

## The Life of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker

### Part 2 – The Meaning Behind Christmas Stockings

“A saint is one who is constantly conscious of being a sinner and rarely, if ever, conscious of being a saint. In fact, it has been said that there are two kinds of people in the world: sinners who think they are saints, and saints who know they are sinners. The most outstanding personalities in Orthodox spirituality, those who saw the uncreated light of God, never said they had reached that high level of spirituality. The people around them detected it from the distinct radiance they generated.” (Anthony M. Coniaris, *Introducing The Orthodox Church: Its Faith and Life*, p. 92)



We naturally want people to pat us on the back and praise us when we perform some act of charity or do something kind for someone else. And yet, in this chapter, St. Nicholas challenges us to care for others in secret, so only God gets the glory...

Devotion to St. Nicholas flourished in central France in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries, resulting in dramatization of several different legends about his marvelous deeds. The best known of the legends to receive dramatic form is that of the three daughters whose poverty-stricken father cannot provide dowries for them. This play became known as the *Tres filiae*, of which one text survives from the German town of Hildesheim<sup>1</sup> (eleventh or twelfth century) and one from the French Benedictine monastery of Fleury.<sup>2</sup>

According to the Fleury version, a man of noble birth – who has suddenly lost his fortune – is lamenting to his three marriageable daughters his inability to provide a dowry for them. The first daughter suggests prostitution as the only solution for the difficulty, and asks leave to be the first to sacrifice herself. At this moment, an unseen benefactor tosses a bag of gold through the window and, as the family rejoices and gives thanks to God, a gentleman appears and claims the eldest daughter for his bride.

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<sup>1</sup> **Hildesheim:** city in northwestern Germany, in Lower Saxony (Niedersachsen), at the base of the Harz Mountains, near Hannover. In the early 9th century Hildesheim became the seat of a bishopric; in the early 11th century the bishop of Hildesheim, Saint Bernward, made the city an important center of Romanesque art. After it became a free city of the Holy Roman Empire in the 13th century, Hildesheim was accorded municipal rights (1249) and in the same period joined the Hanseatic League. Texts on St. Nicholas are from the eleventh or twelfth century.

<sup>2</sup> **Fleury:** One of the oldest and most celebrated Benedictine abbeys of Western Europe. Its modern name is Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire, applicable both to the monastery and the township with which the abbey has always been associated. Situated, as its name implies, on the banks of the Loire, the little town is of easy access from Orléans. The boast of Fleury is the relics of St. Benedict, the father of Western monasticism.

At once, the lamentation of the father is repeated, word for word and, as the second daughter recoils at the prospect in store for her, the gold and a gentleman appear a second time.

After the father's third lamentation, the remaining daughter urges him to put his trust in God and to remember the tribulations of Job.<sup>3</sup> Again, the (now not altogether) unexpected bag of gold makes its appearance. This time the father dashes out and surprises the unknown benefactor, falling at his feet. *Nicholas reveals his identity, disclaiming credit for the gift and ascribing it to God's generosity.* As Nicholas disappears, the rejoicing and the suit for the third daughter's hand resume their familiar way, and the play comes to an end.

The Latin verse of these plays is so highly lyrical as to suggest a basis in hymnody, perhaps from the office of the Saint's Feast Day. The *Te Deum* closing the Hildesheim play confirms the association with liturgical Matins, and the Fleury text ends with the antiphon *O Christi pietas*, which was ordinarily used in Lauds and Vespers of the feast.

Vincent of Beauvais<sup>4</sup> includes the legend in his encyclopedia, and St. Thomas Aquinas<sup>5</sup> cites Nicholas' effort to remain unknown in the chapter *Of Ingratitude* in the Summa Theologica. He writes:

“Seneca also says (De Benef vii): When we say that a man after conferring a favor should forget about it, it is a mistake to suppose that we mean him to shake off the recollection of a thing so very praiseworthy. When we say: He must not remember it, we mean that he must not publish it abroad and boast about it.

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<sup>3</sup> **Job:** Biblical character in the Hebrew Scriptures. Job is a “man . . . blameless and upright . . . one who feared God, and turned away from evil” (Job 1:1). He is pious, rich, and the head of a large, contented family. Then on a day “when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord” (Job 1:6), God asks Satan what he thinks of Job's piety and righteousness. Satan proposes that Job would curse God if he were to lose all his wealth; so God and Satan agree to test Job. Satan proceeds to take away Job's possessions, even his sons, and finally to afflict Job with extremely painful boils. Job refuses, however, to curse God.

<sup>4</sup> **Vincent of Beauvais** (1190? – 1264?): Priest and encyclopedist. Vincent undertook a systematic and comprehensive treatment of all branches of human knowledge. In the preparation of this colossal work, he was helped in the purchase of books by his royal patron Louis IX. The general title of Vincent's work is “*Speculum majus*.” The first part, “*Speculum naturale*,” contains thirty-two books and 3718 chapters, and treats of theology, psychology, physiology, cosmography, physics, botany, zoology, mineralogy, agriculture. The second part, “*Speculum doctrinale*,” in seventeen books and 2374 chapters, treats of logic, rhetoric, poetry, geometry, astronomy, instincts, passions, education, industrial and mechanical arts, anatomy, surgery, medicine, jurisprudence, and administration of justice. The third part, “*Speculum historiale*,” in thirty-one books and 3793 chapters, brings the history of the world to A.D. 1250. A fourth part, “*Speculum morale*,” appears in some additions, but its authenticity is questioned, Daunou (1761- 1840) affirming that it cannot be attributed to Vincent. The “*Speculum majus*” contains 80 books, divided into 9885 chapters, figures which give some idea of the magnitude of the work accomplished by the Dominican Friar in the first half of the thirteenth century.

<sup>5</sup> **Aquinas, Saint Thomas:** sometimes called the Angelic Doctor and the Prince of Scholastics (1225-1274), Italian philosopher and theologian, whose works have made him the most important figure in Scholastic philosophy and one of the leading Roman Catholic theologians.

“He that is unaware of a favor conferred on him is not ungrateful, if he fails to repay it, provided he be prepared to do so if he knew. It is nevertheless commendable at times that the object of a favor should remain in ignorance of it, both in order to avoid vainglory, as when Blessed Nicholas threw gold into a house secretly, wishing to avoid popularity: and because the kindness is all the greater through the benefactor wishing not to shame the person on whom he is conferring the favor.” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Volume 3, p. 1649)

This legend is one of the oldest and most popular of the legends of St. Nicholas. It occurs regularly in all the Greek and Latin *Lives of St. Nicholas*. It came down to us without much embellishment by later biographers.

Besides being related in the Latin *Vitae*, the legend is found in various accounts in the vernacular. It's briefly alluded to in the *Jeu de St. Nicolas* by Jean Bodel<sup>6</sup> and in an unpublished Old French prayer to St. Nicholas of the same period. In German the legend occurs as early as the thirteenth century in the *Passionale* and in a poem ascribed to Konrad von Würzburg.<sup>7</sup>

We also find the subject of Nicholas' generosity to the maidens treated at some length in two anonymous Old French *Lives of St. Nicholas*, one of the thirteenth and the other of the fourteenth century. Robert Wace<sup>8</sup> also included it in his *Life of St. Nicholas*.

Sermons for the Feast of St. Nicholas are frequent during the twelfth and following centuries, and it's surprising to find how often the legend of the *Tres Filiae* is brought in. Thus it's very

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<sup>6</sup> **Jean Bodel** (died c. 1210): French poet and dramatist. Author of “Le Jeu de St Nicolas,” which is by far the most elaborate and the best-known treatment of the legend of the barbarian and the icon of St. Nicholas. Here the barbarian has become a pagan king and the setting is the Crusades. To be sure, the tavern scenes are more suggestive of the everyday life of Arras than they are in keeping with the miraculous intervention of the Saint, but the theme of the *Iconia* remains essentially the same. Bodel depended heavily on both the Fleury and Hilarius plays for his material. In the opinion of one critic, Jean Bodel wrote under Norman influence. There was much in the accounts of the life of St. Nicholas that presented a peculiar appeal to the Normans. Many of the Saint's miracles were performed at sea, or in behalf of sailors, and he was held in such reverence by the Normans, a sea-faring people, that he became the patron Saint of sailors.

<sup>7</sup> **Konrad von Würzburg** (1220?-1287): German poet, who marked the transition in German literature from the period of the minnesingers to that of the Meistersinger. He was probably born in Würzburg and lived and worked chiefly in Strasbourg. Konrad wrote short literary or art epics and legends, poetic narratives, and romances. Many of his writings were derived from older Latin and French sources. Author of “Passionale.”

<sup>8</sup> **Robert Wace (or Guace)** (1100 – 1174): Poet. When very young, as he was destined to the Church, he was sent to Caen to make his studies, and afterwards to Paris. Between 1130 and 1135 he returned to Caen, where he was appointed *clerc lisant* (reader) to King Henry I. Being in straitened circumstances, he began to write to increase his resources. Wace wrote a very early, and perhaps, the *earliest* life of Nicholas written in French. The nautical vocabulary employed by Wace in his life of St. Nicholas, his descriptions of storms at sea, and the many journeys to which references are made, journeys in almost every instance by ship, must have had an uncommon interest to people familiar with the sea. His great importance is due to the fact that instead of writing in Latin like the other educated men of his day, he was among the first and ablest to introduce the vernacular. This gained for him a much larger audience. The evidence points clearly to the fact that Johannes Diaconus, rather than Methodius, was the chief source from which Wace drew his material for the life of St. Nicholas.

briefly referred to in the sermon by Nicolas de Clairvaux.<sup>9</sup> Alain de l'Isle<sup>10</sup> and Honorius of Autun<sup>11</sup> refer to the story at greater length.

After the twelfth century it's mentioned in three sermons by Odo of Châteauroux;<sup>12</sup> two by Dionysius the Carthusian;<sup>13</sup> two attributed to St. Bonaventure;<sup>14</sup> and one by Jean de Gerson.<sup>15</sup> None of the passages tell the story completely, doubtless because it was familiar to all hearers.

In one long thirteenth-century homily divided into scholastic divisions and subdivisions, the author (thought to be St. Bonaventure) forcefully analyzed the manifold gifts given by God to St. Nicholas. He shows, in the story of the three girls' dowries, how Nicholas could change his temporal goods into spiritual riches.

This is the story that, in general, has linked the name of St. Nicholas particularly with the virtue of generosity. Among schoolboys in the Middle Ages, the story was particularly well known. It formed the subject of one of the plays performed by them on the eve of the Feast of St. Nicholas.

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<sup>9</sup> **Nicolas de Clairvaux** (d. 1178): Entered Clairvaux Monastery c.1152

<sup>10</sup> **Alain de l'Isle** (1115 – 1202/3): (Also called Alain of Lille, Alanus Ab Insulis, Or De Insulis, Alain Von Ryssel etc.). Monk, poet, preacher, theologian, and eclectic philosopher. French scholastic philosopher, a Cistercian, honored by his contemporaries as the Universal Doctor. He was born in Lille; he taught at Paris and Montpellier before retiring to Cîteaux. Alain attempted to give rational support to the tenets of Christian faith in his writings. He held that the mind unaided by revelation can know the universe, but by faith alone can man know God. Although his thought was largely Neoplatonic, he made use of numerous Aristotelian and neo-Pythagorean elements. The mathematical and deductive method had an important place in the working out of his theology. One of his chief works, *De fide catholica contra haereticos*, was written in order to refute heretics and unbelievers. Alain was also one of the foremost didactic poets of his day; his chief poem *Anticlaudian* (tr. 1935) is a complicated allegory.

<sup>11</sup> **Honorius of Autun**: A theologian, philosopher, and encyclopedic writer who lived in the first half of the twelfth century. Honorius has been correctly described as one of the most mysterious personages in all the medieval period. All that can be stated with certainty is that he flourished between the years 1106 and 1135, that he spent the greater part of that time in Southern Germany, and that he wrote a very large number of works, most of which have come down to us. The list of Honorius's writings is a very long one. In Pez's "Thesaurus" ("Diss. isagog.," in vol. II, p. 4) we find as many as thirty-eight titles.

<sup>12</sup> **Odo of Chateauroux** (d. 1273): papal legate.

<sup>13</sup> **Dionysius the Carthusian** (1402 – 1471): Theologian and mystic, one of the important contributors to, and propagators of, the influential school of Rhenish spirituality originating in the 14th century. He excelled as a mystical writer and on this account has been honored with the title Doctor Ecstaticus. His renown for learning and especially for saintliness, drew upon him considerable intercourse with the outer world. He was consulted as an oracle by men of different social standing, from bishops and princes downwards; they flocked to his cell, and numberless letters came to him from all parts of the Netherlands and Germany.

<sup>14</sup> **Bonaventure, Saint** (circa 1217-74): Christian theologian and minister general of the Franciscans; especially noted for his spiritual writings, he was called the Seraphic Doctor.

<sup>15</sup> **Gerson, Jean de** (1363-1429): French churchman and theologian, remembered for his efforts to settle the Great Schism and for his writings on contemplation.

Over the centuries, the legend evolved into the custom of giftgiving on the Feast Day of St. Nicholas. The secret manner of bringing the gifts to the children must have been an old practice as may be understood from the incident recorded of the young man of the sixteenth century. In an attempt to imitate St. Nicholas, he fell through an opening left for grain and nearly lost his life!

The dowry legend is referred to more often than any other in the many medieval hymns in honor of St. Nicholas. The antiphons in the office for the Feast of St. Nicholas also refer frequently to the miracle. In the eleventh-century office from Saint-Maur-les-Fossés, three different antiphons mention the legend.

In Danté's<sup>16</sup> *Purgatory*, the shade of Hugh Caplet introduces the name of Nicholas in this connection:

*Esso parlava ancor della larghezza  
che fece Niccolao alle pulcelle,  
per condurre ad onor lor giovenezza.*<sup>17</sup>

### **The Legend of the Three Girls – According to “The Golden Legend”**

“And when his father and mother were departed out of this life, he began to think how he might distribute his riches, and not to the praising of the world but to the honour and glory of God. And it was so that one, his neighbour, had then three daughters, virgins, and he was a nobleman: but for the poverty of them together, they were constrained and in very purpose to abandon them to sin. And when the holy man Nicholas knew hereof he had great horror of this, and threw by night secretly into the house of the man a mass of gold wrapped in a cloth. And when the man arose in the morning, he found this mass of gold, and rendered to God therefore great thankings, and therewith he married his oldest daughter.

“And a little while after this holy servant of God threw in another mass of gold; which the man found, and thanked God, and purposed to wake for to know him that so had aided him in his poverty. And after a few days Nicholas doubled the mass of gold, and cast it into the house of this man. He awoke by the sound of the gold, and followed Nicholas, which fled from him, and he said to him: ‘Sir, flee not away so but that I may see and know thee.’ Then he ran after him more hastily, and knew that it was Nicholas; and anon he kneeled down, and would have kissed his feet, but the holy man would not, but required him not to tell nor

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<sup>16</sup> **Dante Alighieri** (1265-1321): Italian poet, and one of the supreme figures of world literature, who was admired for the depth of his spiritual vision and for the range of his intellectual accomplishment.

<sup>17</sup> **Translation:** *It spoke further of the generosity of Nicholas toward the maidens in order to conduct their youth to honor.*

discover this thing as long as he lived.” (Jacobus de Voragine,<sup>18</sup> *The Golden Legend: Lives of the Saints*, translated by William Caxton, pp. 62-63)

### **The Legend of the Three Girls – According to the *Vita Per Metaphrasten***

“There was a man, once famous, who had fallen into obscurity and from riches to poverty. He had been reduced to extreme want in all material ways. When the day came that he lacked the very essentials of life (ah, shame! to what extreme does poverty progress!), he determined to sell into prostitution at a price his three beautiful daughters to whoever were willing to buy, with the profit from each to sustain himself and them. It was impossible for him to marry them off; for because of their excessive poverty, all beaux disdained them.

Now once having convinced himself, he pondered the disreputable plan, and was already making the first move toward that shameless act. But Thou, Lord, Who art by nature both good and the source of every good, and dost benignly hearken to our needs, didst convey news of this plight to the ears of Nicholas. And Thou didst send him like a good angel and ready helper to that poor man, who had already reached the point of decision, that Nicholas might at one and the same time relieve his poverty and free him from that which was more oppressive than poverty.

“Let us scrutinize together the compassion mingled with good sense of this Saint. For Nicholas could not bear either to approach him to discuss the matter (however briefly), or show him the hand that should rescue him, as those are wont to do who bare that hand for philanthropy but with a mean and earthbound heart. For he sensed what arrogance it would be to approach one who had fallen from riches and glory into want – how it would cover one with shame and too vividly recall his one-time felicity.

“Rather, just as *Nicholas was striving to live up to the evangelic precept that a good deed must not be identified as the act of a Christian lest the Christian use his beneficence for his own gain, so he should divorce himself from this deed and not seek glory from men. Indeed, whenever he did anything good, he tried*

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<sup>18</sup> **Jacobus de Voragine** (1230? – 1298?): Archbishop of Genoa and medieval hagiologist. In 1244 he entered the Order of St. Dominic, and soon became famous for his piety, learning, and zeal in the care of souls. His fame as a preacher spread throughout Italy, and he was called upon to preach from the most celebrated pulpits of Lombardy. Jacopo de Voragine is best known as the author of a collection of legendary lives of the saints, which was entitled “*Legenda Sanctorum*” by the author, but soon became universally known as “*Legenda Aurea*” (*The Golden Legend*), because the people of those times considered it worth its weight in gold. *The Golden Legend* was the most popular collection of lives of the Saints during the Middle Ages, and from 1470 to 1530 it was also the most often printed book in Europe. In 1500 as many as seventy-four Latin editions of it had been published, not counting the three translations into English, five French, eight Italian, fourteen Low German, and three Bohemian. About 900 manuscripts of his *Golden Legend* survive.

*harder to hide his actions than do those who do evil.*<sup>19</sup> So, after he had bagged a sum of gold, in the dead of night he went to that man's home. The minute he had thrown the bag through the window, he hastily returned to his home, disquieted at the thought of being seen. When the poor man arose later in the morning, he found the gold. Loosing the string with difficulty, he was dumfounded, thinking himself deluded and fearing that what he saw before him was fool's gold. For in such circumstances how could he imagine that a benefactor would be willing for him to benefit without knowing the source of the benefaction? Then assaying the gold with the sensitive tips of his fingers and scrupulously testing it, he concluded that it was in fact gold.

“He was elated, he marveled, he was transported. In the realization of such joy he shed warm tears. Mentally checking down the roll of all his many acquaintances, he could find none to whom he could ascribe what had been done. He attributed this gift to God, incessantly and tearfully rendering thanks to Him. Then with overflowing heart he strove before all else to erase the mischief of his sin against God. He married off one of his daughters, the eldest of course, providing as dowry for her the mysterious gold which had so abundantly been supplied.

“Yet at a later time it came to the attention of the remarkable Nicholas and he verified the fact, that the man was preparing to carry through a resolve to sell the second of his daughters, despite his vain hope that through marriage he might avert a second such evil occasion. Thereupon, unperceived by anyone, during the night Nicholas threw an equally valuable bag of gold through the same window. And so again, when the man arose in the morning and found the gold as before he was once more dumbfounded. Prostrate on the ground he wet the earth with his hot tears, saying: ‘God, Who dost gladden the wretched and art the font of our well-being, Who even once didst become man for my disobedience, and now hast freed me and my daughters from the snare of the Enemy, show Thou me the one who obeyest Thy will, who is angel among men and reflector of Thy goodness. Who is this man who has snatched us from the poverty which overwhelms us, and freed us from our loathsome intentions? For lo, out of Thy mercy I now give a daughter to wed, conjoined in lawful matrimony. Till now she has escaped becoming the prey of the Devil and a source of profit for me. What a sorrow, that – more overwhelming than any other catastrophe to me!’

“He uttered this prayer, and forthwith arranged for the marriage of his second daughter. He was now consumed by a firm belief and high hope that the same evil occasion would not arise with respect to the third daughter. Surely a bridegroom could not be lacking! Because of the previous happenings he confidently imagined that in the instance of this daughter he would have her dowry ready at hand. As a peer of her sisters she should receive equal generosity. This time he waited, watchfully, night after night on guard, to anticipate that singular disburser of money when he came again unannounced. If and when he should come again,

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<sup>19</sup> Emphasis mine.

he would learn from that person who he was and why he was distributing gold in this way. The father watched very carefully, awaiting the unknown's appearance.

“Then at the third hour in the dead of night, the servant of God Nicholas came to the now customary spot with silent tread, and now again threw a tied bag of gold through the same window, swiftly retreating toward home. The girls' father, when he heard the sound of gold as it struck and realized that it was the anticipated gift of wealth, as fast as he could ran after the man. When he caught up with him and recognized who it was (for because of his family's position and celebrity Nicholas could not hide his identity) he dropped to Nicholas's feet, calling him redeemer, reviver, savior of souls who were foundering in dire peril. 'For had not,' he said, 'the good Lord in His compassion awakened thy pity, then long ere this, alas unhappy me, I would have perished with my three daughters. But now through you God has granted salvation to us and freed us from the mischievous mischance of sin. He has lifted the indigent from the mire and caused the poor to rise from the poverty also.'”

“These words he uttered with tears of joy and in the warm glow of faith. Then Nicholas, as soon as he realized that he had failed to keep his identity hidden from the man, made him arise. He bound the man by an oath never in the whole course of his life to relate to others what had occurred, or to make known the benevolent act. Now all the actions of the marvelous Nicholas, this one is the most charitable and the best known.”

The legend is the story of a simple, spontaneous good deed. It lacks the grandeur of the supernatural found in most other anecdotes concerning St. Nicholas' acts on Earth and, after his bodily death, through appearances as a saintly apparition endowed with miraculous powers.

**The Legend in Art:** His coming to the house at night was an inspiration for a great many painters and sculptors. One, for instance, is featured on a doorway at Chartres Cathedral in France. The father is asleep by his three daughters without perceiving their misery or their silent reproaches, and the kind hand of quite a young man is just about to drop a purse through the partly open door.



There is also a picture by Fra Angelico,<sup>20</sup> with the three girls lying innocently together asleep, the father dozing at the foot of their bed, looking utterly crushed, while a slim, haloed figure

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<sup>20</sup> **Angelico, Fra** (1400?-1455): Italian painter of the early Renaissance, who combined the life of a devout friar with that of an accomplished painter. He was called Angelico (Italian for “angelic”) and Beato (Italian for “blessed”) because the paintings he did were of calm, religious subjects and because of his extraordinary personal piety. In the gallery of the Vatican are his “St. Nicholas of Bari” and “Madonna and Angels.”

reaches up to the latched window with his right hand. There are two more pictures of the Italian school, in which Nicholas, perching on a stone, is performing real acrobatic feats to reach the window.

The three golden balls with which some artists – especially Italians – represent St. Nicholas, are a reminder of the three girls he saved.

***Did You Know?*** Until recently, in the church of St. Nicholas in Carcere at Rome, the generosity of St. Nicholas was annually commemorated, by the giving of gifts to poor children in the sacristy after the memorial Mass on the Feast of St. Nicholas. After the Mass, a throng of expectant parents and children would follow the officiating priest into the sacristy. The distribution of gifts would follow.



***Thought to Ponder:*** In the ongoing war of among the fast-food giants, a commercial comes along that says it all. A spokesman from one chain is having a debate with Ronald McDonald. After outlining all the benefits of his own product (great taste, great food, and great prices), he asks Ronald McDonald what McDonald’s has to offer. The clown happily responds, “Toys! Lots and lots of toys!”

That is the essence of the debate between the St. Nicholas and Santa Claus.

Or, as J. Rosenthal & C. Myers have said:

“Santa Claus belongs to childhood;  
St. Nicholas models for all of life.

Santa Claus, as we know him, developed to boost Christmas sales—the commercial Christmas message;  
St. Nicholas told the story of Christ and peace, goodwill toward all—the hope-filled Christmas message.

Santa Claus encourages consumption;  
St. Nicholas encourages compassion.

Santa Claus appears each year to be seen and heard for a short time;  
St. Nicholas is part of the communion of saints, surrounding us always with prayer and example.

Santa Claus flies through the air—from the North Pole;  
St. Nicholas walked the earth—caring for those in need.

Santa Claus, for some, replaces the Babe of Bethlehem;  
St. Nicholas, for all, points to the Babe of Bethlehem.

Santa Claus isn't bad;  
St. Nicholas is just better.”<sup>21</sup>

*Thought to Discuss around the Dinner Table:* Nicholas’ parents set an example for him through their service to the poor. The epistle for his Feast Day (**Hebrews 13:16-21**) contains the verse, “Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God...” It was a lesson he never forgot.

How can we do the same during the Christmas season – and all year round?

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<sup>21</sup> Quoted on the following web site: <http://www.stnicholascenter.org/>