

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 December 14th, 2025

Parish Rectory: (203) 743-1106

Church Hall: (203) 628-7997

Church: [stnicholasdanbury@icloud.com](mailto:stnicholasdanbury@icloud.com)

Father Stephen: [FrStephenRusso@gmail.com](mailto:FrStephenRusso@gmail.com)

Website: [www.stnicholasdanbury.org](http://www.stnicholasdanbury.org)

Served by: Father Stephen R. Russo, Pastor  
Father Anthony DeFronzo, Emeritus  
Cantors: Dr. Randy Weyant, Ms Ann Schlain  
Trustees: Ms Ann Devine, Dr David Fanning

### LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

- Saturday, Dec 13 — Anticipation 22nd Sunday after Pentecost**  
**4:00 PM** Divine Liturgy at Holy Trinity, New Britain  
Intention: For Vocations to Holy Orders
- Sunday, Dec. 14 — 23rd Sunday after Pentecost**  
**9:00 AM** Divine Liturgy at St. Nicholas, Danbury  
Intention: +Nicholas Stroz by Ellen Stroz
- Saturday, Dec 20 — St. Michael the Archangel, anticip for 23rd Sun**  
**4:00 PM** Divine Liturgy at Holy Trinity, New Britain  
Intention: Parishioners of Holy Trinity
- Sunday, Dec. 21 — 24nd Sunday after Pentecost**  
**9:00 AM** Divine Liturgy at St. Nicholas Danbury  
Intention: +Anna Devine, by Ann Devine

### **A Special Thank-you**

I would like to extend a heartfelt THANK-YOU! to everyone who had a part in making our St. Nicholas day celebration a great success and joy-filled event. To those who shopped and purchased the food, those who set up the hall and decorated, those who came to decorate the church, those who cooked, served, cleaned up, to those who donated prizes for the raffle, those who brought side dishes and desserts, and to everyone who participated! And most especially for St. Nicholas visiting with us during this busy time of year! May the Good Lord bless you and your work for His Glory.

**A few Short stories to meditate on as you prepare for Christmas and the coming of our Lord! Enjoy,**

### **The Village Festival**

As Christmas draws near, we remember a story of a village preparing for its annual feast. Invitations were sent, but many people were too busy with shopping, cleaning, and daily worries to attend. So the host invited those who rarely received invitations—the lonely, the poor, and the forgotten. They came with joy, grateful simply to be welcomed, and the feast became more beautiful than ever. Christmas is God’s own banquet, where He comes to dwell among us and offer His love freely. As we prepare for the Nativity, may we lay aside our excuses, open our hearts, and accept His invitation with the humble readiness of those who long to be filled with His joy.

**“Come, for everything is now ready.”**

— *Luke 14:17*

### **The Lantern in the Window**

In a small village lived an elderly widow named Anna who placed a lantern in her window every year as Christmas approached. When asked why, she said, “It is my way of telling the Lord that He is welcome here.”

One bitter winter night, a young traveler lost in the snow saw the faint glow of her lantern and followed it to her home. Anna welcomed him in, giving him warmth and food. When he thanked her, she said, “This light is not only for guests. It is for Christ, who comes to us in anyone who needs kindness.”

Later, the traveler would say that the lantern not only guided his steps, but reminded him that **God often comes quietly, in those who need our love.**

As we prepare for Christmas, may we keep such a “lantern” in our hearts — a readiness to welcome Christ by welcoming one another.

**“Let your light so shine before others, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”**

— *Matthew 5:16*

## **The Gospel this week: Luke 14:16-24 The Parable of the Great Banquet! Sunday of the Forefathers. The Epistle Colossians 3:4–11**

I encourage all of you to read the gospel and Epistle passages for this week and meditate on its meaning

On this Sunday of the Holy Forefathers, the Church proclaims Christ's Parable of the Great Banquet to illuminate the meaning of salvation history as we approach the Feast of the Nativity. The banquet symbolizes God's generous invitation to share in His life — an invitation first extended to the people of the Old Covenant. Today we honor the Holy Forefathers — Adam, Abraham, Moses, David, the prophets, and all the righteous — because they responded faithfully, preparing the way for the coming of Christ. In the parable, however, many of those first invited refuse the invitation, reminding us that God's call must be freely accepted. The master then extends the invitation to all — the poor, the forgotten, and the outsiders — revealing the universal call to salvation fulfilled in Christ's birth. As we draw near to Christmas, this Gospel urges us to imitate the faith and readiness of the Forefathers, so that our hearts may be open to the Lord's coming and eager to enter His banquet of life.

The Epistle for the Sunday of the Holy Forefathers is chosen because it teaches the spiritual transformation required of those who wish to enter the Kingdom that the Forefathers longed for and prepared. St. Paul tells us that when Christ appears, "*you also will appear with Him in glory,*" and therefore we must "put off the old self" and "put on the new."

The Holy Forefathers — Adam, Abraham, Moses, David, the prophets, and the righteous — are honored today because through faith they allowed God to begin this transformation in the human race. They looked forward to the coming of the Messiah, and they aligned their lives with God's promises, becoming models of conversion and hope. Even Adam while his acts caused the fall, he he is remembered as the first created Son

Paul's teaching that "*Christ is all and in all*" reveals that in Christ the divisions between peoples are overcome. This fits the theme of the Forefathers, whose lineage culminates in Christ, and whose faith opens the way for **all nations** to become one family in Him.

This Epistle prepares us for Christmas by calling each of us to the same inner renewal: to cast off what is earthly, to put on the new life of grace, and to be united in the One who fulfills the hope of the patriarchs and prophets — **Christ our God.**

## **Living Our Byzantine Heritage:**

Our Byzantine Catholic Church is rich in beautiful traditions that express our faith and outwardly reveal what we believe in our hearts. These practices are not simply rituals of the past—they are living reminders of God's presence and invitations to draw nearer to Him. Yet in today's secular world, we may sometimes feel hesitant or discouraged from expressing our faith openly, and many of these treasures have quietly fallen out of use.

Beginning this week, I will be including short summaries of various Byzantine traditions and practices in our bulletin. I encourage you to rediscover and embrace them. I hope that, even in a small way, they will help you grow closer to Our Lord, deepen your love for the Most Holy Theotokos, and strengthen your relationship with the saints whose intercession accompanies us.

If you would like to learn more about any of these practices, please feel free to speak with me. It is a joy to share this beautiful heritage with you.

## **Traditional greetings:**

When I was growing up at the monastery, almost everyone who came in greeted each other with simple proclamation the beautiful proclamation inscribed above the main entrance of St. Nicholas Church:

During the majority of the year

**Glory to Jesus Christ!** The response **Glory Forever!**

At Christmas Time:

**Christ Is Born!** The response **Glorify Him!**

At Theophany (this is a newer greeting that was initiated by our ancestors in the US)  
Christ Is Baptized! The response In the Jordan!

During Pascha:

**Christ is Risen!** The response Indeed **He Is Risen!**

And in a more personal setting when you are receiving an anointing or when a kiss is being exchanged:

**Christ Is Among Us!** The response **He Is and Always Will Be!**

## 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. It would be very nice to have some warm drinks and some desserts to share after the service. There will be a sign up sheet on the credence table in the back of the church**



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. **A rehearsal will be held after the Sunday Divine Liturgy in Danbury on Sunday December 21st.**

## Schedule for Christmas

December 24th Christmas Eve:

- 03:00 PM at Holy Trinity, Christmas Vigil Compline with Divine Liturgy
- 09:30 PM at St. Nicholas, The Children's Candle light Nativity Pageant
- 10:00 PM at St. Nicholas, Christmas Vigil Compline with Divine Liturgy

December 25th Christmas Day

- 10:00 AM at St. Nicholas Christmas Day Divine Liturgy

## Confession Schedule before Christmas

December 20th 01:30PM - 02:30PM at Holy Trinity

December 21st 07:00PM - 09:00PM at St. Nicholas

If you would like receive the Mystery of Reconciliation (Confession) before Christmas and cannot make one of those times, please contact Fr. Stephen to make an appointment.



## The Giving Tree

Please remember to bring your gifts for the giving tree project. They will be picked up on Monday the 15th to take them to the organization that will distribute them. Please remember to attached the tag so they know who they should go to. If you happen to forget to bring them on Sunday Please contact Diane at 203-313-3200., or Fr. Stephen to make special arrangements to drop them off. Thank-you to everyone who participated in the wonderful project. Think of the smiles you will put on the faces of the Children!.

## The Vocation Icon

We still have open time periods on the calendar for you to take home the Vocation icon and offer prayers 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. 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

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.

## December Birthdays

Charlie O'Boyle	December 1
Pamela Peña	December 9
Margaret Hrabcsak	December 12
Dicky Vira	December 16
Elena Weyant	December 19
Luke Weyant	December 21
Jack Weyant	December 26
Agnes Ferraro	December 26
Alicia Shiland	December 27
Lynda Streaman	December 27

May God Grant Them Many Happy And Blessed Years  
(If there are any missing or incorrect, please inform Fr. Stephen)

Weekly Collections: Nov 23rd: \$606.00, Nov 30th \$1300.00

Thank you for your continued support of our Church