



Anglican Catholic Church



Diocese of the United Kingdom

Catholic Faith † Orthodox Worship † Apostolic Order

October 2016

My dear friends and colleagues,

Autumn is upon us once again – that fruitful season, which is traditionally the most abundant of the year.

The seasons come and go, but we remain focused on the God who remains unchanged and unchanging. “Lord, thou hast been our refuge from one generation to another. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made, thou art God from everlasting, and world without end.” (Psalm 90:1-2).



There is indeed much unwelcome change in our world. Moral and societal changes are thrust at us when we turn on our television or glance at the news. Our children are growing up in a world very different from the one we knew as youngsters. And there are personal changes – children leaving home, the passing of dear friends, and the slow, steady decline in our vitality and health as we age. But amid all the changes, one thing, one person, never changes – our eternal God. Remember this verse from *Abide with Me*? “Swift to its close ebbs out life’s little day; Earth’s joys grow dim; its glories pass away; Change and decay in all around I see; O Thou who changest not, abide with me.” – Henry F. Lyte

God’s life is always the same. His character is always dependable. His truth, ways, and purposes do not change. His Son does not change. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8). The world may fade, the stars may fall, the seasons may change, and winter may come. But the God who has been our help in ages past is our hope for years to come. In Him we have permanence, stability, unshakable joy, and life unending.

Of course we’ve all suffered setbacks along the way. But God’s divine forethought knew it all in advance. Our Saviour knows the beginning and the end, so focus on His foreknowledge, providence, and sovereignty.

As we get older, the autumn of life is a special time to focus on those wonderful blessings of God which we still enjoy – family, friends, strength, shelter, provision, guidance, care, fruitful ministry, opportunities to serve, more time to pray and study His Word, and eternal life still to come. During life’s autumn, we have a richer perspective and can better appreciate our blessings.

So you see, even the autumn of life is a fruitful and abundant season too, and a good time to focus on your commitment to God. If you are a follower of Christ, remember to remain close to the Changeless One during the shifting seasons of life. During autumn we all know that winter lies ahead, but if winter comes can spring be far behind?

With every blessing

Fr. Raymond Thompson

Archdeacon

Mobile: 07443 438465 Email: fraythompson@gmail.com

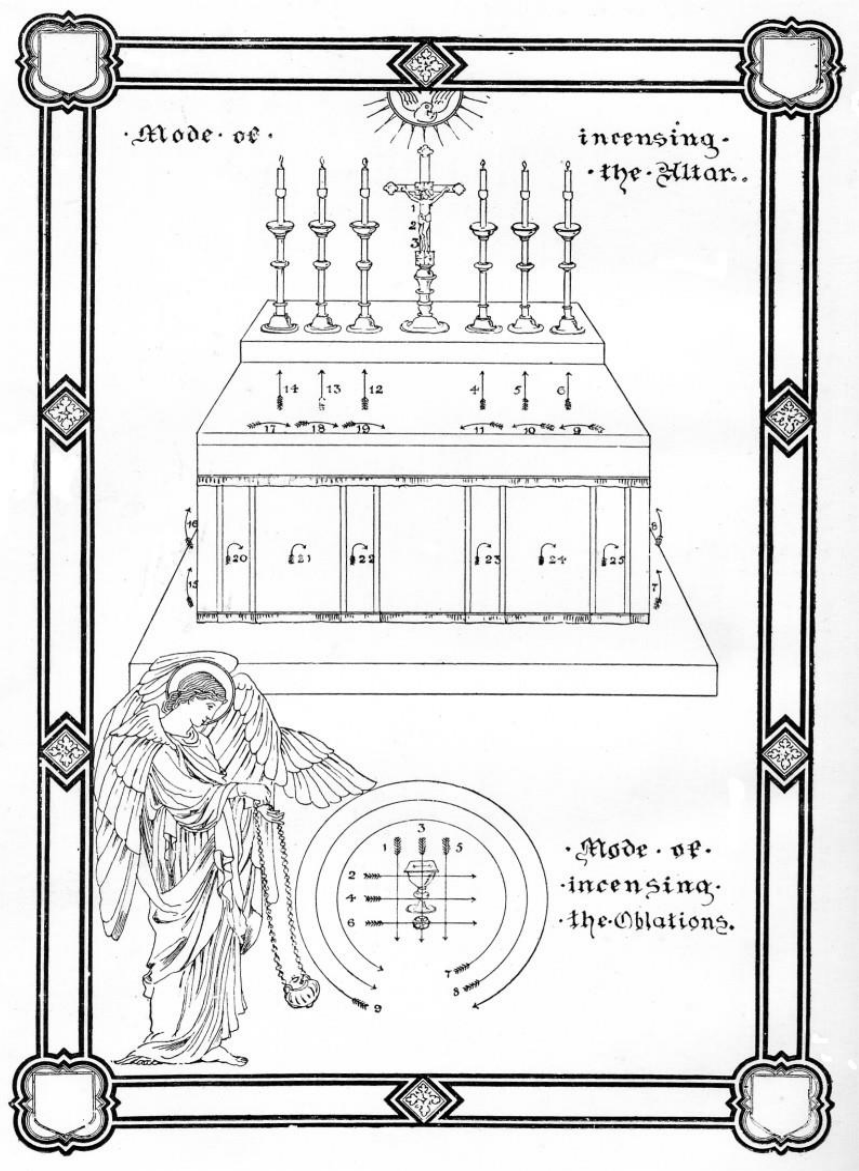
Diocesan website: <http://www.anglicancatholic.org.uk/>

Email: diocesanoffice@anglicancatholic.org.uk

Holy Smoke

Sometimes even the most experienced among us can benefit from a refresher about correct liturgical practice. Clergy and servers often develop habits which become established and it does one good to be reminded that there are right ways and wrong ways to do things. For instance, there often appears to be confusion about whom and what should be incensed, and when, and how many “swings” should be given and received.

A “swing” is usually taken to mean a double “click”, where the thurible is raised by the server or deacon to just below face level and swung twice, the second time being a little less vigorous than the first. It is then lowered a little and then immediately raised again and the second double swing follows, etc. When incensing an individual the swings are “full frontal”, straight ahead, whereas groups of people and objects, such as the Gospel book or the crib are censed in the form “centre, left, right”.



The celebrant censes the altar according to a set pattern. The cross receives three doubles, and then any relics are censed from the centre with two doubles to each side of the altar (Gospel side first, then Epistle side) which covers all of them. In other words they are not censed individually, but if, say, there are four relics the thurible can be directed accordingly so that each reliquary receives a single swing. (The relics are only censed at the beginning of Mass and not again at the offertory.) The altar is then censed as depicted in the diagram. At the offertory the oblations are incensed as shown, followed by the cross and altar.

The celebrant receives three double swings, unless he is celebrating in the presence of a bishop in cope and mitre, in which case he receives two doubles, following which the bishop receives three doubles. A deacon of the Mass receives two doubles, as do clergy “in quire”. The sequence and method of the incensation of clergy and servers in quire can be found in detail in *Ritual Notes*. The thurifer then censes the congregation with three swings, in the order of centre, left, right. Local custom will vary as to whether the people receive three double clicks or three singles, but singles should be the norm. The celebrant never censes the congregation himself if there is no server.

The Blessed Sacrament, when exposed, is to be censed with three double swings straight ahead.

When the deacon reads the Gospel he censes the Book with three doubles (centre, left, right), and after the reading he censes the celebrant (or the bishop if present at the throne) from just inside the sanctuary and not from the place of the reading. At a sung Mass without a deacon the celebrant is not incensed by the thurifer after he has read the Gospel. It is in his Order as a deacon that the celebrant has proclaimed the Gospel, and the deacon is never censed at this point.

There is, of course, much detail on the correct way to incense (and lustrate) people and objects in additional circumstances and contexts, and I will be happy to answer any questions.