

076 NICHOLAS

(lowering voice)

My Lord... Before the Church's  
doors open and I prepare for  
Mass... I must tell you something,  
because I know You hear me.

NICHOLAS TAKES A DEEP BREATH.

077 NICHOLAS (CONT'D)

It has been weeks, Lord... Since  
You called me to this new life. But  
Lord: how can I continue to give in  
secret... Now that I hold this  
public position? How can I serve  
without being seen?

NICHOLAS SIGHS, CONCERNED.

078 NICHOLAS (CONT'D)

And I have heard the news that  
Emperor Diocletian has begun  
persecuting Christians throughout  
the empire. These are turbulent  
times... Guide me, Lord. Show me  
how to -

MUSIC STOPS AND THE WOODEN DOORS OF THE CHURCH  
ARE KICKED OPEN WITH A VIOLENT CRASH. A GROUP OF  
FIVE ROMAN SOLDIERS ENTER. THE CLANG OF METAL AS  
SWORDS ARE DRAWN.

**START >>>**

079 **SOLDIER**

The bishop! Where's the bishop?

NICHOLAS stands up and turns to the SOLDIERS, who are now in  
front of him.

080 NICHOLAS

I am Nicholas. By the grace of God,  
the Bishop of Myra.

081 **SOLDIER**

Emperor Diocletian demands that all  
bishops renounce this false Christ!  
Offer sacrifice to the true gods of  
Rome, or face the consequences!

082 NICHOLAS

(firmly)

My heart and my soul belong to my  
Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I  
will worship no other.

SOLDIERS SEIZE NICHOLAS. THE RATTLE OF CHAINS AS  
THEY ARE ROUGHLY PLACED AROUND HIS WRISTS.

083 SOLDIER

Then you are under arrest. Take him! <<< END

CHAINS FASTENED. METAL CLINKS. NICHOLAS BEING  
LED AWAY. DRAMATIC MUSIC SWELLS.

15

INT. PRISON CELL - NIGHT

DRIPPING WATER. RATS SCURRYING. WALLA: LOW  
GROANS OF SUFFERING. NICHOLAS'S CHAINS RATTLE  
SOFTLY. HIS BREATHING IS SHALLOW AND WEAK.

084 GUARD

(mockingly)

Have you changed your mind yet,  
Bishop? It's been two weeks since  
we've given you food. Renounce your  
Christ, and you can eat. It's  
simple.

085 NICHOLAS

(weakly)

I will not renounce my Lord.

086 GUARD

Starve then.

087 NICHOLAS

(lowering voice)

My Lord... I pray not for myself...  
But for the hearts of those who  
hate You. May their eyes open...  
May Your love conquer fear.

088 GUARD

You pray to a common man who is  
dead and won't help you. A  
crucified carpenter who couldn't  
even save himself. Let's see if he  
brings you dinner to you and your  
cell mate.

A HEAVY IRON DOOR SLAMS SHUT. CHAINS RATTLE.

089 ANTONIUS

(weakly)

Another night of starving, Bishop  
Nicholas...