Five things you didn't know about St. Nicholas

St. Nicholas lived in the fourth century and is best known today as the living model of "Santa Claus." St. Nicholas Day is Dec. 6. A tradition holds that children who leave their shoes by the door on the eve of this day wake up to find them filled with candy and treats in honor of this generous saint. Did you know . . .

1. Before he became the model for Santa Claus and the patron of children, St. Nicholas was the patron saint of sailors and fishermen.
2. In 2005, the mayor of Demre (St. Nicholas' hometown) had a large plastic Santa Claus statue erected on the square in front of the medieval church of St. Nicholas.
3. His name means "victory of the people." Because of the many miracles attributed to him, he is sometimes called Nikolaos the Wonderworker.
4. Historians believe Nicholas was barely 5 feet tall and had a broken nose.
5. St. Nicholas is one of the most popular saints in Eastern Orthodox iconography. Many Eastern churches display his portrait along with Jesus, Mary, Peter and Paul.