

Holy Helpers

St. Nicholas

The Secret Gift-Giver

Giving with a Happy Heart!



Catholic Sunday School



This book belongs to:

Meet St. Nicholas!

Mitre

A bishop's tall hat

Shepherd's staff

He cared for his people

Gold bag

He gave secret gifts!

White beard

A kind, happy face



St. Nicholas was a kind bishop who lived long ago by the sea. He loved Jesus, and he loved to give **secret gifts** to people in need!

The patron saint of children and sailors

Follow St. Nicholas!

Let's follow Nicholas on his kind and happy adventure.



Story 1

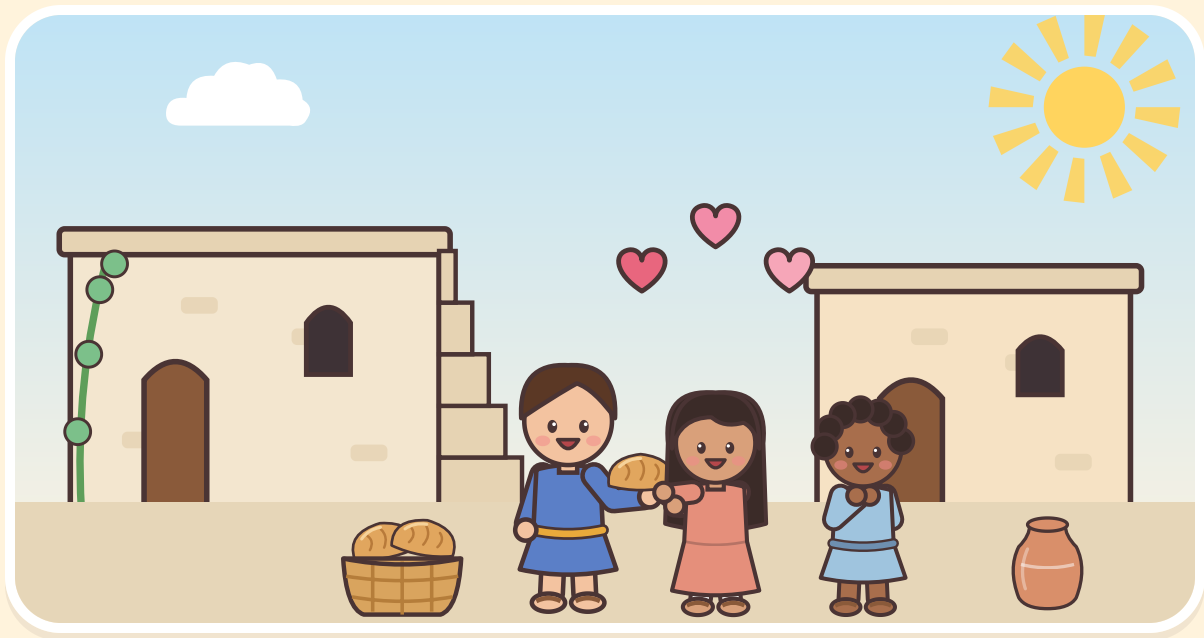
A Boy Who Loved to Share

📍 Patara · in the land now called Turkey · about 280



Long ago, in a sunny town by the sea called Patara, lived a boy named Nicholas. His mama and papa loved God, and they taught Nicholas to pray and to share.

Nicholas loved to share his bread with children who had less. When he grew up, his parents went to Heaven and left him lots of money. Nicholas wanted to use it to help others!



LET US PRAY

Dear God, help me to share what I have.

Story 2

Three Bags of Gold

📍 Patara



In Nicholas's town lived a poor man with three daughters. They had no money at all, not even enough for the girls to get married. The father didn't know what to do.

Nicholas heard about them. That night, he crept up to their house in the dark and quietly tossed a bag of gold through the window. Plop!



In the morning, the family found the gold. It had landed in a stocking drying by the fire! Now the oldest daughter could get married. Hooray!



LET US PRAY

Dear God, help me to give with a happy heart.

Story 3

Shh! It's a Secret

📍 Patara



Nicholas came back with a second bag of gold for the second daughter! The father wondered, "Who is our kind helper?" So the next time, he stayed awake to watch.

Then he saw Nicholas with the third bag! "Thank you!" he cried. Nicholas smiled and said, "Shh! Please keep it a secret. Thank God, not me!"



LET US PRAY

Jesus, help me to do kind things, even when no one sees.

Story 4

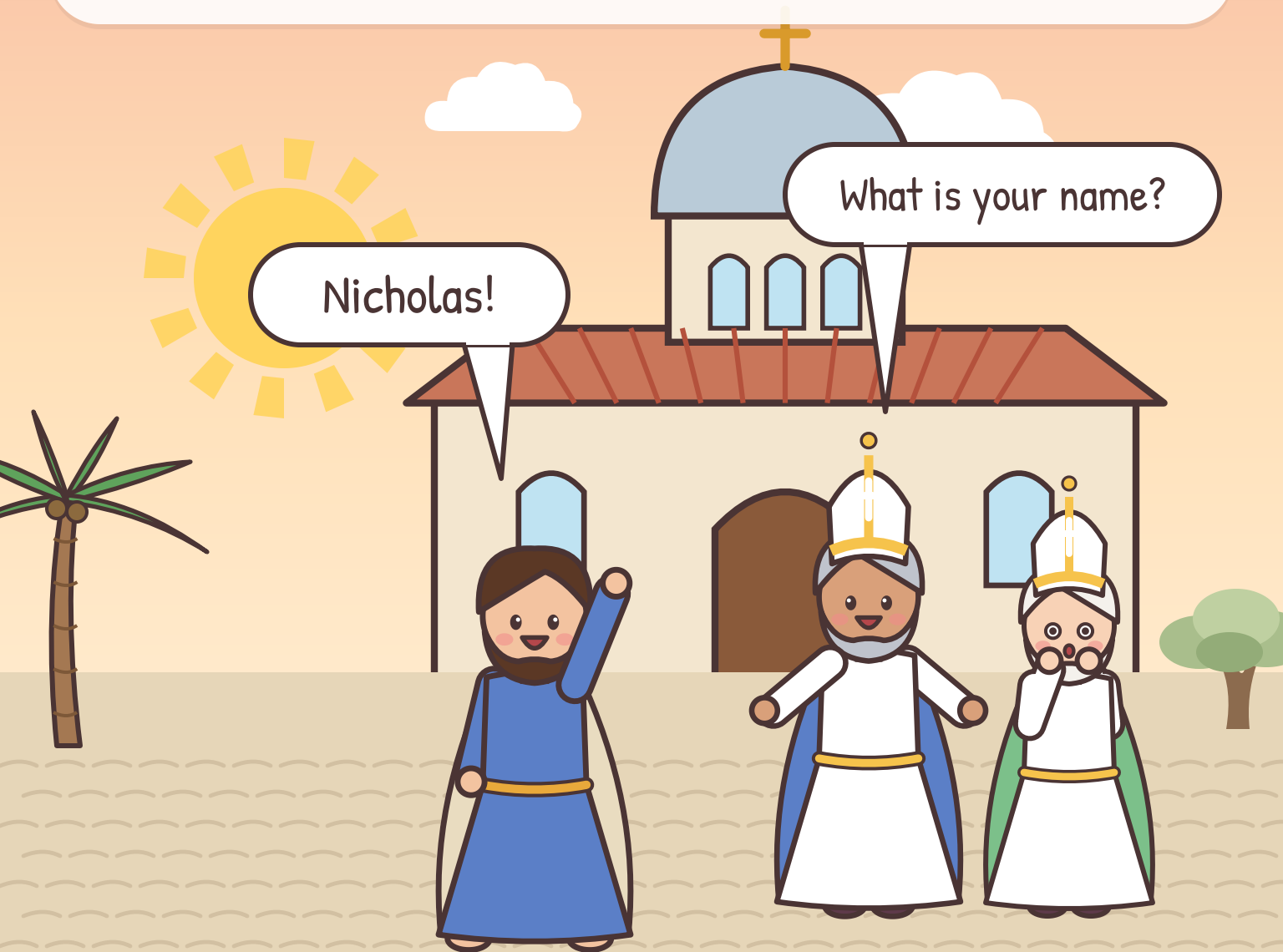
The Early Bird Bishop

📍 Myra · in the land now called Turkey



Nicholas went to live in the city of Myra. There, the bishops needed to choose a new bishop to take care of the people. They prayed all night long.

God showed them a sign: the first man named Nicholas to come into church in the morning should be the new bishop.
At sunrise, the door opened. In came Nicholas to pray!



So Nicholas became the bishop of Myra! He took care of his people like a kind shepherd takes care of his sheep.



LET US PRAY

Jesus, thank You for the priests and bishops who take care of us.

Story 5

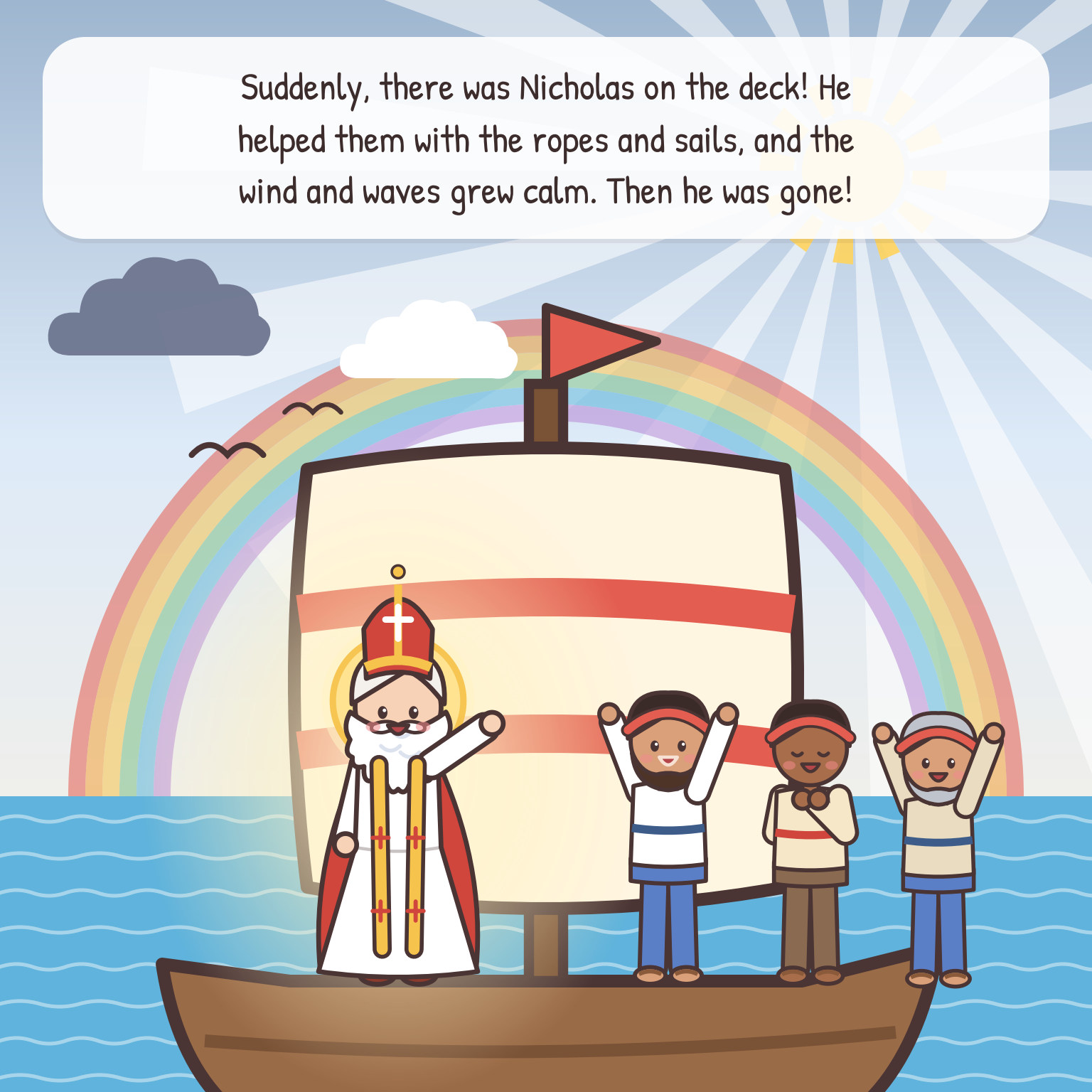
The Stormy Sea

📍 The sea near Myra



One day, some sailors were caught in a big storm.
Huge waves splashed over their little ship. The
sailors prayed, "St. Nicholas, please help us!"

Suddenly, there was Nicholas on the deck! He helped them with the ropes and sails, and the wind and waves grew calm. Then he was gone!



When the sailors reached Myra, they hurried to church to say thank you, and there was Nicholas! “**Thank God,**” he said. That's why sailors love St. Nicholas.



LET US PRAY

St. Nicholas, please watch over everyone who travels.

Story 6

Wheat for Everyone

📍 Myra



Once, no rain fell for a long time, and nothing grew. The people of Myra were very hungry. Then some big ships full of wheat sailed into the harbor.

The wheat was for the emperor. "Please share a little with my hungry people," said Nicholas. "God will take care of you." So the sailors carried off sack after sack.

Please share a little with my hungry people!



When the ships reached the emperor, they were still full! Not one sack was missing. And in Myra, there was bread for everyone.



LET US PRAY

Thank You, God, for our daily bread.

Story 7

Shoes by the Door

📍 Myra · and all around the world

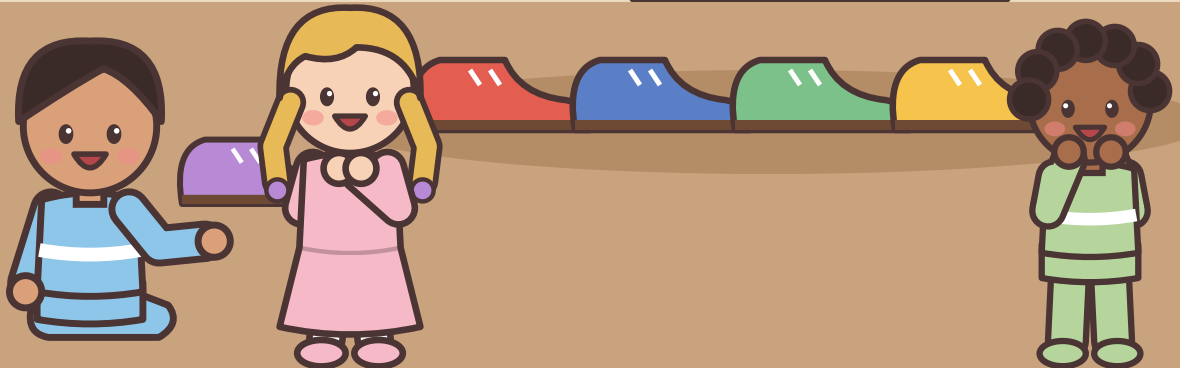
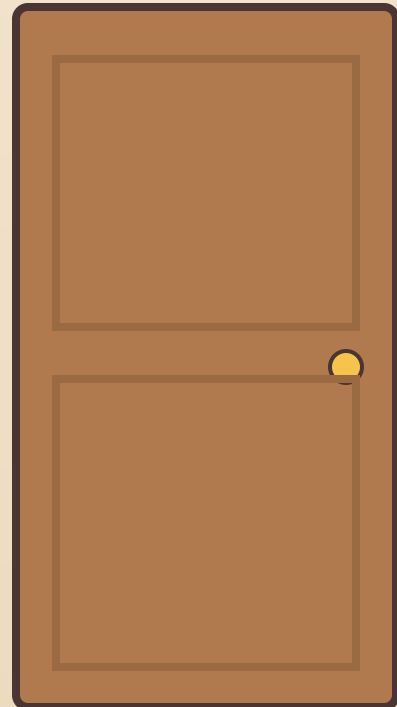


Nicholas lived to be very old, always helping and sharing. On December 6, God called him home to Heaven. But people never forgot their kind bishop!

Today, on the night before St. Nicholas Day, children in many places put out their shoes. In the morning, they find little treats: oranges, cookies and chocolate coins!



Good night!



In Holland, St. Nicholas is called **Sinterklaas**. Say it fast: that's where the name Santa Claus comes from! Like Nicholas, we can give gifts with love.



LET US PRAY

St. Nicholas, help me to give with a happy, secret heart.



A Prayer to St. Nicholas

Let's pray it together!

St. Nicholas, you loved Jesus and you loved to give. You helped families, sailors and hungry people, and you kept your kindness a secret. Help me to share with a happy heart, to help people in need, and to thank God for every gift. Amen.

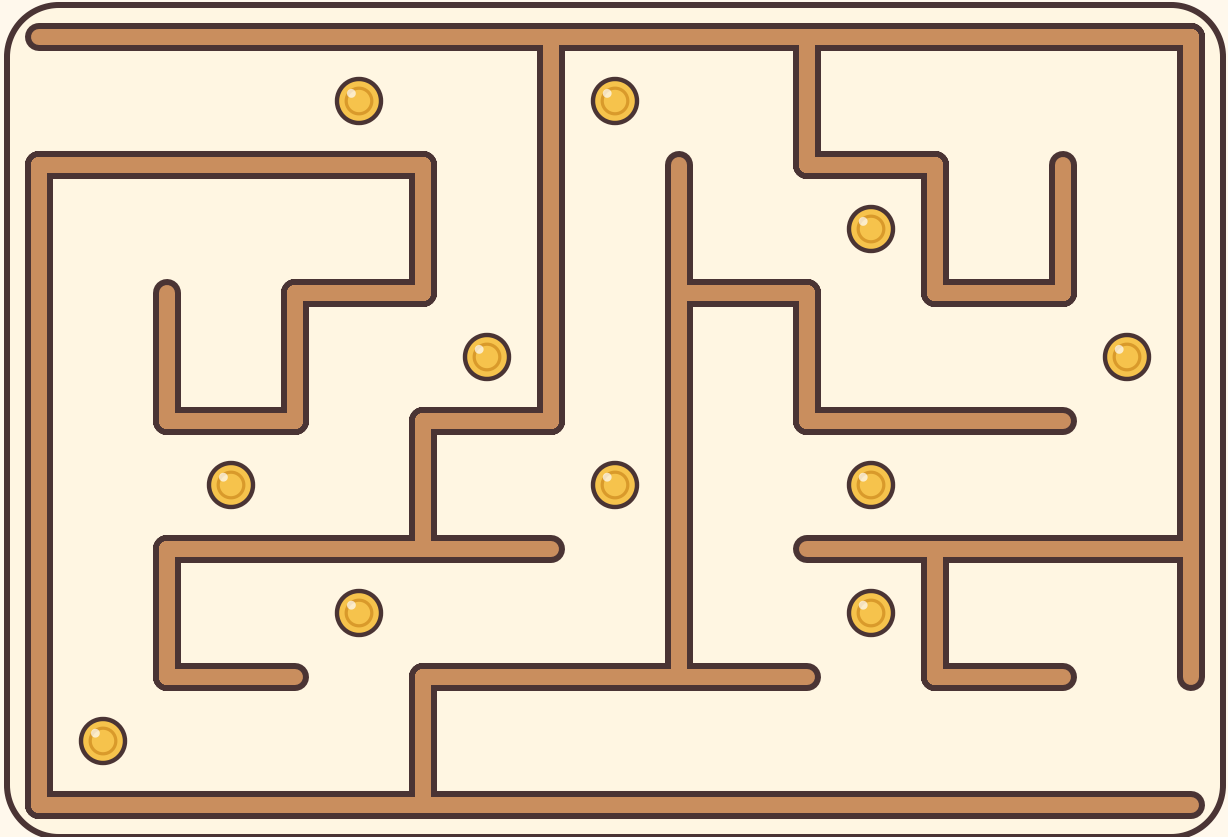
A little prayer for little ones
Nicholas, so kind and true,
secret gifts you loved to do.
Help me share and help me give,
and love like Jesus all I live! Amen.

Help St. Nicholas!

Find the way to the house. Collect the gold coins as you go!



Start



Finish

Shh! Leave a secret gift by the stocking!

Be Like St. Nicholas!

Color in a gold coin each time you do it!

☐ I can give a secret gift.

☐ I can share my snack.

☐ I can help someone who is sad.

☐ I can say thank you to God.

☐ I can pray for people who travel!



St. Nicholas's Special Day



Every year on December 6, the Church celebrates St. Nicholas, the friend of children. Here are some fun ways to celebrate!



Put out your shoe



Give a secret gift

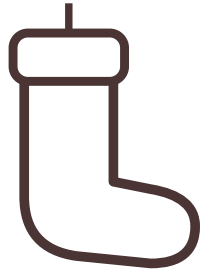
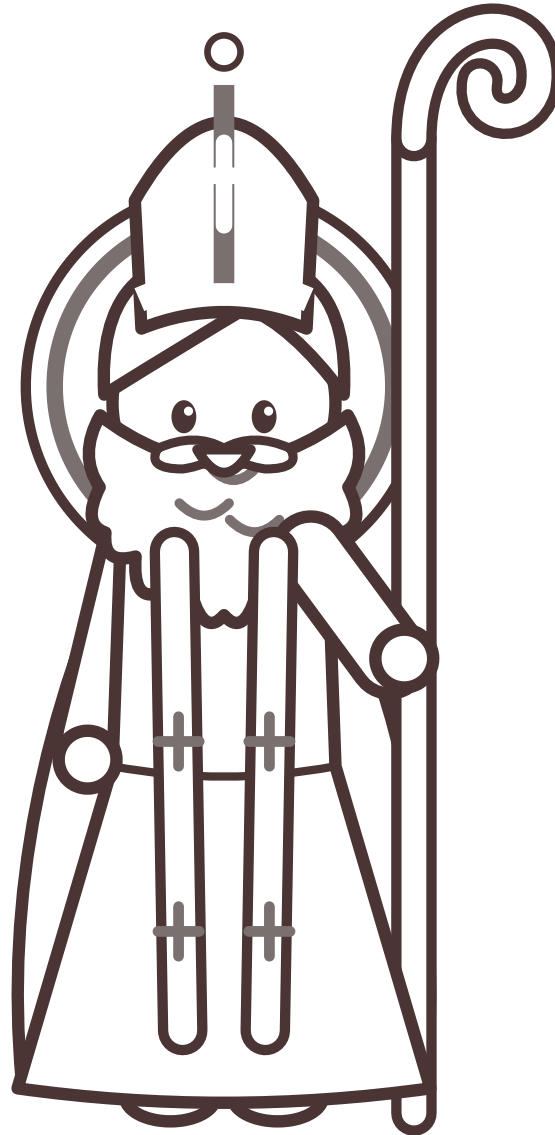


Share an orange



Pray for sailors

Color St. Nicholas!



Give with a happy heart!

You can be a secret helper too!



St. Nicholas gave his gifts in secret, just to make others happy and to please God. When you share and help without being asked, you are a lot like him. St. Nicholas is cheering you on!

Dear Jesus, thank You for St. Nicholas. Help me to give like he did. Amen.

For Grown-Ups

Where these stories come from: the early lives of St. Nicholas and centuries of loving tradition, retold here simply and gently for young children.

1. **A Boy Who Loved to Share.** Nicholas was born in the late 3rd century at Patara in Lycia, on the southern coast of today's Turkey, to devout parents. Tradition says they died when he was young and that he gave his inheritance to the poor.
2. **Three Bags of Gold.** The best-known story, found in the earliest lives of St. Nicholas: a poor father could not provide dowries for his three daughters, and Nicholas secretly threw a bag of gold through the window by night. The detail of the gold landing in stockings hung to dry is a later, much-loved addition behind the custom of Christmas stockings.
3. **Shh! It's a Secret.** He returned for the second and third daughters; the father kept watch, recognized him and thanked him, and Nicholas asked him to tell no one. The three gold balls in his pictures recall this story.
4. **The Early Bird Bishop.** When the bishop of Myra died, the bishops of the province were told in prayer to choose the first man named Nicholas to enter the church in the morning. Nicholas came early to pray and was made bishop.
5. **The Stormy Sea.** Sailors in a storm off Lycia called on him; he appeared, helped with the rigging and calmed the sea, and they later recognized him in church at Myra. He is patron of sailors, and model ships are still left in churches in his honor.
6. **Wheat for Everyone.** During a famine, grain ships bound for the emperor put in at Myra. Nicholas asked the sailors to unload a hundred measures from each ship, promising they would lose nothing; they arrived with their cargo complete, and the grain fed Myra for two years.
7. **Shoes by the Door.** Nicholas died on December 6, around 343, and his relics have been at Bari, Italy, since 1087. Tradition says he attended the Council of Nicaea in 325. Children in many countries set out shoes on the eve of his feast, and the Dutch *Sinterklaas* traveled with settlers to New York to become Santa Claus. We have left out some of the more frightening legends for young readers.



St. Nicholas,
pray for us!

Holy Helpers

www.catholicsundayschool.com