

Ghost Supper or Jiibay Wiikongewin

As **Anishinaabe** people we have always remembered and honored our Ancestors, our relatives who were here before us. We would honor our family past away whether they be **Grandfathers, Grandmothers, Fathers, Mothers, Aunties, Uncles, Brothers, Sisters and cousins by blood or Clan**. We would also honor those **Tribal Chiefs, Spiritual Leaders, Medicine People** and all others that had important roles within our communities. We would also honor and remember friends and all of those that contributed to our communities in one way or another.

One of the ways we would do this is by holding a **Jiibay Wiikongewin Ceremony** or sometimes referred to **Ghost Supper or Feast**. There are many different ways of how this Ceremony is done varying from family to family and community to community. There is no wrong way when your intentions are good. **Spirit** will recognize your intentions and accept your offering.

Often times a **Sacred Fire** would be lit, so that food and **Asemaa** (Tobacco) offerings could be made. This would be done prior to anyone else eating. If a fire is unavailable, the offerings may be placed in a safe spot outside. Along with this sometimes those ones that carry those **Dewe'iganak** (drums) and **Nagamawinan** (songs) can be invited to share what they carry. Spirit especially enjoys the sound of our **Dewe'igan** (drum) and the Sacred Songs that go with them.

Usually the building (area when outdoors), participants and Feast food is smudged prior to eating. It is the **Medicine**, usually one or all of the **Sacred Medicines, Giizhik** (Cedar), **Weengashk** (Sweetgrass), **Mshkadewashk** (Sage) and **Asemaa**, (tobacco), we use that we ask for help, not the person who does the smudging. The person who does the smudge is only a helper that physically carries the **Medicines**, the **Eagle Feathers** or what ever the **Sacred** items we may use. Anyone can do the smudge, as long as it is not a woman on her time.

Some people who still practice this way will prepare a feast place where a chair is left empty, but everything is placed there as though someone would sit and eat. This empty seat is there for Spirit to sit. Others may designate someone to eat for the **Spirit**.

When the food is cooked, women on their moon time would not touch any of the food to be eaten. Most times someone else would even get their food and serve them. We have also been taught to have only good thoughts when we do this, cooking of the **Jiibay Wiikongewin** foods.

We also cook what are past away enjoyed, for example my Mother liked macaroni and cheese so that is what I would cook for her and other things that other relatives liked. We have also been taught that when we eat for the **Spirit**, we do so in a respectful way thinking of them and the goodness that they brought into our lives; giving thanks for all that we have received and will receive in the future.

These are things that I have been taught and probably will vary from what others have been taught.

-Written by employees of the Sault Tribe Cultural Division