

December 6th - St. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra

If any person attempts to tell you that there is no Santa Claus, you can prove to them that they are wrong. There was and there is truly a Santa Claus. He lived in a small town called Myra in Asia Minor, which is now the country of Turkey. He became a priest at an early age and soon commanded the respect and admiration of all the citizens of Myra. He was elevated to Bishop very quickly and served for many years as Archbishop of the province. His fame as a lover of children was well known. He also defended the unfortunate and assisted the poor. It was St. Nicholas who brought the spirit of good will and Christmas to the world. He loved to give presents to poor children and underprivileged families. The name Santa Claus is the northern European name for Saint Nicholas. St. Nicholas attended the first Ecumenical Council in the year 325 A.D. in Asia Minor and helped to



defend the true Faith of Jesus Christ. He was tortured by the enemies of Christianity and spent many years in prison. He bore the terrible scars of torture on his body for many years after his release from prison. Among his many charitable acts was his help for a poor man with three daughters, the eldest of which was of marrying age, but the father did not have money for food, much less to provide a dowry to the groom, which was the custom. The daughter was about to be sold into slavery when St. Nicholas heard of their troubles and wanted to help. St. Nicholas knew the man was too proud to accept charity, so during the night, St. Nicholas secretly threw a pouch containing gold coins through the window of their house. This was enough for a dowry so the eldest daughter married, and enough and to provide for the rest of the family. St. Nicholas helped this family again when it was time for the other daughters to get married. St. Nicholas helped many other people too, and is a beautiful example of how we can spread God's love by sharing with others the many wonderful gifts God has given to us. Santa Claus will continue to exist so long as there are people who love one another and who are willing to share in the many wonderful gifts which Almighty God has given to us. St. Nicholas is the Patron Saint of children everywhere, of giving in secret, and is also considered the Patron Saint of travelers.

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This week we will celebrate the feast of a very good man. Can you guess who he is? His special month is December. He had a long white beard. He loved children. He left presents during the night in secret in the homes of children and adults who were very poor. He helped those who needed help. He loved Jesus Christ. When he was serving Jesus Christ in Church as a Priest, Bishop or Archbishop, he may have worn vestments of bright red. Who was this good man? His name is Saint Nicholas. Some people in other countries called him Santa Claus, which means Saint Nicholas.

