

Rhythms of Grace Worship • St. Nicholas Celebration Year 3

Theme: St. Nicholas Celebration

Scripture: _____

Date: _____

Location: _____

Volunteer Roles:

Facilitator _____

Storyteller _____

Celebrant _____

Center Leader _____

Guide _____

Items needed for this Session

Gathering: Bible, Jesus doll, at the St. Nicholas Center (website below) go to miter page and print out miter form to use along with directions, large red construction paper or red foam, decorations for miter

Storytelling: With the Bible, Jesus doll, Storytelling pages, and purple miter for the base, tell the story of St. Nicolas using the list of symbols in supplies.

Response Activities: There are many activities available on: [stnicholascenter.org](http://www.stnicholascenter.org) Go directly to activities:

<http://www.stnicholascenter.org/pages/activities-to-print/> My suggestions for some activities from the website are:

1. The Match Game: (using mainly the symbols that were discussed in the story or have someone who knows the additional stories tell them during this station)

2. St. Nicholas Puzzles: four different puzzles with five pieces each.

Making candy canes: Taking red and white clay or play dough roll out long ropes of each and twist them around each other. Bend the top to look like a shepherd's crook which is a crozier for Bishops. Explain the legend of the candy cane while participants are making. See Resources for information

Find St. Nicholas: Have a bucket or tub filled with rice. In the bucket, place figures of St. Nicholas along with some of the symbols. Participants find the pieces and discuss the story.

Regathering: See lesson, *Jesu, Jesu*, elements for the Eucharistic table (see Eucharist-Book 1)

Eucharist: altar table and elements (pita bread/rice crackers, juice, chalice, paten, purificator, corporal, altar cloth), Eucharistic Prayer (see Book 1 p. 100), *Gather our Hearts* song lyrics (see book 1 p. 99)

Dismissal: *Jesus Loves Me* song lyrics (see Book 1 p. 99 and CD Yr. 2 additional resources)

Sessions Plan • St. Nicholas Celebration• Yr. 3

Gathering: Have participants make miters to wear during the story. Instructions under “miters” at the St. Nicholas Center.

Storytelling: Bible, Jesus doll, Storytelling pages, large purple miter shaped piece of cloth or felt, priest’s collar, bag of gold (plastic or chocolate), small miter and crozier (wood or metal), orange, chain link. (If you do the shoe filling take a look at <http://www.stnicholascenter.org/pages/shoe-treats/> for ideas and resources....do use the chocolate coins and oranges from the story. Have an extra pair of shoes on hand in case someone does not want to take their shoes off so you can assign them a shoe.

Response Activities:

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stnicholascenter.org directly to activities:
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The Match Game: (using mainly the symbols that were discussed in the story or have someone who knows the additional stories tell them during this station)

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Find St. Nicholas: Have a bucket or tub filled with rice. In the bucket, place figures of St. Nicholas along with some of the symbols. Participants find the pieces and discuss the story.

Regathering: Have participants make their way to where the shoes were left having them sing *Jesu, Jesu*, and picking up an element for the Eucharist. Obviously they will see the filled shoes so let them look through the items as the priest sets the table.

Eucharist: Sing: *Gather our Hearts*

Gather our hearts, oh God
Gather our thoughts, oh God
Bring us together around you

Celebration of the Eucharist

Dismissal: All sing and sign *Jesus Loves Me*

Celebrant provides the blessing:

Celebrant: “*Go in Peace to love and serve the Lord*”

Participant: “*Thanks be to God!*”

Storytelling • St.Nicholas Day Celebration• Yr. 3

Place the Bible and Jesus doll by the Storyteller. Place the large purple miter in front of the storyteller with the objects on the side: priest's collar, bag of gold (plastic or chocolate), small miter and crozier (wood or metal), orange, chain link. NOTE: Tell this story AWAY from where you plan to do the activities so you can leave a volunteer behind to fill the shoes with gifts)

Our story today has ties to our Bible, (*show the Bible*) our book that tells the stories of God and God's people, of Jesus (*show Jesus doll*), God's son, and of how much God loves *us* (*place hands over heart*).

Today's story is about a very kind and generous man, who lived almost three hundred years after Jesus lived, died, rose, and went up to heaven. Nicholas was born into a wealthy family with very loving parents who not only loved him but also loved God. When he was a young boy they taught Nicholas about Christ. He learned from his parents of God's love for him and all others and how following Christ's teachings to care for others would show others about God's love for them too.

When Nicholas became a teenager both of his parents died. He went to live with his uncle who happened to be a Bishop in the church. Living with his uncle his faith grew deeper and deeper. He decided to sell all he had and take all his money and give it to help the poor. As a man Nicholas became a priest (place on the felt a priest's collar or a cardstock resemblance of one) and used his position and resources to continue to help people, especially children. He loved children very much.

One story about Nicholas tells how he heard about a poor man in his town that had three daughters. He could no longer take care of them and did not have the money for their dowries. That is money needed so they could marry and begin lives of their own. One night Nicholas waited until dark. He filled a bag with money (place a bag of gold plastic or chocolate coins on the felt) and secretly left it at the poor man's door. The man was so surprised in the morning. He did this two more times so each daughter could have a bag of gold but the father never found out who left the coins.

Nicholas' uncle, the Bishop of Myra, died and Nicholas became the new bishop (place a miter and crozier (wood or wire) on the felt). But, even after he became a bishop, he still found time to look after the children and poor in his town and country. Nicholas was known to secretly leave gifts of candy and fruit like oranges for children at night around the countryside (place an orange on the felt).

Under the Roman rule, Bishop Nicholas suffered for his faith. He was exiled and imprisoned along with other bishops, priests, and deacons (place a chain on the felt). While in prison people from his home continued his tradition of leaving gifts for children. Although when he was released and he continued his acts of love and devotion to his people, he never completely recovered from his imprisonment. He died December 6, AD 343 in Myra. Again, the people took up his tradition of leaving gifts for the children in need. The church, because of his extraordinary character named him a saint, and the anniversary of his death became a day of celebration, St. Nicholas Day, December 6th each year.

Through the centuries many stories and legends have been told of St. Nicholas' life and deeds. These accounts help us understand this extraordinary person and why he is so beloved and revered as protector and helper of those in need. Also, there have been many traditions created in many countries around world that began with the gift giving of St. Nicholas. And a surprising thing has happened. Many children still put out their shoes at night and in the morning they are filled with special gifts. Now I wonder if we left our shoes now while we go and do our activities.....?

(If you do the shoe filling take a look at <http://www.stnicholascenter.org/pages/shoe-treats/> for ideas and resources....do use the chocolate coins and oranges from the story

Have an extra pair of shoes on hand in case someone does not want to take their shoes off so you can assign them a shoe.)

Amen!

After an appropriate pause, the Storyteller goes to explain the activities of the day.