

CHRIST THE SAVIOUR ORTHODOX CHURCH  
AMERICAN CARPATHO-RUSSIAN ORTHODOX DIOCESE

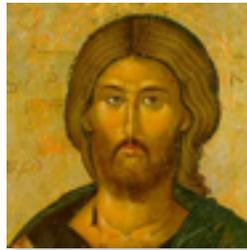
ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

TEN THOUSAND STATE ROAD

NORTH ROYALTON, OH 44133

Parish Website: [www.christsaviour.weebly.com](http://www.christsaviour.weebly.com)

Diocesan Website: [www.acrod.org](http://www.acrod.org)



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Sunday, December 18, 2016-Sunday Before Christmas

**Schedule of Services:**

Sunday, December 18; 10:00 AM-Divine Liturgy

Friday, December 23; 6:00 PM-Royal Hours of the Nativity of Our Lord

Saturday, December 24; 7:30 PM-Vigil Service for the Nativity of Our Lord

Sunday, December 25; 10:00 AM-Christmas Divine Liturgy

**Upcoming Events**

December 18-Parish Council Meeting

December 25-Nativity of Our Lord

With the blessing of His Grace, Bishop Gregory, we will be having monthly unction services. Unction is one of the seven sacraments of the Orthodox Church. It is not reserved exclusively for the dying or for Holy Wednesday. Rather, it is a healing sacrament which can be performed at any time of the year. It is open to all Orthodox Christians who require healing of both the body and the soul. Please come and experience this healing sacrament.

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Our parish and diocese have chosen Zoe for Life as an Advent Mission Project. We will be collecting diapers to deliver to Zoe for Life at the end of the Advent and Christmas Season. They are in desperate need of diapers sizes New Born thru 4. Please bring your diaper donations to Church and place them in our collection bin in the vestibule. Zoe for Life is always in need of baby items; i.e. clothing, car seats & pack and plays. To help in this manner, the diocese has put together a baby registry. Please visit <http://www.acrod.org/news/7283/2016adventmissionproject> to search and purchase items from the Diocesan Baby Registry. In addition, a baby bottle will be placed in the vestibule for monetary donations to Zoe for Life. THANK YOU for your help!

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Our Parish has teamed up with Royal Oak Recycling to help take care of our environment and our church. For every ton of paper that we collect, Royal Oak Recycling will give us \$30.00. We will be keeping the earth green and saving green for our church! Please collect your paper products from home and place them in the recycling bin in the corner of the church parking lot. For a list of acceptable items, please see Fr. Nick.

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

|     |                          |
|-----|--------------------------|
| Dec |                          |
| 21  | Fr. Deacon Robert Hubiak |



## Prayer List

### Living

|                      |                     |                      |
|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Pani Donna (Smoley)  | Thomas (Royko)      | Kathryn (Royko)      |
| Fr. James (Gleason)  | Fr. Ronald (Hazuda) | Ethel (Rusyniak)     |
| Fr. John (Zboyovski) | Angela (Hubiak)     | Emerson (Sirilla)    |
| Theodore (Bunevich)  | John (Bazilewich)   | Fr. George (Hutnyan) |
| Tiana (Hosta)        |                     |                      |

### Departed

|                    |                 |                          |
|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Virgilia (Nicula)  | Peter (Tatsis)  | Infant Nazareth (Mihaly) |
| Fr. Paul (Herbert) | Marion (Fallon) |                          |

*“Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects.” James 5:16*

If you have someone you would like to be added to the prayer list, please see Fr. Nick



## The Traditional Holy Night Supper and Prayer Service

Christians of the Orthodox Faith have developed many meaningful customs which are associated with the feasts and fasts of the Church Year. These are especially recognizable during the feast of the Nativity of Jesus Christ.

One of the most prominent of these customs among the people who emigrated from the Carpathian mountain region, is the Holy Night Supper. Each village retains its own variations regarding the actual ritual, but all the customs in general enrich the Christmas Eve Supper. Many of these customs have been handed-down by word of mouth. Others have been forgotten. Many are perpetuated here in America by second and third generation of Orthodox Christians.

Our forefathers and their descendants have been generously blessed with a number of inspiring traditions which are promoted in the home. The home of the Orthodox Christian is an extension of the Church. St. Paul reminds us of “the church in the home” in Romans 16:5.

The entire drama of events, associated with the “Birth of Christ” at Christmas, is re-enacted through the customs at the “Holy Night Supper.”

The Advent season does not conclude until the feast of Christmas. The Lenten rule of abstinence from meat and dairy products is strictly observed. Therefore, the Holy Night Supper consists of lenten foods.

Traditionally, the entire family prepares for the Holy Supper on the vigil of Christmas by washing themselves. The clean body is reflective of an unblemished soul and reminds us of the special state of grace, the result of having received the Holy Eucharist in Church during the Advent season.

The Supper, which is also called “Scedry Vecer” and “Svajtyj Vecer” (“generous evening” or “holy night”), begins at about the time the first star appears in the sky, or when the church bells ring at 6 p.m. (Angelus). The entire family assembles in the dining room. The star represents the star of Bethlehem.

The “gazda” or master of the home proceeds to feed the animals with a generous portion of food. This custom reminds us of the animals present in the stable at the birth of Christ.

The father spreads hay or straw in the dining room. As he does this, special prayers are recited. He greets the family with the words: “Christ is Born,” to which all reply, “Glorify Him!”

The dining room represents the cave and manger of Bethlehem, the humble surroundings of the Lord’s birth.

The four legs of the table are tied with rope or chain by the father. This represents the asking of blessings and protection from all corners of the world. The chain symbolizes the unity of love which prevails among the members of the family.

The mother of the house sprinkles all present with holy water. She also sprinkles all the livestock in the barn and the animals in the home. She gives each of the animals some sugar or salt and plenty of feed.

Candles are lighted on the table, as well as on the Christmas tree. The tree represents that one from which Adam and Eve had eaten. The candles remind us of Christ the “light of the World” at the time of His Birth. A candle is placed in the window as a Sign of welcome to any stranger or traveler who seeks shelter.

A clean white linen cloth is placed on the table. The linen represents the swaddling clothes with which the Mother of God clothed the Infant Child. Four candles are placed on the table symbolizing Christ and the three wise men. A manger scene or icon of the Nativity is also placed on the table.

During the initial prayers by the father, blessed incense is burned on hot coals or charcoal. It reminds us of the gift of frankincense and myrrh. The smoke symbolically elevates the prayers to the throne of God.

An empty chair is set at the table in memory of deceased family members. It also reminds us of those family members who are unable to be present at the Supper. Members of the family who are absent, represent those people who were not present at the birth of Christ.

According to the custom, the father or the eldest son leads the family in prayer, in a kneeling position. This reminds us of the adoration of the Christ-Child by the shepherds and wise men. The prayer expresses gratitude of God for His blessings during the past year. Included in the prayer are special petitions for health, happiness, longevity, peace and love. The father then blesses the food with holy water.

The father offers the traditional Christmas toast with a drink of sweet wine or brandy. All members of the family drink the toast, including the children.

The mother gives a tooth of garlic, dipped in honey, to each member. She makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of the father, and on each of the other members of the family according to seniority. The honey is symbolic of the sweetness of life, while the garlic represents the bitterness. The Trinity is invoked to fortify all family members against the tribulations of life in the coming year.

The father takes the home-made bread, blesses it, and distributes a piece to everyone. The sign of the cross is made with the bread, before it is consumed.

Customarily, twelve traditional foods are served, representing the twelve Apostles. The food is served from a common bowl, from which all eat, as it is passed-around. This is symbolical of the family unity.

The following lenten foods are served at the Supper. They may vary according to each village, county, and even from each household: (Only 12 of the following foods are served)

- Bread
- Vegetables
- Honey
- Fish
- Garlic
- Prunes
- “Bobalky” (small biscuits)
- Prune Soup
- “Pirohy”
- Stuffed Cabbage
- Mushrooms
- Sauerkraut
- Mushroom Soup
- Tea
- Pea Soup
- “Kolachy” (cakes)
- Nuts
- Borsch (beet soup)

Sounds like a feast instead of a fast, doesn't it? Only a small portion of the food is consumed.

After dinner, the father reads the narrative of Christ's Birth from the Scripture. A prayer of thanksgiving is recited, including thanks for the most precious gift of all, the only begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ. Carols are sung as the children eagerly hunt for pennies and small toys hidden in the straw, or in some secluded place of the home. Later, gifts are exchanged. During this time many carols are sung reminding the family of the birth of our Savior in the cave in Bethlehem. Then after the singing of the carols the family, like the shepherds, hasten to attend worship services.

*—Adapted from an article by Very Rev. Andrew Hutnyan*