

*Christ The Saviour Orthodox Church
American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese
Ecumenical Patriarchate*

10000 State Road
North Royalton, OH 44133

Parish Website: www.christsaviour.weebly.com

Diocesan Website: www.acrod.org

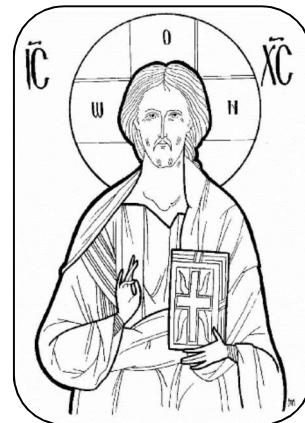
Church Phone: (440) 237-9196

Church Email: christsaviour@live.com

Fr. Harmon's Contact Info:

Cell: (440) 539-1116

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Schedule of Services:

Sunday December 24th: Matins at 8:55 am

Sunday December 24th: Divine Liturgy at 10 am

Sunday December 24th: Candlelight Vespers at 6 pm

Monday December 25th: Matins at 8:55 am

Monday December 25th: Divine Liturgy at 10 am

Friday December 30th: Vespers at 5 pm

Sunday December 31st: Matins at 8:50 am

Sunday December 31st: Divine Liturgy at 10 am

For more dates of services check out the parish website's calendar.

Prayer List:

Living		
Pani Donna (Smoley)	Thomas (Royko)	Kathryn (Royko)
Fr. James (Gleason)	Myra (Fabian)	Ethel (Rusyniak)
Fr. John (Zybojovski)	Angela (Hubiak)	Emerson (Sirilla)
Eileen (Bunevich)	Theodore (Bunevich)	Fr. George (Hutnyan)
Tiana (Hosta)	Virginia (Shymske)	Jakob (Hwang)
Infant John	Jane	Pani Amy (George)
Fr. George (Havrila)	Helen (Bires)	Theresa (Popovich)
Sally (Hubiak)		

Departed		
Virgilia (Nicula)	Peter (Tatsis)	Helen (Spanovich)
Fr. Paul (Herbert)	Marion (Fallon)	Pani Martha (Zeleniak)
George (Smisko)	Jack (Cochran)	Thomas (Krafick)
Brandy	Anthony	Fr. Elias (Kozar)
Fr. William (George)	Fr. Ronald (Hazuda)	Daria (Petrykowski)
Matushka Catherine (Jula)	Deacon Gregory (Hatrak)	Donna (Hanna)

"Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren this ought not to be so." +James 3:10

Starting with the new calendar year we will be restarting the prayer list. If you wish to have someone on the list, please contact a member of the Royko family or send an email to:

- christsvaviour@live.com

Candle Prices:

-Large are \$3

-Small are \$1

ORTHODOX CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS THROUGHOUT THE ORTHODOX WORLD:

Christmas is a more purely religious feast in Orthodox Christian tradition-it is not as commercial as in some other parts of the world. For most Orthodox Christians it is a time of fasting, prayer, worship, sacraments, spiritual renewal, and philanthropy.

On the Feast-Day of the Holy Nativity of Christ some Orthodox traditions call for Orthodox Christians to cut a branch from a tree and bring it into their home, as a symbol that Jesus is entering their house and their hearts. A prayer and blessing will be said before the Christmas Eve feast begins, and the head of the family will greet each person present with the traditional Christmas greeting of 'Christ is born!' to which the response is 'Glorify Him!' Then the bread will be torn by hand and shared with all present. Some families will have straw scattered around the table, as a reminder of Jesus' birth in the manger.

On Christmas Day, Orthodox Christians will attend the Divine Liturgy and receive the Holy Eucharist or Holy Communion. It is traditional to light candles in honor of Jesus, as Light of the world.

The food traditionally associated with Christmas depends on the location and culture of the people celebrating. Orthodox Christmas food is very different from the traditional turkey or roast ham of Western Christianity.

For example, in Russia and Ukraine the Christmas Eve feast should include twelve different foods (symbolic of the Twelve Apostles), including the traditional Kutia which is made from cooked wheat, honey, poppy seeds, raisins and occasionally walnuts. It is a kind of Christmas porridge, with the seeds included as a symbol of hope for the year ahead. The meal can contain fish but not meat.

In Serbia on Christmas Day the center of the table will be occupied by a special bread known as Cesnica. It is usually baked as a sweet bread, and always has silver coin inside-whoever finds the coin in his or her bread will receive a special blessing for the new year to come. The meal itself will often center on roast pig, with side dishes such as sausage, roast potatoes, and nut strudel.

In Greek Orthodox tradition, baklava, kourabiethes, melomakarona, and other traditional pastries are baked on Christmas Eve while Christopsomo is the bread baked on Christmas Day (it means literally 'Christ's bread'). A cross is formed on the top of the bread and at the end of each bar of the cross there is a walnut. As in Serbia, pork is the traditional roast meat of Greek tables as well as lamb. In the Greek Orthodox tradition

presents are given to everyone on 1st January the Feast-Day of Saint Basil the Great. Carol singing is another tradition on Christmas and New Year's Eve. The Nativity scenes are a popular Christmas tradition.

In Bulgaria, Christmas is celebrated on 25th December. Traditionally, Christmas Eve would be the climax of the Nativity Fast, and thus only an odd number of Lenten dishes are presented on that evening. On that day, a Bulgarian Budnik is set alight. On Christmas, however, meat dishes are already allowed and are typically served.

Among the Bulgarian Christmas traditions is koleduvane, which involves boy carolers visiting the neighboring houses starting at midnight on Christmas Eve, wishing health, wealth, and happiness. Another custom is the baking of traditional round loaf (pita). The pita is broken into pieces by the head of the family and piece is given to each family member, a valuable possession, and a piece for God. A coin is hidden inside the pita and whoever gets the coin, he or she will have a special blessing.

As in other countries, a Christmas tree is typically set up and the entire house is decorated.

On calendars in Georgia, Christmas is celebrated on 7th January. It is traditional in Georgia to go on Alilo (a modified pronunciation of Alleluia), a mass walk in the streets, dressed in special clothing to celebrate and congratulate each other. Most members of the Alilo march are children and they are given sweets by the adults. The Alilo carols vary across the provinces of Georgia. A local variant of the Christmas tree, called Chichilaki, is made of soft wooden material with curled branches. Sometimes it is hazelnut branch which is carved into a Tree of Life-like shape and decorated with fruits and sweets.

Armenians celebrate Christmas (surb tsnunt meaning 'saint birth') on January 6th as a public holiday in Armenia. It also coincides with the Epiphany. Traditionally, Armenians fast during the week leading up to Christmas. Devout Armenians may even refrain even from food for the three days leading up to the Christmas Eve, in order to receive the Holy Eucharist on a "pure" stomach. Christmas Eve is particularly rich in traditions. Families gather for the Christmas Eve dinner (khetum), which generally consists of rice, fish, nevik (a vegetable dish of green chard and chick peas), and yogurt/wheat soup. Desert includes dried fruits, and nuts, including rojik, which consists of whole shelled walnuts threaded on a string and encased in grape jelly, bastukh. This lighter menu is designed to ease the stomach off the week-long fast and prepare it for the rather more substantial Christmas Day dinner. Children take presents of fruits, nuts, and other candies to older relatives.

In addition to the Christmas tree, Armenian Christians also erect the Nativity scene. Christmas in the Armenian tradition is purely religious affair.

Christmas is the time of festivities and getting together. The 25th of December is a day that is celebrated throughout the world and due to the diversity of cultures, different countries celebrate it with their own mix of traditions. Romania is no different. They have their own way of celebrating the festival. To start with, the festivities last 19 days, from 20th of December to 7th of January. In Romania, Christmas begins with fasting which takes six weeks. Fasting implies giving up on meat, eggs, and milk, or like our grandfathers would say, restraining from sweet foods.

A true fasting would mean giving up on physical love, on alcohol and paying back any dues. People from villages do not listen to the radio during the fasting period, they don't watch TV and they don't throw or go to any parties. The fasting ends on Christmas night. Romanians are very religious and follow their customs and traditions well. Now let us go through the festivities and understand them.

On December 20th, people celebrate "the Ignat Day." On that day, they aren't allowed to do any work, but prepare the pork. According to the tradition, those who are poor and have no pig (which is usually sacrificed and prepared at the farmer's home) should sacrifice another animal. An old belief was that in the night before Ignat, the pig dreams of its knife. Those who are faint at heart and feel sorry for the pig are not allowed to participate in this ceremony, unless it dies slowly, and its meat is no longer good. Grandfathers usually make the sign of the cross on their grandchildren's foreheads, in order for them to be healthy.

Then comes Christmas Eve. In some Romanian areas, on Christmas Eve, farmers gather back everything they've lent during the year. Also, on Christmas Eve, bread is placed under the table to bear luck for the whole family, and wheat is placed under the tablecloth, to bring good crops.

Men and women start by cutting and preparing the lard bacon, the sausages, and other traditional specialties. And thus, begin the preparations for the Christmas feast. Housewives choose meat for their delicious cabbage rolls, for steaks, and the grease for baking cookies. Both parents and children go carol-singing on Christmas Eve. The houses are beautifully adorned on that eve, perfectly and ready to receive the carol-singers.

In some parts of the country, there is a custom called "carrying the icon", which symbolizes the Birth of Jesus Christ. In the North of Moldavia, the Christmas Eve feast is made of fasting food. And no one is allowed to uncover the table, until the priest comes through the door.

There are also many Orthodox Christians churches in Africa (Egyptian, Ethiopian, Kenya, Eritrean, and Asia (Syria, India). In the Coptic church fasting before Christmas

lasts 43 days, and throughout the final 30 days certain hymns are chanted in a manner known as 'seven and four'.

In Ethiopia, more than half the population is Orthodox Christians. People attend church on Christmas Day, and are given candles as they enter the church. After lighting their candles, the entire congregation processes three times around the church. They stand for all the three-hour ceremony. After the service the rest of the day is spent celebrating, with food, dancing, and sports.

There are, however, Orthodox Christians that do not celebrate Christmas on December 25th but use the Julian calendar, created under the reign of Julius Caesar in 45 BC. and have not adopted the Gregorian calendar, proposed by Latin Pope Gregory of Rome in 1582. There are 13 days in difference between the two calendars. December 25th on the Julian calendar actually falls on January 7th on the Gregorian calendar. January 6th marks the Theophany or Epiphany (Baptism of Christ in the River Jordan) one of the major Orthodox Holy Days when we celebrate the manifestation of the Triune God.

We focus acutely on the aspect of the Incarnation of Christ and the cosmic salvation it has for all mankind. While many of the external trappings are the same, like Christmas trees, wreaths, ribbons, and gifts, there is an increased emphasis on the spiritual reality of this truly miraculous and Divine Mystery of God becoming man, so that man may be united to God and each other.

+Father George