

# Cork Wick Floats

## Directions

- 1. GLASS:** Any low, wide mouthed glass may be used for the lamp. Once used for this, however, the glass should not be re-used for any other purpose.
- 2. OIL:** Any vegetable oil can be used. Olive oil is the traditional choice dating back even to the time of Moses. Olive oil burns best if left open and allowed time to age, even to the point of becoming rancid.
- 3. WICK:** Use cotton string about one foot in length. Do not use coated or waxed string. Cotton string of about 6 ply will be thick enough so as to slide easily through the wire loop of the float, and yet not slip out. If the wick is soaked in vinegar for about 30 minutes it will burn brighter and cleaner. If this is done, the wick should be allowed to dry thoroughly before being used. Care should be taken that the wire loop holding the wick is below the surface of the oil, otherwise, the flame will burn down to the wire loop itself, causing the string to fall out of the loop.
- 4. FLAME:** The fathers of the Holy Mountain have taught us to use a very low flame which they call apatheia, passionless. The flame should burn steadily, not flickering. The size of the flame can be adjusted either by moving the wick itself or the wire handles of the float up or down. The lamp will burn six to twelve hours, depending mainly on the oil, but also on the size of the flame, weather, etc.. Before relighting the lamp, remove the excess carbon from the wick and twist the string slightly to shape the wick into a point.

**5. Cleaning:** napkins or tissues used to wipe the carbon and oil from fingers and/or tweezers should be burned in a separate place (the home censer is the best place) and not just thrown in the garbage. Be careful not to drip or spill the oil when lighting the lamp (St. Theodore of Studion imposed a canon of thirty prostrations on the ecclesiarch who spilled oil from the icon lamps). The glass should be washed periodically, and the water and oil replaced anew. The water in which the lamp is washed, as well as the old water and oil from the icon lamp, should not be poured down the drain. It is best, rather, to pour it under plants or trees, in an area that is not walked upon

