

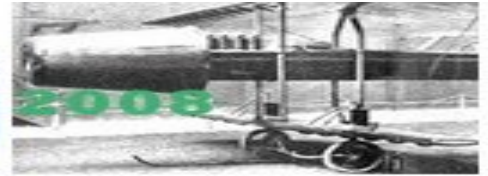


newsletter

The Spirit Of December

“Henri Coanda” Technical College Tulcea

No. 1, Decembrie 2008



SUMMARY:

* Saint Nicolas

A sweet old man who takes care of good children, putting presents for them in the boots...



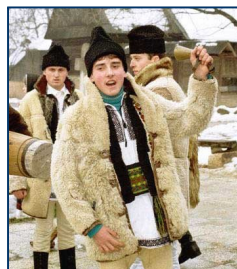
* IGNAT



A celebration of our people which consists in ritual sacrifice of the pig for Christmas

* New Year's shows: The Little Plug and Sorcova

Children invoke the divinity of vegetation for the health of the host in the morning of the first day of the New Year



* New Year's Eve: beliefs and superstitions

Bad luck, small gifts, not good to give money, wear new clothes...



SCHOOL NEWS

*Our theatre troupe presented another play, "With the Gypsy Girls", after a short story written by Mircea Eliade.

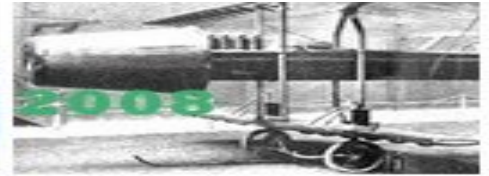


*Christmas is coming, gifts were gathered in the school for the orphans from Sambata Noua Day Centre.



* Our football team won the schools' championship. So, we have the best football team in town!!!





Saint Nicholas

On the night of 5 / 6 December it says that St. Nicholas is coming through the windows and, if the sleeping children had a good behaviour, let them in boots sweets and other gifts. But also he is the one who punishes the lazy and disobedient.

In the morning of St. Nicholas children find gifts in their boots. It's a habit, not only the Romania, to make gifts in this day. Unlike Santa Claus, St. Nicholas does not show at all and nobody can see him.. .

IGNAT

On December 20, is celebrated Ignat, when it's said that pigs are sad finding out they will be cut.

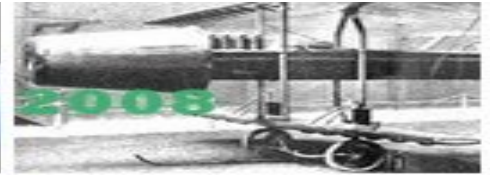
It is an old Roman habit which proves the origin of name Ignat: derived from ignis, meaning fire. Pig is an embodiment of the spirit of harvest and the sacrifice had at origins a fertilization function, the enhancement of plenty.

At the Roman Saturnalia, the pig was dedicated to goddess, Ops, wife of Saturn. An antique wrote: "This pig, feed with acorns between feral pigs will make you spend good Saturnalia".

After the slaughter, a cross is made on the pig's head, because it's the only way for the soul to leave the body. The ritual cutting must be done with no mercy, otherwise the pig will die hard and the meat won't have a good taste.



Usually, tail, ears and bladder were given to the children; the spleen was an important weather indicator, showing how the winter will be, long or short, depending on spleen thickness. Curdled blood found in the pig's heart means luck in money. If the pig was black, those who participated in the slaughter smear their faces with blood to be red on the face and healthy all year that will follow. The same blood, gathered in a bowl and dried was good for sick children from smoking cold, ghosts, fear, etc.



New Year shows



"**Plugusorul**" ("The Plough") and "**Sorcova**" (bunches of artificial flowers that children hold while they make greetings for the New Year), dances of anthropomorphous and zoomorphous masks are the most widely spread popular traditions for the New Year. Gathered together in processions of goats, dears, horses, bears, etc., people wearing these masks walk the village paths in the sound of bells, whistles and drums, in the eve of the New Year and remind of the Bacchus festivals in antiquity.

Beliefs and Superstitions

The last night of the year... It's a magic night, a mystery time with powerful implications in our lives. Like any other important event in everyone's life, the last night of the year is associated with a big number of beliefs and superstitions. Here are some of them:

- * empty pockets and empty cups of the New Year will bring a poor year;
- * first person who comes into your house can still influence the following year. Ideal is that first came to be dark-haired, tall, handsome and would be good to bring small gifts such as a penny silver, a bit of bread, a green sprig and some salt. Blonde and redhead bring bad luck and women should dispel before she brings bad luck in the house.
- * it is bad luck to let a fire lit out for New Year's Eve;



- * if you make as much noise in the passage of years scare evil spirits to be removed from your house;
- * dance outdoors, especially around a tree, ensure luck in love, prosperity and health in the next 12 months;
- * Children born in the New Year bring good luck and prosperity in the house;
- * as for money, it is not good to give money in the first day of the year because it will ensure that you do the same for the next 12 months;
- * in the first day of the year, girls have to look out the window of their bedroom. If the first person they see is a man passing, they will marry before the next year;
- * it is recommended to wear new clothes from January 1 to get more clothes next year;
- * better to not throw away anything from the house in the first day of the year, not even garbage. If you make gifts, make sure they leave in the day of December 31;
- * to make sure that your relationship will continue and will be fed with love during the following year, you have to shift kiss when the year is passing;
- * it's good to pay all your debts to not be in debt throughout the next year and so on;
- * at midnight all the doors should be left open to let the old year leave the place.



Newsletter editors:

Livia Adelina Drambu

Laura Bostan

Collaborators:

George Stefanov

Andrei Rosu

Coordinator:

Mihai Tiuliumeanu

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