



This pageant tells both the St. Nicholas and the Nativity Story. It also makes the connection between our beloved saint and the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and provides for an offering for the children of the Holy Land. The pageant takes about 45 minutes to perform depending on the amount of music used. St. Nicholas should be played by an energetic and loving person with an air of mystery. The text does not need to be memorized by the actor. A large decorated book holding the script works well, but the actor needs to be very familiar with the text. As there are a number of long monologues, the performance is enhanced by mimes that will enact the stories being told by Nicholas. The mimes can be employed in other parts of the pageant, as well. For costuming and other ideas to enliven your St. Nicholas celebration see [www.stnicholascenter.com](http://www.stnicholascenter.com). There is lots of room for creativity, so have fun.

## Characters:

St. Nicholas  
Pageant Narrator *This part can be played by Nicholas*  
5 mimes  
3 prophets  
Mary & Joseph  
Innkeepers  
Angels including Gabriel  
Shepherds

## Prelude Music

## SCENE I

*Welcome- The Host of the Pageant welcomes the people. The Host might be the Rector of the parish or some other person in leadership.*

**Host** Welcome all to our St. Nicholas pageant on this special day, December 6<sup>th</sup>, the feast day of this great saint. Before we begin I would like to thank \_\_\_\_\_ and to invite you all to a Nicholas feast following our pageant (tell them where).

December 6<sup>th</sup> is also the Sunday we shine a light on the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. The American Friends for over twenty years has supported this Episcopal Diocese whose presence is in Israel, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. The diocese has twenty-seven parishes with thirty-seven educational and medical institutions that minister to Palestinian Christians and Muslims alike. The collection that will be taken for the children of the Holy Land will be offered in the generous spirit of St. Nicholas and sent directly to the Diocese of Jerusalem.

And now let the festivities begin.

*There is a loud knock on the front door of the church and the Host invites St. Nicholas to enter.*

Welcome Nicholas of Myra, welcome on your festival day.

**Music** *See next page for a sample of an opening hymn. More are to found on [www.stnicholassociety.org](http://www.stnicholassociety.org)*

*It is preferable that the actual singing of the hymn happen after St. Nicholas has made his entrance.*

*Nicholas enters with great pomp surrounded by angels. He bows to the audience as he makes his way forward to his place of storytelling. This should be a grand chair such as a bishop uses. He dismisses the angels.*

### A SONG OF SAINT NICHOLAS

There was a good bishop who lived long ago  
 His memory is glorious, His legends are bold  
 We call him St Nicholas, a servant of Christ  
 Who loved little children and taught what was right

He is Father Christmas and Santa Claus too  
 He helped many people, the stories are true  
 At Christmas he calls to us, both young and old  
 To see that the story of Jesus is told

The gifts that he brings us are signs of the love  
 That comes down at Christmas from heaven above  
 We see Mother Mary, the babe in the stall,  
 With Joseph, the wise men and shepherds and all

O blessed St Nik'las we hail you today  
 The patron of many, you show us the way  
 To be good and generous, to help those in need  
 To be kind to others in both word and deed

**Suggested tune: ST DENIO (Welsh)**

J Rosenfeld – [www.stnicholassociety.org](http://www.stnicholassociety.org)

## SCENE II

*The Nicholas story can be presented as a dramatic reading or memorized. Either way it is to be presented with flourish.*

### Nicholas

Greetings one and all!! Well, well, I have traveled a long distance to be with you, and at last I may sit down and rest my weary feet. I am about 1609 years old you know.

You might ask: where have you come from? I come from where ever children live, little children and bigger children, and even those who are along in years but carry the spirit of childhood in their hearts. From every corner of the world I have come and today I have come to share my gifts with you.

My name is Nicholas. Some call me Kris Kringle, some call me Santa Claus, but my true name is Nicholas. I was born in a small village called Patara in an area you might know as Turkey. I was born in the year of our Lord 300. My parents were very devout Christians and as all good Christian parents who taught me to follow in His footsteps. They died when I was very young (it was very sad) and left me a great deal of money. But I remembered the words of Jesus that my parents taught me, "Share your money with the poor." So, I did just that: I shared all my wealth with the poor and I dedicated my life to the mother Church. In time the Church made me a Bishop, the Bishop of Myra.

*The following stories may in pantomime at one side of the stage.*

There are many stories that are told about me and the way in which God worked wonders and miracles through my prayers and my hands. Once I was traveling in Greece and in a dream I saw three young students who had been murdered and stuffed into a pickling barrel. When I got up from my sleep I called the innkeeper and together we prayed to God and, lo and behold, the three boys were restored to life and wholeness. For this the Church, that holy and sacred mystery, made me the protector of students and all children.

Another time I was traveling to the Holy Land, that glorious place where our Lord Jesus was born and did so many miracles, praise be to God (*Nicholas looks a bit dreamy*)...now, as I was saying... we were crossing the Mediterranean Sea and a great wind came upon us and we all thought we were going to drown in that great and terrible water. But the words came to my lips and I prayed to our Lord Jesus, "Just as the waters of the Galilee were calmed by your words, command these waters to be still and know the wonder of God." And the waters fell silent, praise be to God. And, for this the Church, that holy and sacred mystery, made me the protector of sailors and all people who travel on the seas.

My favorite memory is of the young girls who lived in such terrible poverty that their father was unable to support them. When it was time for them to be married, the poor father did not have dowries to give to prospective husbands and, so, as was the custom of that time and place, the father prepared to sell his daughters into slavery. Ah, it placed a burden on my heart and then a thought stirred in my mind.

One night, when the moon was full, I approached the house of the three daughters. In my hands I held three bags filled with gold. Not hearing a sound, for I presumed that they were sleeping, I carefully threw the first, then the second, and then the third bag of gold up and through the window of the sleeping sisters. And, then I slipped away. The next morning the father, such a God-fearing man, was heard out in the streets of Myra, "A miracle! It's a miracle!" he shouted, "There was nothing and now this morning there is abundance and happiness in my house. Praise be to God." Truth be told, it warmed my heart to share my gift of gold with these children. And for this the Church, that holy and sacred mystery, made me the protector of all young girls and of young brides.

But enough with the stories of Nicholas! For there would be no stories about me had it not been for the greatest story ever to be told. There is no St. Nicholas without our Lord Jesus; there are no gifts of the heart without the greatest gift that God has given to the world, himself. So, our storytelling brings us to Bethlehem, to the birth of a child, to a humble cave where heaven reaches down and kisses the earth. It is the story of the gift of Christmas.

So, let us stand and herald the beginning of this marvelous story with a hymn.

*At this point the bishop's chair is moved to the side but still visible to the audience. Nicholas commands a prominent place either as the Narrator or as a joyous spectator of the pageant. If the latter, a Narrator needs to be appointed.*

**Carol** *Prepare the way, O Zion*, Hymnal 1982 #65

*The carol suggested is an advent carol. Should another be chosen it is important that it be a rousing tune with a text that anticipates the Christmas story. The hymn should cover the moving of furniture and the placing of scenery.*

### SCENE III

*If possible the lights should be dimmed. The mimes move across the stage mimicking the words of St. Nicholas. The prophets come out of the darkness*

#### **Narrator/St. Nick**

This is the story of the first Christmas, the night Jesus was born. The story did not begin in the brilliant light of the heavenly hosts but in darkness; it did not begin in hope but in hardship. Our story begins when there were great troubles in the land of Israel and there was a great despair in the hearts of God's people. There was violence in the streets and hunger in the belly of children, and throughout the land people cried, "Where is God?" The people were looking for a sign from God that He would always be there to look after them. During this time of waiting God sent prophets to announce the coming of the One who would teach them how God loves them and how they should love one another. The prophets told them to prepare for the coming of Jesus, the Christ.

*The three prophets come in and take their places in different areas of the stage. As they speak a light shines on them or they turn on a flash light to illumine their face as they speak.*

**Prophet #1**

Behold, the Lord God comes with might. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms and gently lead those that are with young.

**Prophet #2**

For unto us a child is born and his name shall be called – Wonderful, Counselor, the Prince of Peace.

**Prophet #3**

God will give you a sign, a young woman shall conceive and bear a child, whom she shall call Emmanuel, God is with us.

**Narrator/St. Nick**

In the fullness of time, God went among the people and spied a young woman named Mary who would become the mother of God's son. Mary lived in the little town of Nazareth. She was engaged to a man named Joseph.

*Mary is in the background working in her house. Mary comes forward and is surprised by the angel Gabriel.*

**Carol** The angel Gabriel from heav'n came down, *verse 1. The Hymnal 1982, #265 or another that talks about Gabriel and the Annunciation.*

**Gabriel**

Hail, Mary, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women.

**Narrator**

Mary was frightened by his appearance and disturbed at his words. But Gabriel was reassuring and told her that God had sent him to tell her that she would bear a son and that his name would be Jesus.

**Gabriel**

Fear not Mary, for you are special in God's eyes. God has chosen you to give birth to a son and His name will be Jesus and he will be the Son of God and His kingdom will have no end.

**Narrator**

Mary took these words and pondered them in her heart and then she said:

**Mary** I will do as God chooses.

**Carol** Sing of Mary verses 1, 2 & 7, *The Hymnal 1982, # 277 or Sing we of the blessed Mother, The Hymnal 1982, # 278 or some other appropriate carol.*

*During the singing of the carol, Mary exits to the back of the church where she will reappear with Joseph. The Narrator continues following the carol.*

**Narrator**

Now Joseph was disturbed that Mary was to have a child but he had a marvelous dream and in the dream he was told by an angel to trust God; Mary was to bear the Son of God.

*Mary and Joseph move forward; different innkeepers take there places in the stage area.*

At that time Caesar Augustus in Rome sent out a decree that everyone was to be taxed. Joseph Although Mary was heavy with child, she and Joseph were required to go to Bethlehem, Joseph's ancestral home.

It was there that they were to be counted for the tax census. It was a long, hard journey and when they arrived in Bethlehem they found it to be crowded with other families who had come to be registered.

*Mary and Joseph come to the first innkeeper.*

They went to an inn; knocked on the door (knock, knock).

**Joseph**

We have traveled a long way and my wife is expecting a child.

**Innkeeper #1**

Sorry, there is no room here for you.

*Mary and Joseph go to the next and then the next innkeeper.*

**Narrator**

This happened over and over again until at last Mary and Joseph came to an innkeeper who took pity on them.

**Last Innkeeper**

There is no room here in my inn but I do have a cave over in that direction and a little bit up in the hills. You can stay in there and keep warm.

*Pointing to the area of the stage where the crèche scene will take place, the innkeeper his exit.*

**Narrator**

Mary and Joseph left the center of town and went up into the hills and found a cave that was filled with animals that would keep them warm. Mary and Joseph were grateful to have found shelter in this little town of Bethlehem.

## SCENE IV

**Carol** O Little Town of Bethlehem, verse 1 *The Hymnal 1982 # 78* Sung by the angels and Congregation

*While the congregation is singing the hymn the angels stand in front of the crèche area. The stage hands (mimes) arrange large cut outs of the animals. Mary and Joseph are around the manger. At the end of the carol the angels pull back to reveal the crèche scene.*

**Narrator**

In the nighttime, Mary gave birth to Jesus.

*Bells ring in joyous celebration.*

**Narrator**

This child, born of Mary, is the gift of everlasting Peace to the world.

Mary took the tiny, Holy Child and wrapped him in strips of cloth and laid him in the feeding trough of the animals.

*The angels arrange themselves around the manger scene.*

**Carol** Away in a Manger verse 1, *The Hymnal 1982 # 101.*

**Narrator**

Now there were shepherds camping in the fields near Bethlehem. The night was cold and dark and they were lonely. The stars in the heavens looked so far away.

**Carol** Go tell it on the mountain, The Hymnal 1982, #99 or  
‘Twas in the moon at wintertime, The Hymnal 1982, #114.

*The shepherds begin to come down the aisle. An angel appears in a high up place (a high box, the pulpit, or balcony).*

**Narrator**

Suddenly, a brilliant light lit up the sky. The light was the glory of God and in the middle of the light was an angel.

*The shepherds look up pointing to Gabriel, they back up, frightened.*

**Narrator**

The shepherds were terrified. They had never seen an angel in the sky. Have you? But then the angel spoke to them.

**Gabriel**

Don't be afraid. I'm here to announce a great and joyful event that is for everyone. A savior has just been born in David's town, a Savior who is Messiah and Master. This is what you are to look for: a baby lying in a manger surrounded by animals.

**Narrator**

At once Gabriel was surrounded by the sound of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

**All the Angels**

Glory to God in the Highest and peace to all people on earth.

**Carol** *Angels we have heard on high*, verses 1&2, The Hymnal 1982, # 96.

*During the singing of the hymn the shepherds (and their sheep) come in and kneel left and right to the manger.*

**Narrator**

Far and wide the news spread about the miraculous birth of God's Son. Far to the east of Bethlehem, wise men of great knowledge noticed the unusual brilliance in the sky. And they left their homes to follow the star.

**Carol** *We three kings of Orient are*, The Hymnal 1982, # 128.

*Three wise men begin their journey from the back of the church. If possible each verse, 2, 3 & 4, are sung by a wise man as he moves forward in turn. Verses 1 & 5 are sung by either an ensemble or congregation and with everyone singing the refrain.*

*The tableau is now set with the three wise men kneeling in front of the manger.*

## SCENE V

### Narrator/St. Nicholas

Now the story has been told in all its wonder and beauty. But this story is just the beginning, the beginning of giving. God begins by giving Himself to the world in the person of Jesus. Mary gives her willingness to be the mother of Jesus. Joseph gives his gift of care-taking this family. The animals give their warmth on a cold night. The angels give their light and their song of praise. The shepherds give their adoration and the wise men their gifts of gold, frankincense and rich perfume.

And Jesus became the gift for the world. All during his life he showered everyone with God's love; ah, just to have been in his presence.

And you know what? He loved the children best of all; so many children he gathered around him; blessing the children.

**Carol** *O come little children* see next page.

*This carol is sung by St. Nicholas or a choir-ensemble. At this point children dressed in costumes from many countries come up to the crèche scene.*

*transposed*



1. O come, lit - tle chil - dren; be - hold, one and all, Who
2. He lies there, be - fore you, a - sleep in the hay, With
3. A - dore like the shep - herds! Your glad voi - ces raise With



1. lies in the man - ger in Beth - le - hem's stall; For
2. Ma - ry and Jo - seph to guard Him and pray. The
3. those of the an - gels who sing in His praise. Your



1. there, lit - tle child - ren, on this ho - liest night, Our
2. won - der - ing shep - herds look in at the door, And
3. cho - rus will ech - o from earth to the sky, With



1. God sends from heav - en His Son, your de - light.
2. see - ing the In - fant they kneel and a - dore.
3. 'Glo - ry to God in His heav - en most high.

**St. Nicholas**

Today, Jesus continues to bless God's children all over the world and especially the children of Bethlehem and his hometown Nazareth and in Jerusalem-all the children of the holy land. He is present with every child in their joys and in their nightmares; in their hunger and their hurts; in their loneliness and the soothing of tears. Jesus is Emmanuel, which means *God with us*.

And the Jesus' greatest gift is that is that we are gift bearers in his name. Like Jesus we reach out to bless the children in our homes and in far away places and especially tonight (today) in the Holy Land.

In my lifetime, my three bags of gold brought freedom and happiness to the three young girls in Myrna. Tonight (today) your bags of gold will help an infant in Jerusalem who is was born deaf receive medical treatment so that she can hear. Your bag of gold will allow a seven-year-old boy in Bethlehem to buy shoes so he can walk to school. Your bag of gold will provide a scholarship for a ten-year-old girl in Ramallah so that she will have a future.

You and my good helpers of the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem are going to see the gift of Jesus come alive tonight (today). So let us with great cheer fill our gold bags with treasures for the children of the Holy Land.

**Music** Ensemble, Choir, instrumental

*The collection is gathered by three children in costume who receive the gold bags from Nicholas and pass them amongst the congregation. Or the collection might be made in gold paper bags that are in the pews which would be gathered up by the children in costume or by the angels.*

*The collection is brought forward and placed in full view of the manger.*

**Music** *Doxology*

Sung by all.

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;  
 Praise God, all creatures here below;  
 Praise God above, ye heavenly host;  
 Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

**St. Nicholas**

God bless you and Merry Christmas to you all.

**Carol** *Hark, the herald angels sing*, The Hymnal 1982, #87.