

# Christmas traditions

Some many moons ago, my wife decided to extend the Christmas season by just a little bit. Not to overwhelm the season, but to take the "I want" stage out of oldest child. We had the advent calendars, but they just seemed to bring on that inner consumer that my oldest daughter was (is???)

My wife decided to celebrate St. Nicholas Day. We told the story of St. Nicholas and how he eventually became known as Santa Clause. We also told how he gave to the people in need, not everyone. I like to think that this got more of the spirit of giving in our girls, but I never asked them. Anyway early on Dec 6 we would investigate our Christmas Stockings. The very first gifts of the season.

As parents we would put in a small gift that would take some attention away from the other getting. There would be fruit, candy and a Christmas Ornament from Grandma.

We carried on this tradition for many years. I know at least two of the girls (maybe 3) still celebrate the day. I hope it is the spirit of giving, not getting.

This is the 6th Christmas Season without my lovely wife by my side. A time mixed with dark thoughts and bright lights. With only my youngest at home, this may be one of the last time St. Nicholas visits this house. The traditions are changing as life changes.