

2023-01-13: Offering of Incense

Objective

- A greater appreciation for the rites of the Offering of Incense

Key Verse

“Let my prayer be set forth before You as incense, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice” (Psalm 141:2)

Visual Aid

Attached

Body

Introduction

- The use of incense in Scripture
 - Used in the Old Testament at the Altar of Incense
 - Used in the New Testament for Jewish worship
 - Used in Revelation in the heavenly church
- Where does the Offering of Incense fit in the grand scope of the Divine Liturgy
 - Agpeya Prayers
 - Offering of Incense
 - Divine Liturgy
- Offering of Incense was a big part of the daily life of early Christians
 - They would wake up in the morning and go attend Matins in the church before work
 - Then they would go to work
 - Then they would come to the church and attend Vespers before going home
 - Then they would go home
- Now let's head into the church and go through the rite of Vespers and Matins Offering of Incense

Vessels of the Offering of Incense

- The boys can sit/stand in the women's altar at first, and then in the deacons area on the right side
- The Censer
 - Review what does it represent and how
- The Cross
 - The use of the Cross
 - How the Cross and the Gospel book are used together and represent the Lord Jesus Christ
- The Book of the Gospel
 - Readings of the Offering of Incense

The Order of the Rite

- Thanksgiving Prayer
- Verses of Cymbals
- Minor Circuit of Incense
- Litanies [Order of the Litanies]
- Doxologies
- Major Circuit of Incense
- Creed
- †
- Psalm and Gospel
- Short Litanies
- Absolution

The Circuits of Incense

- Two circuits of incense - minor circuit during Verses of Cymbals, major circuit during Doxologies
- Demonstrate the route that Abouna takes when he goes around
- Read the prayers that Abouna prays in both
 - The Three Litanies (Peace, Fathers, Assemblies)
 - Incense Prayers to the Trinity, on our behalf, with the angels and the saints
 - The blessing of the morning/evening incense, may its holy blessing be with us. Amen.
 - Prayer of Confession

The Litanies

- Offering of Incense Litanies
- Five Minor Litanies

Application

- Attend Vespers and Matins and try and pay attention to those things, remember that at all times you are praying and being prayed for

- 2023 Resolution - to attend Vespers and Matins

Contemplation

Lord, we thank you for allowing us to experience and to live the work of salvation on a weekly and even daily basis. We thank you for giving us and preserving for us ritual practices that bring us closer to Your saints and Your heavenly ones. We ask you O Lord that our prayer is lifted up to you as incense and that You smell the aroma of our prayers as a sweet aroma of incense - well pleasing to You. Let us be dependent on Your will for us, and accepting of Your will for us - for we know that all good and perfect things come from you, and that all things that come from You are good and perfect. Let our prayer reflect this - let us continually pray that Your will be done. And in this way, we participate with You.

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