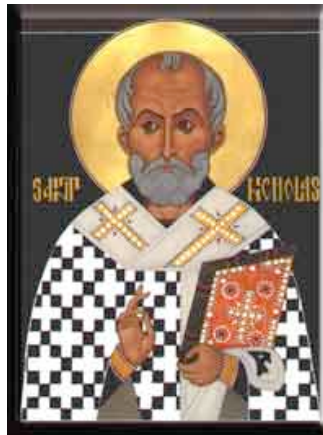


SAINT NICHOLAS
The Inspiration for our modern day
Santa Claus and Father Christmas
He touched the hearts of the people
and inspired them with the true meaning of giving
as he led them to Christ.



Let us pause and remember that we are always and everywhere in the presence of our loving God. From the very beginning God has loved us and continues to love us. God has always walked with His people. He sent us a Savior in the name of Jesus the Christ and His Spirit lives in and among us forever.
Glory to You, Source of All Being, Eternal Word, and Holy Spirit.
As it was, is now, and ever more shall be. Amen.



According to tradition, Nicholas was born in Asia Minor and even in his youth was known for his zeal in helping the unfortunate and oppressed. In his native city of Patara, there was a poor man who had three marriageable daughters, but could find no husbands for them because he could offer no suitable dowry. The contemptible idea struck him to sacrifice the innocence of his daughters to gain the needed money. When Nicholas became aware of this, he went by night and threw a bag containing as much gold as was needed for a dowry through the window. This he repeated the second and third nights.

**Another tradition surrounding Nicholas tells of him calming the sea by his prayers during a ship voyage.
Nicholas was imprisoned for the faith and was Bishop of Myra.
It is known that he took part in the Council of Nicea.
He had a peaceful death, uttering the words; "Into Your hands, I commend my spirit." He died in Myra and much later his remains were transferred to Bari, Italy.
Saint Nicholas is highly venerated in the East as a miracle worker, as preacher of the Word of God, and spokesman of the Father.**

HYMN

**Good Saint Nicholas of Myra
Deeds and legends tell his fame
Saintly bishop, friend of children
Bari pilgrims chant the name.
Blessed Nicholas, Blessed Nicholas,
He loved all in Jesus' name.**

**Miracles and signs and wonders
He performed to praise the Lord
For a poor and weary people
Source of care and joy outpoured.**

**Sailors, nations, peoples thank Him
For he message that he brought
Young and old now hail the memory
Of the lessons that he taught.**

**May his ways of true devotion
Guide us on our earthly way
Challenge us to be more like him
As Christ's gospel we obey.**

**Father, Son and Holy Spirit
Bind us in community
So that we with holy Nicholas
May eternal glory see.**

LET US PRAY

O God, in Your great love, You gave us the example of Your servant Saint Nicholas, as a perpetual name for deeds of kindness. May his gifts of love remind us of the Great Gift of Jesus. May we continue to be faithful to You as we are kind to others in word and deed. Grant that we, Your Church, may always work for the happiness of others, the relief of the poor, and the consolation of those who suffer from doubt or grief. Amen.

SCRIPTURE 1 JOHN 4: 7-14

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love. In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent His only Son into the world so that we might have life through Him. In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as expiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love one another. No one has ever seen God. Yet, if we love one another, God remains in us, and His love is brought to perfection in us. This is how we know that we remain in Him and He in us, that He has given us of His Spirit, and whoever acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him and he in God.

REFLECTION Saint Basil - Fourth Century

What keeps you from giving now? Aren't your own warehouses full? Isn't the reward promised? The command is clear: the hungry person is dying now, the naked person is freezing now, the person in debt is beaten now - and you want to wait until tomorrow? "I am not doing any harm," you say. "I just want to keep what I own, that's all." You own! If everyone took only what they needed and gave the rest to those in need, there would be no such thing as rich and poor. After all, didn't you come into life naked, and won't you return naked to the earth? The bread in your cupboard belongs to the hungry person; The coat hanging unused in your closet belongs to the person who needs it; the shoes in your closet belong to the person with no shoes; the money you put into the bank belongs to the poor. You do wrong to everyone you could help but fail to help.

Saint Ambrose – Fourth Century

The large rooms of which you are so proud are in fact your shame. They are big enough to hold crowds – and also big enough to shut out the voice of the poor...there is your sister or brother, naked, crying! And you stand confused over the choice of an attractive floor covering.

INTERCESSION

**Good Saint Nicholas,
help us to prepare for the feast of the nativity of Jesus.
Help us not to be blind to the gift of Advent and the preparation
for the Second Coming.
Help us to be sincere in the greetings we send and receive with
love and prayer.
Good Saint Nicholas,
help protect us from shoppers' fatigue, stress, and overspending.
Help us to be kind and generous of heart to all,
especially those who are alone, financially poor or fearful.
May our celebration of your feast lead others to see the true
meaning of giving and receiving.
Guide all people to the greatest of all gifts, Jesus the Christ, the
Prince of Peace and Child of Mary, Lord of lords and King of
kings.**



**O come, come gather and sing the praises
of Blessed Nicholas
the glory of God, the fountain of wonders,
and the great protector of the faithful.**

**Rejoice, O light full of brightness
that makes the ends of the earth shine with wonders.**

**Rejoice, O divine delight of the afflicted,
the fervent advocate of those who suffer from injustice.**

**And now, O all-blessed Nicholas,
Never cease praying to Christ our God
For those who honor the festival of your memory
With faith and love.**

Orthodox Liturgy

**Let your light shine before others
that they may see your good works
and give glory to God.**

Matthew 5



**Saint Nicholas, holy preacher of Christ,
pray to the lord that we may be delivered from all danger.**

**Saint John Baptist de La Salle
and all you holy Brothers who have gone before us,
help us to be filled with generous hands and hearts.**

Live Jesus in our hearts. Forever!