

Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church
13 Pembroke Road, Danbury, CT 06811

Holy Trinity Byzantine Catholic Church
121 Beaver St. New Britain, CT 06051

Week of November 23rd, 2025

Parish Rectory: (203) 743-1106

Church Hall: (203) 628-7997

E-mail: stnicholasdanbury@icloud.com

Website: www.stnicholasdanbury.org

Served by: Father Stephen R. Russo, Pastor

Father Anthony DeFronzo, Emeritus

Cantors: Dr. Randy Weyant, Ms Ann Schlain

Trustees: Ms Anne Devine, Dr David Fanning

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Saturday, Nov 22 — Anticipation 24th Sunday after Pentecost

4:00 PM Divine Liturgy at Holy Trinity, New Britain
Intention: Parishioners of Holy Trinity

Sunday, Nov. 23 — 24th Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy at St. Nicholas Danbury
Intention: +Michael Zuzalock, by Marion Smith

Wednesday, Nov 26 Pre-Thanksgiving

7:00 PM Divine Liturgy at St. Nicholas, Danbury
Intention: To give thanks for all the blessings our parishes have been given

Saturday, Nov. 28— Anticipation 25th Sunday after Pentecost

3:00 PM Divine Liturgy at Holy Trinity, New Britain
Intention: The Health and well-being of our Parishioners

Sunday, Nov 29 — 25th Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy at St. Nicholas, Danbury
Intention: +Florence Zuzalock by Marion Smith

The Vigil Candel for November for +Margaret Weyant

By her loving daughter, Carol Haddad

The Giving Tree

Starting last week, the “Giving Tree” outreach program began. It will benefit Family and Children’s Aid of Danbury (FCA). FCA provides support for families and children in a variety of ways. This year, your gifts will support children in foster care ages 2 to 17. There are additional tags on the trees in the back of the church for you to choose from. Each tag has a variety of options/wishes for each child. It is not necessary to purchase everything listed; you can select as you like. If you would like to support this program but are unable to get out and purchase a gift, you can donate, and we will buy the gifts on your behalf. Please have your gifts wrapped and attach the tag so we know who they are for. Please place your wrapped gifts under the icon of St. Nicholas in front of the Church by Dec. 14th. If you have any questions, reach out to Diane D-Addario-Billimoria at 203-313-3200. A great big THANK-YOU to Diane for coordinating this special project for us! Please remember her and her family in your prayers. For any tags that are not taken. The church will fund the gifts, but I would appreciate it if someone could help order or buy the gifts, which will be from the church. Please see Fr. Stephen

The Vocation Icon

We will continue to share the vocation Icon with our families. Our parish invites individuals and families to **sign up to take home the Vocation Icon** for one week and pray for vocations to the priesthood, diaconate, and religious life. In the Byzantine Catholic tradition, we rely on the fervent prayers of the faithful to nurture and sustain these sacred callings.

Please consider welcoming the icon into your home and offering daily prayers that the Lord will raise up servants for His holy Church. *“Ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest”* (Matthew 9:38).

A sign-up sheet is available on the credence table. There are still open weeks. Thank you for joining in this important ministry of prayer.

Additionally, if you or anyone in your family is discerning a vocation and would like to discuss or obtain additional information and support, please don't hesitate to contact Fr. Stephen.

Bingo Support in Danbury

Our next bingo will be Saturday, Dec. 13th. We need door prizes! If you would like to donate items that we can give away as door prizes, it would be greatly appreciated. Our Bingo is a major source of income for our parish, so please support us by donating. Also, we are always in need of help. If you can spare any time, it goes a long way to spread the workload.

Bingo Craft Fair In Danbury

We will also be having a small holiday craft fair in the church annex on Dec. 13th. 9-3. If any parishioners are interested in setting up a table to sell their arts and crafts, please don't hesitate to contact Fr. Stephen or Stephanie Fanning.

This Week: The Gospel of the Parable of the Rich Fool

As we begin **Philip's Fast**, we are invited to examine our priorities, our treasures, and what truly sustains the soul. The parable of the Rich Fool warns against storing up earthly wealth and building bigger barns for ourselves without being rich toward God. During this fast, we embrace simplicity and spiritual discipline, laying aside commercial distractions so that our hearts are free to seek the riches of the Kingdom. In fasting, prayer, and generosity, we resist the temptation to hoard for ourselves and instead cultivate hearts of compassion, gratitude, and readiness for the Lord's coming.

As we prepare for Thanksgiving

Giving True Thanks on Thanksgiving! As we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving Day, on the 27th, let us remember that gratitude is at the heart of our Byzantine Catholic life. The very word **Eucharist** means *thanksgiving*, reminding us that all true gratitude begins and ends in God. Before we gather at our tables, may we pause to offer prayerful thanks for the blessings the Lord has poured into our lives—seen and unseen.

Let us also remember those who are lonely, suffering, or in need, and lift them up in prayer. As the Apostle Paul reminds us: *"In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you"* (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

May our gratitude overflow into acts of mercy, generosity, and love, so that our Thanksgiving becomes a reflection of the heavenly banquet to which Christ calls us.

I would like to start a new tradition for our parish to celebrate a Thanksgiving liturgy, at St. Nicholas, on Wednesday evening before Thanksgiving at 7 PM to begin the celebration of this great American Feast. Try to make every effort to join us. Cider and refreshments will be served after.

A blessed and grace-filled Thanksgiving to all!

St. Nicholas Celebration

Please join us on **Sunday, December 7th**, for a festive **parish brunch in the lower hall** following the **9:00 AM Divine Liturgy**. As we celebrate the feast of our holy patron, **St. Nicholas**, we will also welcome a special visit from St. Nicholas himself! This is an excellent opportunity for fellowship, joy, and honoring the saint who guides and protects our parish community. All are welcome—come and celebrate with us and bring friends and family! There is a sign up sheet in the back. Parishioners are asked to bring deserts. If anyone would like to help set up on the 6th, Please join at 9:30 in the lower hall.

As Philip's Fast Begins Nov. 15th!

As we enter **Philip's Fast**, the Church invites us into a season of quiet preparation for the joyful feast of our Lord's Nativity. These forty days help us open our hearts more fully to the Lord who comes to dwell among us—*"Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight His paths"* (Mark 1:3).

Philip's Fast is a time to slow down, to breathe, and to make more room for Christ in our daily lives. Each person will keep the fast as they are able; what matters most is the desire to grow closer to God. As we read in the book of Psalms, *"The Lord is near to all who call upon Him"* (Psalm 145:18).

Here are a few gentle ways to embrace this season:

- **Deepen your prayer.**
Add a brief prayer to your day, spend a few quiet moments reading the bible, or pray the Jesus Prayer. *"Be still, and know that I am God"* (Psalm 46:10).
- **Simplify with intention.**
Fasting helps us let go of distractions and live with greater clarity. Whether through simpler meals, less noise, or intentional gratitude, choose what helps you focus on Christ. *"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"* (Matthew 6:21).
- **Offer mercy and kindness.**
Acts of charity allow Christ's love to shine through us. Reach out to someone in need, support parish outreach programs, or offer a word of encouragement. *"Whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did it for Me"* (Matthew 25:40).

May these days of preparation fill your homes with peace, your hearts with hope, and your lives with the quiet joy of Christ's coming. Let us walk this fast together in faith and love, trusting in the promise that *"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it"* (John 1:5).



I thought you might enjoy some short stories to inspire you as you journey to the Feast of the Incarnation! Enjoy,

Your servant in Christ

Fr. Stephen

The Lantern in the Window

In a small mountain village, an elderly woman placed a lantern in her window every night of Philip's Fast. When asked why, she said, "Someone might be walking in darkness, and if they see the light, they will know they're not alone." As the weeks passed, others began placing lanterns in their windows too. By the time of the Nativity, the entire village glowed with warm light.

The lesson: Every small act of kindness and prayer during the Fast brightens the road to Bethlehem—not only for us, but for others.

The Empty Chair

A family preparing for the Nativity always set one extra place at the table. When the children asked why, the father explained, "This is for Christ, who comes to us in the stranger, the lonely, and the forgotten." One year, a neighbor who had recently lost his wife stopped by unexpectedly. Seeing the empty place, he wept. "I thought I'd be alone tonight," he said. The family welcomed him in, and their celebration became more radiant than ever before.

The lesson: Christ is born wherever love makes room for Him.

The Small Bundle of Straw

A little girl helped her mother prepare a simple Nativity scene. Each day of the Fast, she added a small piece of straw to the manger whenever she performed a good deed or made a sacrifice. By the time Christmas arrived, the manger was full and soft—ready for the newborn King.

The lesson: Every small act of love during the Fast becomes part of the humble bed we prepare for Christ.

Blessing of the Waterways – January 11

Mark your calendars for **Sunday, January 11th at 11:00 AM!** This year, we joyfully reestablish the beautiful **Theophany tradition of blessing the waterways.** As Christ descended into the Jordan for His Baptism, we will gather at a Danbury park along the edge of **Candlewood Lake** to bless the waters and proclaim the sanctification of all creation. We also hope to welcome participation from our sister **Eastern Christian churches** as a sign of unity and shared faith. More details will be announced after Christmas. Please plan to join us for this grace-filled celebration! We can use some assistance in organizing this event. If you are interested, please see Fr. Stephen.



In the **Eastern Catholic Church**, Theophany is one of the most profound and ancient feasts of the liturgical year. It commemorates the **first public manifestation of the Holy Trinity:** the Father's voice proclaiming Jesus as His beloved Son, the Son standing in the waters, and the Holy Spirit descending in the form of a dove. Through the Baptism of Christ, the waters—and all creation—are blessed and renewed. This feast reminds us of our own baptismal calling and the grace that continues to sanctify our lives.

Children Needed for Christmas Eve Nativity Pageant

We are excited to prepare this year's **Christmas Eve Nativity Pageant** and invite all children of the parish to take part in telling the story of Christ's birth. Angels, shepherds, wise men, and candle lighters are all needed—and every child is welcome to participate!

We are also looking for **adult volunteers** to help with costumes, assist during practices, and support the children on the evening of the pageant (which will be at 9:30 Christmas Eve. Your help will bring this beautiful tradition to life once again for our parish family.

If your child would like to participate or if you are able to volunteer, please sign up in the narthex or contact Fr. Stephen. More information about rehearsal dates will be provided soon. Thank you for helping us celebrate the joy of the Nativity!

November Birthdays

Catherine Guzi	November 1
Jay Streaman	November 6
Michelle Maroni	November 7
Simeon Kearns	November 11
Catherine Fulgum	November 19
Randy Weyant	November 21
Melissa Hrabcsak	November 22
Beth Rivera	November 23
Jeremy Weyant	November 25
Christine Stephenson	November 26
Paul Caruso	November 26

May God grant all of you many blessed years!

(If anyone is missing or incorrect, please see Fr. Stephen)

Offertory Danbury

November 9th: \$740.00

November 16th: \$880.00

Offertory New Britain

November 9th: \$645.00

November 16th: \$195.00

THANK_YOU for your coninued Support!

Bishop's Appeal

Please prayerfully consider a gift to this year's **Bishop's Appeal**, which supports the vital ministries of our eparchy. Your generosity helps sustain **youth camps and faith formation**, provides **assistance to our parishes**, and offers **charitable care for the poor and those in need**. Every contribution—large or small—strengthens our Church and helps us carry out the Gospel mission. Thank you for your prayerful support and generosity. You should have received a donation packet in the mail. There are also extras in the back of the church.