



## Nativity Holy Supper When Served at Home

- ◆ Technically, and traditionally, this was a family event served before the great Vigil of Christmas Eve.
- ◆ It is a Ukrainian/Carpatho-Russian tradition to have a “Holy Supper” on Christmas Eve. Since Christmas is preceded by forty days of fasting, this Holy Supper is the last meal of the Fast.
- ◆ The twelve fasting foods (in honor of the 12 Apostles) usually served are: barley, wheat, honey, garlic, lenten bread, stewed fruit, poppy-seed bread (Babalki), pierogi, sauerkraut (Halushki), potatoes, chick peas/beans, and mushroom soup/vegetable soup.
- ◆ The meal begins with a prayer in front of an icon of the feast, and the singing of the Christmas troparion and the lighting of a candle placed in the center of the table. Hay is strewn on the table to symbolize the manger. The candle symbolizes the star of Bethlehem.
- ◆ The bread is then broken by the father of the house and given to everyone present. This symbolizes Christ at the Last Supper.
- ◆ The father also offers a toast for health and joy in the coming year and “Many Years!” is sung.
- ◆ Memory Eternal is also sung for loved ones who have fallen asleep in the Lord.
- ◆ The foods range from bitter to sweet to remind us of the bitterness of life before Christ was born and the sweetness of life which comes after His birth.
- ◆ Sometimes Caroling is sung at the end.
- ◆ The Nativity Troparion, TONE 4:

**Christ is Born!**

**Glorify Him!**

**THY NATIVITY, O CHRIST OUR GOD,  
 HAS SHONE TO THE WORLD THE LIGHT OF WISDOM!  
 FOR BY IT, THOSE WHO WORSHIPPED THE STARS,  
 WERE TAUGHT BY A STAR TO ADORE THEE,  
 THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,  
 AND TO KNOW THEE, THE ORIENT FROM ON HIGH.//  
 O LORD, GLORY TO THEE!**