

**WHO WAS ST. NICHOLAS?**

**Myrths and legends abound about St. Nicholas, who is arguably the most popular saint in the Christian Church. His generosity has been well documented. He is the patron saint of children, sailors, and pawnbrokers. But just exactly what kind of a person was this man who is revered by all?**

**If we study the Troparion for the Feast of St. Nicholas, we find the best answer to that question. In it, he is called a MODEL OF FAITH. From his youth, he possessed a deep piety. Upon the passing of the previous Bishop of Myra, it was foretold tht the first person to enter the church by the name “Nicholas” was to be appointed to be the new bishop. Unknowingly, one morning, he did just that! Although Nicholas felt he was tooyoung and inexperienced for such a responsibility He accepted that it was the will of God.**

**St. Nicholas is also referred to in his Troparion as an EXAMPLE OF VIRTUE. Truly he was a humble man who chose to give away all of his worldly possessions and live in poverty. He found true “wealth” in his charitable deeds, giving alms in secret – deliberately shunning the public accolades of those whom he aided.**

**Finally, we parise St. Nicholas in his Troparion for the SINCERITY OF HIS DEEDS. Perhaps nothing underscores this greater than the story of his participation in the First Ecumenical Council. Nicholas had deep convictions about the teaching of the Church. When the priest Arius challenged the accepted position on the divinty of Christ, the enraged Archbishop struck this heretic for his blasphemy!**

**Yes, St. Nicholas lived a life worthy of all the adulation that is given to him. May his example inspire us all to live faithful, virtuous and sincere lives.**