



St. Nicholas

St. Nicholas, the bishop of Myra in present day Turkey, is honored in the East and West as a miracle worker and a friend of children. Countless miracles are ascribed to him, and it's no wonder that the early Dacada settlers asked that their new parish be placed under Nicholas' patronage.

He lived in the early years of the Church, and died in approximately 350. The bishop was imprisoned for his faith during the persecution under the Roman Emperor Diocletian. In 325 Bishop Nicholas was present at the Council of Nicaea, which developed the Nicene Creed now recited at most week-end Masses.

There are many stories about St. Nicholas, such as how he rescued innocent victims who had been condemned to death and saved three girls from the shame of prostitution. In an age of anti-Semitism he helped the Jews, and when an innkeeper had murdered three children he brought them back to life. Nicholas appeared to sailors in peril and saved both ship and crew. He is an ecumenical saint of charity, and an example to us all.

Actually Bishop Nicholas never came close to present day Luxembourg during his lifetime. He was mostly venerated by the Church of the East until 1087, when his relics were brought to the Italian port city of Bari. His shrine became one of the great pilgrimage centers of medieval Europe. Nicholas is the patron saint of seafarers, children, travelers, bakers, merchants, as well as Greece, Apulia, Sicily, Lorraine and Russia.

For much of this century the Archdiocese of Milwaukee had two St. Nicholas Parishes — one in Milwaukee and the other at Dacada. On Jan. 1, 1992 St. Nicholas of Milwaukee merged with two other parishes to form

Blessed Trinity Parish, 4717 N. 38th St. There still is one Catholic parish in Wisconsin named after St. Nicholas, and it is located at Freedom (Outagamie County) in the Green Bay Diocese. The past decade has seen a St. Nicholas Orthodox Church established in Cedarburg.

A Story About Our Lady of Luxembourg

Over 300 years ago a plague descended on central Europe. At the height of the plague a young student wandered out into the woods near what is the city of Luxembourg and found a statue of Mary. He placed that statue in the town square and all the people started to pray for relief from the plague. Overnight the statue disappeared, but was found again the next day in the same spot in the woods.

The plague left Luxembourg almost as suddenly as it had started. In thanksgiving the people built a chapel in 1625 to designate Mary as their patroness under the title of "Consoler of the Afflicted."

THE STORY SURROUNDING THE STATUE

The statue of Our Lady, Consoler of the Afflicted at St. Nicholas Church is unique. The statue was brought along to America from Luxembourg by Mrs. Anna Margaret Deppiesse and two of her three sons. Their ship departed on July 3, 1849.

The statue was carried in three parts, the top half, the bottom half and the hands and arms in a separate package. While at sea a series of storms buffeted the ship. Passengers were told to jettison their possessions in an effort to lighten the load. Two other ships on the same voyage sank in the storm. Treasured possessions went overboard, but only the bottom half of the statue was thrown out. Before the captain said the ship was light enough to ride out the storm the devout Luxembourgers started praying, asking Mary to intercede for them. After a 101-day trip, they reached New York.

According to Fr. Victor Kemmer, the former St. Nicholas pastor, some of this story may be fact and some may be fiction. Mrs. Deppiesse and her sons came directly to Dacada, where a new St. Nicholas church had been built. Her sons built a base for the statue and Mrs. Deppiesse saw it installed shortly before her death. Stop by and view the red-headed statue of "Our Lady, Consoler of the Afflicted" in the back of St. Nicholas Church.

