St. Nicholas is remembered by the church because of his **intercession** for others.

One exercise you could try this Advent and Christmas is to make a list of individuals and categories of people whom you would like to pray for and why you would like to pray for them and then quite simply pray for them .

Some of you might wish to **write** a special prayer for this.
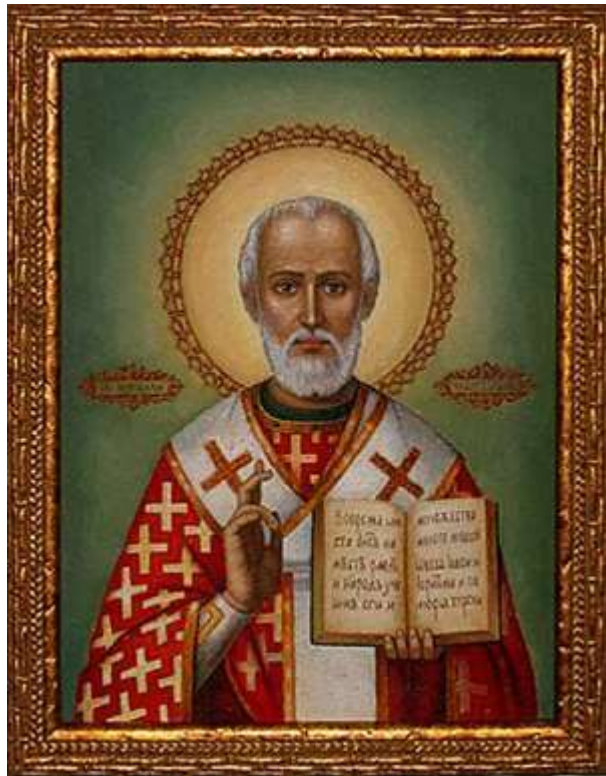
Wishing you a Blessed Christmas

Focus on Advent and Christmas

The Man Behind the Story of Father Christmas/Santa Claus

St. Nicholas was a Bishop who lived in the fourth century in a place called Myra in Asia Minor (now called Turkey). He was a very rich man because his parents died when he was young and left him a lot of money. He was also a very kind man and had a reputation for helping the poor and giving secret gifts to people who needed it. There are several legends about St. Nicholas, although we don't know if any of them are true!

The most famous story about St. Nicholas tells how the custom of hanging up stockings to put presents in first started! It goes like this:

There was a poor man who had three daughters. The man was so poor that he did not have enough money for a dowry, so his daughters couldn't get married. (A dowry is a sum of money paid to the bridegroom by the bride's parents on the wedding day. This still happens in some countries, even today.) One night, Nicholas secretly dropped a bag of gold down the chimney and into the house

(This meant that the oldest daughter was then able to be married.).
The bag fell into a stocking that had been hung by the fire to dry!
This was repeated later with the second daughter. Finally,
determined to discover the person who had given him the money,
the father secretly hid by the fire every evening until he caught
Nicholas dropping in a bag of gold. Nicholas begged the man to not
tell anyone what he had done, because he did not want to bring
attention to himself. But soon the news got out and when anyone
received a secret gift, it was thought that maybe it was from
Nicholas.

Because of his kindness Nicholas was made a Saint. St. Nicholas is
not only the saint of children but also of sailors! One story tells of
him helping some sailors that were caught in a dreadful storm off the
coast of Turkey. The storm was raging around them and all the men
were terrified that their ship would sink beneath the giant waves.
They prayed to St. Nicholas to help them. Suddenly, he was
standing on the deck before them. He ordered the sea to be calm, the
storm died away, and they were able to sail their ship safely to port.

St. Nicholas was exiled from Myra and later put in prison during the
persecution by the Emperor Diocletian. No one is really knows
when he died, but it was on 6th December in either 345 or 352.

In 1066, before he set sail to England, William the Conqueror
prayed to St. Nicholas asking that his conquest would go well.