

A Pastoral Letter from St. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, 2010

Dear Friends,

Just about this time of year children around the world are thinking of writing me a letter filled with ideas for Christmas giving. But here I am writing to you about how **you** might give an important gift to the children of the Holy Land.

You may not know that I was bishop in what is now called Turkey over 1500 years ago. My ministry as the Bishop of Myra focused on needy children. The Lord Jesus put it on my heart to give everything I had - my prayers and my wealth – to make their lives happier and full of hope for the future. That was a long time ago but my tradition and the message of gift-giving to children are timeless. Our children are precious gifts from God and Jesus commands us to provide for their welfare and to protect them from the perils of wicked forces in the world.

Come and follow me by making a gift to children living in the Holy Land today. You can give hope to a very special child who lives in Bethlehem, or in a neighborhood in Zebabdeh, or in a school in East Jerusalem. Every child throughout the Holy Land yearns for the day that their homeland will be filled with peace and prosperity. Christmas is your opportunity to make education and good health care a reality for God's special children.



This year I am sharing my Feast Day, December 6<sup>th</sup>, with the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. The AFEDJ is making available a variety of parish resources that will enhance the spirit of giving in my name. Your parish will send the offerings made on this day to the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and it will be received by my dear brother in Christ, Bishop Suheil Dawani, the Episcopal Bishop in the Holy Land, by Christmas.

I pray that you join me on making this Christmas a special joy for the children throughout the Holy Land.

*Nicholas*, Bishop of Myra

