

# BYZ#KIDS

**December 2023**

**Holy Bishops of December**



The Right Reverend Gerasim, Bishop of Fort Worth and Auxiliary to the Diocese of the South for the Orthodox Church in America



Christ is Born!

Dear ByziParents,

St. Nicholas, Archbishop of Myra, was our theme when we published our very first digital issue six years ago. We didn't offer it in print then, just a free digital download of a tricked-out version of the newsletter I was sending to all my mom-friends who wanted a copy of some of the activities I did with my own kids and my students over the years as a catechist. A friend made my little essays look so very pretty, another selflessly shared her coloring pages, and a third friend volunteered to write some articles to go along with mine. My, how we've been blessed since then! We do hope that our patron continues to pray for us and guide us along as we strive to provide ByziFamilies with resources that will strengthen their faith...our faith... the TRUE faith!

The Bishop of Myra is only one of the many Bishops commemorated in the month of December, but for some reason, Nicholas is the one who gets all the publicity. As fond as we are of our patron, we'd like to introduce your family to some of the other great leaders of the Church that we will commemorate this month.

Bishops are such special people! Please consider contacting your own bishop this month and letting him know how grateful you are for his service to God and to you!

Be assured that the ByziKids Team will be praying for each and every one of our patrons and supporters this holiday season.

Have a blessed St. Nicholas Day and a Very Blessed Nativity, from all of us at ByziKids!

Enjoy the issue!

*Lynne*



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# Christmas Quotes December Bishops

"Since therefore I have, in the persons before mentioned, beheld the whole multitude of you in faith and love, I exhort you to study to do all things with a divine harmony, while your bishop presides in the place of God, and your presbyters in the place of the assembly of the apostles, along with your deacons, who are most dear to me, and are entrusted with the ministry of Jesus Christ, who was with the Father before the beginning of time, and in the end was revealed. Do ye all then, imitating the same divine conduct, pay respect to one another, and let no one look upon his neighbor after the flesh, but do ye continually love each other in Jesus Christ. Let nothing exist among you that may divide you, but be ye united with your bishop, and those that preside over you, as a type and evidence of your immortality."

Ignatius of Antioch

Thus, in greeting the Nativity of our Lord, let us purify ourselves, brothers, from all defilement of sin. Let us fill His treasury with various gifts so that on this holy day, there would be something to comfort strangers, relieve the sorrows of widows, and clothe the needy. For can it be good if, in one and the same house, there be one servant making merry in silk garments, while another desponds, wearing rough tunics, the former sating himself with food while the other goes hungry in the cold?

St. Ambrose of Milan

"The giver of every good and perfect gift has called upon us to mimic His giving, by grace, through faith, and this is not of ourselves."

St. Nicholas of Myra







## GOD WITH US BOOKS

# God With Us Family Formation

Want great catechesis for all ages in your home or parish? GOD WITH US BOOKS in partnership with the talented crew at BYZIKIDS will be offering FREE activity-based learning on a new theme each month related to the Catechetical Year! Help grow your faith and your family through engaging and dynamic learning!

New Downloadable Family Formation Kits each month!



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2023-2024 Catechetical Year



# MEANWHILE, BACK IN BYZANTIUM



by Kathryn Reetzke

Each liturgy and during other services we say the Nicene Creed together. We have St. Spyridon and many other early Bishops to thank for forming this important text of our faith. St. Spyridon was born in the Mediterranean Sea on the island of Cyprus in 270 AD. He became a monk after being widowed when both he and his daughter joined monasteries. Eventually, he was appointed Bishop of southern Cyprus. In 325 AD, he took part in the debates against Arianism at the Council of Nicaea.

Throughout his life St Spyridon taught about the Trinity to those who would listen. He persuaded a pagan philosopher to believe in the Trinity by showing a piece of pottery (in other accounts, a brick) and that it was made of fire, clay, and water but was one substance. By showing that something could be made up of 3 things, but still remain one, he convinced the philosopher of the Christian truth. The piece of clay burst into flames in his hand and turned into dust. After a turbulent time of persecution under Emperor Maximinus, he reposed in peace on Dec 12, 348 AD.

When Islamic forces recaptured Cyprus from the Romans about 50 years after the saint's death, St Spyridon's body was taken to Constantinople. During this transport, his relics were found to be incorrupt and contained a sprig of basil, important in pointing to this saint's holiness.

In 1453 AD Constantinople was conquered by the Ottoman Empire and St Spyridon's relics were moved again; this time, to the island of Corfu by a monk named Kalohairetis, where they remain today. He is considered the patron saint of potters and the protector of all those who live on Corfu, he

is commemorated on Dec. 12th and the Saturday before Cheesefare. Many miracles have taken place both on the island of Corfu and throughout the Mediterranean under St. Spyridon's care.

"Thou didst lend wings to thy mind with the fire of the Spirit, wounded by love for Christ. Thy practical work was the practice of contemplation, O inspired Spyridon. Thou didst become a divine altar, imploring illumination for all." Kontakion, tone 2



Icon of St. Spyridon, written by iconographer Eri Fragiadaki. See more icons of St Spyridon and others on IG: @eri\_fragiadaki or her website: <https://angelicon.gr>



# KNOW YOUR FAITH

By Lynne Wardach



We are celebrating the many Bishops commemorated in December. The word for bishop in Greek is *πίσκοπος* (*epískopos*), which means “overseer.” This is because bishops are members of the clergy who are ordained to watch over all that happens within the Church in the area they govern. They strive to ensure that the Church is ministering to its people according to the authentic teachings of Jesus Christ, making them the guardians of the true faith handed down to us from the Apostles.

Not just anyone can become a bishop! St. Paul gives clear guidelines for choosing one in his first letter to Timothy.

**1 Tim 3:1-6** *The saying is sure: whoever aspires to the office of bishop desires a noble task. Now, a bishop must be above reproach, married only once, temperate, sensible, respectable, hospitable, an apt teacher, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, and not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way—for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how can he take care of God’s church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may be puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace and the snare of the devil.*

Jesus chose the Apostles to spread the Gospel message throughout the world and ensure that all they taught about it was accurate and true.

Jesus told the twelve apostles that He had full authority:

**Matthew 28:18** *And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth...”*

Christ then gave that authority to his apostles. St. Paul writes about it, saying,

**2 Corinthians 13:10** *For this reason, I am writing these things while absent, so that when present, I need not use severity in accordance with the authority, which the Lord gave me for building up and not for tearing down.*

**1 Thessalonians 4:2** *For you know what commandments we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.*

**Acts 20:28** *Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you bishops to shepherd the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood.*

And when the apostles became old, they chose other men who displayed those qualities that St. Paul wrote



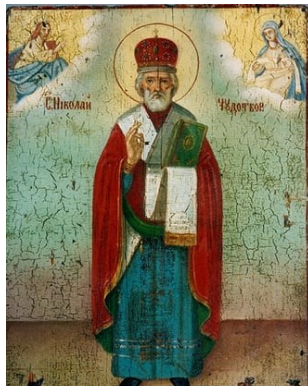
about, prepared them, and prayed over them, laying their hands upon them as Christ had once done for each of them to confer authority. St. Paul writes,

**1 Timothy 4:14** *Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery.*

**2 Timothy 1:6** *For this reason, I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.*

**Titus 1:5-9** *The reason I left you in Crete was that you might put in order what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. An elder must be blameless, faithful to his wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since a bishop manages God's household, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.*

So, how does one become a bishop? One can imagine it is different for every bishop who ever lived, but let's see how each of our December bishops ascended to their episcopal throne.



### How did St. Nicholas become a bishop?

About 300 AD, the bishops of Lycia had gathered to decide who would be elected to lead the church there after the Bishop of Myra had died. They prayed and debated for a long time but still could not choose. One of the elder bishops heard a voice tell him in the middle of the night that the next bishop should be the first person to enter the church in the morning. All the bishops gathered very early before matins to see who would be the first to arrive. Because Father Nicholas was anxious to say his morning prayers, he entered the church before anyone else and was informed that he would be the next Bishop of Myra.

### How did St Ignatius become a bishop?

It was the Apostle Peter himself who appointed St Ignatius Bishop of Antioch! It is also believed that he had been one of the little children Christ blessed when he said, "Let the children come to me!" Perhaps having sat upon Christ's lap prepared him.

### How did St. Ambrose of Milan become a bishop?

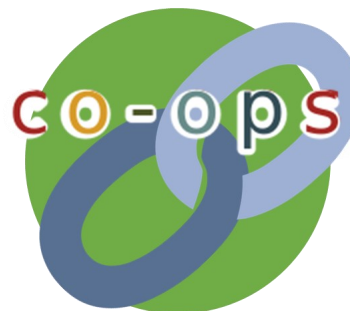
In 374 AD, there was a fierce debate about who would become the next bishop of Milan. Ambrose, a layman who wasn't even baptized yet, was known for his holiness and was chosen by the assembly to become Bishop of Milan in an attempt to put an end to the debate. Ambrose did everything he could to get out of the spotlight and refuse elevation, but within eight days, he went from being a catechumen to becoming the next Bishop of Milan.

### How did St. Spyridon become a bishop?

A married man with children who supported his family as a shepherd, St. Spyridon entered a monastery after his wife had died, and he finished raising his children to adulthood. He grew in holiness and was eventually elected bishop of his hometown of Tremithius on the island of Cyprus.



# Co-Op Connection



December is full of so many wonderful feasts to celebrate. It is the perfect time to share our faith with those who don't normally celebrate the saints! (We all know how popular our friend, St. Nicholas, is!) Whether you gather a large group at your parish or just have one family over to your home to celebrate with you, there are many opportunities to make December both faithful and incredibly fun!

St. Lucy's Feast Day is December 13th. She lived in Italy about 300 years after Christ and was martyred for her faith. One story tells that she wore a wreath of candles on her head to keep her hands free to carry a basket of bread to Christians who were in prison. The candles served to light her way as she navigated the bumpy roads of her home town in the middle of the night. In her memory, we can have a St. Lucy's Day parade! The children can dress in white robes with a candle wreath on their heads made from felt and a red sash around their waist. Then, take to the aisles of your social hall or the streets of your neighborhood, sharing songs and sweet rolls with all who you encounter!





# Sense-Ability

Let us be attentive to God's Creation



When God created us, He made us both body and soul, meaning we are both physical and spiritual beings. We are not like angels that are just spirits. For this reason, when we use our bodies to help us learn, our spirits are changed as well!

Have you played with a sensory bin before? A sensory bin is a small tub or table filled with items that you can touch, smell, taste or make noise with. They typically include items that are all about a particular theme. When we use our senses to help us learn something, it helps our brain to recall the information better.

*In our "I Spy in my Little Icon" article this month, we learned all about St. Ambrose and we heard the story of the bees that gave him a little drop of honey when he was a baby. Here is a fun idea to remember the story by! For this sensory bin, you will need:*

- Black beans (uncooked)
- Semolina Dough Pearls (uncooked)
- Yellow food coloring
- Vinegar

*To start, place your semolina pearls in a large plastic ziploc bag along with 10 drops of yellow food coloring and one tablespoon of vinegar. Seal the bag and use your hands to gently spread the yellow color over all of the pearls. Once they are thoroughly coated, spread them out on a cookie sheet and place them in the oven at 170 for about one hour. You will end up with small, bright yellow balls that look a lot like the pollen that bees love to spread from flower to flower!*

*To create a striped effect in your sensory bin, layer the yellow pearls with black beans. You can play with the colorful textures as they are, or add the printed bees and beehives for a pretend play element as well. Laminating the bees will help them to hold up better during play. Don't forget to send us a picture of your children enjoying their sensory play, we love to see their smiling faces!*



Bees and beehives-  
[\(free printable here\)](#)





A RECIPE from ByziMom.com  
for December 20

## ST. IGNATIUS BONES OF BREAD



We often forget to commemorate the translation of the relics of St. Ignatius of Antioch, whose primary feast is celebrated on December 20 because of the holiday hustle and bustle, but when we do remember him at our house, it is with a batch of some very special bread that serves to remind us of the deep love he had for Christ, so deep that he felt it in his very bones.

St. Ignatius was an actual disciple of the apostles who became Bishop of Antioch and is known for his letters to the early churches in which he instructed the faithful. Under Emperor Trajan, Ignatius was sentenced to be thrown to the lions for refusing to worship pagan idols. On his way to his martyrdom in Rome, he sent a letter to the Church there, discussing his fate and giving instruction.

*"Suffer me to be the food of wild beasts, whereby I may attain unto God. I am the wheat of God, and am to be ground by the teeth of wild beasts, in order that I may be found the pure bread of Christ..."*

*In the arena, the saint was quickly devoured by the wild animals so that only a few large bones were left. These were gathered by two of his deacons who brought them back to Antioch. After the defeat of Antioch by the Saracens, the bones were taken back to Rome where they remain to be venerated in the Church of St. Clement to this day.*

*In honor of our saint of the day, my children and I make a batch of St. Ignatius' Bones! You'll notice that it's a fast-friendly recipe because his feast occurs during the Nativity fast.*

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 package of dry yeast
- 2 cups warm water (about 100 degrees)
- 2 Tbsp sugar
- 1 Tbsp salt
- 1/2 cup coconut (or other) oil, melted
- 5-7 cups of flour

### PREPARATION

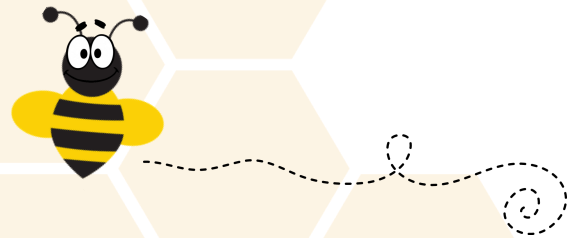
Add the warm water to the yeast and sugar in a large mixing bowl and allow it to sit 10 minutes or so until the yeast begins to bubble (proof). Add the salt and oil, and then the flour, mixing in the last cup or so only if necessary, to make a workable dough. Knead 10 minutes until smooth and elastic. Cover with plastic wrap and allow the dough to sit in a warm place until doubled in bulk, (about an hour). After the first rising, shape into long strips and tie a knot in each end. Place on a greased baking sheet and allow to rise till doubled, brush with almond milk or coconut oil, then bake for 15-20 minutes till golden.



# St. Ambrose's Honey Lip Balm

*There is a legend that when our friend was just an infant in his cradle, a swarm of bees came by and landed on his little face while he was napping. Imagine his parent's anxiety! Instead of harming little Ambrose, the bees just sat there for a while, and when they left, they left him little droplets of honey on his face and tongue as a gift. This prompted his parents to believe that someday he would say something very, very special. He turned out to be one of the most influential bishops of the fourth century!*

You can have honey on your lips, just like St. Ambrose, when you make this lip balm from honey and beeswax. It's just the thing when the cold December wind begins to blow!



## Ingredients:

6 parts (2 Tbsp) grated pure beeswax  
6 parts (2 Tbsp) olive oil  
1 part (1 tsp.) raw honey

You'll need a double boiler on the stove for melting the wax, just exactly as you would melt chocolate. It has to be done slowly and at a very low temperature. Put a pot with a few inches of water on the stove over medium heat and bring just to a low simmer. Place the wax shavings, the oil, and the honey into a pint-size glass jar and place the jar into the water. Every so often, swirl the jar around to aid in the melting process until all the wax is completely melted and everything is incorporated. Once it is completely melted, pour your mixture into some very small jars or other small containers. The lids from empty spice jars can be recycled for this purpose as they are the perfect size. Once the balm has hardened, it may be used as often as you like. Let it remind you to keep sweetness on your lips, just like our saintly friend!

For more activities, recipes, and resources for Building Up your Byzantine Family, visit [ByziMom.com](http://ByziMom.com)!



# Caught You Listening

Khouria Sylvia Dorham

**DECEMBER 3, 2023**

○ **Gospel: Luke 18: 35-43**

Jesus likes it when we keep on asking for what we need. In today's Gospel, the blind beggar will not allow the opportunity to talk to Jesus pass him by. Even when told to be quiet, he keeps on trying to get Jesus' attention. "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asks him.

Solve the code to figure out what the blind beggar asks Jesus.



Icon courtesy of Iconographics

12 15 18 4 12 5 20 13 5 18 5 3 5 9 22 5 13 25 19 9 7 8 20

A=1 B= C=3 D= E=5 F= G= H= I=9 J= K=11 L=12  
M=13 N= O=15 P= Q= R= S= T= U=21 V= W=23 X=  
Y=25 Z=

**DECEMBER 10, 2023**

○ **Gospel: Luke 17: 12-19**

The ten lepers used their LOUD voices to call to Jesus for help. When they were healed, only one of them used his LOUD voice to say thank you.  
Jesus is disappointed.  
Unscramble the words to find out what he would like us to do when he answers our prayers.

ERNUTR NAD EVIG SKATNH OT OGD



Icon courtesy of Iconographics



**DECEMBER 17, 2017**

**Gospel: Luke 18: 18-27**

What would it be like to sell everything you have and give the money to the poor?

What thing would be hardest to let go of?  
Some of our stuff is more important to us than God is.

Use the clues to find out what Jesus wants us to do once we make HIM more important to us than our stuff.

Third letter of the alphabet: \_\_\_\_

Second letter of an entryway: \_\_\_\_

First letter of the word that means the opposite of "a few": \_\_\_\_

The letter that shows up three times in the word 'envelope': \_\_\_\_

Change the first letter of the word 'mellow' to the sixth letter of the alphabet: \_\_\_\_\_

Change the first vowel to one that starts the word meaning the opposite of 'in': \_\_\_\_\_

First letter of the Gospel that comes first in the New Testament: \_\_\_\_\_

Not A, Not I, Not O, Not U, Not Y: \_\_\_\_\_



Icon courtesy of Iconographics

**DECEMBER 24, 2023**

**Gospel: Luke 2: 1-20**

Christ is Born! Glorify Him! Put the parts of the story of Jesus' birth in order by marking the first step with 1, the second step with 2, etc.

\_\_\_\_ she gave birth to her firstborn, a son.

\_\_\_\_ Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart

\_\_\_\_ the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

\_\_\_\_ everyone went to their own town to register.

\_\_\_\_ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger



**DECEMBER 31, 2017**

**Gospel: Mark 1:1-8**

John the Baptist was the greatest Old Testament prophet.

Underline the Old Testament books of the Bible in the list below.

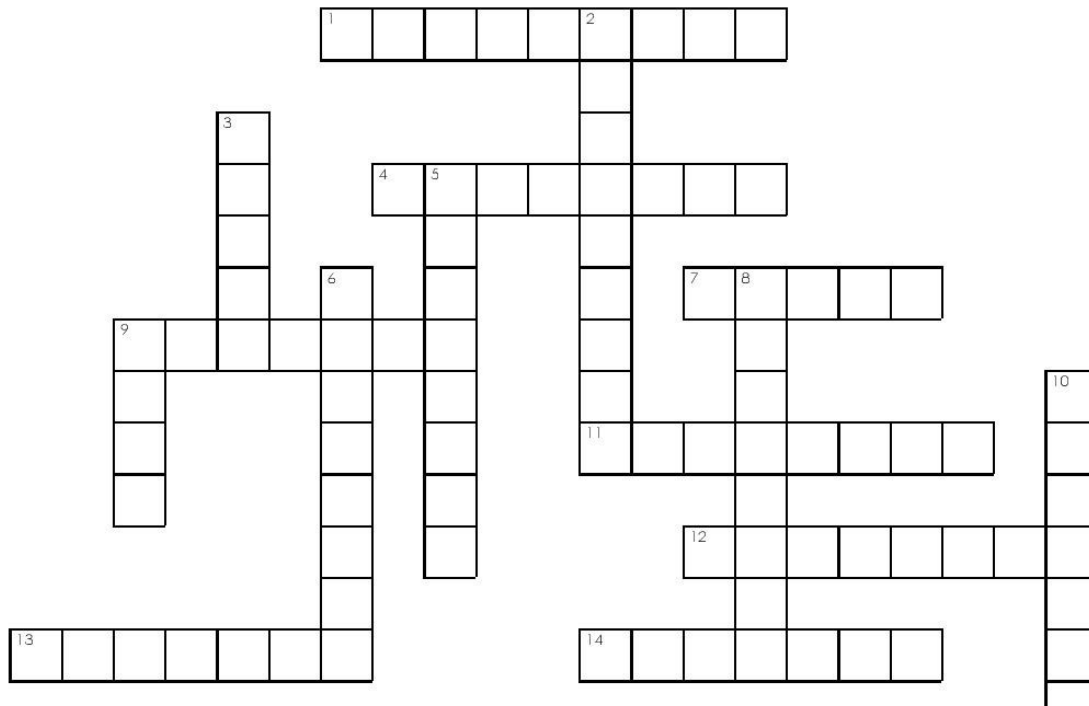
Mark	Leviticus	Exodus	Luke
Genesis	Romans	Colossians	Galatians
Isaiah	Jeremiah	Ephesians	2 Samuel
Acts	Philippians	Ruth	Ezekiel
Daniel	I Kings	2 Corinthians	Titus
Judith	Joshua	Nehemiah	James
Amos	Judges	2 Timothy	John
I Peter	Revelation	Jude	Jonah



Icon courtesy of Iconographics

CROSSWORD  
PUZZLE

# December in the Church



## Across: →

1. another word for the Nativity of our Lord
4. Bishop of Myra
7. symbols of Ambrose are bees & \_\_\_\_\_
9. another December saint
11. Bishop in Cyprus
12. we celebrate these bishops in \_\_\_\_\_
13. Paul wrote to \_\_\_\_\_ about choosing bishops
14. Bishop of Milan

## Down: ↓

2. Anna is mother of the \_\_\_\_\_
3. He made Ignatius a bishop
5. Bishop of Antioch
6. The \_\_\_\_\_ Fast is in December
8. The word 'bishop' means \_\_\_\_\_
9. Christ is \_\_\_\_\_! Glorify Him!
10. Christ is born! \_\_\_\_\_ Him!

SPYRIDON  
TIMOTHY  
THEOTOKOS  
NICHOLAS  
AMBROSE

BARBARA  
CHRISTMAS  
NATIVITY  
DECEMBER  
BORN

Word Bank:  
GLORIFY  
IGNATIUS  
HONEY  
OVERSEER  
PETER

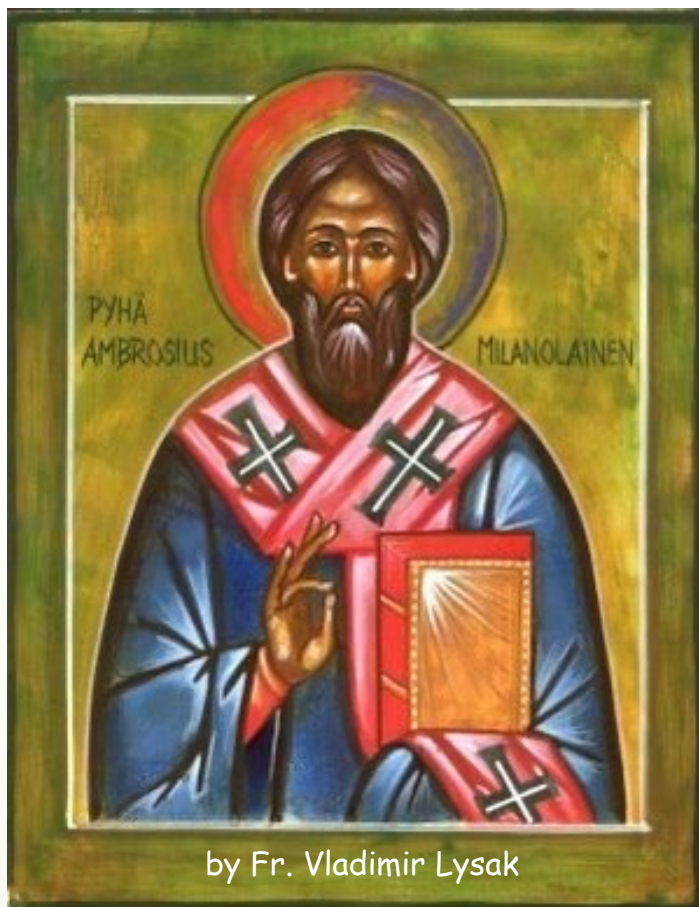


# I SPY IN MY LITTLE ICON



By Kh. Jocelyn Abyad

## St. Ambrose of Milan



On December seventh, the Church celebrates the Feast of St. Ambrose, pictured in this month's icon. St. Ambrose was born in Gaul (now France) in the year 339 or 340 AD. While not Christian, his parents loved him very much and he was close to his siblings. One story in particular stands out in his infancy. After being laid down for a nap in the shade on a beautiful, warm day, St. Ambrose's mother was shocked to find him covered by a swarm of bees! You can imagine her panic, but she soon found out that she had no reason to worry- the bees gently flew away, leaving the baby unharmed with just a drop of honey on his tongue. St.

Ambrose's father was convinced this was a sign that he would someday be an important leader in the world and he was right!

St. Ambrose pursued a civil education in Rome and was well respected for his leadership, kindness, intelligence and persuasive speaking skills. He was appointed to be the governor of Liguria and was well liked by the people. In the city of Milan in 374, there was a great upheaval in the church because of the Arian controversy. St. Ambrose went as a government official to help calm the people, but while he was speaking to them, a child cried out "Ambrose for Bishop!" and the people took up the chant as well! St. Ambrose tried to run away, but was found by the people and pressed into service. He did not feel prepared to take on the position- he was not yet even baptized! The people persuaded him to become a Christian and he was baptized that day. He was elevated through all the clerical positions in just one week and at the end of the week, he was made Bishop of Milan!

St. Ambrose took his new role as bishop very seriously. He sold all of his possessions, gave the money to the poor and lived an austere lifestyle. He encouraged the people through letters and homilies to live a holy life. Eventually, harkening back to his father's prediction, he became known as the "honey tongued doctor," referring to his eloquent speeches and ability to defend the True Faith against heresy. May we follow his lead and say with confidence, "If you demand my person, I am ready to submit: carry me to prison or to death, I will not resist; but I will never betray the Church of Christ."

# Once Upon a SAINT

Story and illustration by Rebecca O'Loughlin



Dearest children,

In the early Church, in Myra (which is in modern day Turkey), lived a Bishop who we know as St. Nicholas. St. Nicholas is often one of the four figures on our iconostasis, on the north side of the Royal Doors, and was known as an amazing miracle worker. He is so well known that you have probably heard stories about him yourself. There was one time when he saved three young women from slavery by throwing coins into their house, which landed in their stockings and shoes. This is where we get the tradition of putting out our shoes or stockings on St. Nicholas' feast day and Christmas. There is also the wonderful story of St. Nicholas raising three murdered boys from the dead, and the story of when he bilocated (which means being in two places at once) in order to save some sailors in a storm. I have chosen to tell you a story that is less well-known. But I encourage you to look up any of the above stories if you don't know them yet.

This story is about a man, who we will call Pateras, and his family. St. Nicholas was already in Heaven. Pateras and his wife lived on a little island in Greece. Pateras longed for a child, and he prayed to St. Nicholas:

"Holy Nicholas," Pateras prayed, "please help my wife conceive a child."

Pateras rose from his knees.

"Husband!" The wife said. "Why don't you offer St. Nicholas a gift of thanksgiving if he grants us the miracle of a new child?"

Pateras looked at his wife. "St. Nicholas is in Heaven. What could possibly be useful to him?"

"Well," replied his wife, "I don't know exactly. Perhaps St. Nicholas would want us to imitate him and feed the poor. But we already do this. What if you were to have a golden chalice made for the Church of St. Nicholas?"

Pateras returned to his prayer: "Holy Nicholas, please help my wife conceive a child. If you grant my prayer, my child and I will journey together to bring you a golden chalice, the most beautiful the world has seen, and together we will place the cup on the altar of the Church of St. Nicholas."

Not long after, Pateras and his wife had a son, who they call Yoïs (pronounced ee-ows). One day, when Yoïs was about five, he asked his father a question.

"Daddy, were you happy when I was born?"

"So, so happy! I prayed every day for you, Yoïs, and I even told St. Nicholas that if he gave you to me, that you and I would go on pilgrimage to his Church with a magnificent golden chalice to honor him. Together we will put that golden chalice on his altar."

Yoïs looked thoughtful. "Daddy, we haven't got a golden chalice. And we didn't go to St. Nicholas' Church."

"No, no, not yet," replied Pateras, stroking his long beard. "Let's have the chalice made right away, and I will keep my promise!"

The chalice finally arrived. Pateras stared at the cup: "Yoïs, look at this magnificent chalice! It is so beautiful! I think I should have a second just like it made!"



Yois was confused. "What would we do with it? It is too beautiful for us to use."

"I think the Church could use a second chalice in case anything happens to the first one." Pateras replied. "And I am so so happy to have you, my Yois."

A second cup was made, and the father and his son got into their boat toward the Church of St. Nicholas.

On the way, a storm came up, and Yois fell overboard. The second cup went with him. It was all Pateras could do not to fall over himself, and Yois sank to the bottom of the sea.

A mournful father arrived on the now peaceful shore, carrying the remaining cup. He walked to the Church, and head bowed in sorrow, he placed the cup on the altar. Immediately, the chalice fell off the altar.

Picking it up, he examined the cup for damage. Upon seeing none, he carefully placed it back on the altar. Once more the cup fell off.

A third time he put the cup on the altar. A third time it was tossed off, and Pateras understood that St. Nicholas was rejecting the gift. He had promised that he and his son would bring the chalice together. But his son was drowned, and unable to make the offering with him.

Falling on his knees, Pateras wept. He had lost his son, and now he thought that God and the Holy Saint had abandoned him.

At that moment, the door to the Church opened. Yois walked in, dripping wet, proudly holding the second chalice. When he had fallen overboard and sunk into the water, St. Nicholas appeared and helped him breathe underwater and then walked him to the shore and safety. Throughout it all, Yois had held the cup firmly and carefully.

Together, father and son put the two chalices on the altar. This time they stayed. Offering thanks, Pateras realized in a moment that no matter what gift we give, God always outdoes our generosity. Pateras spent money to buy these chalices to honor St. Nicholas, but God had sent St. Nicholas to return his son to him. There is no greater gift than life.

Be generous this Christmas. Give and know that God will give back far more. Be generous most of all in your kindness to others. That is what St. Nicholas did.

The feast of St. Nicholas is on December 6th. For this feast try making these Sugar Plum Chalices. These Sugar Plums are inspired by fruit balls that originated in Turkey, where St. Nicholas is from!

## Sugar Plum Chalices

½ cup California Prunes about 3.25 oz  
5 dried apricots (about 1 oz)  
½ cup walnuts toasted & coarsely chopped (about 2 oz)  
¼ cup dates pitted & chopped (just over 1 oz) or dried figs  
¼ cup hazelnut meal or almond meal toasted  
¼ teaspoon cinnamon  
⅛ teaspoon ground cardamom  
⅛ teaspoon ground cloves  
⅛ teaspoon fine sea salt  
⅓ cup gold decorating sugar (or any sugar)  
¼ cup finely chopped pistachios  
¼ cup currants or dried cherries

Throw everything into the food processor except the coarse sugar, pistachios and cherries. Mix well. If needed, add a touch of honey. Mixture should form a thick and sticky dough (if you don't have a food processor, you can mash everything together using a wooden mallet). Put the sugar and pistachios onto a plate. Roll the dough into small balls and roll onto the sugar and pistachios, coating them. Place the ball on a plate, but create a small hole in the middle of each ball using your finger (here's where little ones are especially good at helping!). When all the dough is prepared, fill each cup or "chalice" with a few currants or chopped dried cherries.



# CHOIR PRACTICE

## The **BISHOP** Song

**B**ishop leads the church  
**I**n one location, he  
**S**hares the truth of Christ, it's his vocation, he  
**H**elps the great and poor alike, his  
**O**ffice shows what God is like, a  
**P**riest and when he's here, the whole Church is present

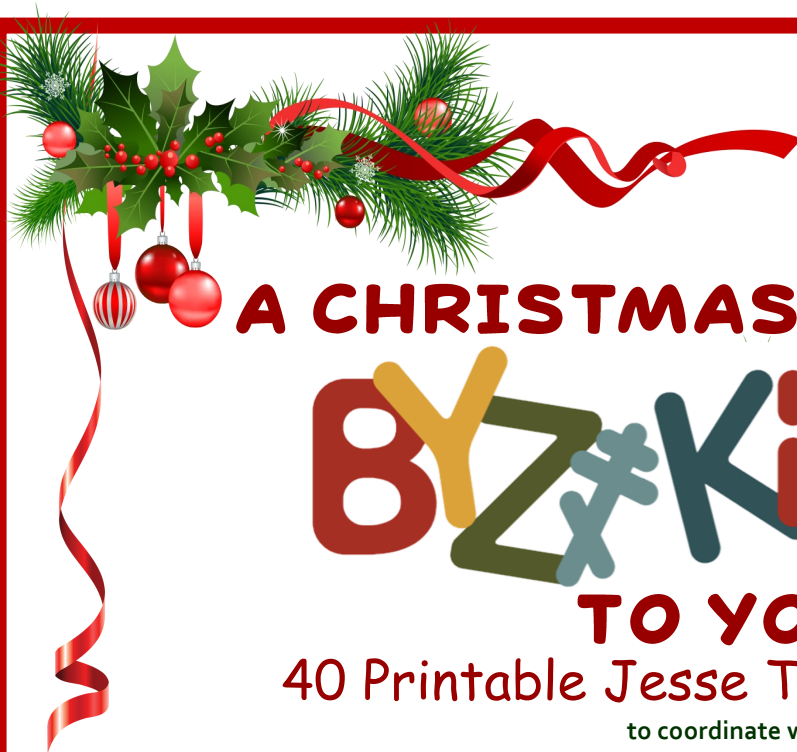
Bishops lead and teach  
Bishops lead and teach  
Bishops lead and teach us,  
Holy bishops

Scan  
To  
Hear

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By Sylvia Dorham



## A CHRISTMAS GIFT FROM

# BYZiKIDS

## TO YOU!

### 40 Printable Jesse Tree Ornaments

to coordinate with

*The Jesse Tree: A Family Guide, by Lynne Wardach*  
(Also available on the gift shop page at [ByziMom.com](http://ByziMom.com)!)

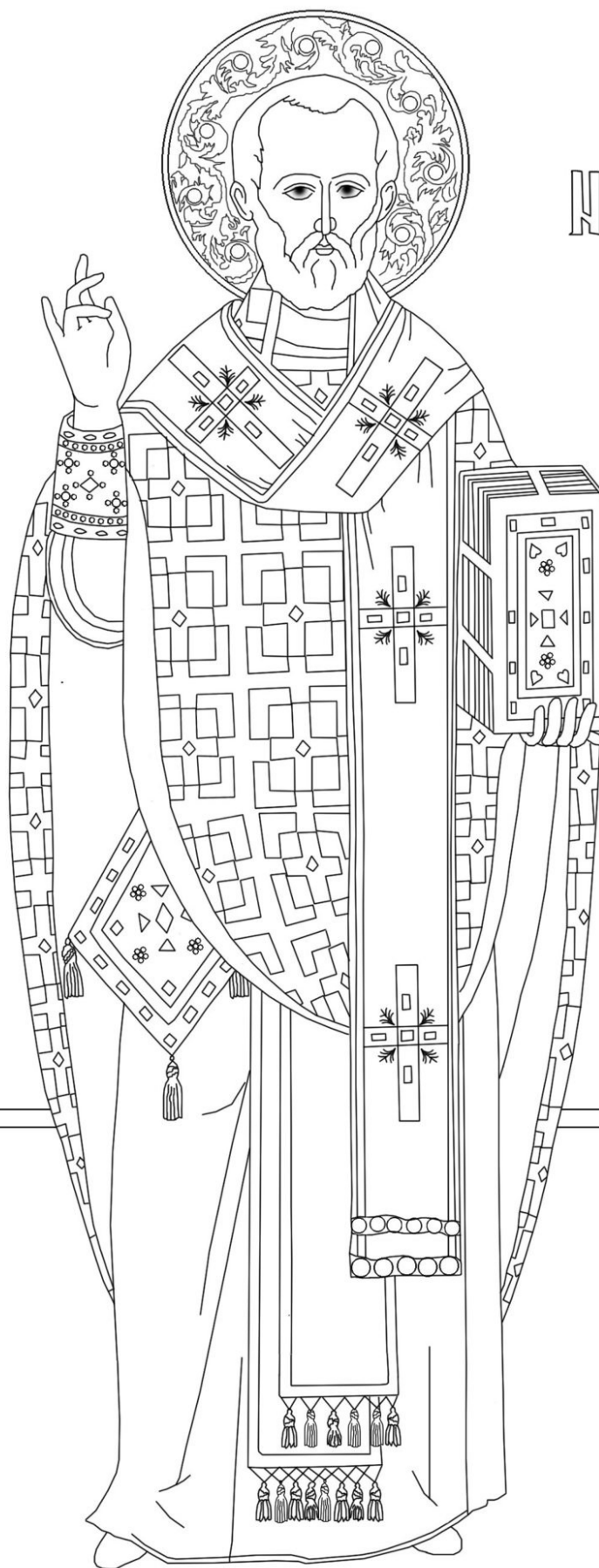
Log onto the Gift Shop page at [www.byzimom.com](http://www.byzimom.com) and use the promo code GIFT to download your FREE printable set of 40 Jesse Tree Ornaments through the month of December.

This is a simple and fun craft your ByziKids can do each day of the Nativity Fast to help them count down to Christmas. All you need to supply is some glue, some string for hanging, and a place to hang them!



SAINT

NICHOLAS





Scan the QR code to see the links for the activities

## December Activities Calendar

This month is filled with so many fun and interesting things to do!  
Visit the Activities Index on the ByziKids page at ByziMom.com for all the links!  
<https://www.byzimom.com/byzikids-magazine-extras>

### December 4

#### Feast of St. Barbara

- Make a Tower Vase for forcing branches and have St. Barbara's Breakfast!
- Get the coloring page and the I Spy in My Little Icon of St. Barbara printables!



### December 20

#### Translation of the Relics of St. Ignatius of Antioch

- Bake a Batch of St. Ignatius' Bones



### December 6

#### Feast of St. Nicholas

- Make a batch of St. Nicholas' Purses to have with dinner.
- Get all the printables: St. Nicholas Sailors Maze; St. Nicholas Story; St. Nicholas Coloring Page;
- St. Nicholas Word Search; ○ Kto Kto, Sheet Music (MCI)



### December 7

#### Feast of St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan

- Make some Honey Medovnicki and some great Honey Lip Balm to protect your lips in cold weather!



### December 8/9

#### The Conception of Anna, Mother of the Theotokos



### December 14

#### St. Nimatullah

- Story & Meghli Recipe



### December 25

#### Feast of the Nativity; Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

- A Visit from the Kubi: Put on the Ancient Nativity Play with our Printable Script and Puppet Template!
- Get Instructions to make a ByziGirl's Christmas Star Hairstyle!
- Make a gift in honor of the Magi: Wise Men's Winter Balm Recipe
- Perform "Joseph, Son of David; A Nativity Play" by Kh. Sylvia Dorham
- Learn "The Words the Prophets Said" and "Something Startling" Songs by Khouria Sylvia!
- Check out the ByziKids Perler Bead Templates!
- Get all the Christmas Printables!
- Nativity Icon Coloring Page
- Adoration of the Magi Coloring Page
- Nativity Crossword Printable
- God is With Us; Did You Know?
- God is With Us Printable Ornament Set
- Holy Supper Explained
- Holy Supper Matching Game
- Holy Supper Playset Printable
- Holy Supper Lapbook
- Christmas Greeting Printable
- Nativity Troparion Bookmark Printable

