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**Create Your Own Personal Christmas Traditions**

**By Donna D. Fontenot**

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Create Your Own Personal Christmas Traditions

The Christmas holidays are steeped in familiar, old traditions. Decorating our homes, trimming the tree, exchanging gifts, hanging mistletoe and many other traditions are staples of the season. And while these old traditions can create warm memories, you may be missing out on something special. This Christmas season, take some time to consider creating your own special family tradition. Perhaps a glimpse into my own family's unique tradition will inspire you to discover one as well.

My Family's Personal Christmas Tradition

Many years ago, my mother became addicted to garage-saleing. She would wake up bright and early every Friday and Saturday morning (year-round), retrieve the newspaper from the driveway, and circle all of the garage sales near her neighborhood that were listed in the classified section. Then, with a group of 2-3 lifelong friends, she would begin her quest for that perfect 'gift' that someone else was discarding. She rarely paid more than 50 cents for an item. The gifts were usually slightly worn, even a little broken. (In fact, many times a perfect item would end up broken by the time she got it home. She was a little clumsy). But by the end of each shopping trip, she would arrive home with 10-20 items, that she would proudly display to my father. He, of course, would usually groan, because he always knew that she would be asking him to mend the broken pieces, or re-paint an old item. Needless to say, by the end of a year, my mother had managed to accumulate hundreds of 'special gifts', but had spent very little money doing so.

A few days before Christmas, it would then be my job to help her wrap all of these gifts. She generally bought as many Christmas bags as she could find (at garage sales of course), so the task was made somewhat simpler. All I had to do was throw the gift into the bag, and mark it with a recipient's name. How did I know who was to receive which gift? Well, Mom kept a running list throughout the year which identified which item was reserved for which member of the family. Of course, she often mis-labeled things, so the male members of our family occasionally received nice lingerie, while the female members would receive a new hunting cap!

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But really, this was the point of the whole tradition. Our family has a wonderful sense of humor. Opening up 100's of crazy, ridiculous gifts each year was so much more fun than opening up one or two 'real' gifts. The standard question when one of us would open a gift would be, "Ummm...what is this???". There were many times when we never could figure out what the gift was supposed to be.

A favorite thing to do was to trade gifts. If I received an ugly, strange gift, I would barter with someone else for one of their strange gifts. The entire process of opening semi-broken, often useless, but almost always funny gifts, and then trading them back and forth, is a tradition that made our family close as we shared our laughter with one another. (And believe it or not, occasionally the gifts were actually useful and just what we needed!)

Mom has passed on now, but the memories of those wonderful garage sale Christmas's will always be our most treasured memories.

Create a unique Christmas tradition in your family, and the memories will last a lifetime.

Author: Donna D. Fontenot Email: <mailto:dazzlindonna@yahoo.com> Visit <http://www.christmas-corner.com> for your guide to Christmas holiday traditions, carols, holiday recipes, gift ideas, and holiday desktop wallpaper. This article is free for use in your ezine, print publication or web site, so long as the author resource box at the end is included, with hyperlinks. Notification of publication is appreciated.

### **Need To Recapture The Magic Of Christmas? Try Inspirational Christmas Stories!**

**By Bernadette Dimitrov**

Everyone knows that life today is more hectic than ever before. Families are often very busy and family fun time is at a premium. This is never more apparent than at Christmas. Everyone wants Christmas to be magical and special, but many of us feel that it has become commercial and impersonal. The solution, though, is so simple that many families are surprised. Inspirational Christmas stories can help you recapture the magic of an old-fashioned Christmas, but with a modern twist. Just consider:

- 1) Inspirational Christmas stories for children and adults are quick to read and can be read together at any time. You won't have to rearrange your entire schedule for this Christmas magic - all you need are a few stolen moments here and there.
- 2) Inspirational Christmas stories for children and adults allow you to create special Christmas traditions for your family. Many cultures read the Christmas story aloud during the holidays. Reading favorite inspirational Christmas stories for children and adults together can be a great way to develop special holiday traditions for your own family.
- 3) Inspirational Christmas stories for children and adults are about sharing time - not about spending money. Getting together to read inspirational Christmas stories out loud is about sharing time together.

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It is not simply another impersonal way to spend money. In fact, inspirational Christmas stories are very economical, no matter what your holiday budget this Christmas season!

4) Inspirational Christmas stories for children and adults can help you teach your family what the season is all about. These stories have modern settings and twists and are exciting and fun. At the same time, they are about the miracles and togetherness that Christmas should represent. Without lecturing or moralizing, inspirational Christmas stories for children and adults capture and reveal exactly what this time of year is all about - and they do so in a way that everyone can understand!

5) Inspirational Christmas stories for children and adults can create cherished memories for your whole family. Stir up some cocoa and serve some cookies to your audience. Take turns reading inspirational Christmas stories out loud, and put on some quiet Christmas carols in the background. Inspirational Christmas stories for children and adults can be the perfect way to set the stage for a fabulous Christmas celebration.

The magic of reading and the wonder of Christmas combine together in inspirational Christmas stories for children and adults to create a wonderful way to celebrate this most exciting time of year! Why not get some inspirational Christmas stories today and create a tradition that your family will love and cherish for years to come?

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and sign up for our F\*R\*E\*E\* NEWSLETTER FULL OF TIPS,

TOOLS & RESOURCES for reviving the fun, joy, magic and real meaning of Christmas every day of the year.



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