

**St Nicolas** (1246-1306) is an Italian Augustinian friar who practiced severe mortifications to get healings. St Nicolas' bread, a roll of dough with a cross in the center, has its origin in the bread he used to give to the sick to eat after he had prayed for the Virgin Mary's healing intercession.



**First Reading: (1 Cor 8:1-7, 11-13)**

Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. If any one imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. But if one loves God, one is known by him. Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that "an idol has no real existence," and that "there is no God but one." For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth - as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords" - yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. However, not all possess this knowledge. But some, through being hitherto accustomed to idols, eat food as really offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. And so by your knowledge this weak man is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. Thus, sinning against your brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of my brother's falling, I will never eat meat, lest I cause my brother to fall.

**Ps 138:1-3, 13-14, 23-24**

**R./ Lead me, O Lord, in the path of life eternal.**

**Gospel: (Lk 6:27-38)**

Jesus said to his disciples, "I say to you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. To him who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from him who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to every one who begs from you; and of him who takes away your goods do not ask them again. And as you wish that men would do to you, do so to them. "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. "Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back."

**Reflection:** If someone asks you to point out the passages that are so "Christian" in the bible, I would recommend this one to be in the list. They are truly light to our path, so universal but at the same time so personal. Look at the three, "what credits is that to you"? The third question clarifies the previous two. **Love is expressed in doing good, doing good is expressed in "lending"**. As the words "Love" and "good" are not just financial, the word "lend" need not be taken only in terms of finance. It can be support, helping hand, etc.