

ARCHCONFRATERNITY OF SAINT STEPHEN

The Thurifer & Boat Bearer

The Thurible and Incense Boat. In order to present the thurible to the priest, the thurifer will hand the boat to the first assistant or the master of ceremonies; then transferring the cap to his left hand and raising the lid of the thurible by means of the ring at the top of the center chain, he will grasp the chain just above the lid with his right hand, and raise the lid moderately. Then with the same hand he will raise the thurible to the level of the priest's hands, taking care to place the left hand holding the cap against his breast, while the priest puts incense in the thurible. The thurifer will then lower the thurible, close the lid and hand the thurible to the first assistant or the master of ceremonies, receiving back the incense boat. When the thurible has been returned to him, he will stand *in plano* at the Epistle side and swing it gently to and fro.

Practice this action until you have perfected it.

The thurible is used during a sung Mass as follows :

- Incensing of the altar by the priest after the prayers at the foot of the altar.
- Incensing of the priest by the MC after the incensing of the altar (3 x 2 swings)
- Incensing of the missal by the priest before the Gospel is sung
- Incensing of the priest by the MC after the singing of the Gospel (3 x 2 swings)
- (During the Sermon / Credo a new charcoal may be lit if required)
- Incensing of the Host and Chalice by the priest after the offering of the same
- Incensing of the Crucifix by the priest
- Incensing of the altar by the priest
- Incensing of the priest by the MC (3 x 2 swings)
- Incensing of the faithful by the thurifer (1 swing to the middle, 1 to the left, then 1 to the right)
- Incensing of the Blessed Sacrament at the elevation by the thurifer (3 x 2 swings)
- Incensing of the Chalice and Precious Blood at the elevation by the thurifer (3 x 2 swings)

How many swings, and how many sets of swings are used to incense the priest?

..... swings

..... sets of swings

The **thurifer precedes the acolytes** in the procession to the sanctuary. If no Asperges, he carries the thurible and incense boat. On Sundays he fetches the thurible after the Asperges. He stands holding it on the Epistle side (near the credence). When the celebrant ascends to the altar, the thurifer (and boat bearer) ascends the predella by the Epistle side, and hands the boat to the MC who then presents the spoon to the celebrant (with the customary kisses). The celebrant puts in the incense, returns the spoon to the MC, and then blesses the incense. The thurifer (or boat bearer) then receives the boat from the MC and gives the MC the thurible who passes it to the celebrant. The thurifer (returns *in plano*) moves to the left of the celebrant and supports the celebrant as the incensation is performed. (If there be no servers, then the thurifer may take the missal stand from the altar during the incensation and afterwards replaces it.) Thereafter, the thurifer descends with MC on the Epistle side where the celebrant is incensed. The thurifer receives back the thurible from the MC and retires to the sacristy or stands **near the credence table**. At the end of the Epistle the celebrant imposes incense, and after the Triple Sign of the Cross at the start of the Gospel, the thurifer presents the thurible to the MC for the incensation of the missal. After the singing of the Gospel the thurifer hands the thurible to the MC for the incensation of the Celebrant. The thurifer may then retire to the sacristy with the thurible. **When the Creed is intoned the thurifer leaves the sanctuary** to prepare the thurible. When the sacred ministers return to the altar **after the Creed, the thurifer fetches the thurible and boat and stands in plano, on the Epistle side** of the altar ready for incense to be blessed (Offertory) as at the beginning. After the celebrant has been incensed, the thurifer should incense the sacred ministers, the MC and the acolytes. **To incense the faithful the thurifer**, standing at the entrance to the sanctuary, will make a slight bow, to the middle first, then to the left and to the right, and will a single swing of the thurible will incense first the middle, then on the left, then on the right. After bowing slightly he will return to the sanctuary, and **genuflect together with the torchbearers**. With them, he will retire either to the sacristy or the credence, and **after recitation of the Sanctus by the celebrant will precede the torchbearers to the sanctuary**. Having genuflected between them, the thurifer will go to the Epistle side *in plano*, and stand, swinging the thurible, until **at the Hanc igitur the MC or one of the acolytes puts in incense**; then when the sacred ministers kneel, the thurifer will kneel on the lowest step at the Epistle side of the altar and **at the Elevation incense the Holy Sacrament**. After the Consecration he goes to the middle and genuflecting with the torchbearers precedes them either to the sacristy or credence, and the thurible being no longer required, he puts it away, and the returns with the other servers to the sanctuary.

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Torchbearers

The Torchbearers, genuflecting *recta linea*, leave the Sanctuary, *when the thurifer, after having incensed the faithful*, has joined them, and go to the sacristy (or credence) to fetch their torches. When these are lit, *after the Sanctus bell has rung*, they enter the Sanctuary, led by the thurifer, walking two abreast; those on the right hold their torches in the right hand, and those on the left in the left hand, the unoccupied hand being laid upon the breast. On arriving in the Sanctuary the torchbearers *genuflect with the thurifer and divide, kneeling at equal distances in plano*. After the elevation the torchbearers rise (except in the case of Holy Communion being administered, when they remain kneeling until *the tabernacle is closed*), genuflecting with *the thurifer*, and preceded by him, retire to the sacristy. Great care should be taken to *move and genuflect together*. During the distribution of Communion, *two torchbearers stand, holding their candles, at either end of the Communion rail*. After Communion the two torchbearers join the other torchbearers, kneeling, until *the tabernacle is closed*. Thereafter, the thurifer, genuflecting with the torchbearers, leads them out of the Sanctuary to the Sacristy. They leave their torches and return to the Sanctuary, genuflecting *recta linea* with the thurifer, before returning to their original positions. *When the celebrant reads the Last Gospel*, the torchbearers take up their positions behind the Cross Bearer and Acolytes in preparation for the recessional. Great care should be taken to move and genuflect together.

1. When do the torchbearers leave the Sanctuary?
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2. When do the torchbearers enter the Sanctuary?.....
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3. What do the torchbearers do after arriving in the Sanctuary?.....
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4. Who leads the torchbearers to and from the Sacristy?.....
5. What must torchbearers take great care in doing?.....
6. What do two torchbearers do during the distribution of Holy Communion?.....
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7. When do the torchbearers retire to the Sacristy?
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8. When do the torchbearers take up their positions for the recessional?.....
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