



KIDS BULLETIN  
DECEMBER 2022

Learn about Saints, 12  
days of Christmas, Glu-  
ten Free Baking Week  
and Bah Humbug Day

## **St. Nicholas — Feast Day December 6th**

**Children all over the world know him and love him. In Germany, he's Kriss Kringle. In France, he's Pere Noel. British children call him Father Christmas. Of course, you know him as Santa Claus.**

**He's got another name, you know. It's an ancient one that goes back hundreds of years. It's one of the very first names people called him: St. Nicholas.**

**Children tell lots of fun stories about Santa Claus, Pere Noel, or Kriss Kringle. All of these stories remind us of how much we're loved and of how happy we are when we give. The earliest stories we know were told about St. Nicholas, the bishop of Myra.**

**Hundreds of years ago, Nicholas lived in a seaside town named Myra, which is in the country we now call Turkey. Ever since he was a small child, Nicholas loved God more than anything. He studied hard, prayed often, and followed Jesus by helping the poor.**

**The people of Myra loved Nicholas so much that when their old bishop died, they immediately elected Nicholas to replace him. He served them well for a long time.**

**Nicholas was loved for one reason. He loved. He loved God and God's people so much that he would do anything for them.**

**Here is a story about Nicholas that has been passed down through many generations.**

**There was a man living in Myra who was very poor. This man had no wife, but he had three grown daughters who lived with him**

**In those days, when a young woman got married, she had to bring money or property with her into the marriage. This is called a dowry. If a woman didn't have a dowry, she would never marry.**

**This man was so poor that he had no money for his daughters' dowries. And he didn't have enough money to support them either. He had, he believed, only one choice: to sell his daughters into slavery. Nicholas heard about this terrible situation. Late one night, Nicholas crept to the man's home and threw something through the window. It was a bag of gold—enough to pay the dowry for his oldest daughter.**

**The man was overjoyed, and his daughter was too. She married, but her father was still left with a problem. Two, to be exact. What about the two younger daughters? Sadly, he prepared to send them away.**

**Nicholas returned one night and again threw a bag of gold through the window. The fa-**

ther rejoiced. But he wondered who was helping him and why.

Of course, Nicholas didn't want the man to know. He knew that it's best to help others without letting them know we're helping them. If we help others in this way, we help because we truly want to and not because people will praise us for it.

But the father was determined. He had one daughter left and no money for a dowry. He certainly hoped he would be helped again, especially because he wanted to find out who was doing it. So he locked the windows and watched out the door.

Nicholas still wanted to help, but he didn't want to be seen. So, in the back of the house, far from the father's sight, he dropped the bag of gold for the third daughter right down the chimney

Other stories are told about Nicholas. It's said that God worked through Nicholas's prayers to raise children from the dead—some who had been killed in a fire and another child who had drowned. All of these stories tell us the same thing about St. Nicholas. He lived for God, which means that he lived for love. If people were in need and he was able to help, St. Nicholas gave them hope and strength. St. Nicholas never paused for a minute to wonder what he should receive in return for his help. He only thought about what he could give to those who needed him.

Stories about St. Nicholas spread from his home in Turkey up to Russia, where he is still a very popular saint. Through the centuries, people passed on stories of him across the most northern parts of Europe, then to Germany, France, and England, and finally to the United States. The children in every country gave St. Nicholas a name in their own language, and ours is Santa Claus.

Christmas is a fun, exciting time, isn't it? It's fun because of all the time we get to spend with our families. It's fun because we do a lot of celebrating. It's fun because we get to think, sing, and pray about Jesus, who was born into the world to save us.

Christmas is also fun because we get to give. We can show our family and friends how much we love them by giving them special gifts that we make or buy.

We give because we're thankful. We're thankful for friendship and love and for all the people who take care of us. We're thankful to God for giving us life.

St. Nicholas was thankful too, and that's why at Christmastime we try to be just like him. He was so grateful for the life God had given him that he just couldn't stop giving joy and hope to others—no matter how far he had to travel or how many roofs he had to climb!

## **TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS**

**While many people automatically think of the song, the Twelve Days of Christmas celebrates the days after Christ's birth on December 25th. The twelfth day lands on January 5th and this is the date the magi, or the three kings, were believed to arrive in Bethlehem.**

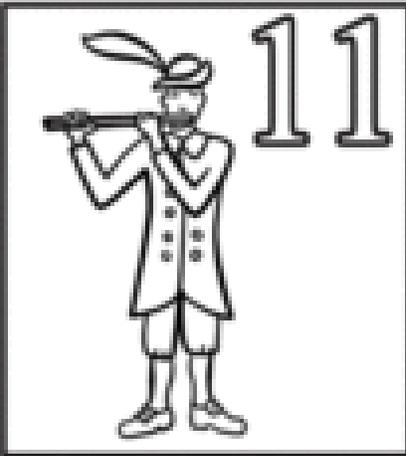
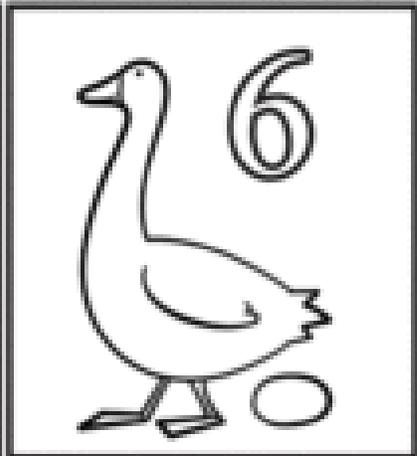
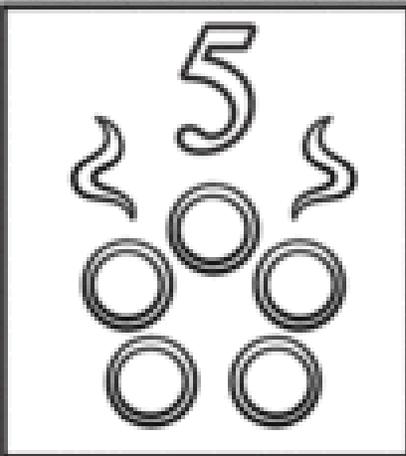
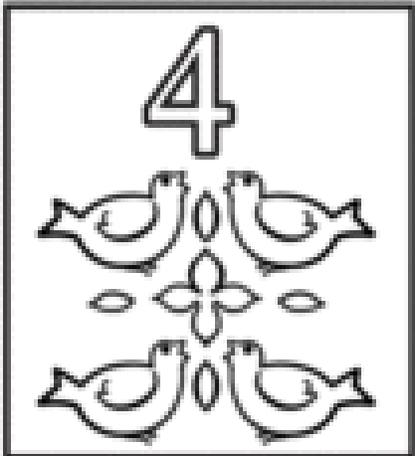
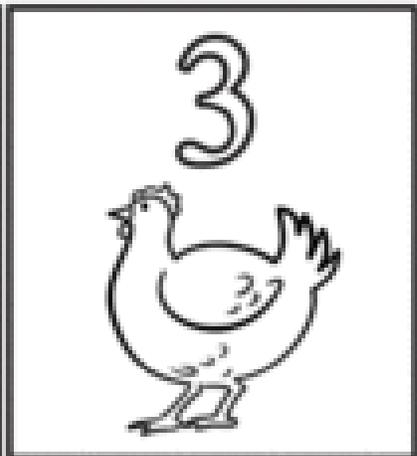
**The Twelve Days of Christmas have been celebrated in Europe since before the Middle Ages. Each day celebrates a feast day for a saint.**

**The Twelve Days are as follows:**

- ♦ **1st Day: the birth of Christ**
- ♦ **2nd Day: St. Stephen – the first Christian martyr**
- ♦ **3rd Day: St. John the Apostle – one of Jesus's disciples**
- ♦ **4th Day: The Feast of the Holy of Innocents – the baby boys King Herod killed when trying to find and kill baby Jesus**
- ♦ **5th Day: St. Thomas Becket – Archbishop of Canterbury in the 12th century murdered for challenging the King's authority over the Church**
- ♦ **6th Day: St. Egwin of Worcester – A Benedictine monk**
- ♦ **7th Day: Pope Sylvester I – one of the earliest Popes**
- ♦ **8th Day: Mary, the Mother of Jesus**
- ♦ **9th Day: St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory Nazianzen – two 4th century Christians**
- ♦ **10th Day: Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus – celebrates the naming of Jesus of in the Jewish Temple**
- ♦ **11th Day: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, the first American saint**
- ♦ **12th Day: St. John Neumann who was the first Bishop in America**

## **TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS HISTORY**

**The Twelve Days of Christmas were first proclaimed by the Catholic Church during the Council of Tours in 567. It was to be a sacred and festive season. During the Middle Ages in England, the Twelve Days of Christmas were a time of continuous feasting and merrymaking. The early colonists to North America celebrated their own version of the Twelve Days of Christmas. Today, many denominations choose to only celebrate the first and last of the twelve days. Other days in between that are commonly celebrated include Boxing Day, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day.**



# **Gluten Free Baking Week — Week before Christmas**

**The week before Christmas is observed as Gluten-Free Baking Week every year. This special time brings awareness to the predicament that is dealing with gluten allergies around the holiday season. More and more people are becoming allergic to gluten, and they should not have to go without the savory deliciousness of all kinds of desserts!**

## **HOW TO OBSERVE**

**Turn on your favorite holiday playlist, throw on a cute red and green apron, invite over some friends and get baking! Use #GlutenFreeBakingWeek or #GlutenFreeBaking to post on social media. The holiday season is one of the most popular times of the year to bake. In today's world, many people are either gluten intolerant, or choose not to consume gluten for health reasons. So if you're going to partake in holiday festivities with friends and family, chances are, a handful of them will prefer treats that don't contain gluten. And since they taste so good... Why not dedicate an entire day to ONLY gluten-free baking?! We hope to see your photos of homemade cake, cookies, candy and more floating around social media this week.**



# When is Bah Humbug Day?

This holiday is always observed on December 21

Bah Humbug Day is an Ebenezer Scrooge approved holiday. It's perhaps, the one day of the year that Ebenezer Scrooge can enjoy. Rumor has it, this is the one day of the year that Scrooge takes off from work to celebrate. According to wellcat.com, the creators of this December 21 holiday, Bah Humbug Day "allows everyone preparing for Christmas to vent their frustrations."

Sure, venting frustration over the stress of Christmas is appropriate for this day. But, we believe Bah Humbug Day is much more. We believe it brings out the Scrooge in all of us. Scrooges all over have been waiting for this day and come out of the woodwork in great numbers. They go far beyond venting a few frustrations. Many scrooges are negative towards Christmas in general and can put a real damper on your Christmas spirit.

Use Bah Humbug Day to release the seemingly endless daily stress of the holiday season. But, whatever you do, avoid becoming a real, bonafide Christmas Scrooge.

## How to Celebrate Bah Humbug Day

- ◇ Watch the classic movie "A Christmas Carol".
- ◇ Go to "A Christmas Carol" play.
- ◇ Dress up as Ebenezer Scrooge and act like him.
- ◇ Go about your day repeatedly saying, "Bah Humbug".
- ◇ Be a miser like Scrooge, if only for a day. Count and horde your pennies.

