

# The Most Precious Present

By  
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The greatest gift a parent can give to a child, a spouse to a spouse, a professional to a client, workers to co-workers, a writer to their reader is oneself. To share **yourself** is the **most precious present**.

Let me share my thoughts and feelings at Christmas. I get sentimental and nostalgic. As an adult before I had children, I used to **feel sad**. Part of me missed the "age of irresponsibility." It is sometimes nice to think about just being taken care of without all the decisions and responsibilities that come with adulthood.

When I was young there was a lot of **anticipation and fun**. Grandparents would arrive and we would begin to set up the Christmas tree. We had a platform under the tree for my train and a complete snow covered city with houses, people, cars, skaters on the mirror pond, animals, skiers on the slopes. It was **magnificent**.

While the adults were doing the decorations early in the morning, my sister and I would fall asleep listening for Santa Claus.

Christmas morning was really exciting with the decorations, toys and bundles. My grandparents, great aunt, parents were all there. **It was just great!**

When I take off my rose colored glasses, I remember the letdown that sometimes comes after intense excitement. Sometimes on Christmas there was disappointment that it wasn't all I had hoped it would be or I didn't get a present I had really wanted, but most of the memories are happy ones.

When Jeph (short for Joseph) and Matthew were born Christmas took on new meaning again. They are both so special to me and as a father I could experience through them what I had lost. It's fun to watch their fun, to share their excitement, to see the happiness in their eyes. Their openness and enthusiasm give a **vibrance** to the Christmas experience.

But time moves on. Maybe the cycle will occur a third time if I become a grandfather and can share Christmas with my children and grandchildren.

To be able to experience joy and sadness, which often come so close together. Maybe that is what being human is all about. To be able to share joy and sadness with those you love. Maybe that's what Christmas is all about. Mary and Joseph tasted those and maybe that's what the Christ Child is all about: **joy and sadness and love**.