

Incense

Catholicism is sometimes called the religion of 'bells & smells'. The Tradition of Mother Church engages the whole person. God created us a unity of body and soul and as such, our worship includes our bodily and spiritual senses. We hear it, see it, feel it, taste it, and smell it as well. We ring bells to HEARLD the Lord's appearance and we burn fragrant incense before His altar.

The prophet Malachi (1:11) foretold a day when 'from the rising of the sun to its setting... in every place incense is offered to My name, a pure offering'. In the exodus, the high priest Aaron states that God said, 'I chose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to go up to my altar, to burn incense' (1Samuel 2:28). And as such, the priest from the time of Moses to the time of Jesus and beyond, Jesus' kinsman Zechariah was performing his priestly duty of burning incense in the Temple, when the angel Gabriel appeared to him. It was apparently customary for a 'whole multitude of people' to pray nearby 'at the hour of incense' every day (Luke 1:9-11).

Psalm 141:2... "Let my prayer be counted as incense before you".

John 1:16... "I will utter my judgments against them, for all their wickedness in forsaking Me; they have burned incense to other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands".

May all of our prayers be much like that of the saints...

'The prayers of the saints on earth, he say, rise as incense to heaven' (Revelation 8:3-4).

- Signs of Life by Scott Hahn