



Pictures of St. Nicholas as traditional featured.

Picture of Father Steven C. Rogers as St. Nicholas. Notice the glasses.

Picture of young boy giving St. Nicholas the picture he had drawn and colored for St. Nicholas

Picture of the drawing. Notice the blue glasses.



Welcome to

Holy Trinity Parish
 407 Cherry St.
 Weston, MO 64098
 www.holytrinitycatholic.org

Twelve Apostles Parish
 Office Mailing Address: 407 Cherry, Weston, MO 64098
 Church: 17900 Humphrey's Road, Platte City, MO 64079
 www.twelveapostlescatholic.org

Telephone: 816-640-2206

***The Nativity of The Lord
 December 25, 2022***

A Christmas Message From Father Steven C. Rogers

God makes a way even before we are aware of what God has planned. I have proof. All we must do is say yes. Yes! Yes, such a simple response that has profound consequences. Such was my experience on my recent holiday vacation in Europe. Good friends of mine called me right before my early December birthday and offered me a trip to Europe to visit the Holiday Markets and seasonal celebrations. Of course, I said, “YES!” Who wouldn’t say yes to a trip to Europe? “Holiday Markets here we come” was the plan, my plan. That was the expectation, my expectation. The huge hurdle of getting other priests to cover for me was removed instantly. Two phone calls and it was done. That never happens. Normally, you have to beg, borrow, negotiate, and worry for weeks on end just to get someone to cover half the time. The way was clear and saying yes was the easiest it has ever been. “Have bags, will travel”, is my middle name. All I had to do was pack a suitcase and show up to receive the Holiday blessings God had prepared. Holiday travel can be daunting with all the challenges, delays and cancellations that are normative this time of year. No problems, just joy-joy-joy, all the way. My checked luggage was underweight, no extra costs involved. That’s unheard these days. Even the meals on the plane were festive and tasty. That never happens. Everything went better than expected. We even arrived an hour early; tail winds were in our favor. We hit the ground running...but not to the Holiday Markets as planned. My plan was not God’s plan and his plan unfolded within seconds upon arrival. What I had prepared was not what God had prepared. He had prepared something over-the-top better. You can’t make this stuff up! It is so God. It all happens because of the power of yes. YES! We found a beautiful church just in time for Mass. I concelebrated Mass with a Dominican Order Priest, Father Leon, and A Canon of the New Jerusalem, Father Michael. They welcomed me with generous hospitality and joy. Mass was beautiful. After Mass, they asked me to say Mass for a few days to give them a break. I said yes. The congregation opened wide their doors and welcomed an English-speaking priest from America into their homes. I started mingling with people the world over which felt just like being with best friends of old. Invitations for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, along with invites to join family gatherings and birthday celebrations streamed in like sunshine on a beautiful day. No jet lag for me. Yes! Yes!! Yes!!! I said yes as fast as I could to as much as I could. One yes, lead to another yes which led to an over-the-top experience I will treasure forever. One of the invitations was to celebrate my birthday with three other people who shared the same day and together we went to a pre-party to celebrate the feast of St. Nicholas. St. Nicholas’ feast day is on December 6th. I think I have celebrated his feast only once before when I was in seminary. In Europe, it’s a big deal. We had a huge pre-party that start-

December 25, 2022
5th Sunday of Advent Year C



Sat, December 24	Christmas Eve
5:00pm- XII	†Wendy Maes †Lucy Serna †Arthur Serna
7:30pm - HT	†Gage Fogt
Sun, December 25	Christmas Day
9:00am - XII	For Members of Holy Trinity & Twelve Apostles
10:45am - HT	†Kim Hays
Mon, December 26, 8am- HT	No Mass
Wed, December 28, 8am -HT	No Mass
Thu, December 29, 6pm- XII	†Diane & John Cook
Fri, December 30, 8am -HT	Private Intention
Sat, December 31,	
5:00pm-XII	Private Intention
Sun, January 1, 2023	
7:30am—HT	For Members of Holy Trinity & Twelve Apostles
9:00am - XII	†Beverly & †Craig Shand
10:45am - HT	Armando Zacarias Borrego

ed three days before his feast. Lots of children. Lots of chocolate. Lots of people. Fun, fun, fun. Not what I had expected; better. Near the end of the festivities after most of the guests had gone, I felt sadness close by. How could that be after all the fun we

had just shared. Three people were nearby talking about how their plans had changed, how they were shattered. They were disappointed but understood, plans do change. They had no priest to help them on the real feast day of St. Nicholas and they were in an awful way. One of the three ladies noticed I was standing in proximity to their conversation. She said, “Let’s ask Father Steven.” That’s all I heard, but still, I said, “Yes!” They were elated. Two days later I returned. I had no idea. They rushed me into a room just off the main kitchen and quickly dressed me in a robe, white wig and beard, a cope, with a bishop’s miter and crosier and I was transformed into an icon of St. Nicholas himself. I’m telling you; you can’t make this stuff up. I was loaded into a van with twelve other people, two dressed like angels and the others each wearing a set of large red Christmas bows. Off we drove, racing through the narrow streets, up and down the hills of the village on our way to a nearby orphanage. Here I was, dressed to the nines like St. Nicholas, riding in the passenger seat, driven by an 84-year-old man in a van full of very excited Catholics on a pilgrimage. Imagine the looks, the stares, the glares from the people we passed. On the way out of town, we sang Christmas carols, laughing all the way. We arrived at the orphanage, unloaded the van and the cargo of the finest chocolate bars and goodies for St. Nicholas to give to the orphans. These children had lost everything, their families, their homes, their toys, and livelihoods due to the ongoing war and tragedies in Ukraine. Overwhelmingly sad, yes, but not so, really, they taught me. I waited outside the gathering hall as the two angels dressed in white with feathered wings and gold halos, and the Christmas bow people took their places center stage for the celebration. At the perfect prompting St. Nicholas (me) made his entrance. The children shouted for joy. Some danced, some cried, some sang loudly. All of them were filled with excitement and ex-

pectation. As St. Nicholas made his way through the crowd of orphans, one young boy broke through the crowd and joyfully exclaimed, “I have waited to meet you all my life!” He ran up and gave St. Nicholas a big hug. St. Nicholas (me) was gobsmacked. Tears were fast giving the beard and moustache a good soaking. He then handed St. Nicholas a gift he had drawn and colored himself, a picture of St. Nicholas. This young boy clung to my side looking up at my face almost hidden in a white beard and moustache and wig that covered most of me. I wondered, “What is he seeing?” He clung in admiration to St. Nicholas who he had waited for all his life. The crowd of children all ran to gather around St. Nicholas. We all sang carols, each in his own language. The red Christmas bow people waved their ribbons and the angels handed St. Nicholas the wrapped chocolate bars to give to each of the children. I did as God prompted me. I gave each child a gift and a blessing with the sign of the cross on their foreheads from St. Nicholas. The young boy never left my side, staring up at my face, deep into my eyes. I wondered, “What is he thinking?” I had handed off the gift of his drawing to one of the angels so I could hand out the treasures to all the children. Lots of photos were taken. Lots of tears were shed. The children didn’t want St. Nicholas to leave. They sang and partied with great release. Life was again normal and good and peaceful and there was great rejoicing. From there we traveled around to several other places. (I) St. Nicholas in the passenger seat, the 84-year-old driver, two angels and lots of red Christmas bows traversing the narrow unpaved roads of Europe to be with people displaced by war and tragedy and all the difficulties of the human condition. We were met with the same enthusiasm and rejoicing everywhere we went. A few days after the feast of St. Nicholas I returned to where it all began when I said yes. Over espresso and banana bread (the best I have ever eaten) we rejoiced at how God is marvelous and wonderful. And then, one of the

young women who had served as an angel gave me the drawing from the young boy who had waited his whole life. I looked at the picture he had lovingly created. As I was admiring the drawing, I noticed something that I have never seen in a picture or icon of St. Nicholas. I was more than gobsmacked this time, goose flesh on my arms, all the way up my neck. In his rendition of St. Nicholas, he drew St. Nicholas with eye-glasses. More profound, blue glasses. Amazing! I wear glasses. I wear blue framed eyeglasses. This young boy stared into my face because I was the St. Nicholas, he had hope for, the St. Nicholas he had envisioned, robe, cope, miter, crosier, and blue framed glasses. God’s plan is so much better than our plans. Seriously, you cannot make this stuff up. I have proof. He had no idea if St. Nicholas was coming or who St. Nicholas would be. I have never been there before. And yet, it happened as he had envisioned. Here are pictures of St. Nicholas and here’s a picture of me as St. Nicholas with this young boy and a picture of his drawing for all of you to see. Here’s proof. God had made a way long before I said yes. Yes! So simple and yet so profound. One huge thing I learned, one huge gift I received was that of all the people, young and old and all in between, I met on this trip to Europe, every one of them is a survivor. They are as human as you and I. They hurt, they bleed, they cry, they wish, and they want just like you and me. More importantly, they know how to rejoice and celebrate in the face of despair and tragedy, in the face of man’s inhumanity to man. But they aren’t victims. They are survivors. They are God’s children. We all are God’s children. God bless us all. Through the intercession of St. Nicholas this young boy too, will be a Bishop one day. Merry Christmas!

*Notice the pictures on
the back page*