



Essential Evangelization

St. Nicholas

December 6

He is the patron saint of children, brides and grooms, sailors, bakers and brewers, merchants and pawn brokers of all things! Saint Nicholas, sometimes the subject of lore and fable more than fact, is one of the most popular saints in Europe today. He is especially celebrated in Greece and Russia and our modern day Santa Claus is derived from the Dutch equivalent, Sinterklaas. St. Nick is known too as the patron saint of those wrongly condemned for his strong concern for justice, especially innocent victims. Some even call him Nicholas the Wonderworker, and his feast day is next Sunday, December 6. He is celebrated throughout Europe via various traditions of Catholic and Orthodox Christian alike. The Nicholas of Myra was the bishop of this ancient metropolis and was born in 270 AD. Myra is now Demre, Lycia part of modern day Turkey.

Legend has it that he would leave anonymous gifts of gold, gifts and sweets in bags and in boots & socks for those in need. Perhaps this is where our Christmas stocking found its roots! He is also revered as the Guardian of Children rescuing them from calamity and evildoers, as well as the guardian of sailor travelers. One legend has it that he anonymously threw 3 sacks of gold thru a poor man's window on 3 separate occasions since the poor man could not afford a dowry for each of his 3 daughters so that they could each be married. He is also the patron saint of the Greek navy and in many places there, these sailors, instead of wishing one another luck in their journey, say, "May Saint Nicholas hold the tiller!"

Saint Nicholas's died on December 6th, 360 AD and his relics reside today in Bari of southern Italy and so he is thus also claimed as the Nicholas of Bari. So if your kids are kind of wound up this Advent season in anticipation of the big day, try praying to Saint Nicholas for a "wonderwork" of intercession. And may Santa intercede in your every need this Christmas season!

*This is one of a series of articles on
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