



OFFICE OF DIVINE WORSHIP

INCENSE

(from Chancery Bulletin #269:IV; May 2004)

Aware of the growing problem for people who suffer with allergy and sickness from the use of incense, we advise several steps of care.

First we note that the use of incense is a religious symbol that is deeply embedded in Catholic religious services. It is part of a long-standing religious tradition. Every ritual book has directives for the use of incense. It is symbolic of the grace and blessing of God, rising prayer, sacrifice, and the presence of God within the human family. But we realize that much of this religious meaning is lost if a person is made sick and faint with the use of incense.

Therefore we advise:

- To use only small amounts of incense if the space is small and the ventilation is poor
- To order the incense that is most non-allergic: Gloria Incense PR-3 blend (or incense of pellets of resin covered in white powder which results in little smoke)
- To notify members that incense will be used at solemn services
- To alert the ushers and hospitality ministers to provide ample ventilation when incense is used

The Worship Office continues to research more appropriate kinds of incense. The monasteries are also addressing the problem.