

The Real St. Nick

At Christmas, children wait for St. Nicholas to bring gifts down the chimney. But it's not just a story. St. Nicholas was a real person.

A long time ago, a man named Marcus occupied a house with his family. He was not modest. He always told everybody he was the strongest man in the province.

He worked hard, but he could barely sustain his family. He wanted to save money and prosper. Still, he could never earn a penny more than he needed.

One day, Marcus made an agreement with a blacksmith. The blacksmith had a lot of work to do. But he couldn't do it all by himself. Marcus wanted to help him forge iron. The blacksmith agreed to compensate him with a lot of money.

In the same town, there was a man named Nicholas. At an early age, Nicholas started preaching. But he also believed that he should be humble and charitable. He learned that helping people gave him even more satisfaction than preaching.

One day, Nicholas encountered Marcus. Marcus told Nicholas about his agreement with the blacksmith. "I worked hard for him," Marcus said, "but a problem arose. Even though I worked for him, he didn't pay me."

Nicholas wanted to help Marcus. That night, he went back to Marcus's house. He brought a bag of gold. It exceeded the amount that Marcus needed. Nicholas climbed up a ladder and dropped the bag of gold down the chimney. Marcus thanked his benefactor.

Soon, people found out about Nicholas's gift. He became well known and loved. Even today, people still give secret gifts to children. And we say they are from St. Nicholas.

Reading Comprehension

I. DIRECTIONS: Part A: Mark each statement T for true or F for false.
Rewrite the false statements to make them true.

- _____ 1. Marcus occupied a home with Nicholas.
- _____ 2. Marcus told Nicholas about his problem when he encountered Nicholas.
- _____ 3. A problem arose for Marcus because he enjoyed preaching.
- _____ 4. Nicholas got a lot of satisfaction from being charitable and humble.

_____ 5. Marcus was compensated by the blacksmith for helping forge iron.

_____ 6. The money that Nicholas gave Marcus exceeded the amount he needed.

II. DIRECTIONS: Part B: Answer the questions.

_____ 7. Which of the following is true about the job Marcus did?

- a. He made pennies.
- b. He was compensated unfairly.
- c. He preached to people.
- d. He barely sustained his family.

_____ 8. Why didn't Nicolas tell people that he gave money away?

- a. He prospered.
- b. He didn't want to be modest.
- c. He wanted to be humble.
- d. He wasn't popular in the province.

_____ 9. What was dropped down the chimney?

- a. A penny
- b. A ladder
- c. Gold
- d. A benefactor

_____ 10. Why did Marcus want more money?

- a. To buy more iron
- b. To feed his family
- c. To give it away
- d. To become a blacksmith