

A BRIEF PAUSE.

082 MARCUS

I'll keep your identity secret with one condition...

083 NICHOLAS

Marcus, please... I wasn't interested in business partnerships back when we met in the Holy Land, and now -

084 MARCUS

(kneeling down)

Baptize me, Bishop Nicholas. After witnessing such grace from you... I... I want to follow Christ. I am ready to become a Christian.

085 NICHOLAS

My brother... nothing would bring me greater happiness. Yes, Marcus. With all my heart, I will baptize you.

AN INSPIRING MELODY SWELLS. THEN FADES OUT.

16

EXT. MYRA CATHEDRAL - EVENINGCOLD WIND BLOWING SOFTLY. CHURCH BELL TOLLS IN THE DISTANCE. CHILDREN SNIFFLING AND SHIVERING, HUDDLED TOGETHER.**START >>>**

086 BOY 1

It's so cold...

087 BOY 2

Are we going to sleep here again tonight? Next to the Cathedral?

088 FEMALE TEENAGER

We'll be all right. The Lord sees us.

A QUIET THUMP. ANOTHER. A BURLAP SACK DROPPED. THEN ANOTHER. THEN SILENCE.

089 BOY 1

Did you hear that?

090 BOY 2

There! Look! Near the church steps!

CHILDREN RUSH OVER. GASPS.

091 BOY 1
It's cloaks... real cloaks!

092 FEMALE TEENAGER
And sandals! These look strong.

093 BOY 2
And fresh bread!

094 BOY 1
And a ball!

THE CHILD BOUNCES THE BALL AGAINST THE FLOOR.

095 FEMALE TEENAGER
Who brought this?

096 BOY 2
No one is here...

097 BOY 1
Someone must've left it for us.

098 BOY 2
An angel!

099 FEMALE TEENAGER
Or someone who loves us!

WALLA: THE CHILDREN ARGUE ABOUT WHO IT MIGHT
HAVE BEEN. THE CATHEDRAL DOORS OPEN. NICHOLAS
EXITS.

100 NICHOLAS
Children! What is all this
excitement?

101 BOY 2
We found this, Bishop Nicholas!
It's a bag full of clothes, food
and toys!

102 BOY 1
Who could have given it to us,
Bishop? Do you know?

<<< END

NICHOLAS kneels in front of them.

103 NICHOLAS
I think... Our Lord, Jesus did.

THE CHILDREN GASP, AWED.