



# Saints of the Season

Second Week of Advent

## December 6 - Celebrate the Feast of St. Nicholas

Many people just know St. Nicholas by the name Santa Claus. While the modern figure of Santa derives from St. Nick, you'd hardly find this patron saint of children making toys in the North Pole. However, St. Nicholas was known for his generosity and gift giving. St. Nicholas, the 4th-century bishop of Myra. St. Nicholas is celebrated throughout Europe with various traditions. Eastern Europe many times depicts St. Nicholas with an angel and a the devil (naughty and nice?) as he traveled around giving gifts to the poor. St. Nicholas's anonymous gift-giving originated in his hometown of Patara in Turkey. According to ancient tradition, to deliver a destitute family of a widower father and his three daughters, who their father was considering to sell into slavery, out of dire poverty, the young Nicholas secretly threw three bags of gold coins through their window on three consecutive nights. St. Nicholas's name has been translated in other languages such as *Sw. Mikolaj* in Poland, *Nikolaos* in Greece, *San Nicolás* in Mexico, but it was the Dutch who began referring to St. Nicholas as *Sinterklaas*.

## Family Activity

### The Traveling Christmas St. Nicholas (or Angel)

This is perhaps the most fun tradition and one you might want to consider starting in your own area. In the spirit of St. Nicholas Day, start a traveling Christmas St. Nicholas (or Angel) tradition to spark generosity all over our area. Here's how it works:



Get some kind of small St. Nicholas statue or angel statue, or even an angel ornament.

Think of another family in your area you want to pass on the statue to and something kind to do for them. This could be a small gift, a family activity, or just an act of kindness.

Anonymously leave the statue on their front door mat one evening with a letter indicating that they've been touched by the spirit of Christmas generosity and that it is now their turn to pass on a kind act to another family in the area. We also print out a paper that "We've been visited by St. Nicholas" that they can post in their front window so others know they've already been visited.

The tradition of "Secret Santa" is derived from this saint's anonymous gift-giving. Send a "Secret Santa" gift or do a random act of kindness today!



## More Information

[thespruceeats.com](http://thespruceeats.com) - *St. Nicholas is Celebrated in Poland December 6*

[stnicholascenter.org](http://stnicholascenter.org)- *Recipes from around the world to celebrate St. Nicholas*

[Teacherspayteacher.com](http://Teacherspayteacher.com) - FREE download printable Bishop's Miter Headband

