

### Reflection Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> Week Advent 2023

We also celebrate St Nicholas today. He was bishop of Myra, in Lycia (now part of Turkey) and died in the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century. He has been venerated throughout the Church, since the 10<sup>th</sup> century. Because of his help to the poor, he is the patron saint of pawnbrokers, whose insignia of three golden balls represent the three purses of gold he is said to have given secretly to a poor man who could not afford dowries for his three daughters.

Nicholas probably was inspired by the Gospel today in which Jesus shares what he has with the vast crowd and ends up with the same amount with which he started. Advent is a season of giving of helping others, particularly children in need who are growing in number. Despite the size of the world populations enough food is produced to feed everyone. The fact that people go hungry therefore lies on our doorstep. Note that Jesus used his disciples to feed that hungry crowd. Today he asks us to do that.

**The Us Bishops wrote:** *Linked to the dignity of human life is our understanding of the social nature of the person. As the creation narratives tell us, we are made in the image of a Triune God and we are created in relationship to God and to each other. Our inherently social nature means that the structures of social, political, and economic life must reflect basic respect for the dignity of every human person as well as a commitment to the common good. This begins with a deep commitment to the family as the foundation of society. It also leads to the principle of solidarity, the understanding that as children of God we are all brothers and sisters, no matter how different or distant we may seem.*

**A hungry traveller stopped at a monastery and was taken to the kitchen where a brother was frying chips...**

"Are you the friar?" he asked.

The brother replied "No. I'm the chip monk."