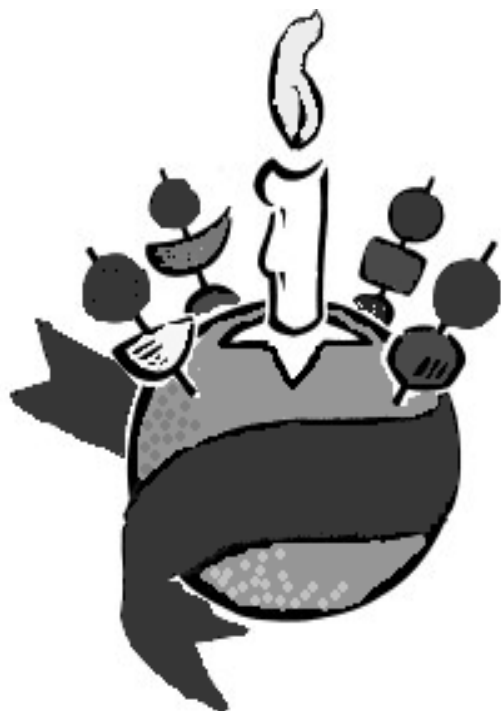


Over the centuries many, including children, sailors, unmarried girls, pawnbrokers and moneylenders have claimed him as their patron. (Moneylenders? Still true today – just think what will be on your Visa card by Christmas!)

Perhaps it was on account of St Nicholas' generosity that that in recent centuries children began to write little notes sometime before 6 December, to tell him about the toys they specially wanted. These notes were then left on the windowsill at night - or else on a ledge in the chimney.

But St Nicholas Day chanced to lie in the magnetic field of a much more potent festival.... and after awhile his activities were moved towards Christmas. Then in Bavaria the children still left their notes on the windowsill, but they addressed them to Liebes Christkind - Krishkinkle as they knew him - and the saint's part in the matter was simply to deliver the letters in heaven.

The most popular result of the cult of St Nicholas has been the institution of Santa Claus. He is based on Nicholas' patronage of children and the custom in the Low Countries of giving presents on his feast. Santa Claus has reached his zenith in America, where the Dutch Protestants of New Amsterdam (New York) united to it Nordic folklore legends of a magician who both punished naughty children and rewarded good ones with presents.



How do I make a Christingle?

Take an orange and cut a small cross in the top. Fasten red sticky tape or ribbon around the middle of the orange.

Place a 3" square of foil over the cut in the orange and place a votive candle over this, push both in one movement, into the cut, until the candle is firmly wedged in.

Load four cocktail sticks with a selection of raisins, sultanas, nuts, cherries or soft sweets, and insert into the orange near to the base of the candle.

It is advisable to make your Christingle within 2 days of the celebration.

Join us in the church rooms on Saturday 10th Jan at 10.30am and help us prepare the Christingles for the service on Jan 11th 2004 at 4pm.

