

## Homily on “Saint Nicholas” -- Seven Questions, Seven Answers

His Grace, Michael – Bishop of New York & the Diocese of New York and New Jersey

### **Question #1: When and where was Saint Nicholas born?**

**Answer:** He was born around the late 200s in a small town called Patara, which is in the country we now call Turkey.

### **Question #2: What does the name “Nicholas” mean?**

**Answer:** The name comes from two Greek words – “*nike*” which means victor or conqueror, and “*laos*” which means people. So, his name means “victor of the people.”

### **Question #3: What was his family life like growing up?**

**Answer:** Nicholas was the only son of very good Christian parents, who taught him about Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, and about the true holy Orthodox Faith. They also taught him how to pray, fast, and worship God. Since his parents were quite wealthy, after their deaths, Nicholas inherited a great deal of money and property, which he gave away secretly to the poor. He spent a lot of time with his uncle, also named Nicholas, who himself was an archbishop. He ordained him as a reader and a deacon and then a priest. Later he was chosen by God to be the Archbishop of Myra in what is now Turkey.

### **Question #4: Did Saint Nicholas ever have any difficulties in his life?**

**Answer:** He certainly did! He was locked up with other Christians in prison because he refused to worship idols. Our Lord saved him from harm, and he continued to teach and guide his flock in the true faith. He also defended the Orthodox Faith at the First Ecumenical Council in Nicea, in 325, against a priest named Arius, who was not telling the truth about who Jesus Christ really is.

### **Question #5: Why is Saint Nicholas called “the Wonderworker”?**

**Answer:** Because God blessed him through the grace of the Holy Spirit to perform miracles while he was still living on earth ... and now as he is in the heavenly kingdom with all the other saints. Among the miracles St. Nicholas performed during his earthly life: He saved sailors from drowning, helped to release prisoners who were unjustly accused, fed people during a famine, helped the poor from being sold into slavery by giving them bags of money, and prayed for many people who were sick to be healed. In every miracle he did, Saint Nicholas gave thanks and glory to God.

### **Question #6: Where are Saint Nicholas’ relics found today?**

**Answer:** They were in Constantinople, but are now in Bari, Italy. They still stream holy myrrh when people come to pray before them.

**Question #7: What would St. Nicholas want us to most remember about him?**

**Answer:** That he is a servant of God ... who prays for the Holy Church ... and for all our souls to be saved, so that we together with him and all the Saints, would live forever in Heaven with God.

