

## The Story of St. Martin of Tours

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People called Martin the “Glory of Gaul.” He was a soldier in the great Roman army, but he was different from the other soldiers. Martin served others first. At the end of a long day, he would take off the boots of his servant to clean them, and he would serve his servant his dinner. Martin treated everyone with love and care.

Now, it was a very harsh winter in Gaul. The hills were covered with snow and the ground was frozen.

One cold day, Martin was riding on the road toward the gates of the Roman army camp. He rode his horse, proudly wearing his armor, his gleaming helmet, and his warm, white lamb’s-wool cloak.

But as he came to the gates, he met a man so poor that he had no clothes to keep him warm. The poor beggar was shivering and crying out for people to help him. “I am cold, and I am hungry,” he said. “Won’t anyone help me?” Soldiers passed by, but they did not help. Farmers passed by, but they did not help. Merchants passed by, but they did not help.

But Martin was not like the others. He knew that when we show love to other people, we show love to God. So he stopped to help the poor man.

He took the warm, white lamb’s-wool cloak off his back, raised his sword, and cut his cloak in half. He wrapped the poor man in half of his warm cloak and wrapped himself in the other half.

“Thank you,” the poor man said to Martin. “You helped me when no one else would. You showed me kindness when no one else would.”

The people who were watching could not believe their eyes. Some laughed at Martin because he looked silly wearing only half a cloak. But others were amazed at the kindness of Martin’s gift to the poor man.

That night, Martin had a dream. He saw Jesus wrapped in the cloak that he had given the poor man. Jesus said to the angels around him, “See what Martin has given to me?” And then Jesus said to Martin, “Thank you. You acted with kindness when no one else would.”