

Saint Nicholas Punches Heretics in the Face!!! ~ Canterbury Tales by Taylor Marshall

The iconography above depicts St Nicholas punching the heretic Arius at the Council of Nicea



When President Teddy Roosevelt was a college student, he taught a Sunday School class for elementary school children. During this time, Roosevelt awarded a dollar to a boy in his Sunday School class for beating the snot out of a bully who tormented little girls. "You did exactly right," said Roosevelt with pride. However, the congregation disagreed. They immediately dismissed Roosevelt for teaching the "un-Christian" principle of laying the smack down on those who have it coming to them.



Well, if tradition is true, that little boy was also richly rewarded by Jolly Old Saint Nicholas since the good Saint Nick allegedly "h-slapped" ("heretic slapped") the heresiarch Arius. You see, Arius wrongly taught that Christ was not fully divine but rather a mere creature. Arius taught that Christ had been created by God the Father.



During the First Ecumenical Council of Nicea (AD 325), Arius was called upon to defend his position on the inferiority of Christ. Saint Nicholas just couldn't listen to all of Arius' nonsense and so he stood up and laid in to Arius with his fist.

The Emperor Constantine and the bishops present at the Council were alarmed by Nicholas' act of violence against Arius. They immediately stripped Nicholas of his office as a bishop by confiscating the two items that marked out a man as a Christian bishop: Nicholas' personal copy of the Gospels and his pallium (the vestment worn by all bishops in the East).

Now if that were the end of the story, we probably wouldn't know about Saint Nicholas, and our children wouldn't be asking him for presents. However, after Nicholas was deposed, the Lord Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary visited Nicholas who was being held in a prison cell for his fist-fight with the heretic.

Our Lord Jesus Christ asked Saint Nicholas, "Why are you here?" Nicholas responded, "Because I love you, my Lord and my God."

Christ then presented Nicholas with his copy of the Gospels. Next, the Blessed Virgin vested Nicholas with his episcopal pallium, thus restoring him to his rank as a bishop.

Traditional icons of Saint Nicholas depict this miracle as in the image below:



Notice Christ (left) holding out the book of the Gospels, and Mary (right) holding out the episcopal pallium, Nicholas (center) holding the Gospels and wearing the pallium

When the Emperor Constantine heard of this miracle, he immediately ordered that Nicholas be reinstated as a bishop in good standing for the Council of Nicea. Today we recite the Nicene Creed every Sunday so we know how the controversy played out. The bishops at Nicea sided with Saint Nicholas and Saint Athanasius and they condemned Arius as a heretic. To this very day, we still recite in the Creed that Christ is "God from

God, Light from Light, True God from True God, begotten not made, one in being with the Father."

I leave you with one last painting of the legendary event:

Nicholas is on the left holding up his fist, Arius is on the ground with his hands up. The guy on the throne is Constantine.

Saint Nicholas, pray for us.

