

Worship Notes from Sunday, September 15

Candle\$ & Candlestick\$ (\$300 x 6)

We take candles for granted in the Episcopal Church, especially in Anglo-Catholic parishes. But candles were once, as some of you know, liturgically incendiary. Consider the following two brief excerpts from George C. Giles' 1984 Ascension parish history:

In the summer of 1874 the rector [Canon Charles Palmer Dorset] began celebrating Mass at 6:30 A.M. daily. This was the first daily Mass in an Episcopal Chicago parish. Candles were placed on the altar, though left unlighted. Receiving a complaint concerning this instance of "extremism," Bishop Whitehouse ordered them removed. (pp. 7-8)

On August 1, 1875, the ninth rector of the Church of the Ascension took charge Fr. Ritchie resumed the use of altar candles, a practice which had been forbidden by the previous bishop. (pp. 9-10)

Some of us believe that the candles in question (lit or not) may well have been placed in the brass candlesticks shown here — two of a set of six. They are arguably the same six candlesticks shown in our only late-19th century photo of the parish's original high altar in the former St. Faith's Chapel (now St. Michael Hall).

Today, two of the six candlesticks are worse for wear but are still viable. They sit atop the moveable altar at which are celebrated our weekday masses and the 9:00 a.m. Sunday mass. The other four candlesticks are shot. On some, old solder repairs have not held. They are too wobbly to hold a candle! Others have been dropped and are now misshapen, one terribly.

We recently received a bid for \$300 per candlestick to completely restore them. Yes, that would be \$1800 for all of them. I'm hoping some of you may be willing to consider a gift to restore one, two ... or all of them. One interesting feature of these candlesticks is that they don't have any previous memorials or thanksgivings etched into them. I will be happy to arrange for the same for those willing to make a gift or gifts for restoration of these beautiful legacy candlesticks. Thanks for considering it.

- Fr. Raymond +

