

TLM 201: Ascending the Steps through the Collect

Ascending the Steps

- always the right foot
- entering the Via Dolorosa and ascent of Mt. Calvary
- Aufer a nobis reminds us of the Temple - the Holy of holies, the dwelling place of God
- Oramus Te recalls our roots in the catacombs and reliance upon heavenly intercession
- veneration of the altar is a reminder of the kiss of Judas, reverence for Christ, saints & faithful

Incensation of the Altar

- priest offers incense as a sacrifice - it is burned and consumed
- Revelation shows us the altar and the prayers lifted up before the throne
- Leviticus 16 shows the same in the Old Testament
- even the pagans has offerings of incense
- Ambrose mentions it explicitly in the 5th Century, normative by 11th Century

Introit

- Epistle side is going to the Jews first; Old Testament is read on this side
- ‘The priest gets his spectacles.... What’s on the menu today...’ - Msgr. Ronald Knox
- Not mere filler, but a true orientation of the Liturgy of the Day
- Antiphon and full Psalm would be sung at entrance (5th Century), abbreviated over time to be a single verse of the Psalm, then to the priest saying it himself (11th Century)
- The Cross is made to show the first words of the Sacrifice being uttered

Kyrie

- Reminder of going to Caiaphas’ house and Peter’s triple denial of Jesus
- the Kyrie appears in the 4th Century and is in the present form by the 7th Century
- Tropes or Verses were often added until the Tridentine reforms
- Perichoresis: the mutual union of the three Divine Persons - Kyrie 3x, Christe (humanity) 3x, Kyrie 3x
- 9 sins - original, venial, mortal, thought, word, deed, malice, weakness, ignorance

Gloria

- Kyrie provides the great transition that lifts up the hearts of believers
- A tremendous outpouring of love
- Telesphorus (2nd Century) had the bishop intoning it at Christmas; Hilary of Poitiers (4th Century) provides the present longer form; 5th Century permitted on all Sundays; then priests & festal days
- Gloria of the angels: reminder of the Nativity, Presentation, Transfiguration, Ascension, & Eucharist
- Priest stands in the middle because the Incarnation is the hinge between the Old & New Testaments
- Priest briefly opens hands to invoke angels

Collect

- reverence the altar - always reverence Christ!
- Oremus is a call to prayer for the people, but also a nice call back if given to distraction
- Orans position for prayer is a reminder of Moses v. Amalek in battle, hands raised ensured victory
- Prayers date from the early church, the structure being normative by the 4th Century

Next time: The Epistle through the Creed