

بابا نُوئل

Santa Claus (n.) {festivals} بابا نُوئل

<http://www.arabdict.com/en/english-arabic/%D9%86%D9%88%D9%8A%D9%84>

بابا نُوئل

بابا نُوئل - ویکی‌پدیا، دانشنامهٔ آزاد - ویکی‌پدیای فارسی

https://fa.wikipedia.org/.../بابا_نُوئل/ ▼ Translate this page Persian Wikipedia ▼

بابا نُوئل عمدتاً یک پیرمرد چاق با ریش سفید بلند و لباس قرمز است که در روز ... در بیشتر کشورهای دنیا نام انگلیسی - آمریکایی آن سانتا کلاوز **Santa Claus** ...

دانلود برنامه **Santa Claus** بابا نُوئل - اندروید

<androidiha.com/1393/.../santa-claus.html> ▼ Translate this page

دانلود برنامه **Santa Claus** برای اندروید با لینک مستقیم|**Santa Claus** یک برنامه سرگرم - Dec 14, 2014
کننده برای گفتگو با بابا نُوئل می باشد. کریسمس نزدیک ...

دانلود بازی **Santa Claus 2015 Christmas Trip** بابا نُوئل - اندروید

<androidiha.com/.../santa-claus-2015-christ...> ▼ Translate this page

با دانلود بازی **Santa Claus 2015 Christmas Trip** شما در نقش بابا نُوئل وارد بازی می - Dec 27, 2014
شوید که در آن شما باید به همراه گوزن ها، هدیه ها را انتخاب کنید و آن ها ...

سانتا کلاز

How to say 'Santa Claus' in Urdu - Word Hippo

www.wordhippo.com/.../urdu-word-for-106819fed9cd37eab541002dcf... ▼

How to say 'Santa Claus' in Urdu. How do you say 'Santa Claus' in Urdu? Here's a list of phrases you may be ... Urdu phrases for 'Santa Claus'. **سانتا کلاز** ...

Geo Urdu - ... **سانتا کلاز** نے واٹر سکیٹنگ کر کے کرسمس ...

www.geourdu.com/.../santa-claus-water-skating-christ... ▼ Translate this page

Dec 25, 2014 - **Santa Claus Water Skating** **سانتا کلاز** نے خوشیاں منانے کی کرسمس ...
سمندر کے ساحل پر پہنچ گئے، جہاں سانتا نے واٹر ...

Timeline Photos - Urdu Majlis - First ever URDU unicode vB ...

<https://www.facebook.com/.../a.../635775553125098/> ▼ Translate this page

New Mexico teacher ... کا بہروپ بھرا **سانتا کلاز** کے سکول میں ایک سیاہ فام بچے نے **سانتا کلاز** کا بہروپ بھرا ... disciplined for telling black student **Santa Claus** is white

Άγιος Βασίλης

Άγιος Νικόλαος - Βικιπαίδεια

https://el.wikipedia.org/.../Άγιος_Νικ... ▼ Translate this page Greek Wikipedia ▼

... λειψάνων για ανάπλαση προσώπου; 6 Προστάτης ναυτικών - Λαογραφία; 7 Άγιος Νικόλαος και **Άγιος Βασίλης** (Santa Claus); 8 Παραπομπές; 9 Βιβλιογραφία ...

ΑΓΙΟΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΗΣ ΚΑΙ SANTA CLAUS - Βίοι Παράλληλοι

www.livanis.gr/ΑΓΙΟΣ-ΒΑΣΙΛΗΣ-ΚΑΙ-SANTA-CLA... ▼ Translate this page

Ο ορθόδοξος **Άγιος Βασίλης** ούτε με δώρα έχει σχέση, ούτε με χιόνια και έλκηθρα.

Αντίθετα, αυτά που κρατάει στα χέρια του είναι «χαρτί και καλαμάρι» και βέβαια ...

Άγιος Βασίλης ή Santa Claus | Νομικά Επίλεκτα

www.nomika-epilekta.gr/.../agios-basilis-i-santa-claus ▼ Translate this page

Ο **Άγιος Βασίλης** στην διεθνή λαογραφία αποτελεί το κυρίαρχο πρόσωπο των Χριστουγέννων και της Πρωτοχρονιάς, αγαπημένος ήρωας μικρών και μεγάλων.

サンタクロース天使

学芸会 学習発表会 脚本 台本「真夜中のサンタクロース！」Web版

www.fukuda21.com/fukuda/santa.htm ▼ Translate this page

みなさんは、「サンタクロース」を信じていますか？信じている人も、信じていない人も、この物語をどうぞゆっくりとごらんください。きっと、あなたの心に何か温かいものが訪れるはず。 「真夜中の**サンタクロース～天使**が舞い降りた夜に～」はじまりはじまり～。

<http://www.fukuda21.com/fukuda/santa.htm>

산타 클로스 천사

어릴 적 꿈꾸던 산타클로스-천사들의 편지 - 연세대 원주의대 ...

yeh.pe.kr/s3/bc.php?g_uid=2&b_uid=25... ▼ Translate this page

3541, 어릴 적 꿈꾸던 [산타클로스-천사](#)들의 편지, 예병일, 2014.12.06 09:32, 114. 3531,

잘 가요 2014, 고마워요 2015, 예병일, 2014.11.28 23:55, 156. 3522, 변화를 ...

22 " 눈사람 산타클로스 천사 크리스마스 훈장 - Made-in ...

kr.made-in-china.com > ... > 공예품 > 크리스마스 용품 ▼ Translate this page

22 " 눈사람 [산타클로스 천사](#) 크리스마스 훈장에 의해 제공Xiamen Flydecor Trading Co., Ltd.중국 수출부터한국.

무료 배송 8 개(4pcs 각 항목) 북유럽의 크리스마스 선물 산타 ...

ko.aliexpress.com > ... > 크리스마스 장식 용품 ▼ Translate this page

무료 배송 8 개(4pcs 각 항목) 북유럽의 크리스마스 선물 [산타 클로스 천사](#) 3 사슴 걸려
문이 chr02. 영어 원제보기. Rated 5.0/5 based on 2 customer reviews ...

圣诞老人的天使

小学作文: 圣诞老人的天使光环_百度文库

kecheng.baidu.com/.../d54c363ede80d4d8d15a4f5d.h... - Translate this page

小学作文: [圣诞老人的天使光环](#)_小学作文_小学教育_教育专区。[圣诞老人的天使光环](#)圣诞节前夕, 圣诞老人可忙坏了。因为每家每户都要他送礼物啊!夜晚, 黑得伸手 ...

小学作文: 圣诞老人的天使光环.doc_免费下载_500字(共1页)_ ...

www.wenku1.com/view/1EC0BBD598E54A9D.html - Translate this page

Feb 27, 2015 - [圣诞老人的天使光环](#)圣诞节前夕, 圣诞老人可忙坏了。因为每家每户都要他送礼物啊!夜晚, 黑得伸手不见五指, 可圣诞老人还是得爬进烟囱, 将圣诞 ...

圣诞老人的天使光环作文_550字_作文大全

www.zuowendq.com/zuowen/660127.htm ▼ Translate this page

[圣诞老人的天使](#)光环作文550字, 圣诞节前夕, 圣诞老人可忙坏了。因为每家每户都要他送礼物啊!夜晚, 黑得伸手不见五指, 可圣诞老人还是得爬进烟囱, 将圣诞礼物 ...

סנטה קלאוס

מתוך ויקיפדיה, האנציקלופדיה החופשית

סנטה קלאוס הוא דמות בדיונית, המבוססת כנראה על מסורת שיובאה על ידי מתיישבים מהולנד, המקושרת בארצות הברית לחג המולד.

לפי המסורת, מדובר בזקן חביב וטוב לב, המגיע בלבוש אדום מחבל לפלנד שבצפון פינלנד ומסתובב ברחבי העולם על גבי מזחלת רתומה לאיילים מעופפים. תפקידו של סנטה קלאוס לפקוד את בתי הילדים הטובים, להביא להם מתנות ולהגשים משאלות.

הדמות במשמעותה הנוכחית קיימת מסוף המאה ה-19. סנטה קלאוס התגלגל לאמריקה דרך דמותו האגדית של סינטרקלאס (Sinterklaas), שהובאה על ידי המתיישבים הראשונים מהולנד לניו אמסטרדם, היא ניו יורק של היום. בהמשך היא הופצה ברחבי ארצות הברית של אמריקה, ובהמשך בעולם כולו. משמעות השם "סינטרקלאס" בהולנדית היא "ניקולאס הקדוש" (סיינט ניקולאס), שהיה בישוף באסיה הקטנה, הוכרז כקדוש על ידי הכנסייה הנוצרית וכפטרונם של הילדים, וב-1087 הועברו שרידיו לבארן.

בארצות שונות מכונה סנטה קלאוס בשמות שונים, כגון "אבא חג המולד" (קוויבק ואירלנד), "סבא כפור" (רוסיה ושאר מדינות ברית המועצות). "סבא כפור" מגיע בדרך כלל עם נכדתו "סנגורוצ'קה", ועוד.

ראו גם

- רודולף אדום האף
- הכפר של סנטה קלאוס
- קגה טיו

Yule Lads

פיטר השחור

שדוני חג המולד

קרמפוס

לקריאה נוספת

- ערן יסעור, סנטה קלאוס - המצאה של קוקה קולה? (<http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4469995,00.html>), באתר ynet, 27 בדצמבר 2013

קישורים חיצוניים

- עינב ברזני, עבור: סנטה קלאוס הקוטב הצפוני (ZCP), (<http://www.zcp.co.il/scripts/openExtra.asp?extra=59>)

מיזמי קרן ויקימדיה

- בלדד השוחי, מי אתה, סנטה קלאוס? (<http://news.nana.co.il/Article/?ArticleID=164900>), באתר נענע 10
- מיכאל הנדלזלץ, כן, וירג'יניה, הוא אכן קיים, סנטה קלאוס



אדם בתלבושת סנטה קלאוס מסורתית, ארצות הברית,

2006



סנטה קלאוס בציורו של תומאס נסט Merry Old Santa Claus משנת 1863

תמונות ומדיה בוויקישיתוף: **סנטה קלאוס**



קלאוס

http://tools.wmflabs.org/hewiki-tools/redirect.php?q=http:)

באתר הארץ, (/www.haaretz.co.il/hasite/spages/661457.html

■ מאמר על מקורו של סנטה, מתוך האתר snopes.com

■ snopes.com, ((http://www.snopes.com/cokelore/santa.asp), בתשובה לשאלה "האם דמותו האדומה לבנה של סנטה קשורה לחברת קוקה קולה". (אנגלית)

■ רון בן יעקב, "הדלק הרוחני של הרווחה הגשמית" - על סנטה קלאוס ועל אחרים (http://www.haayal.co.il/story_382), באתר "האייל הקורא"

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ערך זה הוא קצרמר בנושא תרבות. אתם מוזמנים לתרום לוויקיפדיה ולהרחיב אותו (https://he.wikipedia.org)



/w/index.php?title=%D7%A1%D7%A0%D7%98%D7%94_%D7%A7%D7%9C%D7%90%D7%95%D7%A1&action=edit&editintro=%D7%AA%D7%91%D7%A0%D7%99%D7%AA%3A%D7%A7%D7%A6%D7%A8%D7%9E%D7%A8%2F%D7%94%D7%A8%D7%97%D7%91%D7%94

קטגוריות: קצרמר תרבות | דמויות בדיוניות | חג המולד | פולקלור | קדושים עממיים

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Santa Claus

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Santa Claus, also known as **Saint Nicholas**, **Father Christmas**, **Kris Kringle** and simply "**Santa**", is a mythical figure with legendary, historical and folkloric origins who, in many Western cultures, is said to bring gifts to the homes of the good children on 24 December, the night before Christmas Day. However, in some European countries children receive their presents on St. Nicholas' Day, either the 6th or 19th of December.

The modern figure of Santa Claus is derived from the Dutch figure of Sinterklaas, whose name is a dialectal pronunciation of Saint Nicholas, the historical Greek bishop and gift-giver of Myra. During the Christianization of Germanic Europe, this figure may have absorbed elements of the god Odin, who was associated with the Germanic pagan midwinter event of Yule and led the Wild Hunt, a ghostly procession through the sky.

Santa Claus is generally depicted as a portly, joyous, white-bearded man—sometimes with spectacles—wearing a red coat with white collar and cuffs, white-cuffed red trousers, and black leather belt and boots and who carries a bag full of gifts for children. Images of him rarely have a beard with no moustache. This image became popular in the United States and Canada in the 19th century due to the significant influence of the 1823 poem "A Visit From St. Nicholas" and of caricaturist and political cartoonist Thomas Nast.^{[1][2][3]} This image has been maintained and reinforced through song, radio, television, children's books and films.

Since the 20th century, in an idea popularized by the 1934 song "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town", Santa Claus has been believed to make a list of children throughout the world, categorizing them according to their behavior ("naughty" or "nice") and to deliver presents, including toys, and candy to all of the well-behaved children in the world, and sometimes coal to the naughty children, on the single night of Christmas Eve. He accomplishes this feat with the aid of the elves who make the toys in the workshop and the flying reindeer who pull his sleigh.^{[4][5]} He is commonly portrayed as living at the North Pole and saying "ho ho ho" often.



1881 illustration by Thomas Nast who, along with Clement Clarke Moore's poem "A Visit from St. Nicholas", helped to create the modern image of Santa Claus



The modern portrayal of Santa Claus frequently depicts him listening to the Christmas wishes of children.

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Predecessor figures

Saint Nicholas

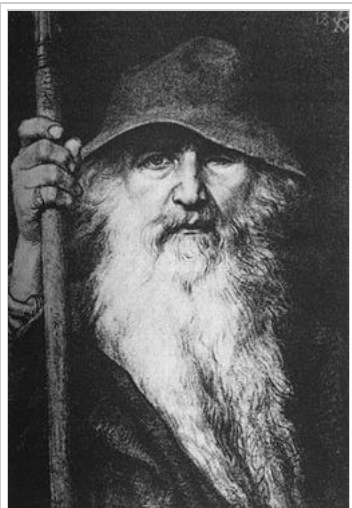
Saint Nicholas of Myra was a 4th-century Greek Christian bishop of Myra (now Demre) in Lycia, a province of the Byzantine Empire, now in Turkey. Nicholas was famous for his generous gifts to the poor, in particular presenting the three impoverished daughters of a pious Christian with dowries so that they would not have to become prostitutes.^[6] He was very religious from an early age and devoted his life entirely to Christianity. In continental Europe (more precisely the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria and Germany) he is usually portrayed as a bearded bishop in canonical robes.

The remains of Saint Nicholas are in Italy. In 1087, the Italian city of Bari mounted an expedition to locate the tomb of the Saint. The reliquary of St. Nicholas was conquered by Italian sailors and his relics were taken to Bari^{[7][8]} where they are kept to this day. A basilica was constructed the same year to store the loot and the area became a pilgrimage site for the devout. Sailors from Bari collected just half of Nicholas' skeleton, leaving all the minor fragments in the grave. These were collected by Venetian sailors during the First Crusade and taken to Venice, where a church to St. Nicholas, the patron of sailors, was built on the San Nicolò al Lido. This tradition was confirmed in two important scientific investigations of the relics in Bari and Venice, which revealed that the relics in the two Italian cities belong to the same skeleton. Saint Nicholas was later claimed as a patron saint of

many diverse groups, from archers, sailors, and children to pawnbrokers.^{[6][9]} He is also the patron saint of both Amsterdam and Moscow.^[10]

During the Middle Ages, often on the evening before his name day of 6 December, children were bestowed gifts in his honour. This date was earlier than the original day of gifts for the children, which moved in the course of the Reformation and its opposition to the veneration of saints in many countries on the 24 and 25 December. So Saint Nicholas changed to Santa Claus. The custom of gifting of children at Christmas has been propagated by Martin Luther as an alternative to the previous very popular gift custom on St. Nicholas, to focus the interest of the children to Christ instead of the veneration of saints. Martin Luther first suggested the Christkind as the bringer of gifts. But Nicholas remained popular as gifts bearer for the people.^{[11][12][13]}

Germanic paganism, Odin, and Christianization



An 1886 depiction of the long-bearded Germanic god Odin by Georg von Rosen

Prior to Christianization, the Germanic peoples (including the English) celebrated a midwinter event called Yule (Old English *geola* or *guili*).^[14] With the Christianization of Germanic Europe, numerous traditions were absorbed from Yuletide celebrations into modern Christmas.^[15] During this period, supernatural and ghostly occurrences were said to increase in frequency, such as the Wild Hunt, a ghostly procession through the sky. The leader of the wild hunt is frequently attested as the god Odin and he bears the Old Norse names *Jólnir*, meaning "yule figure" and the name *Langbarðr*, meaning "long-beard" (see list of names of Odin).^[16]

The god Odin's role during the Yuletide period has been theorized as having influenced concepts of St. Nicholas in a variety of facets, including his long white beard and his gray horse for nightly rides (see Odin's horse Sleipnir), which was traded for reindeer in North America.^[17] Margaret Baker comments that "The appearance of Santa Claus or Father Christmas, whose day is 25th of December, owes much to Odin, the old blue-hooded, cloaked, white-bearded Giftbringer of the north, who rode the midwinter sky on his eight-footed steed

Sleipnir, visiting his people with gifts. ... Odin, transformed into Father Christmas, then Santa Claus, prospered with St Nicholas and the Christchild became a leading player on the Christmas stage."^[18]

Dutch folklore

In the Netherlands and Belgium, next to Sinterklaas, the character of Santa Claus is also known. He is known as *de Kerstman* in Dutch ("the Christmas man") and *Père Noël* ("Father Christmas") in French. But for children in the Netherlands Sinterklaas is the predominant gift-giver in December (36% of the population only give presents on Sinterklaas day), Christmas is used by another fifth of the Dutch population to give presents. (21% give presents on Christmas only). Some 26% of the Dutch population give presents on both days.^[19] In Belgium, presents are given to children only, but to almost all of them, on Sinterklaas day. On Christmas Day, everybody receives presents, but often without Santa Claus's help. In the Netherlands Sinterklaas' helper is Zwarte Piet not an elf.^[20]



A 13th-century depiction of St. Nicholas from Saint Catherine's Monastery, Sinai

Father Christmas

Father Christmas dates back as far as 16th century in England during the reign of Henry VIII, when he was pictured as a large man in green or scarlet robes lined with fur.^[21] He typified the spirit of good cheer at Christmas, bringing peace, joy, good food and wine and revelry.^[21] As England no longer kept the feast day of Saint Nicholas on 6 December, the Father Christmas celebration was moved to 25 December to coincide with Christmas Day.^[21] The Victorian revival of Christmas included Father Christmas as the emblem of 'good cheer'.^[22] His physical appearance was variable, with one famous image being John Leech's illustration of the "Ghost of Christmas Present" in Charles Dickens's festive classic *A Christmas Carol* (1843), as a great genial man in a green coat lined with fur who takes Scrooge through the bustling streets of London on the current Christmas morning, sprinkling the essence of Christmas onto the happy populace.^{[21][22]}

Father Christmas is now widely seen as synonymous with the Santa Claus figure.



Sinterklaas, Netherlands (2009) on his horse called *Slecht Weer Vandaag* or *Amerigo*

History

Origins

Pre-modern representations of the gift-giver from Church history and folklore, notably St Nicholas (known in Dutch as Sinterklaas), merged with the English character Father Christmas to create the character known to Americans and the rest of the English-speaking world as Santa Claus.

In the English and later British colonies of North America, and later in the United States, British and Dutch versions of the gift-giver merged further. For example,

in Washington Irving's *History of New York* (1809), *Sinterklaas* was Americanized into "Santa Claus" (a name first used in the American press in 1773)^[23] but lost his bishop's apparel, and was at first pictured as a thick-bellied Dutch sailor with a pipe in a green winter coat. Irving's book was a lampoon of the Dutch culture of New York, and much of this portrait is his joking invention.

19th century

In 1821, the book *A New-year's present, to the little ones from five to twelve* was published in New York. It contained *Old Santeclaus*, an anonymous poem describing an old man on a reindeer sleigh, bringing presents to



Folk tale depiction of Father Christmas riding on a goat.



1850 illustration of Saint Nicolas with his servant Père Fouettard
Zwarte Piet

"December 24, 1864. This has usually been a very busy day with me, preparing for Christmas not only for my own tables, but for gifts for my servants. Now how changed! No confectionary, cakes, or pies can I have. We are all sad; no loud, jovial laugh from our boys is heard. Christmas Eve, which has ever been gaily celebrated here, which has witnessed the popping of firecrackers ... and the hanging up of stockings, is an occasion now of sadness and gloom. I have nothing even to put in 8-year-old daughter Sadai's stocking, which hangs so invitingly for **Santa Claus**. How disappointed she will be in the morning, though I have explained to her why he cannot come. Poor children! Why must the innocent suffer with the guilty?"

Diary of Dolly Lunt Burge, a Maine native, widow of Thomas Burge, and resident living c. 40 miles southeast of Atlanta near Covington, Georgia. This entry from Mrs. Burge's diary was five weeks after most of General T. Sherman's U.S. Army forces had passed on their blackened-earth "march across Georgia" toward Savanna, after the army's destruction of Atlanta in mid-November 1864. U.S. Army mop-up companies and stragglers during those intervening weeks continued to "forage", loot, burn, and liberate slaves, hence, the concern of Mrs. Burge and her household.^[24]

children.^[25] Some modern ideas of Santa Claus seemingly became canon after the anonymous publication of the poem "A Visit From St. Nicholas" (better known today as "The Night Before Christmas") in the Troy, New York, *Sentinel* on 23 December 1823; the poem was later attributed to Clement Clarke Moore.^[6] Many of his modern attributes are established in this poem, such as riding in a sleigh that lands on the roof, entering through the chimney, and having a bag full of toys. St. Nick is described as being "chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf" with "a little round belly", that "shook when he laughed like a bowlful of jelly", in spite of which the "miniature sleigh" and "tiny reindeer" still indicate that he is physically diminutive. The reindeer were also named: Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Dunder and Blixem (Dunder and Blixem came from the old Dutch words for thunder and lightning, which were later changed to the more German sounding Donner and Blitzen).^[26]

As the years passed, Santa Claus evolved in popular culture into a large, heavyset person. One of the first artists to define Santa Claus's modern image was Thomas Nast, an American cartoonist of the 19th century. In 1863, a picture of Santa illustrated by Nast appeared in *Harper's Weekly*.

Thomas Nast immortalized Santa Claus with an illustration for the 3 January 1863 issue of *Harper's Weekly*. Santa was dressed in an American flag, and had a puppet with the name "Jeff" written on it, reflecting its Civil War context. The story that Santa Claus lives at the North Pole may also have been a Nast creation. His Christmas image in the *Harper's* issue dated 29 December 1866 was a collage of engravings titled *Santa Claus and His Works*, which included the caption "Santa Clausville, N.P."^[27] A color collection of Nast's pictures, published in 1869, had a poem also titled "Santa Claus and His Works" by George P. Webster, who wrote that Santa Claus's home was "near the North Pole, in the ice and snow".^[28] The tale had become well known by the 1870s. A boy from Colorado writing to the children's magazine *The Nursery* in late 1874 said, "If we did not live so very far from the North Pole, I should ask Santa Claus to bring me a donkey."^[29]

The idea of a wife for Santa Claus may have been the creation of American authors, beginning in the mid-19th century. In 1889, the poet Katharine Lee Bates popularized Mrs. Claus in the poem "Goody Santa Claus on a Sleigh Ride".



"Ghost of Christmas Present", a colorized version of the original illustration by John Leech made for Charles Dickens's festive classic *A Christmas Carol* (1843).

"*Is There a Santa Claus?*" was the title of an editorial appearing in the 21 September 1897 edition of *The New York Sun*. The editorial, which included the famous reply "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus", has become an

indelible part of popular Christmas lore in the United States and Canada.

20th century

L. Frank Baum's *The Life and Adventures of Santa Claus*, a 1902 children's book, further popularized Santa Claus. Much of Santa Claus's mythos was not set in stone at the time, leaving Baum to give his "Neclaus" (Necile's Little One) a wide variety of immortal support, a home in the Laughing Valley of Hohaho, and *ten* reindeer—who could not fly, but leapt in enormous, flight-like bounds. Claus's immortality was earned, much like his title ("Santa"), decided by a vote of those naturally immortal. This work also established Claus's motives: a happy childhood among immortals. When Ak, Master Woodsman of the World, exposes him to the misery and poverty of children in the outside world, Santa strives to find a way to bring joy into the lives of all children, and eventually invents toys as a principal means.

Images of Santa Claus were further popularized through Haddon Sundblom's depiction of him for The Coca-Cola Company's Christmas advertising in the 1930s.^{[6][30]} The popularity of the image spawned urban legends that Santa Claus was invented by The Coca-Cola Company or that Santa wears red and white because they are the colors used to promote the Coca-Cola brand.^[31] Historically, Coca-Cola was not the first soft drink company to utilize the modern image of Santa Claus in its advertising—White Rock Beverages had already used a red and white Santa to sell mineral water in 1915 and then in advertisements for its ginger ale in 1923.^{[32][33][34]} Earlier still, Santa Claus had appeared dressed in red and white and essentially in his current form on several covers of *Puck* magazine in the first few years of the 20th century.^[35]

The image of Santa Claus as a benevolent character became reinforced with its association with charity and philanthropy, particularly by organizations such as the Salvation Army. Volunteers dressed as Santa Claus typically became part of fundraising drives to aid needy families at Christmas time.

In 1937, Charles W. Howard, who played Santa Claus in department stores and parades, established the Charles W. Howard Santa School, the oldest continuously-run such school in the world.^[36]

In some images from the early 20th century, Santa was depicted as personally making his toys by hand in a small workshop like a craftsman. Eventually, the idea emerged that he had numerous elves responsible for making the toys, but the toys were still handmade by each individual elf working in the traditional manner.

The 1956 popular song by George Melachrino, "Mrs. Santa Claus", and the 1963 children's book *How Mrs. Santa Claus Saved Christmas*, by Phyllis McGinley, helped standardize and establish the character and role of Mrs. Claus in the popular imagination.

Seabury Quinn's 1948 novel *Roads* draws from historical legends to tell the story of Santa and the origins of Christmas. Other modern additions to the "story" of Santa include Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, the 9th and lead reindeer immortalized in a Gene Autry song, written by a Montgomery Ward copywriter.

In popular culture

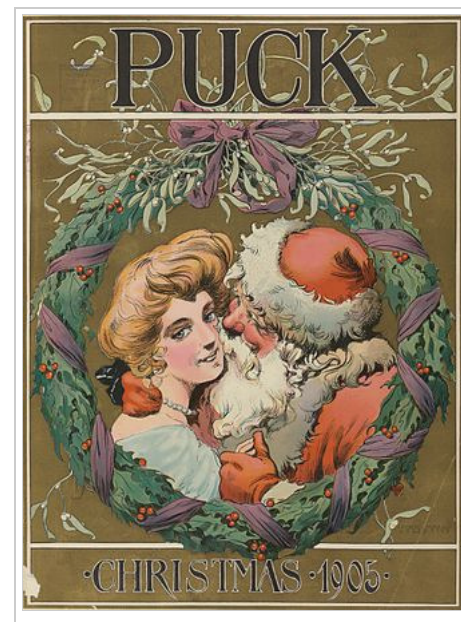
By the end of the 20th century, the reality of mass mechanized production became more fully accepted by the



A man dressed as Santa Claus fundraising for Volunteers of America on the sidewalk of street in Chicago, Illinois, in 1902. He is wearing a mask with a beard attached.

Western public. That shift was reflected in the modern depiction of Santa's residence—now often humorously portrayed as a fully mechanized production and distribution facility, equipped with the latest manufacturing technology, and overseen by the elves with Santa and Mrs. Claus as executives and/or managers.^[37] An excerpt from a 2004 article, from a supply chain managers' trade magazine, aptly illustrates this depiction:

Santa's main distribution center is a sight to behold. At 4,000,000 square feet (370,000 m²), it's one of the world's largest facilities. A real-time warehouse management system (WMS) is of course required to run such a complex. The facility makes extensive use of task interleaving, literally combining dozens of DC activities (putaway, replenishing, order picking, sleigh loading, cycle counting) in a dynamic queue...the DC elves have been on engineered standards and incentives for three years, leading to a 12% gain in productivity...The WMS and transportation system are fully integrated, allowing (the elves) to make optimal decisions that balance transportation and order picking and other DC costs. Unbeknownst to many, Santa actually has to use many sleighs and fake Santa drivers to get the job done Christmas Eve, and the transportation management system (TMS) optimally builds thousands of consolidated sacks that maximize cube utilization and minimize total air miles.^[38]



Santa has been described as a positive male cultural icon:

Santa is really the only cultural icon we have who's male, does not carry a gun, and is all about peace, joy, giving, and caring for other people. That's part of the magic for me, especially in a culture where we've become so commercialized and hooked into manufactured icons. Santa is much more organic, integral, connected to the past, and therefore connected to the future.

—TV producer Jonathan Meath who portrays Santa, 2011^[39]

Many television commercials, comic strips and other media depict this as a sort of humorous business, with Santa's elves acting as a sometimes mischievously disgruntled workforce, cracking jokes and pulling pranks on their boss. For instance, a *Bloom County* story from 15 December 1981 through 24 December 1981 has Santa rejecting the demands of PETCO (Professional Elves Toy-Making and Craft Organization) for higher wages, a hot tub in the locker room, and "short broads," with the elves then going on strike. President Reagan steps in, fires all of Santa's helpers, and replaces them with out-of-work air traffic controllers (an obvious reference to the 1981 air traffic controllers' strike), resulting in a riot before Santa vindictively rehires them in humiliating new positions such as his reindeer.^[40] In *The Sopranos* episode, "...To Save Us All from Satan's Power", Paulie Gualtieri says he "Used to think Santa and Mrs. Claus were running a sweatshop over there... The original elves were ugly, traveled with Santa to throw bad kids a beatin', and gave the good ones toys."

In Kyrgyzstan, a mountain peak was named after Santa Claus, after a Swedish company had suggested the location be a more efficient starting place for present-delivering journeys all over the world, than Lapland. In



2009 Liverpool Santa Dash

the Kyrgyz capital, Bishkek, a Santa Claus Festival was held on 30 December 2007, with government officials attending. 2008 was officially declared the Year of Santa Claus in the country. The events are seen as moves to boost tourism in Kyrgyzstan.^[41]

The Guinness World Record for the largest gathering of Santa Clauses is held by Thrissur, Kerala, India where on 27th December 2014, 18,112 Santas came overtaking the current record of Derry City, Northern Ireland. On 9 September 2007 where a total of 12,965 people dressed up as Santa or Santa's helper which previously brought down the record of 3,921, which was set during the Santa Dash event in Liverpool City Centre in 2005.^[42] A

gathering of Santas in 2009 in Bucharest, Romania attempted to top the world record, but failed with only 3939 Santas.^[43]

Traditions and rituals

Chimney tradition

The tradition of Santa Claus entering dwellings through the chimney is shared by many European seasonal gift-givers. In pre-Christian Norse tradition, Odin would often enter through chimneys and fire holes on the solstice. In the Italian Befana tradition, the gift-giving witch is perpetually covered with soot from her trips down the chimneys of children's homes. In the tale of Saint Nicholas, the saint tossed coins through a window, and, in a later version of the tale, down a chimney when he finds the window locked. In Dutch artist Jan Steen's painting, *The Feast of Saint Nicholas*, adults and toddlers are glancing up a chimney with amazement on their faces while other children play with their toys. The hearth was held sacred in primitive belief as a source of beneficence, and popular belief had elves and fairies bringing gifts to the house through this portal. Santa's entrance into homes on Christmas Eve via the chimney was made part of American tradition through the poem *"A Visit from St. Nicholas"* where the author described him as an elf.^[44]

Steen's *The Feast of Saint Nicholas*

Christmas Eve rituals

In the United States and Canada, children traditionally leave Santa a glass of milk and a plate of cookies; in Britain and Australia, he is sometimes given sherry or beer, and mince pies instead. In Denmark, Norway and Sweden, it is common for children to leave him rice porridge with cinnamon sugar instead. In Ireland it is popular to give him Guinness or milk, along with Christmas pudding or mince pies.

In Hungary, St. Nicolaus (Mikulás) comes on the night of 5 December and the children get their gifts the next morning. They get sweets in a bag if they were good, and a golden colored birch switch if not. On Christmas Eve "Little Jesus" comes and gives gifts for everyone.



Santa Claus waves to children from an annual holiday train in Chicago.

In Slovenia, Saint Nicholas (Miklavž) also brings small gifts for good children on the eve of 6 December. Božiček (Christmas Man) brings gifts on the eve of 25 December, and Dedek Mraz (Grandfather Frost) brings gifts in the evening of 31 December to be opened on New Years Day.

New Zealander, British, Australian, Irish, Canadian, and American children also leave a carrot for Santa's reindeer, and were traditionally told that if they are not good all year round, that they will receive a lump of coal in their stockings, although this practice is now considered archaic. Children following the Dutch custom for *sinterklaas* will "put out their shoe" (leave hay and a carrot for his horse in a shoe before going to bed, sometimes weeks before the *sinterklaas avond*). The next morning they will find the hay and carrot replaced by a gift; often, this is a marzipan figurine. Naughty children were once told that they would be left a *roe* (a bundle of sticks) instead of sweets, but this practice has been discontinued.



Hanging up stockings for Santa Claus, Ohio, 1928

Other Christmas Eve Santa Claus rituals in the United States include reading *A Visit from St. Nicholas* or other tale about Santa Claus, watching a Santa or Christmas-related animated program on television (such as the aforementioned *Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town* and similar specials, such as *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, among many others), and the singing of Santa Claus songs such as "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town", "Here Comes Santa Claus", and "Up on the House Top". Last minute rituals for children before going to bed include aligning stockings at the mantelpiece or other place where Santa cannot fail to see them, peeking up the chimney (in homes with a fireplace), glancing out a window and scanning the heavens for Santa's sleigh, and (in homes without a fireplace) unlocking an exterior door so Santa can easily enter the house. Tags on gifts for children are sometimes signed by their parents "From Santa Claus" before the gifts are laid beneath the tree.

Home

Santa Claus's home traditionally includes a residence and a workshop where he creates—often with the aid of elves or other supernatural beings—the gifts he delivers to good children at Christmas. Some stories and legends include a village, inhabited by his helpers, surrounding his home and shop.

In North American tradition (in the United States and Canada), Santa lives on the North Pole, which according to Canada Post lies within Canadian jurisdiction in postal code H0H 0H0 (a reference to "ho ho ho", Santa's notable saying, although postal codes starting with H are usually reserved for the island of Montreal in Québec). On 23 December 2008, Jason Kenney, Canada's minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, formally awarded Canadian citizenship status to Santa Claus. "*The Government of Canada wishes Santa the very best in his Christmas Eve duties and wants to let him know that, as a Canadian citizen, he has the automatic right to re-enter Canada once his trip around the world is complete,*" Kenney said in an official statement.^[45]

There is also a city named North Pole in Alaska where a tourist attraction known as the "Santa Claus House" has been established. The US postal service uses the city's zip code of 99705 as their advertised postal code for Santa Claus. A Wendy's in North Pole, AK has also claimed to have a "sleigh fly through".^[46]

Each Nordic country claims Santa's residence to be within their territory. Norway claims he lives in Drøbak. In Denmark, he is said to live in Greenland (near Uummannaq). In Sweden, the town of Mora has a theme park named TomteLand. The national postal terminal in Tomtebodavägen in Stockholm receives children's letters for Santa. In Finland, Korvatunturi has long been known as Santa's home, and two theme parks, Santa Claus Village and Santa Park are located near Rovaniemi.

Parades, department stores, and shopping malls

Santa Claus appears in the weeks before Christmas in department stores or shopping malls, or at parties. The practice of this has been credited to James Edgar, as he started doing this in 1890 in his Brockton, Massachusetts department store.^[47] He is played by an actor, usually helped by other actors (often mall employees) dressed as elves or other creatures of folklore associated with Santa. Santa's function is either to promote the store's image by distributing small gifts to children, or to provide a seasonal experience to children by listening to their wishlist while having them sit on his knee (a practice now under review by some organisations in Britain,^[48] and Switzerland^[49]). Sometimes a photograph of the child and Santa are taken. Having a Santa set up to take pictures with children is a ritual that dates back at least to 1918.^[50]

The area set up for this purpose is festively decorated, usually with a large throne, and is called variously "Santa's Grotto", "Santa's Workshop" or a similar term. In the United States, the most notable of these is the Santa at the flagship Macy's store in New York City—he arrives at the store by sleigh in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade on the last float, and his court takes over a large portion of one floor in the store. This was popularized by the 1947 film *Miracle on 34th Street* with Santa Claus being called Kris Kringle. The Macy's Santa Claus in New York City is often said to be the real Santa. Essayist David Sedaris is known for the satirical *SantaLand Diaries* he kept while working as an elf in the Macy's display, which were turned into a famous radio segment and later published.

Quite often the Santa, if and when he is detected to be fake, explains that he is not the real Santa and is helping him at this time of year. Most young children accept this explanation. At family parties, Santa is sometimes impersonated by the male head of the household or other adult male family member.

In Canada, malls operated by Oxford Properties established a process by which autistic children could visit Santa Claus at the mall without having to contend with crowds.^[51] The malls open early to allow entry only to families with autistic children, who have a private visit with Santa Claus. In 2012, the Southcentre Mall in Calgary was the first mall to offer this service.^[52]

There are schools offering instruction on how to act as Santa Claus. For example, children's television producer Jonathan Meath studied at the International School of Santa Claus and earned the degree *Master of Santa Claus* in 2006. It blossomed into a second career for him, and after appearing in parades and malls,^[53] he appeared on the cover of the American monthly *Boston Magazine* as Santa.^[54] There are associations with members who portray Santa; for example, Mr. Meath is a board member of the international organization called *Fraternal Order of Real Bearded Santas*.^[55]

Letter writing to Santa

Writing letters to Santa Claus has been a Christmas tradition for children for many years. These letters normally contain a wishlist of toys and assertions of good behavior. Some social scientists have found that boys and girls



Eaton's Santa Claus Parade, 1918, Toronto, Canada. Having arrived at the Eaton's department store, Santa is readying his ladder to climb up onto the building.



Giant Santa Claus, Philippines

write different types of letters. Girls generally write longer but more polite lists and express the nature of Christmas more in their letters than in letters written by boys. Girls also more often request gifts for other people.^[56]

Many postal services allow children to send letters to Santa Claus. These letters may be answered by postal workers and/or outside volunteers.^[57] Writing letters to Santa Claus has the educational benefits of promoting literacy, computer literacy, and e-mail literacy. A letter to Santa is often a child's first experience of correspondence. Written and sent with the help of a parent or teacher, children learn about the structure of a letter, salutations, and the use of an address and postcode.^[58]

According to the Universal Postal Union (UPU)'s 2007 study and survey of national postal operations, the United States Postal Service (USPS) has the oldest Santa letter answering effort by a national postal system. The USPS Santa letter answering effort started in 1912 out of the historic James Farley Post Office^[59] in New York, and since 1940 has been called "Operation Santa" to ensure that letters to Santa are adopted by charitable organizations, major corporations, local businesses and individuals in order to make children's holiday dreams come true from coast to coast.^[57] Those seeking a North Pole holiday postmark through the USPS, are told to send their letter from Santa or a holiday greeting card by 10 December to: North Pole Holiday Postmark, Postmaster, 4141 Postmark Dr, Anchorage, AK 99530-9998.^[60]

In 2006, according to the UPU's 2007 study and survey of national postal operations, France's Postal Service received the most letters for Santa Claus or "Père Noël" with 1,220,000 letters received from 126 countries.^[61] France's Postal Service in 2007 specially recruited someone to answer the enormous volume of mail that was coming from Russia for Santa Claus.^[57]

Other interesting Santa letter processing information, according to the UPU's 2007 study and survey of national postal operations, are:^[57]

- Countries whose national postal operators answer letters to Santa and other end-of-year holiday figures, and the number of letters received in 2006: Germany (500,000), Australia (117,000), Austria (6,000), Bulgaria (500), Canada (1,060,000), Spain (232,000), United States (no figure, as statistics are not kept centrally), Finland (750,000), France (1,220,000), Ireland (100,000), New Zealand (110,000), Portugal (255,000), Poland (3,000), Slovakia (85,000), Sweden (150,000), Switzerland (17,863), Ukraine (5,019), United Kingdom (750,000).
- In 2006, Finland's national postal operation received letters from 150 countries (representing 90% of the letters received), France's Postal Service from 126 countries, Germany from 80 countries, and Slovakia from 20 countries.
- In 2007, Canada Post replied to letters in 26 languages and Deutsche Post in 16 languages.
- Some national postal operators make it possible to send in e-mail messages which are answered by physical mail. All the same, Santa still receives far more letters than e-mail through the national postal operators, proving that children still write letters. National postal operators offering the ability to use an on-line web form (with or without a return e-mail address) to Santa and obtain a reply include Canada Post^[62] (on-line web request form in English and French), France's Postal Service (on-line web request form in French),^{[63][64]} and New Zealand Post^[65] (on-line web request form in English).^[66] In France, by 6 December 2010, a team of 60 postal elves had sent out reply cards in response to 80,000 e-mail on-line



Santa Claus portrayed by children's television producer Jonathan Meath

request forms and more than 500,000 physical letters.^[58]

Canada Post has a special postal code for letters to Santa Claus, and since 1982 over 13,000 Canadian postal workers have volunteered to write responses. His address is: Santa Claus, North Pole, Canada, HOH 0H0^[67] (see also: Ho ho ho). (This postal code, in which zeroes are used for the letter "O" is consistent with the alternating letter-number format of all Canadian postal codes.) Sometimes children's charities answer letters in poor communities, or from children's hospitals, and give them presents they would not otherwise receive. In 2009, 1,000 workers answered 1.1 million letters and 39,500 e-mail on-line request forms from children in 30 different languages, including Braille.^[58]

In Britain it was traditional for some to burn the Christmas letters on the fire so that they would be magically transported by the wind to the North Pole. However this has been found to be less efficient than the use of the normal postal service, and this tradition is dying out in modern times, especially with few homes having open fires.^[68] According to the Royal Mail website, Santa's address for letters from British children is: Santa/Father Christmas, Santa's Grotto, Reindeerland, XM4 5HQ^[69]

In Mexico and other Latin American countries, besides using the mail, sometimes children wrap their letters to a small helium balloon, releasing them into the air so Santa magically receives them.^[68]

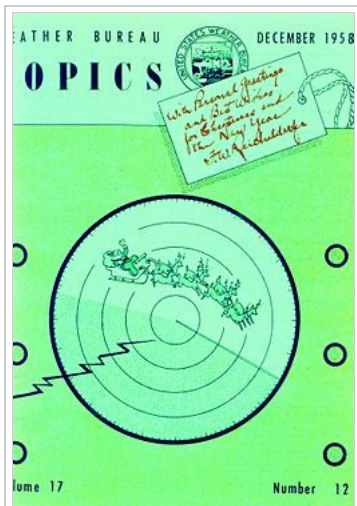
In 2010, the Brazilian National Post Service, "Correios" formed partnerships with public schools and social institutions to encourage children to write letters and make use of postcodes and stamps. In 2009, the Brazilian National Post Service, "Correios" answered almost two million children's letters, and spread some seasonal cheer by donating 414,000 Christmas gifts to some of Brazil's neediest citizens.^[58]

Through the years, the Finnish Santa Claus (Joulupukki or "Yule Goat") has received over eight million letters. He receives over 600,000 letters every year from over 198 different countries with Togo being the most recent country added to the list.^[58] Children from Great Britain, Poland and Japan are the busiest writers. The Finnish Santa Claus lives in Korvatunturi, however the Santa Claus Main Post Office is situated in Rovaniemi precisely at the Arctic circle. His address is: Santa Claus' Main Post Office, Santa Claus Village, FIN-96930 Arctic Circle. The post office welcomes 300,000 visitors a year, with 70,000 visitors in December alone.^[58]

Children can also receive a letter from Santa through a variety of private agencies and organizations, and on occasion public and private cooperative ventures. An example of a public and private cooperative venture is the opportunity for expatriate and local children and parents to receive postmarked mail and greeting cards from Santa during December in the Finnish Embassy in Beijing, People's Republic of China,^[70] Santa Claus Village in Rovaniemi, Finland, and the People's Republic of China Postal System's Beijing International Post Office.^{[71][72][73][74]} Parents can order a personalized "Santa letter" to be sent to their child, often with a North Pole postmark. The "Santa Letter" market generally relies on the internet as a medium for ordering such letters rather than retail stores.

Santa tracking, Santa websites and email to and from Santa

Over the years there have been a number of websites created by various organizations that have purported to track Santa Claus. Some, such as NORAD Tracks Santa, the Airservices Australia Tracks Santa Project,^{[75][76][77]} the Santa Update Project, and the MSNBC and Bing Maps Platform Tracks Santa Project^{[78][79]} have endured. Others, such as the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport's Tracks Santa Project,^{[80][81][82]} the Santa Retro Radar – Lehigh Valley Project,^[83] and the NASA Tracks Santa Project,^[84] have fallen by the wayside.



The Christmas issue of NOAA's *Weather Bureau Topics* with "Santa Claus" streaking across a weather radar screen, 1958

In 1955, a Sears Roebuck store in Colorado Springs, Colorado, gave children a number to call a "Santa hotline". The number was mistyped and children called the Continental Air Defense Command (CONAD) on Christmas Eve instead. The Director of Operations, Colonel Harry Shoup, received the first call for Santa and responded by telling children that there were signs on the radar that Santa was indeed heading south from the North Pole. A tradition began which continued under the name NORAD Tracks Santa when in 1958 Canada and the United States jointly created the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD).^{[85][86]} This tracking can now be done via the Internet and NORAD's website.

In the past, many local television stations in the United States and Canada likewise claimed they

"tracked Santa Claus" in their own metropolitan areas through the stations' meteorologists. In December 2000, the Weather Channel built upon these local efforts to provide a national Christmas Eve "Santa tracking" effort, called "SantaWatch" in cooperation with NASA, the International Space Station, and Silicon Valley-based new multimedia firm Dreamtime Holdings.^[87] In the 21st century, most local television stations in the United States and Canada rely upon outside established "Santa tracking" efforts, such as NORAD Tracks Santa.^[88]

Many other websites are available year-round that are devoted to Santa Claus and purport to keep tabs on his activities in his workshop. Many of these websites also include email addresses which allow children to send email to Santa Claus. Most of these websites use volunteer living people as "elves" to answer email sent to Santa. Some websites, such as Santa's page on Microsoft's Windows Live Spaces, however have used or still use "bots" to compose and send email replies, with occasional unfortunate results.^{[89][90]}

In addition to providing holiday-themed entertainment, "Santa tracking" websites raise interest in space technology and exploration,^[91] serve to educate children in geography.^[92] and encourage them to take an interest in science.^{[93][94]}

Criticism

Calvinist and Puritan opposition

Santa Claus has partial Christian roots in Saint Nicholas, particularly in the high church denominations that practice the veneration of him, in addition to other saints. In addition, he has also become a secular representation of Christmas. In light of these facts, the character has sometimes been the focus of controversy over the holiday and its meanings. Some Christians, particularly Calvinists and Puritans, disliked the idea of Santa Claus, as well as Christmas in general, believing that the lavish celebrations were not in accordance with their faith.^[95] Other nonconformist Christians condemn the materialist focus of contemporary gift giving and see Santa Claus as the symbol of that culture.^[96]



1955 Sears ad with the misprinted telephone number that led to the creation of the NORAD Tracks Santa program



The Santa Claus Museum in Columbus, Texas

Condemnation of Christmas was prevalent among the 17th-century English Puritans and Dutch Calvinists who banned the holiday as either pagan or Roman Catholic. The American colonies established by these groups reflected this view. Tolerance for Christmas increased after the Restoration but the Puritan opposition to the holiday persisted in New England for almost two centuries.^[97] In the Dutch New Netherland colony, season celebrations focused on New Year's Day.

Following the Restoration of the monarchy and with Puritans out of power in England,^[98] the ban on Christmas was satirized in works such as Josiah King's *The Examination and Tryal of Old Father Christmas; Together with his Clearing by the Jury* (1686) Nissenbaum, chap. 1.

Reverend Paul Nedergaard, a clergyman in Copenhagen, Denmark, attracted controversy in 1958 when he declared Santa to be a "pagan goblin" (translated from Danish) after Santa's image was used on fundraising materials for a Danish welfare organization Clar, 337. A number of denominations of Christians have varying concerns about Santa Claus, which range from acceptance to denouncement.^{[99][100]}

Opposition under state atheism

Under the Marxist-Leninist doctrine of state atheism in the Soviet Union after its foundation in 1917, Christmas celebrations—along with other religious holidays—were prohibited as a result of the Soviet antireligious campaign.^{[101][102]} The League of Militant Atheists encouraged school pupils to campaign against Christmas traditions, among them being Santa Claus and the Christmas tree, as well as other Christian holidays including Easter; the League established an antireligious holiday to be the 31st of each month as a replacement.^{[103][104]}

Symbol of commercialism

In his book *Nicholas: The Epic Journey from Saint to Santa Claus*, writer Jeremy Seal describes how the commercialization of the Santa Claus figure began in the 19th century. "In the 1820s he began to acquire the recognizable trappings: reindeer, sleigh, bells," said Seal in an interview.^[105] "They are simply the actual bearings in the world from which he emerged. At that time, sleighs were how you got about Manhattan."

Writing in *Mothering*, writer Carol Jean-Swanson makes similar points, noting that the original figure of St. Nicholas gave only to those who were needy and that today Santa Claus seems to be more about conspicuous consumption:

Our jolly old Saint Nicholas reflects our culture to a T, for he is fanciful, exuberant, bountiful, over-weight, and highly commercial. He also mirrors some of our highest ideals: childhood purity and innocence, selfless giving, unfaltering love, justice, and mercy. (What child has ever received a coal for Christmas?) The problem is that, in the process, he has become burdened with some of society's greatest challenges: materialism, corporate greed, and domination by the media. Here, Santa carries more in his baggage than toys alone!^[106]



Excerpt from Josiah King's *The Examination and Tryal of Father Christmas* (1686), published shortly after Christmas was reinstated as a holy day in England. *Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C.*

In the Czech Republic, a group of advertising professionals started a website against Santa Claus, a relatively recent phenomenon in that country.^[107] "Czech Christmases are intimate and magical. All that Santa stuff seems to me like cheap show business," said David König of the Creative Copywriters Club, pointing out that it is primarily an American and British tradition. "I'm not against Santa himself. I'm against Santa in my country only." In the Czech tradition, presents are delivered by Ježíšek, which translates as Baby Jesus.

In the United Kingdom, Father Christmas was historically depicted wearing a green cloak. As Father Christmas has been increasingly merged into the image of Santa Claus, that has been changed to the more commonly known red suit.^[108] One school in the seaside town of Brighton banned the use of a red suit erroneously believing it was only indicative of the Coca-Cola advertising campaign. School spokesman Sarah James said: "The red-suited Santa was created as a marketing tool by Coca-Cola, it is a symbol of commercialism."^[109] However, Santa had been portrayed in a red suit in the 19th century by Thomas Nast among others.^[110]

Controversy about deceiving children

Various psychologists and researchers have wrestled with the ways that parents collude to convince young children of the existence of Santa Claus, and have wondered whether children's abilities to critically weigh real-world evidence may be undermined by their belief in this or other imaginary figures. For example, University of Texas psychology professor Jacqueline Woolley helped conduct a study that found, to the contrary, that children seemed competent in their use of logic, evidence, and comparative reasoning even though they might conclude that Santa Claus or other fanciful creatures were real:

The adults they count on to provide reliable information about the world introduce them to Santa. Then his existence is affirmed by friends, books, TV and movies. It is also validated by hard evidence: the half-eaten cookies and empty milk glasses by the tree on Christmas morning. In other words, children do a great job of scientifically evaluating Santa. And adults do a great job of duping them.^[111]

—Jacqueline Wooley

Woolley posited that it is perhaps "kinship with the adult world" that causes children not to be angry that they were lied to for so long.^[111] However, the criticism about this deception is not that it is a simple lie, but a complicated series of very large lies.^[112] Objections include that it is unethical for parents to lie to children without good cause, and that it discourages healthy skepticism in children.^[112] With no greater good at the heart of the lie, some have charged that it is more about the parents than it is about the children. For instance, writer Austin Cline posed the question: "Is it not possible that kids would find at least as much pleasure in knowing that parents are responsible for Christmas, not a supernatural stranger?"^[112]

Others, however, see no harm in the belief in Santa Claus. Psychologist Tamar Murachver said that because it is a cultural, not parental, lie, it does not undermine parental trust.^[113] The New Zealand Skeptics also see no harm in parents telling their children that Santa is real. Spokesperson Vicki Hyde said, "It would be a hard-hearted parent indeed who frowned upon the innocent joys of our children's cultural heritage. We save our bah humbugs for the things that exploit the vulnerable."^[113]

Dr. John Condry of Cornell University interviewed more than 500 children for a study of the issue and found that not a single child was angry at his or her parents for telling them Santa Claus was real. According to Dr. Condry, "The most common response to finding out the truth was that they felt older and more mature. They

now knew something that the younger kids did not".^[114] David Kyle Johnson, associate professor of philosophy at King's College (Pennsylvania) disagrees, he wrote

[Consequences can include] everything from the erosion of parental authority and trust to turning a child into an atheist. For example, Jay defended Santa's existence in front of his whole class on the mere basis that his “mother wouldn't lie” to him, only to read the encyclopedia entry on Santa in front of the whole class and simultaneously discover that she indeed would. When little Tennille realized that the reason she didn't always get what she asked Santa for was that he didn't exist, she figured that God's non-existence was the best explanation for why her prayers also went unanswered. (...) But there are even more reasons for not liking the Santa lie--reasons that should resonate quite loudly with everyone (especially atheists). (...) Encouraging your children to literally believe the Santa lie is the last thing that encourages critical thinking and effective reasoning in children. Think about what many parents do to keep kids believing. When a child brings doubts, parents often encourage the child to stifle those doubts and continue believing: “Just believe what you want to. After all, isn't that more fun?” They will sometimes plant false evidence (or show terrible fake “scientific” documentaries that do so), make up faux ad hoc explanations, or—worst of all—just say “he's magic.” But all these things are directly contrary to what parents who want to develop critical thinking in their children should do. Stifling doubt, believing based on desire (instead of evidence), being convinced by bad evidence, being fooled by ad-hoc explanations, and appealing to magic—these are all “bad habits of lazy thinking” that I have to drive out of my critical thinking students every semester. And, not surprisingly, the students in which these bad habits are most deeply entrenched are often those who believed in Santa for too long).^[115]

See also

- Christmas controversy
- Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus
- Flying Santa—a northeastern US tradition of pilots delivering presents to families in remote lighthouses
- Fraternal Order of Real Bearded Santas
- Santa Claus, Indiana—a small Midwestern United States town named after the figure, and home to Holiday World amusement park
- Easter Bunny
- Tooth fairy
- Santa Claus's reindeer

Related figures in folklore

- Joulupukki Original Santa-Claus from Finland
- Mikulás (Hungary)
- Companions of Saint Nicholas
- Jack Frost and Old Man Winter—Mythical characters
- Olentzero, Basque character, possibly derived from Roman traditions
- Saint Nicholas of Myra and Saint Basil
- Tomte—Scandinavian mythical character
- Yule Goat—Scandinavian Christmas symbol
- Yule Lads

- Ded Moroz (Father Frost, Russian: Дед Мороз) plays a role similar to Santa Claus
- Befana
- Moș Gerilă name of a character from Romanian communist propaganda

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External links

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- The History of Santa Claus and Father Christmas (<http://www.arthuriana.co.uk/xmas/>)

- North Pole Flooded With Letters (<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/16122221/>)—MSNBC
- Research guides for Thomas Nast and Santa Claus at The Morristown & Morris Township Public Library, NJ (http://jfpl.org/NJHistoryPathfinders.cfm?doc_Id=31)
- "THE KNICKERBOCKERS RESCUE SANTA CLAUS: 'CLAAS SCHLASCHENSCHLINGER' from James Kirke Paulding's 'The Book of Saint Nicholas'" (1836) (<https://archive.org/details/TheKnickerbockersRescueSantaClausJamesKirkePaulding>)

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Saint Nicholas

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Saint Nicholas (Greek: Ἅγιος Νικόλαος, *Hagios Nikólaos*, Latin: *Sanctus Nicolaus*); (15 March 270 AD – 6 December 343 AD),^{[3][4]} also called **Nikolaos of Myra**, was a historic 4th-century Christian saint and Greek^[5] Bishop of Myra (Demre, part of modern-day Turkey).^[6] Because of the many miracles attributed to his intercession, he is also known as **Nikolaos the Wonderworker** (Νικόλαος ὁ Θαυματουργός, *Nikolaos ho Thaumaturgos*). He had a reputation for secret gift-giving, such as putting coins in the shoes of those who left them out for him, a practice celebrated on his feast day—St Nicholas Day (6 December, Gregorian calendar, in Western Christianity and 19 December, Julian calendar, in Eastern Christianity);^[7] and thus became the model for Santa Claus, whose modern name comes from the Dutch Sinterklaas, itself from a series of elisions and corruptions of the transliteration of "Saint Nikolaos". His reputation evolved among the faithful, as was common for early Christian saints.^[8] In 1087, part of the relics (about half of the bones) were furtively translated to Bari, in Apulia, Italy; for this reason, he is also known as **Nikolaos of Bari**. The remaining bones were taken to Venice in 1100.

The historical Saint Nicholas is commemorated and revered among Anglican,^[9] Catholic, Lutheran, and Orthodox Christians. In addition, some Baptist,^[10] Methodist,^[11] Presbyterian,^[12] and Reformed churches have been named in honor of Saint Nicholas.^[13] Saint Nicholas is the patron saint of sailors, merchants, archers, repentant thieves, children, brewers, pawnbrokers and students in various cities and countries around Europe.

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Saint Nicholas



Russian icon depicting St Nicholas with scenes from his life. Late 1400s or early 1500s. National Museum, Stockholm.

Defender of Orthodoxy, Wonderworker, Holy Hierarchy, Bishop of Myra

Born	15 March 270 ^[1] <div>Patara, Roman Empire (now in Turkey)</div>
Died	6 December 343 (aged 73) <div>Myra, Roman Empire (now in Turkey)</div>
Venerated in	Anglicanism, Baptist, Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Oriental Orthodoxy, Lutheranism, Methodism, Presbyterianism, Reformed
Major shrine	Basilica di San Nicola, Bari, Italy
Feast	6 December [O.S. 14 December](main feast day - Saint Nicholas Day) <div>9 May [O.S. 22 May](translation of relics)^[2]</div>

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Attributes	Vested as a Bishop. In Eastern Christianity, wearing an omophorion and holding a Gospel Book. Sometimes shown with Jesus Christ over one shoulder, holding a Gospel Book, and with the Theotokos over the other shoulder, holding an omophorion
Patronage	Children, coopers, sailors, fishermen, merchants, broadcasters, the falsely accused, repentant thieves, brewers, pharmacists, archers, pawnbrokers, Galway, Russia, Lorraine and Duchy of Lorraine.

Life

Nicholas was born in Asia Minor (Greek Anatolia) in the Roman Empire, to a Greek family^{[14][15][16]} during the third century in the city of Patara (Lycia et Pamphylia), in present day Turkey,^{[17][18]} which was a port on the Mediterranean Sea,^[18] and lived in Myra, Lycia^[19] (part of modern-day Demre, Turkey), at a time when the region was Greek in its heritage,^[18] culture, and outlook and politically part of the Roman diocese of Asia.^[18] He was the only son of wealthy Christian parents named Epiphanius (Ἐπιφάνιος) and Johanna (Ἰωάννα) according to some accounts^[20] and Theophanes (Θεοφάνης) and Nonna (Νόννα) according to others.^[18] He was very religious from an early age^[16] and according to legend, Nicholas was said to have rigorously observed the canonical fasts of Wednesdays and Fridays. His wealthy parents died in an epidemic while Nicholas was still young and he was raised by his uncle—also named Nicholas—who was the bishop of Patara. He tonsured the young Nicholas as a reader and later ordained him a presbyter (priest).

In the year AD 305, several monks from Anatolia in Asia Minor came to the Holy Land to Beit Jala, Palestine and established a small monastery with a church named in honor of the Great Martyr George (Saint George). This was before St. Sava's Monastery was founded in the desert east of Bethlehem on the Kidron Gorge near the Dead Sea. These monks lived in Beit Jala on the mountain overlooking Bethlehem in a few caves. In the years 312–315, St. Nicholas lived there and came as a pilgrim to visit shrines in the Holy Land. A text written in his own hand is still in the care of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem. It was in his prayers that St. Nicholas heard the Holy Spirit call him back to Asia Minor, to Myra, where soon after his return in 317 he was consecrated bishop.^[21]

In 325, he was one of many bishops to answer the request of Constantine and appear at the First Council of Nicaea. There, Nicholas was a staunch anti-Arian and defender of the Orthodox Christian position,^[22] and one of the bishops who signed the Nicene Creed.^[23]

Translation of the relics

On 26 August 1071 Romanus IV, Emperor of the Byzantine Empire (reigned 1068–1071), faced Sultan Alp Arslan of the Seljuk Turks (reigned 1059–1072) in the Battle of Manzikert. The battle ended in humiliating defeat and capture for Romanus. As a result the Empire temporarily lost control over most of Asia Minor to the invading Seljuk Turks. The Byzantines would regain its control over Asia Minor during the reign of Alexius I Comnenus (reigned 1081–1118). But early in his reign Myra was overtaken by the Turks. Nicholas' tomb in Myra had become a popular place of pilgrimage. Because of the many wars and attacks in the region, some Christians were concerned that access to the tomb might become difficult. For both the religious and commercial advantages of a major pilgrimage site, the Italian cities of Venice and Bari vied to get the Nicholas

relics.^[3] Taking advantage of the confusion, in the spring of 1087, sailors from Bari in Apulia seized part of the remains of the saint from his burial church in Myra, over the objections of the Greek Orthodox monks. Returning to Bari, they brought the remains with them and cared for them. The remains arrived on 9 May 1087. There are numerous variations of this account. In some versions those taking the relics are characterized as thieves or pirates, in others they are said to have taken them in response to a vision wherein Saint Nicholas himself appeared and commanded that his relics be moved in order to preserve them from the impending Muslim conquest. Currently at Bari, there are two churches at his shrine, one Roman Catholic and one Orthodox.

Sailors from Bari collected just half of Nicholas' skeleton, leaving all the minor fragments in the grave. These were collected by Venetian sailors during the first crusade and brought to Venice, where a church to St. Nicholas, the patron of sailors, was built on the Lido. This tradition was confirmed in two scientific investigations of the relics in Bari and Venice, which revealed that the relics in the two cities belong to the same skeleton.^{[24][25]} Many churches in Europe, Russia and the United States claim to possess small relics, such as a tooth or a finger.^[26]

It is said that in Myra the relics of Saint Nicholas each year exuded a clear watery liquid which smells like rose water, called manna (or myrrh), which is believed by the faithful to possess miraculous powers.^[27] After the relics were brought to Bari, they continued to do so, much to the joy of the new owners. Vials of myrrh from his relics have been taken all over the world for centuries, and can still be obtained from his church in Bari. Even up to the present day, a flask of manna is extracted from the tomb of Saint Nicholas every year on 6 December (the Saint's feast day) by the clergy of the basilica. The myrrh is collected from a sarcophagus which is located in the basilica vault and could be obtained in the shop nearby. The liquid gradually seeps out of the tomb, but it is unclear whether it originates from the body within the tomb, or from the marble itself; since the town of Bari is a harbour, and the tomb is below sea level, there have been several natural explanations proposed for the manna fluid, including the transfer of seawater to the tomb by capillary action, however this does not explain it appearing only once a year on a fixed date, its smell and its appearance while the relics were in Myra.^[28]

In 1993, a grave was found on the small Turkish island of Gemile, east of Rhodes, which historians believe is the original tomb of Saint Nicholas.^[29] On 28 December 2009, the Turkish Government announced that it would be formally requesting the return of St. Nicholas's skeletal remains to Turkey from the Italian government.^{[30][31]} Turkish authorities have asserted that St. Nicholas himself desired to be buried at his episcopal town, and that his remains were illegally removed from his homeland.

An Irish tradition states that the relics of Saint Nicholas are also reputed to have been stolen from Myra by local Norman crusading knights in the twelfth century and buried near Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny, where a stone slab marks the site locally believed to be his grave.^[32] This is not widely accepted beyond local tradition.

Legends and folklore



Basilica di San Nicola in Bari, Italy where most of the relics of St. Nicholas are kept today.



The church of San Nicolò al Lido (Venice), hosts half of Nicolas' relics



The dowry for the three virgins (Gentile da Fabriano, c. 1425, Pinacoteca Vaticana, Rome).

One legend^[33] tells how during a terrible famine, a malicious butcher lured three little children into his house, where he killed them, placing their remains in a barrel to cure, planning to sell them off as ham. Saint Nicholas, visiting the region to care for the hungry, not only saw through the butcher's horrific crime but also resurrected the three boys from the barrel by his prayers. Another version of this story, possibly formed around the eleventh century, claims that the butcher's victims were instead three clerks who wished to stay the night. The

man murdered them, and was advised by his wife to dispose of them by turning them into meat pies. The Saint saw through this and brought the men back to life.

In his most famous exploit,^[34] a poor man had three daughters but could not afford a proper dowry for them. This meant that they would remain unmarried and probably, in absence of any other possible employment, would have to become prostitutes. Even if they did not, unmarried maidens in those days would have been assumed as being a prostitute. Hearing of the girls' plight, Nicholas decided to help them, but being too modest to help the family in public (or to save them the humiliation of accepting charity), he went to the house under the cover of night and threw three purses (one for each daughter) filled with gold coins through the window opening into the house.

One version has him throwing one purse for three consecutive nights. Another has him throwing the purses over a period of three years, each time the night before one of the daughters comes of age. Invariably, the third time the father lies in wait, trying to discover the identity of their benefactor. In one version the father confronts the saint, only to have Saint Nicholas say it is not him he should thank, but God alone. In another version, Nicholas learns of the poor man's plan and drops the third bag down the chimney instead; a variant holds that the daughter had washed her stockings that evening and hung them over the embers to dry, and that the bag of gold fell into the stocking.

According to another legend, during a great famine that Myra experienced in 311–312, a ship was in the port at anchor, which was loaded with wheat for the Emperor in Constantinople. Nicholas invited the sailors to unload a part of the wheat to help in time of need. The sailors at first disliked the request, because the wheat had to be weighed accurately and delivered to the Emperor. Only when Nicholas promised them that they would not suffer any loss for their consideration, the sailors agreed. When they arrived later in the capital, they made a surprising find: the weight of the load had not changed, although the wheat removed in Myra was enough for two full years and could even be used for sowing.^[35]

While yet a young man, Nicholas followed the example of his uncle, the abbot, by making a pilgrimage to the birthplace of Christianity—the Holy Land. Desiring a serene time of preparation, Nicholas set sail on an Egyptian ship where the other pilgrims did not know who he was. The first night he dreamed a storm would put them all at peril. When he awoke in the morning he warned the sailors that a severe storm was coming, but they need not fear, for "God will protect us." Almost immediately the sky darkened and strong winds roared round



Supposed effigy of St. Nicholas near Thomastown, Ireland.

the ship. The wind and waves made it impossible to keep the ship under control. Even with lowered sails, the sailors feared for their very lives and begged Nicholas to pray for safety. One sailor climbed the main mast, tightening the ropes so the mast would not crash onto the deck. As he was coming back down, the sailor slipped, fell to the deck, and was killed. While Nicholas prayed, the storm did quiet, relieving the sailors. Their comfort, however, was dampened by grief over their comrade's death. As Nicholas prayed over the dead sailor, he was revived, "as if he had only been asleep." The man awakened without pain and the ship finished the journey to the Holy Land. Saint Nicholas then embarked on his pilgrimage to the holy places, walking where Jesus had walked. One night while staying with a family in Jerusalem, he wanted to pray at the only church remaining in Jerusalem at that time. It was the Church of the Room of the Last Supper on Mount Zion. As he approached the heavy, locked doors, they swung open of their own accord, allowing him to enter the church. Nicholas fell to the ground in thanksgiving.^[36]



A key ring with the image of Nikolaos of Myra as patron of the sailors

Before returning to Lycia, he lived in the Holy Land several years in a cave overlooking Bethlehem and visited the Holy Sepulchre, Golgotha, Bethlehem, and many other holy sites. The Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church is located on the site of his cave in Beit Jala where today there are innumerable stories about Saint Nicholas still handed down from generation to generation.^[37]

The legends with the most likely historical basis are the stories of Nicholas helping three girls and stories of Nicholas helping sailors. Others, especially the legend of the three murdered children, are much later additions to Nicholas lore, historian Dr. Adam English concludes^[38] in a new biography of Nicholas for Baylor University Press based on a four-year study of current historical research into Nicholas of Myra.

In Europe, "Sinterklaus" which of course was translated as Santa Claus which the name and legend carried on for hundreds of years and brought to America.

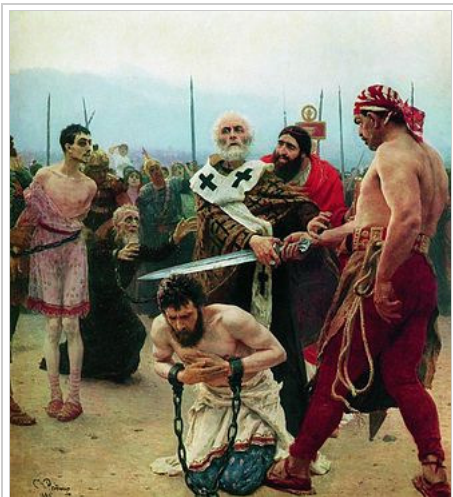
Face of the historical saint

Whereas the devotional importance of relics and the economics associated with pilgrimages caused the remains of most saints to be divided up and spread over numerous churches in several countries, St. Nicholas is unusual in that most of his bones have been preserved in one spot: his grave crypt in Bari. Even with the allegedly continuing miracle of the manna, the archdiocese of Bari has allowed for one scientific survey of the bones. In the late 1950s, during a restoration of the chapel, it allowed a team of hand-picked scientists to photograph and measure the contents of the crypt grave.^[39]

In the summer of 2005, the report of these measurements was sent to a forensic laboratory in England. The review of the data revealed that the historical St. Nicholas was barely five feet in height and had a broken nose. The facial reconstruction was produced by Dr. Caroline Wilkinson at the University of Manchester and was shown on a BBC2 TV program 'The Real Face of Santa' ^[40]

Formal veneration

Among the Greeks and Italians he is a favorite of sailors, fishermen, ships and sailing. As such he has become over time the patron saint of several cities maintaining harbours. In centuries of Greek folklore, Nicholas was seen as "The Lord of the Sea", often described by modern Greek scholars as a kind of Christianized version of Poseidon. In modern Greece, he is still easily among the most recognizable saints and 6 December finds many



Saint Nicholas Saves Three Innocents from Death (oil painting by Ilya Repin, 1888, State Russian Museum).

cities celebrating their patron saint. He is also the patron saint of all of Greece and particularly of the Hellenic Navy.^[41]

In the Eastern Orthodox Church, Saint Nicholas' memory is celebrated on almost every Thursday of the year (together with the Apostles) with special hymns to him which are found in the liturgical book known as the Octoechos. Soon after the transfer of Saint Nicholas' relics from Myra to Bari, a Russian version of his Life and an account of the transfer of his relics were written by a contemporary to this event.^[42]

Devotional akathists and canons have been composed in his honour, and are frequently chanted by the faithful as they

ask for his intercession. He is mentioned in the Liturgy of Preparation during the Divine Liturgy (Eastern Orthodox Eucharist) and during the All-Night Vigil. Many Orthodox churches will have his icon, even if they are not named after him.

In Oriental Orthodoxy, the Coptic Church observes the Departure of St. Nicholas on Kiahk 10, or 19 December.^{[43][44]}

In late medieval England, on Saint Nicholas' Day parishes held Yuletide "boy bishop" celebrations. As part of this celebration, youths performed the functions of priests and bishops, and exercised rule over their elders. Today, Saint Nicholas is still celebrated as a great gift-giver in several Western European and Central European countries. According to one source, in medieval times nuns used the night of 6 December to deposit baskets of food and clothes anonymously at the doorsteps of the needy. According to another source, on 6 December every sailor or ex-sailor of the Low Countries (which at that time was virtually all of the male population) would descend to the harbour towns to participate in a church celebration for their patron saint. On the way back they would stop at one of the various *Nicholas fairs* to buy some hard-to-come-by goods, gifts for their loved ones and invariably some little presents for their children. While the real gifts would only be presented at Christmas, the little presents for the children were given right away, courtesy of Saint Nicholas. This and his miracle of him resurrecting the three butchered children made Saint Nicholas a patron saint of children and later students as well.

Among Albanians, Saint Nicholas is known as Shen'Kollë and is venerated by most Catholic families, even those from villages that are devoted to other saints. The Feast of Saint Nicholas is celebrated on the evening before 6 December, known as Shen'Kolli i Dimnit (Saint Nicholas of Winter), as well as on the commemoration of the interring of his bones in Bari, the evening before 9 May, known as Shen'Kolli i Majit (Saint Nicholas of May). Albanian Catholics often swear by Saint Nicholas, saying "Pasha Shejnti Shen'Kollin!" ("May I see Holy Saint Nicholas!"), indicating the importance of this saint in Albanian culture, especially among the Albanians of Malësia. On the eve of his feast day, Albanians will light a candle and abstain from meat, preparing a feast of roasted lamb and pork, to be served to guests after midnight. Guests will greet each other, saying, "Nata e Shen'Kollit ju nihmoftë!" ("May the Night of Saint Nicholas help you!") and other such blessings. The bones of Albania's greatest hero, George Kastrioti, were also interred in the Church of Saint Nicholas in Lezha, Albania,



Saint Nicholas, Russian icon from first quarter of the eighteenth century (Kizhi monastery, Karelia).

upon his death.

Iconography



Russian Orthodox statue of Saint Nicolas, now in a corner near the church in Demre.



St. Nicholas, the patron saint of Russian merchants. Fresco by Dionisius from the Ferapontov Monastery.

Saint Nicholas is a popular subject portrayed on countless Eastern Orthodox icons, particularly Russian ones. He is depicted as an Orthodox bishop, wearing the omophorion and holding a Gospel Book. Sometimes he is depicted wearing the Eastern Orthodox mitre, sometimes he is bareheaded. Iconographically, Nicholas is depicted as an elderly man with a short, full white fluffy beard and balding head. In commemoration of the miracle attributed to him by tradition at the Ecumenical Council of Nicea, he is sometimes depicted with Christ over his left shoulder holding out a Gospel Book to him and the Theotokos over his right shoulder holding the omophorion. Because of his patronage of mariners, occasionally Saint Nicholas will be shown standing in a boat or rescuing a drowning sailor.

In Roman Catholic iconography, Saint Nicholas is depicted as a bishop, wearing the insignia of this dignity: a bishop's vestments, a mitre and a crozier. The episode with the three dowries is commemorated by showing him holding in his hand either three purses, three coins or three balls of gold. Depending on whether he is depicted as patron saint of children or sailors, his images will be completed by a background showing ships, children or three figures climbing out of a wooden barrel (the three slaughtered children he resurrected). In medieval paintings, Saint Nicholas is depicted as a dark-skinned man, as in Pietro di Giovanni d'Ambrogio's *Saint Nicholas of Bari*, a 1430s painting held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, or Francesco di Giorgio e di Lorenzo's 1461 *Altarpiece with the Annunciation* made for the church of Spedaletta.^[45]

In a strange twist, the three gold balls referring to the dowry affair are sometimes metaphorically interpreted as being oranges or other fruits. As in the Low Countries in medieval times oranges most frequently came from Spain, this led to the belief that the Saint lives in Spain and comes to visit every winter bringing them oranges, other 'wintry' fruits and tales of magical creatures.

In music

- *San Nicola di Bari*, an oratorio composed by Giovanni Bononcini (1693).
- *St. Nicolas*, a choral song for male choir by Edward Purcell (1730).
- *Saint Nicolas*, a Christmas cantata by Benjamin Britten (1948).

Operetta *St. Nicholas arrives*

Salesian priest Jerko Gržinčič wrote a Christmas operetta in three acts entitled *Miklavž prihaja* (*St. Nicholas arrives*). The premiere took place before World War II in the Union Hostel in Ljubljana (now in Slovenia) with great success.^[46]

Demre

I[The modern city of Demre]], Turkey is built near the ruins of the saint's home town of ancient Myra, and attracts many Russian tourists as St. Nicholas is a very popular Orthodox saint. Restoration to Saint Nicholas' original church is currently underway, with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in 2007 permitting Divine Liturgy to be celebrated at the site, and contributing 40,000 Turkish Lira to the project.

A solemn bronze statue of the saint by Russian sculptor Gregory Pototsky was donated by the Russian government in 2000, and was given a prominent place in the square fronting the medieval Church of St. Nicholas. In 2005, mayor Süleyman Topçu had the statue replaced by a red-suited plastic Santa Claus statue, because he wanted an image more recognisable to foreign visitors. Protests from the Russian government against this were successful, and the bronze statue was returned (albeit without its original high pedestal) to a corner nearer the church.

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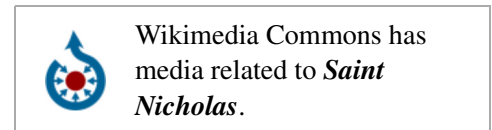
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External links

- The Saint Nicholas Center -comprehensive St. Nicholas related information and resources. (<http://www.stnicholascenter.org/>)
- St. Nicholas Center: Who is Saint Nicholas? (<http://www.stnicholascenter.org/pages/who-is-st-nicholas/>)
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- The History of Santa Claus and Father Christmas (<http://www.arthuriana.co.uk/xmas/>)
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- Translation of Grimm's Saga No. 134 about St. Nicholas (http://www.fairytaleschannel.org/2009_12_07_archive.html)
- <http://www.santiebeati.it/dettaglio/30300>
- 130 pictures of the church in Myra (<http://www.pbase.com/dosseman/stnicolas>)



(original tomb at Church of Saint Nicholas, Myra, Turkey)

- Colonnade Statue St Peter's Square (<http://www.stpetersbasilica.info/Exterior/Colonnades/Saints/St%20Nicholas%20of%20Bari-52/StNicholasofBari.htm>)

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