

## What is the reason for the use of incense in the services?

The incense spreading in the church symbolizes the prayer of the faithful sent up to God and at the same time it is a symbol of the Grace of the Holy Spirit mysteriously embracing them. Before every censuring a priest reads a secret (quiet) prayer: "We offer unto Thee, O Christ our God, this incense for an odor of spiritual sweetness which do Thou accept upon Thy most heavenly altar, sending down upon us in return the Grace of Thy Holy Spirit." Listening to this prayer we understand that the smoke visible to everybody denotes the invisible presence of the Lord's Grace, which is sanctifying the faithful.