

# Miss Katie's Kids Korner

## Gifts and Giving

by Katie Taylor

It's December and the Holidays are upon us. This time of year brings to mind getting together with friends and family, eating lots of good food and giving and receiving presents. Regardless of your religious affiliation, December is the month of presents. My uncle used to take pictures of my cousins in their robes standing in front of the Christmas tree. If the tree was full and there were a LOT of presents underneath it, it was a good year; if it was a skinny tree with just a few presents, it was a bad year.

We are told to believe that more and bigger is better, but sometimes less with thought and caring can be best.

What I remember most about my childhood Christmases isn't the amount of presents under the tree, but the care "Santa" put into my stocking. Santa was actually my grandmother who made stockings for everyone in the family. With eight kids and six adults, this was not an easy task. She would squirrel away little trinkets all

year: treasures like bubble pens, yo-yos, mini flashlights, and change purses. Each item would then be wrapped in green, red, or white tissue paper and tied with a ribbon – no scotch tape. Presented in carefully-folded tissue paper, even a pair of socks became something special.

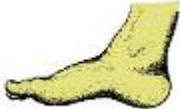
Another of my childhood holiday traditions was my father taking me downtown to Macy's the Saturday before Christmas to see Santa and buy my mother a present. I don't remember one present I bought for my mother. I do remember a bracelet I made for her at summer camp. I remember the bracelet because my mother still has it in her jewelry box. If your child asks you what you want for Christmas, do yourself a favor and tell him that you would like him to make you something. Give some suggestions and be specific. You could...

- ✎ Create and frame a family tree
- ✎ Bake a batch of your favorite cookies
- ✎ Make a tape of your favorite songs
- ✎ Make holiday decorations
- ✎ Write a story, poem, song, or play and perform it for the family.
- ✎ Make a coupon book of "chores" to be redeemed throughout the year: one dinner, one room clean up, one taking out trash, one babysitting for younger sibling, etc.

Some years your child wants THE BIG present. For example, if he's been going around the house singing "I want a Song PlayStation One Console" like a mantra, he really wants it. Of course, in addition, he'll be expecting the giant size Hershey bar with the \$10 bill inside that he has come to expect every year, but this year he wants a BIG present as well. As a parent, you'll know the difference.

(Katie Taylor teaches *Kindermusik* at the *Christ Lutheran Church* in Ellenville. She's accepting enrollment for the Spring '04 session, which will be starting in February. For more information you may contact her at 647-7291.)

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