

UOC Youth!



JANUARY 2021

FOCUS ON JANUARY SAINTS



WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO
NATIVITY EDITION!



THE MORE YOU KNOW!
DECEMBER 25TH OR
JANUARY 7TH?




NATIVITY ISSUE



UOC Youth!

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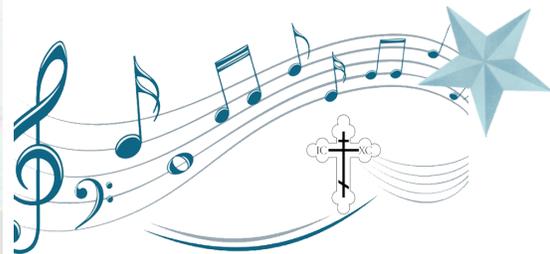
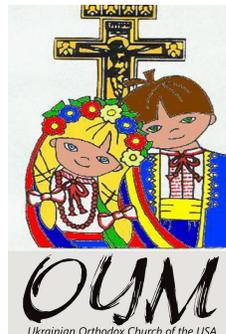
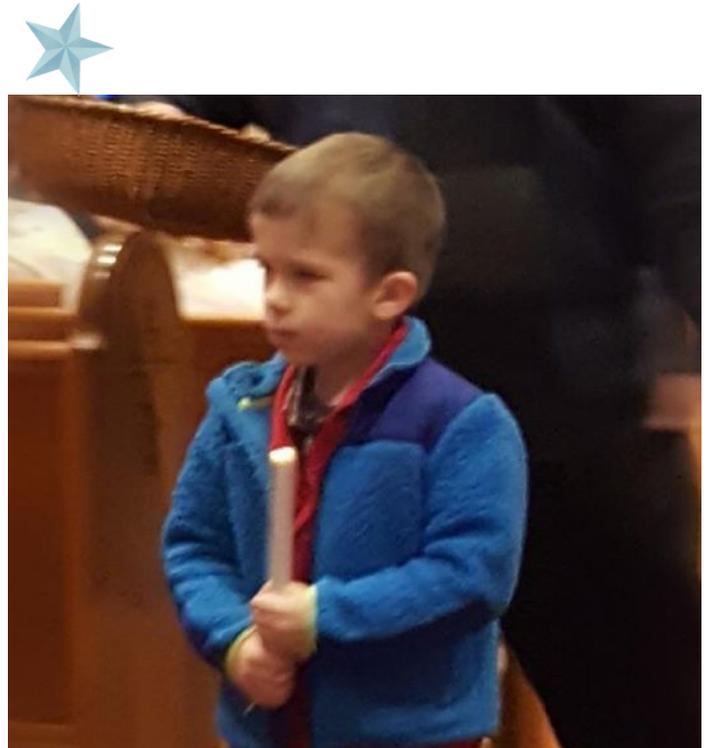
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Icon of the Nativity courtesy of Archangel Icons.

Parish Nativity photos courtesy of St. Peter & St. Paul in Carnegie, PA.

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Nativity Edition

FOCUS on the Saints



Who is in your family? Your first thought might be your parents, brothers, or sisters. We also have so many more people! Aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents to name a few. We can trace our family tree back for well....who knows how far!

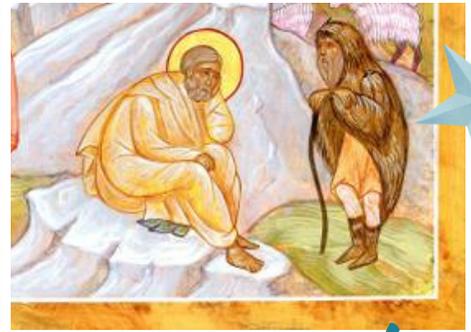
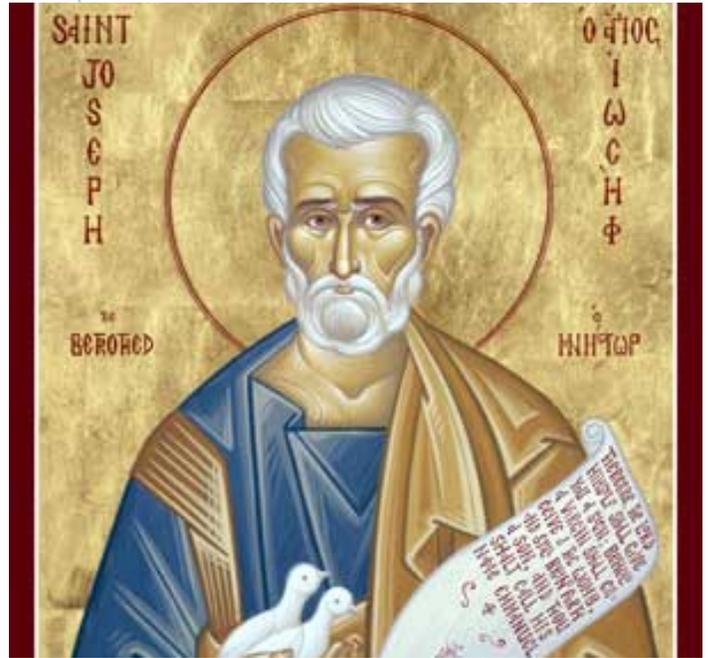
Joseph's family tree can be traced back to King David in the Old Testament! This is the family tree we listen to during the Gospel reading at Christmas!

St. Joseph had been married and sadly his wife died. He was a widower. He had three sons and three daughters before he married Mary.

St. Joseph was chosen to be the husband and protector of Mary and Jesus and that is what he did!

At first, he wasn't sure about what God was asking him to do. The icon on the bottom right shows Joseph being tempted to not trust God. That is why he looks worried. But an angel comes to Joseph in a dream and tells him not to worry and trust in God!

St. Joseph holds two white turtle doves. This is to show the offering Joseph made at the temple when he and Mary presented Jesus there. How can we be like St. Joseph and trust in God's!



St. Joseph the Betrothed

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO..

Nativity Edition



Why do we fast on Nativity Eve? Most of my friends have a big party with all kinds of food?

That is a good question! Why do we fast on Nativity Eve? Well, do you get really excited the day before your birthday? You might be getting ready for a party. Decorations are going up and food is being cooked but you don't get to eat yet or open your presents.

I bet you can't wait for it all to happen. How do you feel when it finally gets to happen? Happy? Relieved? Is the day now more special?

Fasting before a feast is a bit like this. When we fast it helps us with our discipline to better experience the feast. It allows us to grow closer to God. We can 'fill up' on good things like prayer, helping others, kindness and love! Fasting is a reminder of the joy that we will experience in heaven by following God's will, not ours. No earthly birthday party can compare! Our body and soul are excited and waiting for Christ to come! How wonderful and special it is when it happens!

Our special party is celebrating Divine Liturgy, participating in Holy Communion and THEN breaking the fast!

THE MORE YOU KNOW!



We are unique because... We celebrate the Nativity on January 7th! Julius Ceasar, the famous Roman Emperor, put the Julian calendar in place in the year 46 BC. It replaced the Roman calendar, which was based on the cycle of the moon. This calendar is based on the cycle of the sun!

It takes just about 365 days to circle the sun. BUT, it is not exactly 365 days. Because of this they had to add a day to the calendar every 128 years!

In the year 1582, Pope Gregory XIII introduced a new calendar, the Gregorian calendar. This calendar is very similar to the Julian calendar but it makes an adjustment so that you don't have to add a day to the calendar! Both calendars need to add one extra day every four years - Leap Day! But only for that year!

Over the years, the two calendars have drifted apart. Currently, there are 13 days between the two. Which is why we have Christmas on January 7th!

Many Orthodox churches still use the Julian Calendar and some use the Gregorian. However, when Great Lent begins we ALL use the Julian calendar.



The More You Know!

LIVING THE LITURGY

Nativity Edition



What does it mean that, "God is with US!"?

The service of Great Compline is what we celebrate on Christmas Eve. We hear many readings from the old and new testament. We also hear a beautiful song "God is with us!" This is so exciting! God is always "with" us but now He is here, the Son of God in the flesh!

Listen during the verses of the hymn - use the sheet on the next page to help you remember all the different ways we see God with us! Add your own ideas of where you see God during the Nativity Feast! You can draw a picture if you prefer! The verses remind us of the Old Testament prophesies Jesus does and will fulfill



LIVING THE LITURGY

Nativity Edition



God With Us! Verses from Church:



God with Us! What I see!



**What does it
mean that,
"God is with
US!"?**

COOKING ORTHODOX

Holy Supper - Sviat Vechir

Nativity Edition

How can you help with Holy Supper?

Holy Supper takes place on Christmas Eve. We are still fasting from meat and dairy on this evening! Much of the food preparation for the Holy Supper can be complicated. This could be a great time to ask what you can help with in the kitchen!

Here a few things you should be able to help with:

- Setting the table! Your family might have special traditions. One common one is to have a candle in the middle of the table. The candle will be lit once the first star has been seen and the meal will begin.
- Have an extra place setting for your ancestors or guests who may stop by.
- The Didukh (wheat bundle) should be placed in the same room as you will be eating your meal. Didukhs symbolize the household's wish for an abundance of nature and a bountiful harvest for the upcoming year.
- You can help bring out each dish that will be served. There are 12 different meatless foods that represent the 12 Apostles.
- Helping to clear the table and do dishes will be most helpful.



**Sviata Vecheria' or
Holy Supper is eaten
on Christmas Eve,
January 6th.**

MUSIC MINUTE



Nativity Edition

There is SO much beautiful music during the Nativity season. Listen on Christmas Eve - we will sing over and over again, "For God is with us!" How exciting! Sing along! Here is a sample of how this is sung.

The tropar is something you will sing many times. It is sung in Tone 4. Here is a sample to learn!

We have many beautiful carols! One of the most common is God Eternal! or Boh Predvechny! Another carol is known the world - over. Carol of the Bells is a Ukrainian carol known as Shchedryk.

Tropar of the Nativity of Christ

Your 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 You, / the Sun of Righteousness, / and to know You, the Orient from on High. / O Lord, glory to You!

Caroling is a very popular tradition for Ukrainians. If your parish carols - join them! If they don't maybe you could suggest starting a new tradition!



You may use the icon on the next page to help you color this one! Once complete, maybe you can share this icon as a gift in a frame or place it in your icon corner!



Nativity Activity

Christ Is Born! Glorify Him!



Things We Say

We use special greetings in the church. These greetings can often tell us what time of the year it is. For the Nativity season we greet someone saying, "Christ is Born!" or "Khrystos Narodvitsya!" and the response is "Glorify Him" or "Slavite Yoho!"

Who's in the Icon?

Top corners - The Angels
Center Circle - The Star
Center - Mary the Birth-giver of God
Center - Baby Jesus
Center - Ox and Donkey
On the Left - The Wisemen: Balthasar, Gaspar, Melchior
On the Right - The Shepherds
Bottom Left - Salome and the midwife care for Jesus
Bottom Right - St. Joseph and the devil disguised as a shepherd.

UOC Parent!

MAKING A DIDUKH

★ Your Family Can Create a simple didukh for Christmas!

Items needed:

- A tube (from paper towels or toilet paper) depending how high you would like your didukh.
- A paper plate or plate you wish to place your didukh when completed. (You may want to glue it to the plate)
- Glue to hold the wheat in place, and string for extra level. (Glue gun is optimal)
- Ribbon of your choosing to tie around the wheat for decoration.
- Wheat for flower vases from a store.



1. Take the tube and glue the wheat stems to the tube.
2. Take a piece of string or yarn to tie around the wheat to help secure the wheat in place.
3. Use the ribbon you selected and tie it around the string and decorate the wheat.
4. Place the decorated wheat, didukh on the plate you selected.
5. Congratulations! You made your very own DIDUKH! Select a special place in your home to display.

UOC Parent!

Reflections for Parents during the Nativity Season:

In keeping with the idea of caroling, find a few reflections for parents as you celebrate this special time of year.

- **Joy to the World:** A popular author famously advises those who wish to simplify and declutter their homes to consider whether or not items "spark joy." As Orthodox Christians we know that the greatest joy is found in Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Consider which traditions and events are helping to bring the joy of Christ to your family. Check out the Recommended Reading list below for ideas.
- **Little Drummer Boy:** Encourage your children to recognize the gifts they have been given by God and to think about ways they use those gifts to bring joy to others during this season. Learning to use their talents for God's glory is a gift that we can share with them.
- **Silent Night:** This season is marked by hustle and bustle, sights and sounds. But in the story of the Nativity, we are reminded that Christ was born in a cave because it was the place where room was made for Him. We can encourage our family to make room for Christ by taking a few minutes to sit quietly. Even if it only lasts a few minutes, this can be a simple way to keep our family focused on "the reason for the season."

Recommended Reading:

Check out these books that include practical ideas for keeping Christ at the center of Christmas in your home!

[Celebrating the Twelve Days of Christmas: A Family Devotional in the Eastern Orthodox Tradition](#)
by AmandaEve Wigglesworth

[Welcoming the Christ Child: Family Readings for the Nativity Lent](#)
by Elissa Bjeletich

[Making God Real in the Orthodox Christian Home](#)
by Anthony M. Coniaris

(This book includes ideas for many aspects of family life, but several focus specifically on the Nativity Season.)



UOC Youth Team!

In Your Parish:

Caroling is a great way to engage families and youth of your parish in the Nativity season. Children of all ages can easily be included in this activity and learning the hymns of our church fosters an understanding of our faith. Here are some ideas for beginning a caroling tradition or extending it if your parish already has a caroling program.

- Make arrangements to visit with parishioners who are "shut-in" and unable to attend church. If there are health concerns about having visitors, record a video to share virtual greetings.
- Have families "adopt" a parishioner to bring a small gift to as part of your caroling. You could also have youth gather to make small crafts that could be given as gifts when carolers visit shut-ins. This would be a great connection to make to St. Nicholas as an example of giving.
- Find a public place to carol and share the faith with the community near your parish. Consider joining a public Christmas celebration, connecting with other local Orthodox or Christian churches to host a concert, or simply sing outside your parish doors for all to hear!



Special Consideration:

Parish members with auditory processing concerns may be overwhelmed in a large caroling event. It's always best to check with families to see what accommodations will help them to feel included, but consider allowing the individual to bring in the caroling star and make a greeting while the room is quiet.

UOC Youth Team!



In Your Parish:

Create Ukrainian Caroling Stars!

Needed Items

- Colored paper, card stock, or scrapbook paper. The thicker the paper, the more stable the star.
- Glue sticks, modge podge and or Tacky glue - ensure it will dry clear
- Craft sticks or paint brushes to spread glue
- Paper Icons
- Any of the following to decorate - washi tape, self-stick gems, markers, crafting stickers, yarn, ribbons.
- Dowel rods

Direction

- Watch the accompanying video on our Youtube Channel , Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry to learn how to fold your papers.
- Once your paper is folded and glued together, start having fun decorating!
- Once complete and dry, you may attach dowel rods to the back of the stars for easy carrying. You may choose to use a sturdy tape to secure and then cover with additional paper. You may also choose to wrap your dowel rods in yarn or ribbon.
- There are many videos showing caroling in Ukraine. Your youth group can create your own traditions.
- Share a brief discussion that may touch on the following points:
 1. Caroling is our way to proclaim Christ's birth to the world! Why is this important?
 2. When caroling for our parish family or people in our community, who are we being like? Answers could include the angels and shepherds.
 3. Love, Joy and Peace are three important themes of the Nativity season. They are also first three Fruit of the Spirit. How can we live these gifts during this season?