



OBJECT ID	2006.19.98
OBJECT NAME	Burner, Incense
MATERIAL	Metal
OBJECT ENTITIES	Frangos, Diane (owned by)
ACCESS POINTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cross hinge household accessory Metal Pewter

OBJECT DESCRIPTION

Small incense holder/burner is made out of silver colored metal, most likely pewter. The holding portion is covered with a flip top lid that is carved with a vertical ribbing and has a cross at its tip. Around the middle of the lid are holes for the smoke of the burning incense inside to escape. The bottom portion has a stem and a base, which is embellished with a starburst design that radiates from the center. The holding portion also has a small handle of a curving form and is embellished with small dots lined up next to one another.

ORIGIN

This small incense burner/holder is a variation of the censer, which is large and hung in Greek Orthodox churches. I suspect that this petite and freestanding version would probably have been used in the home.

Incense is a material used to produce a fragrance when burned. It is a mixture of spices and gums burned during religious rites to produce a fragrant smoke. These grains of spices are obtained from trees in Eastern and tropical countries.

The priest places incense on the burning coals in the censer which the server swings to and fro ... causing clouds of smoke to go heavenward. The ascending clouds of an incense in the Old Testament made up of fragrant gums and spices is an offering of earth's treasures to their Creator, symbolizing prayer. "Let my prayer be counted as incense before thee, and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice ..." (Psalm 141: 2) Accordingly, the people would pray before the Holy of Holies while the priest within was making the sacrifice. "And the whole multitude of people were praying outside at the hour of incense." (Luke 1: 10) The prayers went up to heaven unto God as the smoke of the incense does leaving behind the sweetness of the odor of it all the sweetness of the Holy Spirit.

The burning of incense has several meanings. Its burning represents zeal in the service of the Lord. Its fragrance represents virtue, pleasing to God as it always is. The rising smoke represents prayer and shows that your prayers are rising too. The smoke reminds you to pray, if you are not praying. The

fragrance of the smoke shows that our prayer and service are pleasing to God. God commanded Moses and His chosen people to use incense. The Church uses it in her service so the burning of incense has a biblical-historical weight.

CITATION

Burner, Incense, *National Hellenic Museum*, <https://hellenic.whirlihost.com/Detail/objects/>. Accessed 05/14/24.
