

Candle and religion – candles in liturgy



On biblical basis a candle can be identified as the symbol of 'Logos', Light of Men; in Christianity the symbol of Christ. The candle is perishing while it is giving light as the Saviour had to perish to save people. A candle can incarnate the Trinity in the unity of flame, wick and wax. Candles accompany us throughout a whole lifetime; they play just as important role at a baptism as on a birthday, beside a man passing away or at a bier.

They spread during the Roman era. Although, at first the ancient Christians used them for practical reasons, they were also applied in pagan cults. Candles used these days come from the time of Christian persecution. Pope Honorius III installed the law of burning at least two candles on an altar.

Candles burning on altars can represent various religious motives: six candles for the continuity of prayer, three ones for trinity and seven ones for sacraments.

Beside Christianity, in several other religions candles have an outstanding role e.g. in Judaism or in Buddhism.

Saint August said that the candle is the saved man himself: *'For Thou wilt light my candle; The Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.'*

And, of course, it is essential in the decoration of an Advent wreath. There are only four candles on it; in the four-week long Advent of Christ's coming they are lit one by one, week by week.

(Source: Wikipedia)