Christmas Eve - an Unforgettable Holiday Celebration by Mark Bennett

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Christmas time is the one where you not only think about what kind of presents you get but also the tasty and delicious delicacies you can gorge in. The one thing that I have enjoyed and anticipated is the Christmas savories, making my taste buds to acquire more of them and also the quality of family time that I can spend.

Watching the busy Christmas shopping and food preparations on various shows on my hi-def television connected to Dish TV does bring the sweet Christmas memories of my childhood. The day before the Christmas, my mom would start preparing the Christmas cookies in various shapes, reindeers, elves and gingerbread man. The wonderful aroma of it always brought me to the kitchen slobbering and with the gradual contemplation of when the cookies would melt in my mouth. My dad would be sitting in front of the fireplace with a cup of hot chocolate.

The anticipation of seeing the glass of milk with cookies kept for Santa empty the next day made me realize how much I miss Christmas celebrations of my childhood. As years roll by, and as I moved out of my parent's house, the celebration of Christmas seems like a dream of a distant past. Sometimes I wish I could go and spend the Christmas with them but it never happens. I still remember the roasted turkey stuffed with bread crumbs, onion, celery and my mom's secrete recipe made the Christmas dinner time a wonderful family experience. My uncles, aunts, cousins, and grandparents brought presents and it never ceased to drain my excitement when I used to open each of their presents.

At the dinner table, I would be waiting eagerly for the roasted turkey to come to me. I would at times deliberately try keeping all the tasty foods near me, so that I didn't have to wait until they are served. Besides, granddad would tell me all kinds of Christmas carols and sometimes a little bit of trivia and facts of Christmas. I still remember some of them; like the word 'Christmas' which is derived from the Old English, which is a contraction of Christ Mass; electric lights on Christmas trees were used as early as in the 1890's. The first US president to have a Christmas tree at The White House was Franklin Pierce; and, traditionally a Christmas tree is taken down after Epiphany.

Even today like most people, looking at the Christmas tree being decorated with the colorful ribbons, bauble, stars and the tree topper, which is usually an angel or a star, always restores the Christmas spirit. Whenever I see the decorated Christmas tree in my office, it does bring the feeling of the holiday season, but not the exact Christmas feeling that I used to get when I saw the Christmas tree at my parent's house.

Nowadays, the occasional family moments that I have on Christmas Eve is talking to my mom or dad on the phone. My dad would tell how he has been trying to beat our neighbor Mr. Wilson in setting up the Christmas celebrations. All these years, my dad gets outsmarted by him and it never ceases to disappoint my dad. He would think of innovative ways of decorating our house and the yard, but Mr. Wilson would be one step ahead him and his decoration of the house and his Christmas tree would be better eye-catching than my father's.

In my childhood days, dad would plan and buy the necessary stuff for the decoration two weeks in advance. He would debar me and my brother from going to meet Mr. Wilson and his family during the two weeks before Christmas and make sure that Mr. Wilson never saw us. He felt that if Mr. Wilson saw us, he would influence or bribe us and collect information about the decoration plan.

Christmas is around the corner and like everybody, the spirit of Christmas celebration is still

exhilarating me. Knowing that every Christmas I won't be celebrating with my parents does curb my Christmas enthusiasm, but the joy and happiness of seeing the smiles and laughter on other people's faces make me celebrate the festival of Christmas with the same enthusiasm that I had in my childhood days. Merry Christmas!!

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Mark is a freelance writer and enjoys writing about Christmas. The spirit of Christmas celebration, the shopping makes him keen on celebrating the festival of Christmas. He also enjoys all kinds of comedy, action, and emotional movies on his TV connected to a Dish Network.

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