



**ST. PETER & ST. PAUL  
UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
**105 CLIFTON AVE**  
**ANSONIA, CT 06401**  
**Rectory Phone 203-734-3895**  
**Church Hall 203-732-2414**  
**Fr. Ed Cell 413-218-6404**

*Leaders of the Apostles and  
teachers of the world, pray to the  
Master of all to grant peace to the  
world and great mercy to our souls.*



**December 3, 2023**

Web Site: [www.stspuucc.org](http://www.stspuucc.org)

Very Rev. Archpriest Edward Canon Young, *Pastor*

**Twenty-seventh Sunday after Pentecost, The Holy Prophet Zephaniah (Sophonias) (7th century BC).**  
**Nativity Fast.**

Epistle **Ephesians 6: 10-17** Gospel: **Luke 18: 18-23** Tone **2**

**DIVINE LITURGY SCHEDULE**

**WEEKDAYS:** MONDAY–FRIDAY 10:00AM

**SUNDAY:** 8:30 AM (Ukr.) & 10:00 AM (Eng.)

**Confessions are heard before each Divine Liturgy:**

**Sunday** 8:00AM to 8:30AM and  
9:30AM until 10:00AM

**Religious Education** – Saturday 10:00AM –  
11:00AM

Sunday After 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy  
Call Audrey Sokol 203-924-1184 for more  
information.

**Preservation** – Please use the form in church  
vestibule, mail it to the church or bring it to  
Michael Wysowski, Jr. or Fr. Edward Young or  
Robert Jaskilka.

**Address or Name Change/New Phone Number**

– Please update your records. See Michael  
Wysowski, Jr. to update this info.

Returned checks are subject to a **\$35.00 fee  
per check.**

**Bulletin Notices** – Notices for the bulletin must  
be **in writing** by Wednesday @6PM to be  
included in that week's bulletin.

**Parish Council** meets every 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday  
of every month @7:15pm in the church hall.

**Rectory Office Hours** - Thursday 1:00 to 3:00  
PM or by Appointment on other days

\*\*\*\*Please Note \*\*\*\*

**Mass Offerings**, Sorokousty  
Mother's Day, Father's Day

Checks must be made out to the Fr. Edward Young  
**not the Church ! Thank You...**

**Baptism** Arrangement for baptism is to be made  
personally at the Parish Office. Please call rectory for an  
appointment.

**Marriage** – Arrangements for marriage are to be  
made at least **6 months prior** to the Wedding date.  
Please call rectory for an appointment.

**Sick Calls** – To arrange for Sacraments for the elderly  
and sick at home, please call Parish Office Fr. Young  
at 203-734-3895, **Please advise the rectory of any  
hospitalization.**

**In your Estate planning** – Remember Sts. Peter & Paul Church in your  
will.

**Stewardship** - "As each one has received a gift, use it to serve  
one another as good stewards of God's varied grace" (1 Peter 4:10). All  
Catholics, should give generous support—time, money, prayers, and  
personal service according to their circumstances—to parish and diocesan  
programs and to the universal Church

**Special Share in the Eucharist \*– Bread & Wine**

offered for a week, month, or year. Donations: one week - \$20.00  
Donors/intentions will be listed.

Michael Wysowski, Jr or Fr. Edward Young

**Eternal Light** \*– offered to light for a week \$10.00.

Michael Wysowski, Jr. or Fr. Edward Young

**Virgin Mary's Lamp and Sacred Heart Lamp\*** also available for offering!

Offered to light for a week is 10.00, each. Michael Wysowski, Jr. or  
Fr. Edward Young

**All start on Monday to Sunday!**

**\*Offering must be made when dates  
are reserved on a first come first served basis !!!!**

A Welcome to St. Peter and St. Paul Parish to all who are worshipping with us today. If you are over twenty-one years of age and have not yet registered, have moved or will be moving, or have a new telephone number, please fill out the form below. Each household must be registered at St. Peter and St. Paul and every adult receives a set of stewardship envelopes. Registration also entails an annual dues to the parish. If a parishioner is not registered, it is difficult for church authorities to issue him or her a sponsor certificate, reference, or any other certification.




Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone# \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Christmas Anticipation Prayer:** Hail and blessed be the hour and moment in which the Son of **God** was born of the most pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in the piercing cold. In that hour vouchsafe, I beseech Thee, O my God, to hear my **prayer** and grant my desires, [State your intention(s) here...] through the merits of Our Savior **Jesus** Christ, and of His blessed Mother. Amen. *(This prayer can be said many times in a day before Christmas)* **Christmas Anticipation Prayer:** Hail and blessed be the hour and moment in which the Son of God was born of the most pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in the piercing cold. In that hour vouchsafe, I beseech Thee, O my God, to hear my prayer and grant my desires, [State your intention(s) here...] through the merits of Our Savior Jesus Christ, and of His blessed Mother. Amen



*Bread and Wine Offering None Offered*

12/02	Saturday	4:00 -5:00 PM	Christmas Confessions Fr. Peter Shyshka Ukrainian & English
12/03	Sunday	8:30AM 10:00AM	Pro Populo (For All Parishioners) - За Всіх Парафіян +Leonila Gebuza req. by M/M William Platocz
12/04	Monday		No Liturgy
12/05	Tuesday		No Liturgy
12/06	Wednesday	10:00 AM	Feast of Saint Nicholas the Wonder Worker +PETER, JOANNA, HENRY, MARY, WILLIAM HELEN, MARY, RALPH, ESTELLE, ARTHUR, STEVEN, ROSE, WALTER, JOHN Dorethy
12/07	Thursday	10:00 AM	+ William & Clementina Williams
12/08	Friday	10:00AM 7:00 PM	The Feast of <b>Conception of Saint Anne Immaculate Conception</b> Pro Populo (For All Parishioners) - За Всіх Парафіян Deceased Mothers of Priests
12/09	Saturday		No Liturgy
12/10	Sunday	8:30AM 10:00AM	Pro Populo (For All Parishioners) - За Всіх Парафіян +Tekla Zanolwiak req. by Maria Pisarczyk

Offerings for Sunday November 26, 2023		Offering \$1,073.00 Candles \$57.00 Bld Fund \$10.00 Dues \$0.00 Christmas \$200.00 Cemetery \$181.00 Tag Sale \$30.00 Pyrohi \$66.00 <i>Thank You for Your kind generosity and love for Your Parish Church</i>			
ETERNAL LIGHT		<i>In loving memory of +Leonila Gebuza by Roman Gebuza &amp; Family</i>			
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY LAMP		<i>In loving memory +The Cirkots, +Nyscots and +Mary Cirkot by Carol Stumpf</i>			
SACRED HEART of JESUS LAMP		<i>None Offered</i>			
BREAD & WINE OFFERING RESERVED DATES	ETERNAL LIGHT LAMP OFFERING RESERVED DATES	BLESSED VIRGIN MARY LAMP OFFERING RESERVED DATES	SACRED HEART OF JESUS LAMP OFFERING RESERVED DATES		
None Offered	12/11/23-12/17/23 12/18/23-12/24/23 12/25/23-12/31/23 1/1/24-1/7/24 1/15/24-1/21/24 1/22/24-1/28/24 6/17/24-6/23/24	12/11/23-12/17/23 12/18/23-12/24/23 12/25/23-12/31/23 1/1/24-1/7/24 1/15/24-1/21/24 1/22/24-1/28/24 2/12/24-2/18/24 4/8/24-4/15/24 5/6/24-5/12/24	12/11/23-12/17/23 12/18/23-12/24/23 12/25/23-12/31/23 1/8/24-1/14/24 1/15/24-1/21/24 1/22/24-1/28/24		

Over 32 letters have been **resent** to delinquent dues members of St. Peter & St. Paul totaling over \$27,000 - **Past Church Dues** are due to support your church to pay our obligations to keep the church running such as salaries; electricity; oil; gas; water ; and continual maintenance; repair of the church, rectory and cemetery; insurance ; chancery fees; and telephone just to name a few. As spoken of during the 2022 annual meeting, February 19, 2023.



**PRAYER FOR OUR NATION** Lord, we pray for peace and unity in our nation today. Keep us in peace, O Christ our God, under the protection of your Holy Cross; save us from our enemies, visible and invisible, that we may glorify You with thanksgiving, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. We pray that You would inspire this nation to be a nation under God. Give us your hope. Give us your peace. Amen the Light of God ~ surround us. The Love of God ~ enfold us.

The Power of God ~ protect us. The Presence of God ~ watch over us.

The Mind of God ~ Guide us. The Law of God ~ direct us.

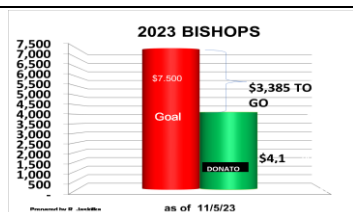
Wherever we are God ~ be our strength.

**PRAY FOR PEACE IN UKRAINE AND THE WORLD: MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS, THROUGH THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL, SPREAD YOUR OMOPHOR ~ WE IMPORE YOUR PROTECTION OVER UKRAINE AND BEG THAT YOU INTERCEDE WITH OUR LORD TO GRANT PEACE.**



**PRAYER FOR THE DELIVERANCE OF UKRAINE IN TIME OF INVASION:** O Lord God of powers, and God of our salvation, O God, who alone work wonders: look down with mercy and compassion on Your humble servants, and out of love for mankind hearken and

have mercy on us and on the land of Ukraine. For, behold, enemies have once more gathered together, in order to cause division and enmity. But You who know all things, understand that they have risen up righteously, and that it will be impossible to oppose their multitudes unless You show us Your help. Therefore, we who are sinful and unworthy pray unto You in repentance and with tears: Help us, O God, our Savior, and deliver the land of Ukraine for the sake of the glory of Your Name, that the enemy may not to say: *"Their God has forsaken them, and there is none to deliver and save them."* But let every nation understand that You are our God, and we Your people are always protected under Your dominion.



## 2023 STAMFORD CHARITIES DIOCESE APPEAL

The month of **August continues** the Stamford Diocese Charities Appeal for **2023**

This fund provides support for many programs in the Diocese as indicated in the Sower.

Our offering reminds us that we are members of a greater body of the Church that operates beyond the barriers of our local parish and that each one of us has a role to play in the Church's mission of evangelization and sanctification.

You have received by mail your request for support. Please help this fund as you have in the past.

The 2023 goal is **\$7,500.00** set by Stamford. **Please do not send your donation to Stamford!!!**

**Donations \$4,115 or 54.9% to go \$ 3,385 – 45.1% This week \$0.00** There will be collectors to take your donation for 2023 in the church hall



**VOLUNTEER** – By definition, it is a person who freely offers to do something or undertakes a task; To volunteer means to freely offer up your time and service to help, willingly and without being forced or paid to do it to serve another or the community. When was last time you Have ever asked yourselves "How do I serve a parish Community" ? As parishioners, we look to come together at a meal, at the parish festival, and other happenings.... Remember these events do not just 'happen'. These events are not the responsibility of the pastor! For these events to take place, it requires the talents of the member of the parish; it requires each of you to come forward and VOLUNTEER your time and talents. You don't need an

invitation, you need to come forward and offer to help freely, inquire where you can serve. For a parish to be active, vibrant, it needs the help from those it serves! It is time to look around, to become aware of where you and your time and your talents can serve the needs of the parish. It is time to step forward and become involved in the life of the parish. Don't look for the other person to step up, this is your Church. If you want to see parish events happen, you need to be involved. Remember each of you are the CHURCH, each responsible for the full life of the parish. Let us come together to grow in hospitality, grow in community and service. Be a leader and come forward. Be that "Gift" !!



**ANNUAL HOLIDAY LUNCHEON WITH ST. NICHOLAS takes place on Sunday, December 10th, 2023 following 10AM Liturgy** Menu: Hot dogs, rolls, sauerkraut, baked beans, macaroni salad, potato chips, beverage, dessert and coffee. **Entertainment:** Youth program, music, activities table, photo with St. Nick **Tickets:** Youth (up to 18) FREE, Adults: \$15.00 Tickets will be on sale after Sunday masses from Nov. 5th to Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023. **No tickets will be sold at the door.**

For more information please call Jolanta Kowal @ 203-393-7370 or Josephine Sembrat @ 203-929-4813.

***Lunch with St. Nick is fast approaching.*** Parish children and youth are encouraged to participate in the artistic program. Practices will be on Sundays after 8:30 AM liturgy on the following dates: November 12<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, and after 10:00 AM liturgy on the following dates: November 19<sup>th</sup>, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, final practice being on Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup> @ 9:00 AM in the church hall. For more information please call Jolanta Kowal @ 203-393-7370 or 203-278-1288.

### **PHILIP FAST FOOD PANTRY PROJECT BEGAN NOVEMBER 15**

*"Do you fast? Prove it by doing good works. "If you see someone in need, take pity on them... For a true fast, you cannot fast only with your mouth. You must fast with your eye, your ear, your feet, your hands, and all parts of your body." ~ St. John Chrysostom*

As we prepare for Christmas, we are encouraged during the Philip Fast/Pilypivka, to do good works through prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

As we approach the Philip Fast in preparation for the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord, let our focus be on the needy as we fast. All of this emphasis on fasting during this period is to prepare our hearts for the coming of Our Savior. Beginning on **November 19 through December 17**, the Saint Peter and Saint Paul Ukrainian Catholic Parish will sponsor a "**Philip Fast Food Pantry Project**", collecting non-

perishable food staples to be donated to the Saint Francis Pantry at Assumption Parish, Ansonia, CT **Daily giving list of food needed to donate.** Needed non-perishable items are ~ Cereal, oatmeal, rice, beans, canned meats, tuna, canned vegetables and fruits, hearty soups, macaroni and cheese, spaghetti, tomato sauce, peanut butter, grape jelly.

**Father Peter Shyshka Hear Confessions for Nativity Fast he will Preach at Sunday Liturgy and Hear Confessions**

## **Nativity Fast Confessions**

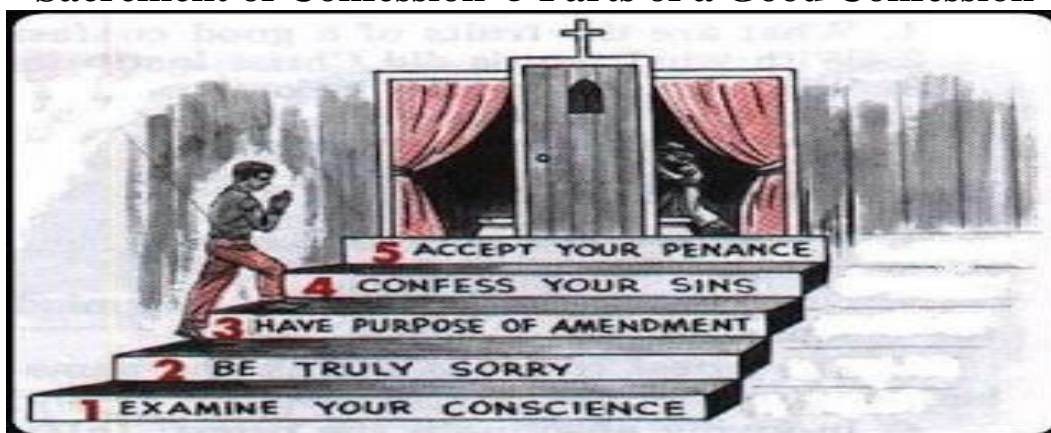
**Saturday, 2 December** 400:-5:00 PM Confession (Ukr & Eng)

**Sunday, 3 December** 8:30 AM Divine Liturgy Mission Sermon

10:00 AM Divine Liturgy Mission Sermon

Confession will be heard before and after Liturgy

## **Sacrament of Confession 5 Parts of a Good Confession**



**"Create  
in me a  
clean heart,  
O God,  
and put a  
new  
spirit  
within me."**  
Psalm 51:10

### **Week 4: St. Nicholas the Wonderworker**

1. Read the material on this Week's Feast slowly and meditatively to yourself. Recall that St. Nicholas was a miracle-working saint who had a special love for children and the poor.
2. Reflect on this Week's reading and on what it is like to be poor in our society/world and read what Jesus says about the poor (Luke 6:20-26; Luke 12:22-34; Matthew 25:31-46). Ask yourself the following questions:
  - What are some new ways we can help the poor as a parish and as a country?
  - What can you do to help the poor?
3. Pray/sing the Tropar and Kondak of the Week with your family.
4. Read the material on this Week's Feast aloud, slowly and meditatively with your family.
5. Share with your family member(s) your thoughts about the life and lot of the poor.
6. Discuss with family member(s) their experience of meeting/seeing the poor. Consider the following questions:
  - What might it be like to be poor?
  - Does Jesus love the poor with a special love?
  - How Jesus wants us to help the poor?
  - What are ways in which we can help the poor?
8. Conclude with the antiphon of St. Philip's Fast.

### Antiphon of St. Philip's Fast

O Bethlehem, be prepared; Eden is opened to all; O Ephratha, be made ready; for in the cave the tree of life has blossomed forth from the Virgin; for her womb has been shown to be a spiritual paradise, in which is the divine plant, from which having eaten, we will live and not die as Adam did. Christ is born to raise the image that had fallen.

**Tropar - Tone 4:** The truth of your deeds made you for your flock a rule of faith  
And an image of meekness, a teacher of continence. And so you gained the heights  
through humility, riches through poverty, father and bishop Nicholas. Intercede with  
Christ our God for the salvation of our souls.

**Kondak - Tone 3 In Myra, O holy one, you proved yourself a priest. You fulfilled the Gospel of Christ, O venerable father. You laid down your soul for your people and saved the innocent from death. And so you were sanctified as a great initiator of God's grace.**

(St. Nicholas the Wonderworker

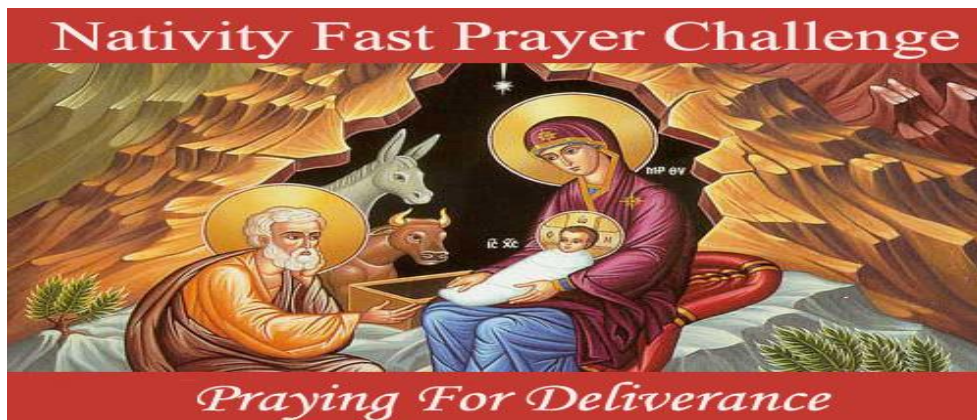
St. Nicholas' parents could not have children for many years, but when they prayed to God, God gave them a child, St. Nicholas. His mother, Nonna, after giving birth, was immediately healed from illness. The newborn infant, while in the baptismal font, stood on his feet to pray, praising the All Holy Trinity.

St. Nicholas was chosen Archeparch thus: a bishop had a vision of Jesus telling him that the next Archeparch of Myra would be the first person to arrive in church. The bishop went to church at night to see who it would be. The first person in church was the child Nicholas (he was always the first to arrive). "What is your name, child?" the bishop asked. The boy-saint replied, "My name is Nicholas, Master, and I am your servant."

When he grew up, St. Nicholas participated in the First Ecumenical Council. This Council proclaimed the Nicean Symbol of Faith, which we pray in every Liturgy.

One time, a poor man, with three daughters had no food. In desperation the man planned to sell his daughters so they would have money for food. When the saint learned of the man's poverty and his wicked intention, he secretly visited him one night and threw a sack of gold through the window. With the money, the man arranged an honorable marriage for his daughter. St. Nicholas also provided gold for the other daughters, thereby saving the family from falling into spiritual destruction. In bestowing charity, St. Nicholas always strove to do this secretly and to conceal his good deeds.

Another time, a family went on a pilgrimage to Vyshorod, Ukraine — a special place because its Church contained relics of Ss. Borys and Hlib (2 brothers who, witnessing to Christ, were killed by an evil prince). Returning home, their only child, not being careful, fell into the Dnipro-Slavutych River and was lost. The distraught parents asked St. Nicholas to pray to God for the life of their only child. St. Nicholas, hearing the grief-filled prayers of the parents, took the infant from the waters, revived him and placed him in the choir-loft of the church of Holy Wisdom before his wonder-working icon. In the morning, the infant was found safe — though all wet— by his thrilled parents, who praised St. Nicholas the Wonderworker. The icon depicting this event is called St. Nicholas the Soaked.



# My Journey Through the \*2023\* Nativity Fast

<b>Start</b> ↓	<b>Nov. 29</b> Welcome someone to play with you today who may need a friend.	<b>Nov.30</b> <b>St. Andrew Day!</b> He was the first one called! Be quick to come when you are called today!	<b>Dec. 1</b> Sweep the porch and sidewalks today for mom and dad, then for a neighbor!	<b>Dec. 2</b> Do an extra chore but don't tell anyone...be a secret angel.	<b>Dec. 3</b> Offer to help someone with a difficult job today.
<b>Nov. 15</b> Discuss how your family will observe this fast for the next 40 days.	<b>Nov. 28</b> Smile at someone who looks sad today and cheer them up!	<b>Dec 15</b> Make Christmas cards for priests, monks or nuns, and those in nursing homes today.	<b>Dec. 14</b> Set the table without being asked.	<b>Dec. 13</b> <b>St. Lucy Day!</b> Make sweet rolls and deliver them to someone	<b>Dec. 4</b> Force branches on the feast of <b>St. Barbara!</b> Blooms by Christmas mean good luck!
<b>Nov. 16</b> <b>St. Matthew</b> Begin to collect spare change for the poor at Christmas.	<b>Nov. 27</b> Learn a new prayer today...one you don't have memorized yet.	<b>Dec. 16</b> Make everybody's bed today as a gift.	<b>Dec. 17</b> Read a Christmas story to your little sister or brother	<b>Dec. 12</b> Say a special prayer for all of the unborn babies today!	<b>Dec. 5</b> Leave your shoe out for St. Nicholas to fill tonight!
<b>Nov. 17</b> Say a prayer for someone who is sad today, then send them a card to cheer them up.	<b>Nov. 26</b> Visit someone who is lonely today and give them a hug.	<b>Dec. 19</b> Do an extra chore but don't tell anyone...be a secret angel.	<b>Dec. 18</b> Say a special prayer for someone who is sad today.	<b>Dec 11</b> Practice your Christmas Carols so you'll be ready at Christmas! Put on a show!	<b>Dec. 6</b> <b>St. Nicholas Day!</b> Do a secret good deed in his honor.
<b>Nov. 18</b> Do an extra chore but don't tell anyone...be a secret angel.	<b>Nov. 25</b> Play in the snow and make a snowman for everyone to see!	<b>Dec. 20</b> <b>St. Ignatius of Antioch</b> Bake some bread for a neighbor!	<b>Dec.21</b> Clean and decorate your room for Christmas	<b>Dec 10</b> Call Grandma or Grandpa (or an older friend) and say hello today.	<b>Dec. 7</b> <b>St. Ambrose</b> Bee extra sweet today...sweet as honey!
<b>Nov. 19</b> Set the table without being asked, maybe make pretty place cards!	<b>Nov 24</b> Offer to make someone a cup of tea or cocoa and sit and talk to them for a while.	<b>Dec 23</b> Do you know what to say when someone says, Christ is Born? Glorify Him!	<b>Dec. 22</b> Practice looking for the first star so you can do it at Holy Supper	<b>Dec. 9</b> Read a Bible story before bed tonight that you haven't read before.	<b>Dec 8</b> <b>Conception of St. Anna</b> Say an extra prayer to welcome the Theotokos!
<b>Nov. 20</b> Clean your room for the holidays, then decorate!	<b>Nov. 23</b> <b>Thanksgiving Day</b> Wash the dishes or empty the dishwasher today without being asked.	<b>Dec. 24</b> Help set the table for Holy Supper. Sing Christmas Carols!			
<b>Nov. 21</b> <b>Entrance of the Theotokos</b> Review the prayer to the Theotokos and say it 10 times for priests.	<b>Nov. 22</b> Practice and recite the prayers before and after meals today!	<b>Christ Is Born!</b>			

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## SAINT PHILIPS FAST PASTORAL OF THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC HIERARCHY IN THE US 2023

“Behold, I am about to do something new! Now it already springs forth; do you not see it?

(Is. 43:19)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are commencing the Fast of St. Philip, embarking on a journey that culminates in the contemplation of an indescribable mystery – God’s condescension to humanity. It is at the Nativity of Our Lord that God draws near to us, for “In the union of the divine and human, ‘the incorporeal one takes on flesh, the Word becomes approachable, the invisible one is seen, the impalpable one is touched, the one beyond time enters time, the Son of God becomes the Son of Man.’” (Christ Our Pascha, §179). In this divine event, God not only reveals His name but also makes Himself visible, inviting us to recognize Him.

For the second consecutive year, we, Ukrainians in the US, find ourselves preparing for Christmas amidst a full-scale war with the Russian aggressor. Our Ukrainian soil is soaked in the blood of heroes, and our cities and villages under occupation are shrouded under the black pall of the “Russian world.” We continually pose questions to each other and to God: “How much longer will this endure? Why, O God, does this war persist?”

Let us consider the circumstances in which our Lord came to the world. Humanity, perpetually anxious and born in fear, anticipated the coming of the Messiah, each person harboring their own expectations of His identity. Who among them recognized Him as the "something new [that] springs forth," as prophesied by the Prophet Isaiah? (Is. 43:19) The initial witnesses to the choir of angels were humble shepherds, for "Many are the high and exalted, but God reveals his mysteries to the humble." (Sir. 3:19) Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God (Matt. 5:8). Pure in heart shepherds became the symbol of those who were capable to see God. However, the path to purity of heart is arduous, demanding profound introspection. We often find ourselves dissatisfied with our circumstances. This war, while manifestly physical and visible, also has deep spiritual ramifications. We yearn for change, for someone to rise against injustice and corruption, yet we tend to overlook that the journey begins within ourselves, with our heart.

"Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. 6:2) The day of salvation marks the inception of our inner journey. The Apostle Paul calls us to bear witness, to be people of hope who endure "in steadfast perseverance; in afflictions, hardships, and distress." As we embark on the path to the Nativity, we strive to "open wide our hearts" (2 Cor. 6:13).

The time is opportune for us to begin. Our first task is the transformation of our hearts. When we delve into the lives of the saints, we often marvel at how they found spiritual equilibrium amidst sorrow, mastering themselves and receiving the strength of Christ, "who by faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and obtained promises. They closed the mouths of lions, quenched raging fires, and escaped the edge of the sword. Their weakness was turned into strength..." (Heb. 11:33-34) Today, our front-line defenders demonstrate that heroes are not born but are instead forged through daily toil and self-sacrifice, proving their unwavering commitment to our homeland. As we commence this journey to the Nativity, we invite you to fathom the depths of this mystery. A single child altered the course of human history with His birth. The tapestry of human history is interwoven with the thread of Jesus Christ. We are also capable and called to change our personal stories and big history. When we gather in the Name of Jesus Christ, each one of us can contribute with the gifts bestowed upon us by the Lord, thereby effecting change in the world around us.

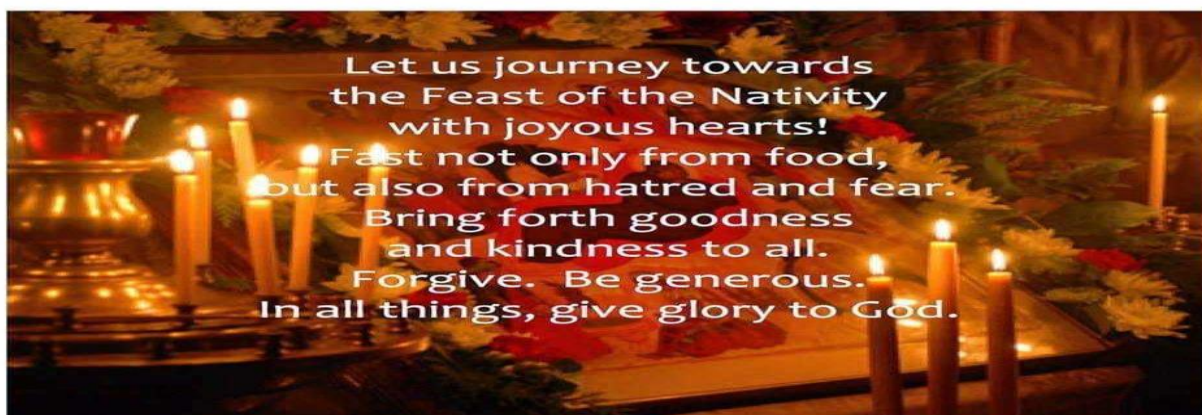
The venerable Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky, in his address to the faithful on Christmas Day 1942, amidst the tumult of the Second World War, exhorted us to struggle: "Those who, with Christ, have battled the passions that lead to sin within their own hearts, who have tasted the power of Christ in victories over themselves, do not merely believe in Christ's victory but know it from personal experience... the cause of our sorrow will pass, and the day of joy will dawn." Dear brothers and sisters, during this Nativity fast, we urge you to engage in intentional spiritual exercises aimed at overcoming sin in your lives, leading you into the battle for the purity of your hearts. As Jesus teaches, "For from the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, perjury, slander." (Matt. 15:19) Much work lies ahead, but it is the sole path to a genuine experience of the Nativity of Our Lord. We are called to comprehend the gift of patience, for in God's timing, everything unfolds according to His divine plan. While we may ardently desire swift change and accomplishment, true transformation occurs when we cooperate with God's grace, serving our neighbors with fervor "in afflictions, hardships, and distress." Thus, we become like those who are "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, yet possessing everything." (2 Cor. 6:4-10) At the liturgical prayers of the Feast of the Nativity, the Church proclaims, "For the Father's express Image, the Imprint of His eternity, takes the form of a servant, and without undergoing change He comes forth from a Mother who knew not wedlock. For what He was, He has remained, true God: and what He was not, He has taken upon Himself, becoming man through love for mankind." (Stichera of the Great Vespers of the Nativity of Our Lord) The radiant light of God will illuminate our countenances, and our virtuous deeds will shine as the star of Bethlehem, guiding us to the manger where the Savior of the world lies.

+ Borys Gudziak, Metropolitan Archbishop of Philadelphia of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the USA

+ Paul Chomnycky, Bishop of the Eparchy of Stamford

+ Benedict Aleksiychuk (author.). Bishop of Saint Nicholas Eparchy of Chicago

+ Bohdan Danylo. Bishop of Saint Josaphat Eparchy of Parma



## TWENTY SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

**EPISTLE - EPHESIANS 6: 10 - 17    GOSPEL - LUKE 18: 18 – 27 TONE 2**

As Christians we have so much to be thankful for in this life. We are thankful for all of the various things that other people are thankful for, such as loved ones and friends, our homes, the food on our tables, the many blessings that we have received. But as Christians we take this level of gratitude and we amplify it to a whole new level.

As Christians we are really blessed beyond our wildest expectations or desires. We are blessed to be called sons and daughters, adopted children of God. We are blessed with miracles in our lives. We are blessed with our faith and Church to guide us from this land to the shores of eternity. We are blessed with the healing sacraments of the Church, the medicines that give us life and joy. As Christians we are blessed to have knowledge of God and His Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, but more than that, we are blessed to know them through a living relationship.

In today's gospel reading we hear about the ten lepers that came and asked the Lord Jesus for healing. They cried out "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." And by the power of His word, they were healed! You wonder why I emphasize reading the gospels every day? Because His word is healing and power.

Suddenly as the ten lepers left to return to the priests to show themselves, they began to rejoice as their dreams came true. The impossible became possible. They were healed! They could return to their lives, to their loved ones, they could again become part of the community. And to they went off rejoicing in their blessings! But what was the problem? The problem was that 9 of the 10 forgot to acknowledge God and start by giving thanks and showing gratitude for all that the Lord Jesus Christ had done for them. Sadly, only one shows gratitude and cries out loudly, falling in worship at Jesus' feet. Being grateful with a sense of God's wonder should be practiced and is a way of life. We cultivate a sense of gratitude by coming to church, serving others, and focusing daily on the little things done in love. When we teach children to say thank you, it is not simply a matter of having good manners. It is a matter of changing their way of thinking and bringing them to a sense of gratitude for everything in their lives. You don't have everything in your life because of anything that you have done, but because of the love and care that others have shown you, most importantly because of the love of God. For this reason, the Lord seems stunned when the only leper to return and offer thanks was the Samaritan, not the others who presumably had been Jews who should have known a thing or two about thanksgiving and gratitude.

Having gratitude in your life can unlock many doors. It can change your life. How often do we start our day or end our evenings by thanking God for all of the blessings in our life? How often do we list them or contemplate the ways that He has taken care of us? Once you start down that road, everything else is transformed. Instead of complaining when we don't get our way, we start to think "if God has always provided for me, and loves me, perhaps He is withholding this thing for my benefit." Or we might say "I trust that the Lord will provide for me according to His good will." When we show gratitude to God, we cannot help but then have that gratitude flow to others around us. I pray that we are not acting contrary to this through our attitudes and actions. In this Gospel lesson we learn about something that Jesus values. Something He expects to find in us. What is it? Gratitude ~ Jesus values a heart that is grateful for the blessings it has received. Gratitude can unlock many doors in your life. It can even help us to unlock the doors of salvation. One of the great modern theologians and priests of our time, Fr. Alexander Schmemmann, during his last ever sermon, on Thanksgiving day, offered these words "Everyone capable of thanksgiving is capable of salvation and eternal joy." May we learn this spirit of thanksgiving to the glory of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Excerpt from <https://outofegyptblog.wordpress.com/>)

### **CATECHISM - CHRIST OUR PASCHA - TODAY'S EPISTLE / GOSPEL LESSON :**

**GRATITUDE:** Were not the ten healed? Where are the nine? Have they allowed fear and pessimism to silence their praise and thanksgiving? Let them return as did the one. They have every reason to praise God with a loud voice and give Him thanks.

### **WEDNESDAY - DECEMBER 6 - SOLEMN FEAST OF ST. NICHOLAS OF MYRA**

Patron of: seafarers, scholars, bankers, pawnbrokers, jurists, brewers, coopers, travelers, perfumers, unmarried girls, brides, robbers and especially - children. The characteristic virtue of St. Nicholas appears to have been his love and charity for the poor.

On three occasions he secretly left gold enough for the marriage portions of three maidens whom their debt-ridden father intended to give up to prostitution. In one version, he climbed up on their roof three nights in a row and threw gold coins down their chimney so that they would land in the girls' stockings, which had been hung by the fire to dry. That is how we have the story and the tradition of stocking full of gifts today. When the father

eventually discovered his good deed, Nicholas made him promise, as he valued his salvation, to tell no one of it.

Our Holy Father Nicholas, emulator of the Apostles and ardent imitator of the Lord Jesus Christ, appears as a living pillar of the Church, zealous in defense of the faith and a model of pastoral solicitude for holy bishops. Through his countless miracles on behalf of the poor, the abandoned, of those suffering injustice and of all who call upon his fatherly protection, he has to this day shown himself "a good steward of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter 4:10).




He saved the city of Myra from famine; Saint Nicholas has miraculously assisted ships in distress and people making voyages, and so is venerated as the protector of all who sail the seas.


### **FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8 - SOLEMN FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, defined by Pope Pius IX on December 8, 1854, states that “The Most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first instant of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace granted by God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, preserved exempt from all stain of original sin” (Ineffabilis Deus).

For us the Immaculate Conception is not just significant, it is essential. Because of the grace of God, Mary was preserved from sin. Because Mary was preserved from sin, she was prepared to become the sinless Mother of Jesus, who by his life, death and resurrection, has ransomed us from sin. Because of Mary’s Immaculate Conception, because of her “yes” to God, we have been redeemed, and given the promise of eternal life through the merits of Mary’s Son, Jesus.

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception places Our Lady before the faithful as an example of what God can do and what we can do, if like Mary, we put ourselves in God’s hands and at God’s service, always open to what God asks and always seeking to fulfill God’s will.

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**2024 ENVELOPES**  
The **envelopes** for **2024** are in the church hall.  
Please pick them up; **they will not be mailed.**  
Any friends/relatives may also pick up their envelopes for delivery



Also, **2024 calendars** have not arrived Yet.