

- ➔ Since none of us can go to God, *Jesus came to bring us to God!* The Bible says that “*Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God*” (1 Peter 3:18 NAS).

## Who Is More Worthy?

1. **Saint Nick** was a great guy, but **Jesus** is the only begotten Son of God, the only Savior of the world!
2. **Saint Nick** tried to avoid sin, but **Jesus** is the sinless Son of God in human flesh!
3. **Saint Nick** gave gifts to help people with their physical needs, but **Jesus** gave His very life to fulfill our greatest need!
4. **Saint Nick** is someone to copy; as he gave gifts to help the needy, so we should do the same, but **Jesus** is someone to trust in with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength; He is the only way to heaven!
5. **Saint Nick** deserves some recognition, but **Jesus** deserves our full devotion! Think about this awesome scene in heaven, which is focused on Jesus: “Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they sang: ‘Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!’” (Revelation 5:11-12 NIV).

## Conclusion

St. Nick was a godly man who lived with generosity, but, *over the centuries*, his good tradition has been transformed into selfishness – *as we forget the poor and buy for each other*, and into Christmas celebrations that have nothing to do with the Christ – *as we honor St. Nick and ignore the Savior of the world*. So, based on the contents of this brochure, let us remember the poor and trust in the Christ of Christmas, the babe born in Bethlehem, who is God in human flesh!

Let us pray: Dear Father in heaven, we thank You for St. Nick, who *believed in Jesus* and *showed his love for others by helping them according to their needs*. But we especially thank You for sending Your Son who put on human flesh, received the name of Jesus, lived a sinless life, received our sins and punishment, and laid down His life to seal His victory over sin, death, and the devil.

Now, *sorry for our sins and trusting in Jesus*, help us to rejoice in Jesus our Savior, honor Jesus as our Lord, and kindly tell others about the Christ of Christmas! Amen!

## You Are Invited to Attend and Benefit

**Website:** [BethlehemLutheranChurchParma.com](http://BethlehemLutheranChurchParma.com)  
**Location:** 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134  
*(Just South of Pleasant Valley Road)*  
**Services:** Sundays 8:00 & 10:45; Most Mondays 7 PM  
**Classes:** Sundays 9:30; Thursdays 10 AM  
**Facebook:** “Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma”  
**Podcast:** “Benefit from the Bible”  
**PH; EM:** 440-845-2230; [pastor@blc7500.com](mailto:pastor@blc7500.com)

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## Who Is the Focus of Your Christmas Celebration? St. Nick or Jesus



## Introduction

Dear Friends: You know *the history, the truth* about Christmas:

- ✦ From the time of Adam and Eve, all people have sinned☹. Even though sin is common, it *broke our relationship with God and brought God’s condemnation upon us*☹. Furthermore, no person can *repair that broken relationship or earn his way to heaven*☹.
- ✦ Therefore, God promised to send His only Son, *the gift we need the most*, to save us from our sins☺! That is Christmas, *the celebration of Jesus’ birth*☺! He was born to die, *to die for us*, so that we, *through faith in Him*, would live forevermore☺!

Even though Jesus is so very important, the focus has shifted more and more to St. Nick. Since St. Nick and Jesus are both historical people, this brochure will help us learn more about them and know how to rightly focus our Christmas celebrations.

## Before Conception

- ✦ **St. Nick** – *He did not exist*, until God allowed him to be conceived in his mother. The Bible says that “**God... made the world and everything in it... From one man he made every nation of men**” (Acts 17:24, 26 NIV).
- ✦ **Jesus** – *He existed with God the Father from eternity*, thus before creation. In this Bible passage, “**the Word**” refers to *the Son of God*, while “**God**” refers to *God the Father*: “**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us**” (John 1:1, 14 NIV). Verse 14 is describing the time when the Son of God put on human flesh, was given the name of Jesus, and completed His work to remove our sins!

## Conception

- ✦ **St. Nick** – *He was conceived like any other child*. As King David applied these words to himself, so they also apply to you, to me, and to St. Nick: “**Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me**” (Psalm 51:5 NIV).
- ✦ **Jesus** – *He was conceived by the Holy Spirit* and born of the Virgin Mary. The

angel Gabriel said to Mary: “**The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God**” (Luke 1:35 NIV).

## Birth

- ✦ **St. Nick** – *He was born in the country of Turkey* around A.D. 300.
- ✦ **Jesus** – *He was born, as prophesied, in Bethlehem*. God moved the Prophet Micah to write this prophecy: “**But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times**” (Micah 5:2 NIV). Then, *just as it was written*, Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea (in 5 B.C., since Herod the Great died in 4 B.C.).

## Name

- ✦ **St. Nick** – *His parents named him Nicholas*. We know him as Saint Nicholas or Saint Nick and, *when we think about when he lived*, we sometimes call him Old Saint Nick, even Santa Claus.
- ✦ **Jesus** – *God named Him Jesus!* An angel, *who brought a message from God*, gave these instructions to Joseph: “**She [Mary] will give birth to a son, and you [Joseph] are to give him the name Jesus, because he [Jesus] will save his people from their sins**” (Matthew 1:21 NIV). Furthermore, *regarding His name*, the Bible says this about Jesus: “**God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name**

that is above every name, that at the name of **Jesus** every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:9-11 NIV).

## Gifts

- ✦ **St. Nick** – *He was a very generous man*, so he gave away what he had to help the needy. His generosity inspired many others, *over the centuries*, to help people who are in need.
- ✦ **Jesus** – *He is God's greatest gift to us!* Think about gifts: We try to give people what they need. Since our greatest need is for forgiveness, *God gave us Jesus to provide the full forgiveness of our sins!* So, *sorry for our sins*, God has enabled us trust in Jesus as our only Savior!

## Relationship

- ✦ **St. Nick** – *He loved Jesus and trusted in Him as his Savior!* His faith in Jesus is what moved him to help the needy.
- ✦ **Jesus** – *He lived and died for Saint Nick!* Jesus also did the same for you, for me, and for every person of all time:
  - ➔ Since none of us could live a sinless life, *Jesus did that for us!* Jesus said: “**Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets [the Old Testament Scriptures]; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them**” (Matthew 5:17 NIV).