates: July 23-27
Time: 6pm – 8pm
Ages: K-5th grade

__Yes, I would love to volunteer! Please contact me.

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

E-mail: _____

My child/children plan on attending VBS.

Name: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Parents Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Jennifer Gould

The Sr EYC has returned from Washington, D.C. with many memories and some sore feet. We talked about a pilgrimage as a combination of service and reflection. This trip was just that. We served at the Capital Area Food Bank on Wednesday preparing bags of food for children who qualify for subsidized meal programs at school. We also learned that there is a large population of hungry in our nation's capital and throughout the country.

The next day was spent in reflection at Washington National Cathedral. We learned about several different methods of contemplative prayer and experimented with them to see which one worked for us. We also took a "spiritual journey" around the church to experience the different places of worship around the church and to understand their meaning.

On Friday, we worked at S.O.M.E. (So Others Might Eat). This organization feeds breakfast and lunch daily to those in need. They also have programs to help with finances and legal matters as well as several other services. Some of us served breakfast while others helped clean up the neighborhood or organize a closet of clothing for children and women. Then we ate breakfast and participated in a social justice class. We went over a budget to see what we could afford as a member of the "working poor." Finally, we served lunch and cleaned up before we ate ourselves.

Our trip was enlightening and fun! I have not even mentioned the sightseeing we were able to accomplish on our trip! We were also fortunate to meet both Congressman Louie Gohmert and Congressman Ralph Hall on our flight to Washington. Congressman Gohmert gave us a 3-hour personal tour of the Capital Building to include the underground tram from the Congress offices! Also, our congressmen worked to allow us in the White House for a brief tour!

We had to change around our schedules and deal with setbacks like flight delays and public transportation, but

the trip was a success! Everything that went wrong happened at the perfect times. God was truly with us through this trip and I am thankful for the opportunity to work with such a wonderful group of young people. They were mature and responsible throughout the trip. Every place we went we were complimented on our group and how they interact with each other and those around them. Thank you to all who helped make this trip such a success and to the parents who have raised wonderful young adults. It was my honor to escort them on this trip. Finally, I could not have done it without the help of Lisa Hendrickson and Bruce and Barbara Cannedy who were the adult sponsors on the trip. They gave their time, talent and patience on this trip to assist with our group! We are fortunate to have so much support and guidance in our church and families! God bless us all!

WE THANK YOU FOR DONATIONS received for the Youth Pilgrimage Fund. Shareholder certificates and tax receipts will be sent out in mid-July.

Sarah Crossman & Children	Marge Allen
Mike & Tracy Jones	Jane & Scott Bruner
Glen & Lova Wile	Ducky Knight
Dr. George & Patsy W. Poulos	Katy Caver
Chesley & Dr Lila Walker	Janet & Basil Hoag
James & Marsha Elliott	Chris & Charles Terry
Fr Douglas & Traci Anderson	Jenny Bartlett
Dee Miller	Eddie & Roxanne Schoen
Barbara & Howard Davis	Martha & William Bean
Cliff & Mary Nell Short	Don G. McCoy
Billy, LouAnne, & Will Harrell	Marti Newell
Kim & Wade Fowler	Doug & Ann Drummond
Britt Finn	Kayla Finn
Andi Sue Townsend	David James
Lisa & Paul Patterson	Trey & Megan Schroeder

A FEW MISSION TRIP T-SHIRTS are available for \$15. (Sizes *S* thru *X-L*). Make a fashion statement! See Jennifer Gould's office door for details.

August Birthdays

James Storey	2
Al Williams	3
Jacob Hill	3
Fisher Plymale	4
David Waddle	4
Dolores Arnold	6
Alice Crowder	6
Carolyn Easley	7
J. C. Markham	8
Serena Markham	10
Susan Stanley	11
Virginia Trammell	12
Laura Jones	13
Carly Loving	13
Bette Stevens	18
Jeremy Fomby	19
Lila Walker	20
Lisa Henrickson	20
Dee Miller	22
John Stanley	22
Jason Kyles	22
Mark Storey	23
Michael Lofton	24
Dixie Splawn	25
Savannah Smith	25
Jackie Brown	27
Ed Burke	27
Nelda Knight	27
Jessica Cowdery	27
Debbie Holder	29
Diane Cannon	29
Don Crisp	30
Mary Lea Norton	31

August Anniversaries

Jack & Pat Thompson	6
Dennis & Candy Smith	7
Larry & Debbie Oxford	9
Cliff & Mary Nell Short	20

Parish News and Notes

BOY CHOIR DVD NOW READY!

The professionally-recorded DVD of the June 7, 2007 Saint James' Boy Choir Concert is now available for purchase from the Music Office or the Parish Office for only \$20.00 each.

This recording features both our Boy Choir in their first concert appearance, and our Guest Conductor, Kerry Kuplic, singing art songs and operatic airs. The Concert was presented as the finale to Choir Camp, held June 4 through 7.

Purchase this DVD now as a permanent record for your personal library; it also makes an ideal Christmas gift! Call Fredrick Krieger at 903-794-9224 for further information.

St James' Episcopal Church
5th & Olive Streets
P.O. Box 1125
Texarkana, TX 75501
Tel. 903.794.9224
www.stjamestxk.org

Non Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Texarkana, AR/TX
PERMIT NO. 78

Special Dates in July & August 2007

Sunday, July 17th

St James' Day (observed)

Quiet Mass at 7:45am

Sung Mass at 10am

BBQ @ St James' Rec Center at 11:30am

Wednesday, August 15th

St Mary the Virgin, a Prayer Book Holy Day

Sung Mass at 7pm

Sunday, August 19th

Homecoming Sunday

Quiet Mass at 7:45am

Sung Mass at 10am

Preacher: The Rev'd Scott Mayer, sometime Curate of St James'

Champagne Brunch following.