

Good News

From Around the Plant

December, 2011

Isaiah 9:6

"For unto us, a child is born,
unto us a child is given."

We all have a favorite Christmas gift story, either about a gift we received or gave at one time. Maybe a gift that was very useful, or expensive, something you wanted (or somebody else wanted and you gave it to them) for a very long time and that you never expected to get. And haven't we all gotten those gifts we opened and thought... "What is *this*?" or, "Why did *I* get *this*?" and then thought, "Now what do I say?" and "What will I do with it?"

Some gifts we cherish and others we just kind of put someplace until we can figure out what to do with them, or who else to give them to. Somehow, we always seem to remember gifts we've received before those we have given. But if we really think about it, the best memories are the gifts we gave someone else and then in seeing their reactions.

I think maybe we tend to remember gifts we received first because of our own natural inclination to think of ourselves first. But those things just don't give us the same "warm fuzzy" feeling we get when we give or do something that takes someone else's breath away.

My own story goes back to when I was in high school about a year ago (ha ha). I worked in a neighborhood grocery store along with a friend and classmate named Dean. We had an elderly customer named Art who stopped in often, to socialize as much as to buy groceries.

Art had retired many years before from a foundry and had very little. I never saw Art drive a car or even ride in one. He either walked or pushed a two-wheeled wooden cart, much like a vegetable dealer of a generation before him, all over town.

Art would wear white cotton work gloves in the winter into the store because I'm sure they were all he had. One year as Christmas approached, my friend Dean had noticed that Art's gloves were pretty tattered. Dean approached me one day and said, "Let's buy Art some new gloves for Christmas."

For the grand sum of what was probably 2 or 3 dollars, we pooled our money, bought the gloves, and waited anxiously. One evening a few days before

Christmas when we were both together working, Dean found me and said "Art's here." We walked together to the front of the store, carefully hiding our surprise, and waited.

Art finally came up and made his purchases, wished us all a Merry Christmas, and started to leave. Dean hollered, "Hey Art!" and as Art stopped and looked back, Dean reached out with the gloves saying, "Merry Christmas, Art".

Art took the gloves and could not look up at us. He could only look down at the gloves. Then I saw his eyes well up with tears. He finally looked up and quietly said, "Thank you, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year". That's the gift that I remember the most.

A gift was given to all of us about 2000 years ago. Although we don't know the exact day of His birth, we will celebrate the gift of the baby Jesus once again on December 25th. He is the greatest gift we could ever receive - a gift we we could never earn or deserve to get. But once we truly have that gift and realize it's greatness, the best thing to do is share it. Please take an opportunity to worship the "King of Kings" this holiday season. Merry Christmas - Chaplain Dan

For Christmas trivia, I came up with this - until the mid 20th century, what was used on Christmas trees for tinsel? Call 2694 with your best shot.