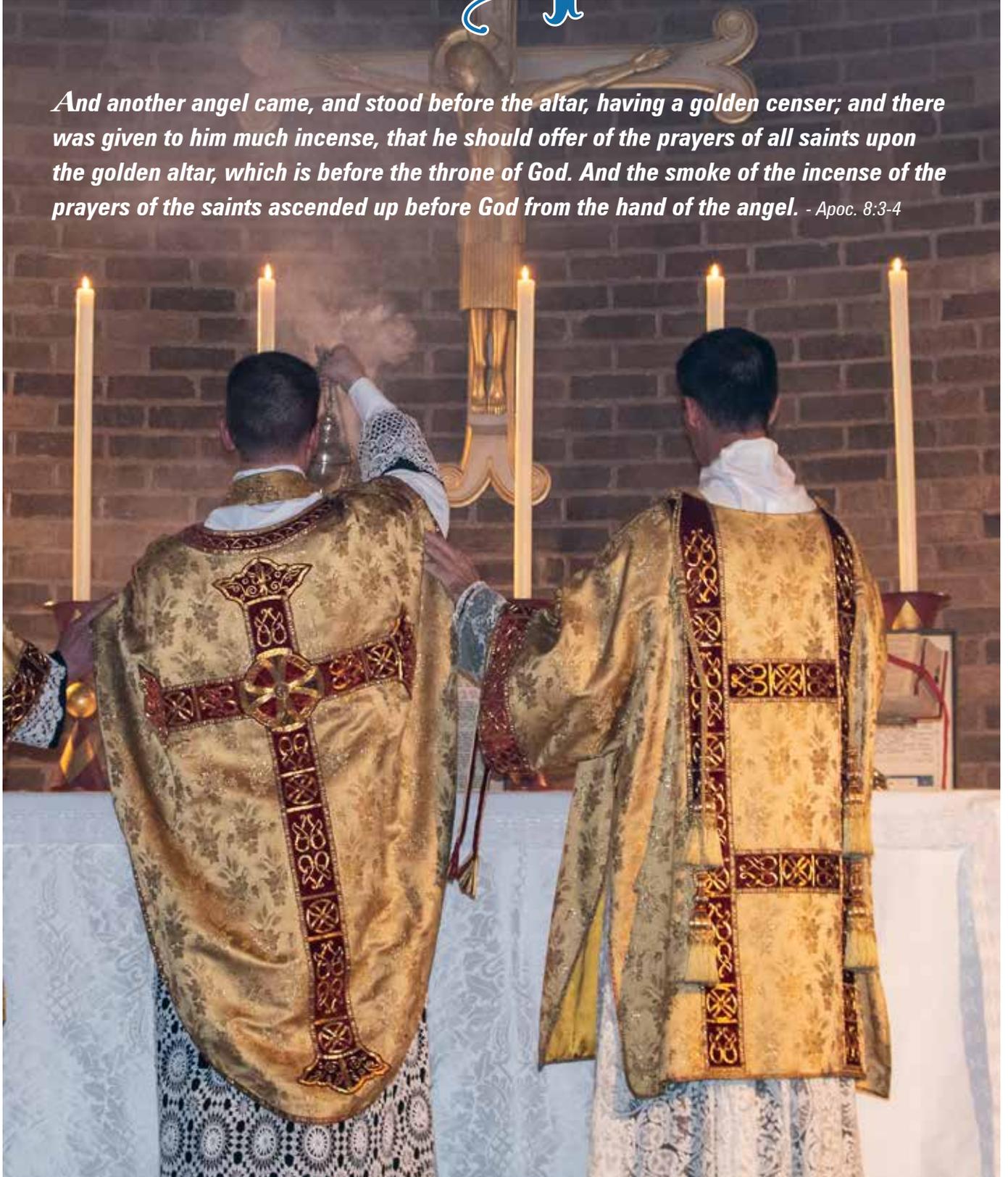


Orate + Fratres

And another angel came, and stood before the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer of the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which is before the throne of God. And the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints ascended up before God from the hand of the angel. - Apoc. 8:3-4



INSIDE: ✠ Incense in the Mass ✠



our human nature, He not only suffered His Passion, triumphed in His Resurrection, and entered into His glory by the Ascension—but He, also, founded the Church upon earth, and this Church is His mystical Body; He is its Head, and the saints are its members. From this point of view, then, our Lord has not the fullness of His mystical Body without His saints; and it is for this reason, that the saints, who are reigning with Him in glory, are united with Him, in the altar, which represents Him.

The priest, having finished the prayer, which he said bowing down, and his hands joined on the altar, prepares for its Incensing. Twice will this take place during the Holy Sacrifice, and both times with much solemnity, out of respect for our Lord, who is signified by the altar, as we have already said. Nevertheless, the priest does not recite any prayer during the first incensing; he merely thurifies every portion of the altar, in such wise as that the whole of it is thus honoured. We learn from the Book of Leviticus, that incense was used, at a very early period, in the divine worship. The blessing, which the priest gives it in the Mass, raises this production of nature to the supernatural order. Holy Church has borrowed this ceremony from Heaven itself; where Saint John witnessed it. In his Apocalypse, he saw an angel, standing, with a golden censer, near the altar, on which was the Lamb, with four-and-twenty elders around him (Apoc. 8:3). He describes this angel to us, as offering to God the prayers of the saints, which are symbolised by the incense. Thus, our Holy Mother the Church, the faithful Bride of Christ, wishes to do as Heaven does; and taking advantage of the veil of its mysterious secrets being even thus partially raised up by the Beloved Disciple, she borrows, for our earth's imitation, the tribute of honour thus paid, yonder above, to the glory of her Spouse. At this part of the Mass, the altar alone, and the priest, are thurified; the incensing of the choir is reserved for the second time of the ceremony, which is at the Offertory. It is one of the customs of the Church to expose, on the altar, images and relics of the saints, which then are incensed at the same time.

Incensing the Altar at Mass

According to Father Adrian Fortescue (*The Mass A Study of the Roman Liturgy*, 1912), the incensing of the altar was first mentioned by St Ambrose († 397). However, the association of incensing as a sign of respect and honour is mentioned in the Bible and would have been familiar to both the Jews and the first Christians. Incense was one of the gifts of the Magi to the Christ child and is mentioned in connection with the altar in heaven in Apocalypse. During the Mass the altar is incensed at the beginning, at the Gospel and during the Offertory.

Below, Dom Prosper Guéranger, Abbot of Solesmes, describes the first incensing of the altar and that which takes place during the Offertory. (Explanation of the Prayers and Ceremonies of Holy Mass: Taken from Notes Made at the Conferences of, translated by Rev. Dom Laurence Shepherd, OSB in 1883):

The first incensing during the Mass

The altar represents our Lord Jesus Christ. The saints' relics which are there, remind us that the saints are His members. For, having assumed

The incensing during the Offertory

We have already seen how the altar represents our Lord; this explains why it is treated with so much honour; the rest of the Church represents the members of the Mystical Body of which Christ is the Head, that is to say, the faithful of whose aggregate Holy Church, the Bride of Christ, is composed. On first going up to the altar, the priest has already incensed it in every direction, thus paying homage to Christ Himself. Now again, this ceremony is performed with sacred pageantry; just as the Eastern Kings laid their rich gifts at the feet of the Divine Infant, as the Gospel tells us, so too is the priest about to burn incense, in his turn, as a homage to his Master and his King.

But, another ceremony must precede that of the incensing of the altar itself. This bread and wine just offered by the priest have been raised above the order of common things by this very offering made of them, so much so indeed, that were the priest to die at this moment of the function, this bread and wine must be disposed of in the piscina. To show her reverence for them, Holy Church sheds on them the perfume of her incense, as if she were doing so to Christ himself. This custom of using perfumes in Church ceremonies began in the East, where they can be procured in rich abundance. But in our cold countries though it is much more difficult to get them, Holy Church will not allow our

ceremonies to be utterly deprived of them, and so she prescribes the use at least of incense, just as for the Chrism, she will at least have balsam mixed with the oil. After the incensing of the bread and wine, *incensatio super oblata*, the altar itself is honoured in like manner. Before making use of the incense, it must be blessed; the priest does so by the following prayer: *Per intercessionem beati Michaelis Archangeli stantis a dextris altaris incensi...* The angel who holds the golden thurible in the Apocalypse is not named. Holy Church here names Saint Michael, Prince of the Heavenly hosts. Some have thought that there is an error in this passage, because in Saint Luke the Angel Gabriel is named standing at the right of the altar; but Holy Church pays no heed to these



their objections; Saint Luke does not say that Gabriel held a golden thurible. The first blessing of the incense was less solemn; the priest then only said: *Ab illo benedicaris in cuius honore cremaberis*. Mayst thou be blessed by Him in honour of whom thou art to be burned. But in this place, the angels are called upon because the mystery of incense is no other than the prayer of the saints presented to God, by the angels, as Saint John tells us, in His Apocalypse (8:4): The smoke of the incense ascends as does the prayer of the saints before the Throne of God: *Et ascendit fumus incensorum de orationibus sanctorum de manu Angeli coram Deo*.

The priest incenses the bread and wine in such a way, that its odour may perfume, and wholly cloud in fragrance the things offered; while so doing, he says these words: *Incensum istud a te benedictum, ascendat ad Te Domine, et descendat super nos misericordia tua*. May this incense, O blessed by Thee, ascend to Thee, O Lord, and may Thy Mercy descend upon us. This prayer, whilst being a homage paid to God, is a wish expressed for ourselves also. The priest divides these words, at intervals, whilst incensing at several parts to be thus honoured, in performing which ceremony, he follows what the rubrics prescribe. When he first incensed the altar, the priest said no prayer; but now, when thus honouring it a second (A time, Holy Church bids

him repeat a portion of Psalm 140, which she selects, chiefly on account of these words which occur therein, and which are the first she puts on the lips of the priest: *Dirigatur, Domine, oratio mea sicut incensum in conspectu tuo*. May my prayer, O Lord, ascend as incense in Thy sight. It is thus she always does, ever selecting with wonderful appropriateness whatsoever suits the circumstance, whether in Psalms, or in Gospels and Epistles. The priest begins by incensing the Cross, or the Most Holy Sacrament if exposed; he then bows before the Cross, or genuflects, if the Most Holy Sacrament is reserved in the Tabernacle of that altar; then, if there be relics there exposed, he incenses them with two throws of the thurible, first on the Gospel side, then on the Epistle side; after which he incenses every part of the altar. In all other respects, this incensing differs in no way from the first, nor from that which is performed at Lauds and Vespers.

On returning the thurible to the deacon, the priest gives expression to a good wish in his regard as well as in his own, saying: *Accendat in nobis Dominus ignem sui amoris et flammam aeternae charitatis*. May the Lord enkindle in its the fire of His Love and the flame of everlasting charity. On taking the thurible, the deacon kisses the priest's hand, and then the top of the chains; he does the contrary, on presenting it. These customs have come to us from the East, and, inasmuch as they are marks of reverence and respect, it is to the liturgy we owe the preservation of them. The deacon then honours the priest with incense, who receives it standing sideways to the altar; but if the Most Holy Sacrament be exposed, as, for instance, at the Mass of Reposition, the priest comes down from the altar, and with his face turned to the people, he receives the said honours from the deacon, who likewise suits his position to the occasion. Then follows the incensing of the choir, beginning with the bishop, if present; next the prelates, if there then the priests and clerics; and, finally, all the faithful, to show that all form but one Body, of whom Jesus Christ is the Head. All, whether bishops, prelates, or simple faithful, should rise on receiving the incense; the pope alone remains seated for its reception.

After this Dom Guéranger says that, because the priest has been using the thurible, his hands are soiled with smoke, so he washes them and, in doing so, further expresses his need to purify himself for the coming sacrifice.



Announcements



First Fridays and First Saturdays

Mark your calendar for the next First Friday Mass, after which you are welcome to a

Reception in the Presbytery. On the Next First Saturday after Mass there will be a Day of Prayer and Catechesis.

Latin Mass Society Events: Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Caversham: Saturday, 21 March

Sacred Triduum in St Mary Moorfields, London

Priest and Server Training Conference in Theodore House, Stonyhurst: 20 – 23 April

English Martyrs Pilgrimage, Preston: Saturday 2 May

Pilgrimage in Honour of the Chideock Martyrs: Saturday, 27 June

Pilgrimage to Holywell: Sunday, 5 July

Annual General Meeting & High Mass in Westminster Cathedral: Saturday, 18 July

Residential Latin Course in Savio House, Macclesfield: 17 – 21 August

Walking Pilgrimage to Walsingham: 27 – 30 August

Online bookings are now being accepted for the Pilgrimage to Walsingham – register before Low Sunday (19 April) to take advantage of our early bird discount! For those unable to undertake the walk, a coach will leave London for a Day Pilgrimage on the Sunday. Details are on our website.

For further information, go to the LMS website at <https://lms.org.uk> or telephone 020 7404 7284. Your local LMS representative is Victoria Keens - email shrewsbury@lms.org.uk or see her after Mass.

Look out for the Spring 2020 issue of Mass of Ages.



Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest Shrewsbury Weekly Schedule *

| | | Ordo | Cathedral | St Winefride's | Mass Intention |
|--|--------|---|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| Sun | 9 Feb | Septuagesima | | 11.15 Procession and Sung Mass | |
| St Wulstan Little Malvern 3.15pm Sung Mass | | | | | Gregorian Masses for Mary Ann Franke RIP |
| Mon | 10 Feb | St. Scholastica Virgin, III class. | 7.30am Low Mass | Church Closed for works | Holy Souls * Gregorian Masses for Mary Ann Franke RIP |
| Tue | 11 Feb | On the Apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary Immaculate, III class. | 7.30am Low Mass | *Church Closed for works | Holy Souls * Gregorian Masses for Mary Ann Franke RIP |
| Wed | 12 Feb | The Seven Holy Founders of the Order of Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary sConfessors, III class. | 7.30am Low Mass | Church Closed for works | Holy Souls * Gregorian Masses for Mary Ann Franke RIP |
| Thu | 13 Feb | Votive of St. Joseph | 7.30am Low Mass 11am Holy Hour with Benediction and Confessions | *Church Closed for works | In honour of St. Joseph * Gregorian Masses for Mary Ann Franke RIP |
| Fri | 14 Feb | Commemoration of St. Valentine Priest and Martyr, Comm. | 7.30am Low Mass | *Church Closed for works | Holy Souls * Gregorian Masses for Mary Ann Franke RIP |
| Sat | 15 Feb | Our Lady on Saturday, Comm. of Ss.Faustinus and Jovita Martyrs. | | 10.45am Confessions 11.15 Low Mass | Holy Souls * Gregorian Masses for Mary Ann Franke RIP |
| Sun | 16 Feb | Sexagesima | | 11.15 Sung Mass | Holy Souls |
| St Wulstan Little Malvern 3.15pm Sung Mass | | | | | Gregorian Masses for Mary Ann Franke RIP |

*Change from the usual schedule! *Intention for a Mass said privately

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