

Wednesday, December 6, 2006

### **The Church Calendar today commemorates St Nicholas**

Far-shining names from age to age  
Enrich the Church's heritage,  
The loyal liegemen of the Lord,  
Who found in thee their great reward.  
One name from that immortal throng  
Inspires to-day our festal song:  
In loving memory we hold  
The bishop and the saint of old,  
Who, far away in eastern land,  
With gentle heart and open hand  
Loved all things living, shared his store  
With homeless men who sought his door.  
Friend of the poor, no less was he  
The guardian saint of those at sea;  
O'er wave-swept rock and sheltered bay  
God's churches bear his name to-day.  
And his the skill, the tender art  
That wins the trustful, child-like heart:  
His dearest title to the end  
Saint Nicolas, the children's friend.  
Words: William H Savile (1859-1925)

from Oremus "Nicholas was a native of the western part of what is now Asiatic Turkey. He became Bishop of Myra in the fourth century, and there are many stories of his love for God and for his neighbor. The best-known story involves a man with three unmarried daughters, and not enough money to provide them with suitable dowries. This meant that they could not marry, and were likely to end up as prostitutes. Nicholas walked by the man's house on three successive nights, and each time threw a bag of gold in through a window (or, when the story came to be told in colder climates, down the chimney). Thus, the daughters were saved from a life of shame, and all got married and lived happily ever after. Because of this and similar stories, Nicholas became a symbol of anonymous gift-giving." [James Kiefer, abridged]

Posted by Cal in Christian Living at 08:07