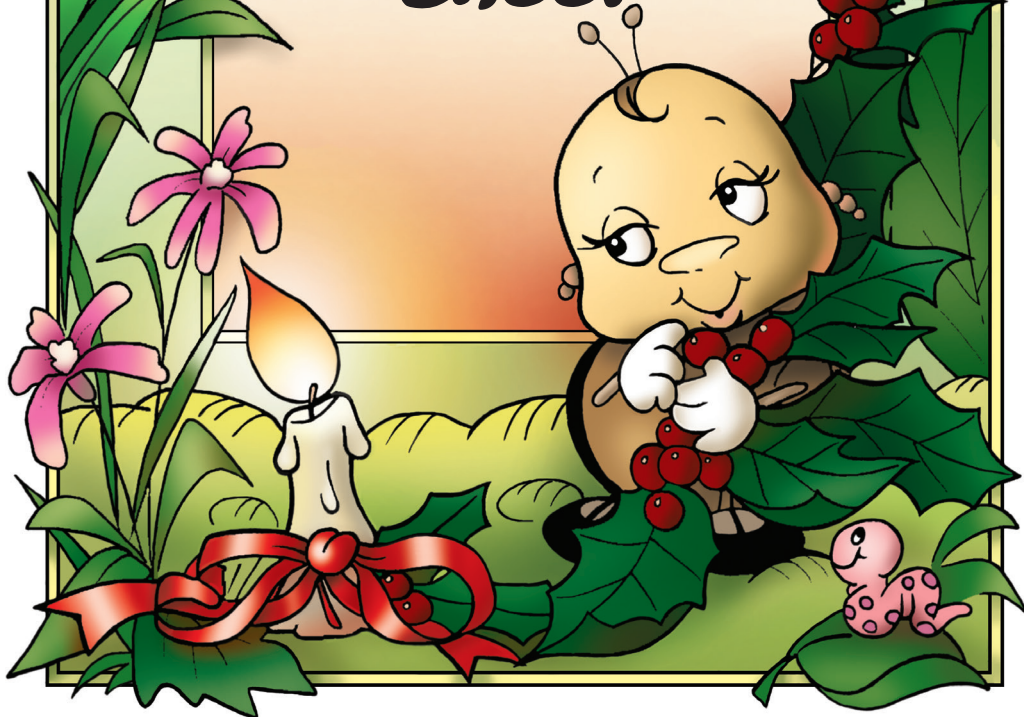




# Insects Galore: Christmas Cheer



"Grandpa, do you have any Christmas stories about the insect friends?" Tristan asked.

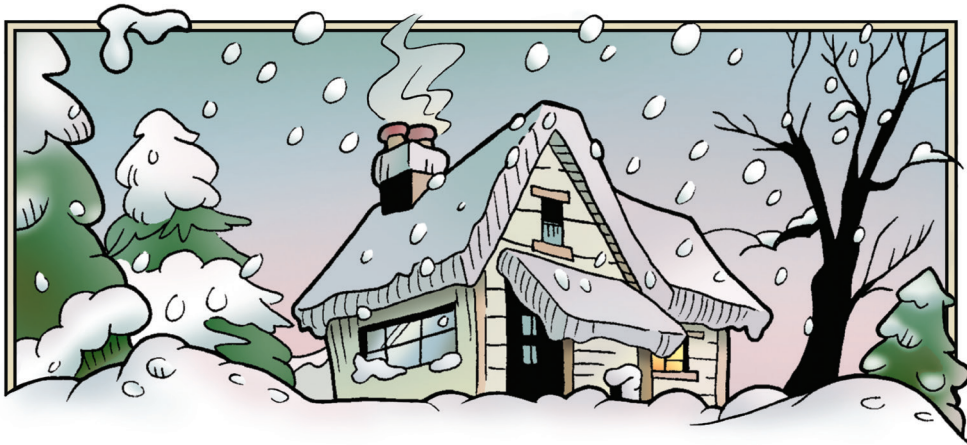
"I'll have to check my storybook," answered Grandpa Jake. "Would you please get it for me?"

The little boy bounded up the stairs in search of his grandpa's favorite storybook. He returned with the book and sat next to his grandpa, eager for a story.

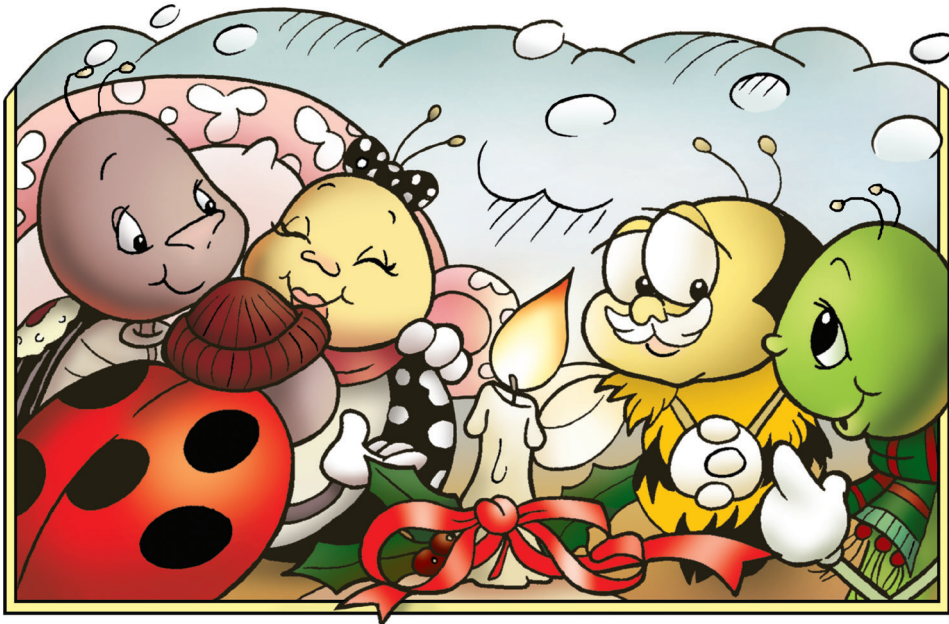
"Ah, here it is: 'Christmas Cheer'!" Grandpa Jake said with a smile and began to read...







It was a sunny winter day. Snow had fallen the night before, covering the ground in a soft, white blanket. Several insects hurriedly made their way to a gathering that had been called, leaving their little prints zigzagging in the snow.



Soon the insect friends had arrived at the meeting spot, a homey underground burrow. They snuggled close together to keep warm.

"I was thinking," began Wallace, "how nice it would be if we could do something for our neighbors this Christmas."

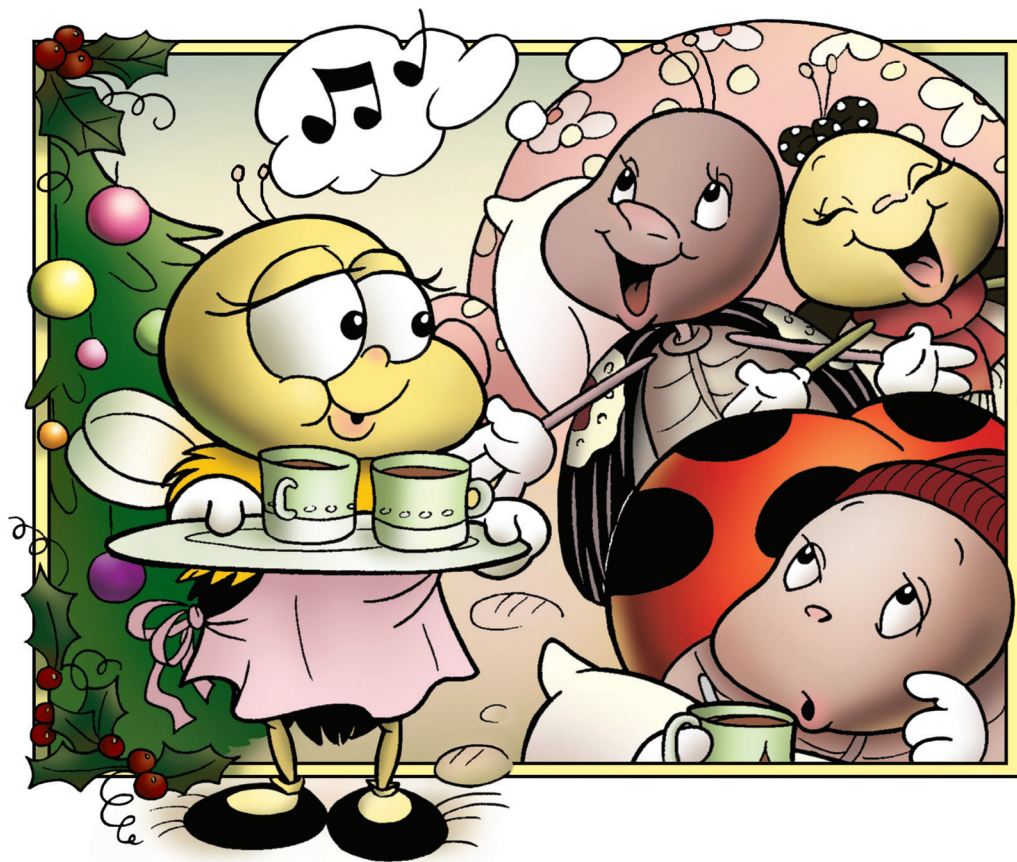
"That sounds like fun!" Drudy exclaimed.

"What were you thinking of?" asked Lincoln.

"I'm not really sure," Wallace answered. "That's why I asked all of you to come, so that we could talk about it. Any ideas?"







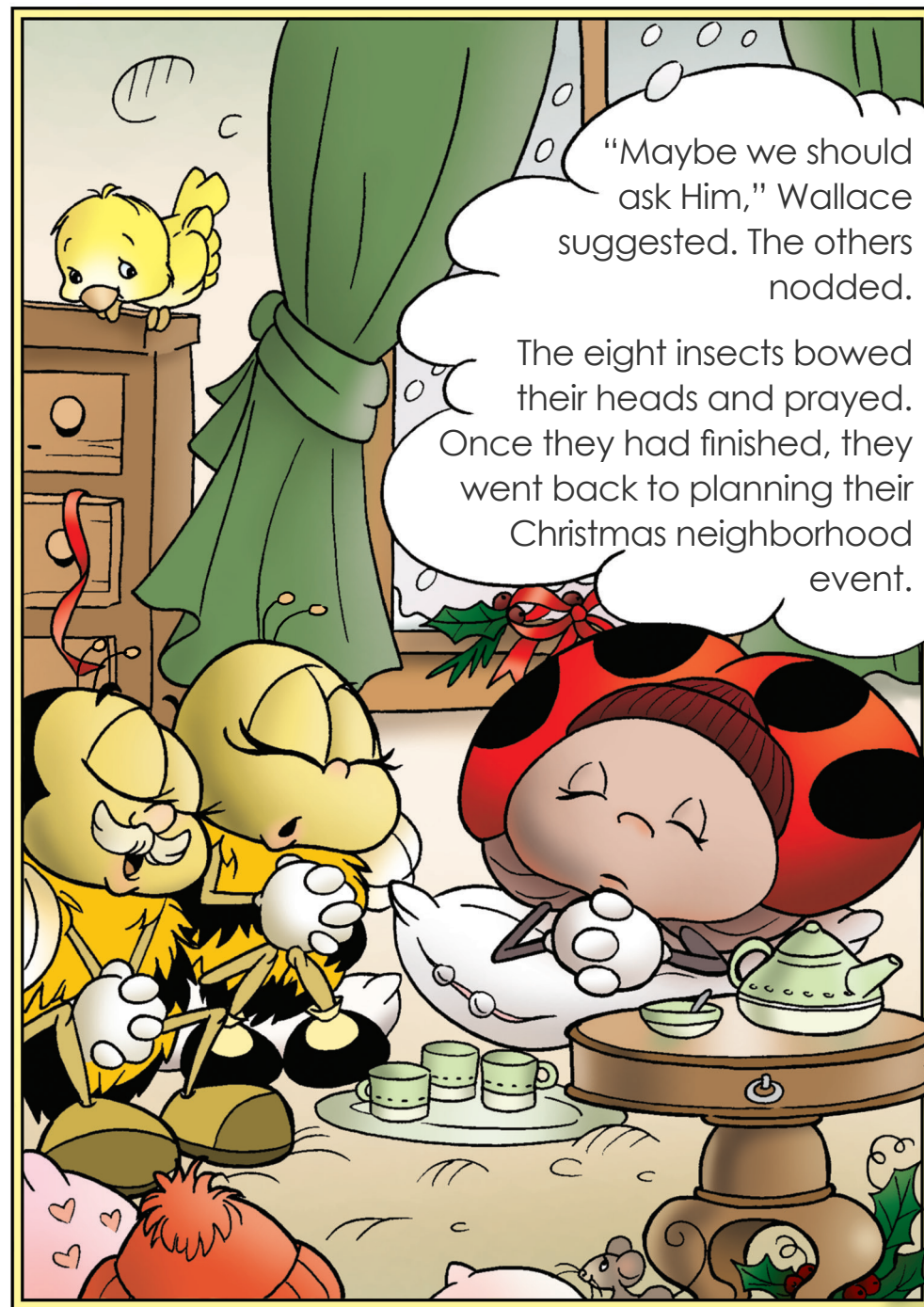
"Hmmm, Christmas is supposed to be a time of giving," Bits said thoughtfully.

"And singing," chorused Specks and Jibber.

"I knew we'd come up with some good ideas," Wallace said with a smile.

"So what do we do next?" asked Jibber. There was a moment of silence.

Finally, Lincoln said thoughtfully: "I was just thinking, Christmas is Jesus' birthday, and I wonder what Jesus would want us to do for His birthday?"



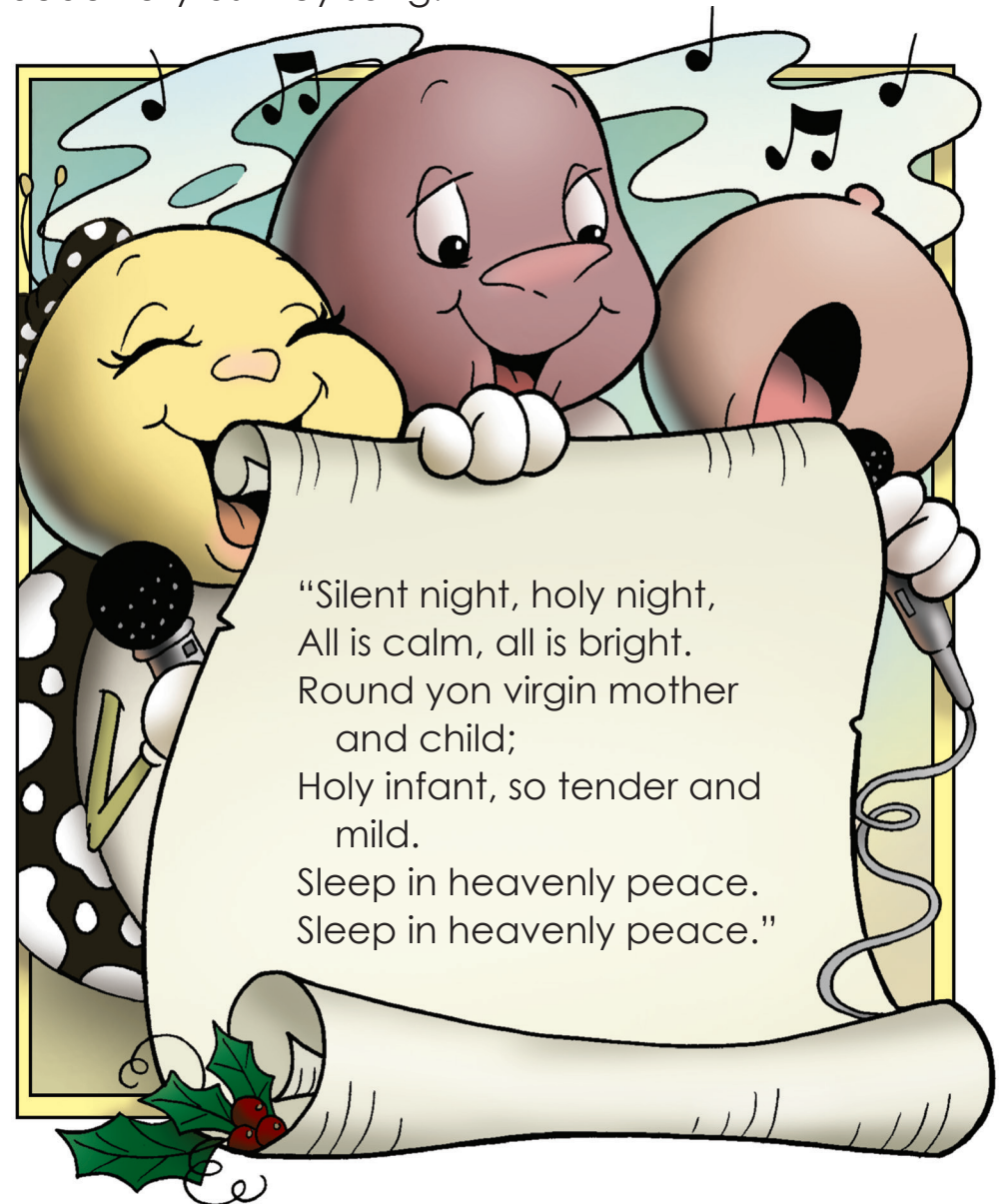




"Silent night, holy night," Lincoln sang in a shaky voice, and then let out a sigh. "I can't do it! My voice isn't strong enough."

"Don't give up now," Jibber said, "you just have to keep practicing. Specks, come join us."

The three insects began the song again, this time together. After a few tries their voices blended beautifully as they sang:



"Silent night, holy night,  
All is calm, all is bright.  
Round yon virgin mother  
and child;  
Holy infant, so tender and  
mild.  
Sleep in heavenly peace.  
Sleep in heavenly peace."

"That was wonderful!" exclaimed Drudy.





"Oh, wow!" said Specks, looking over to where Drudy stood. "Those Christmas baskets are beautiful!"

Lined on the ground were several baskets filled with presents and delicious snacks, and decorated with holly leaves and berries.

"Everyone has been working hard on them, and they really are excellent," Wallace said, as he peeked up from the leaf he was writing on.

"What are you doing, Wallace?" Bits asked.

"I've been putting together a list of all the insect families in our neighborhood that we could distribute the baskets to," he explained.



"How many do you have?" Drudy asked.

"About twelve."

"That means we're nearly done," Jibber said, after counting the baskets. "Only two more to go."

"I'm so happy we could finish them up in time," said Bits. "It's Christmas Eve, and tonight we can distribute them."

"I'm excited! I can't wait to get started!" Lincoln added.

"Let's finish up with the last two baskets," Wallace said, "then we can all get ready."

"Good idea!" the insects chorused, and then got right to work.





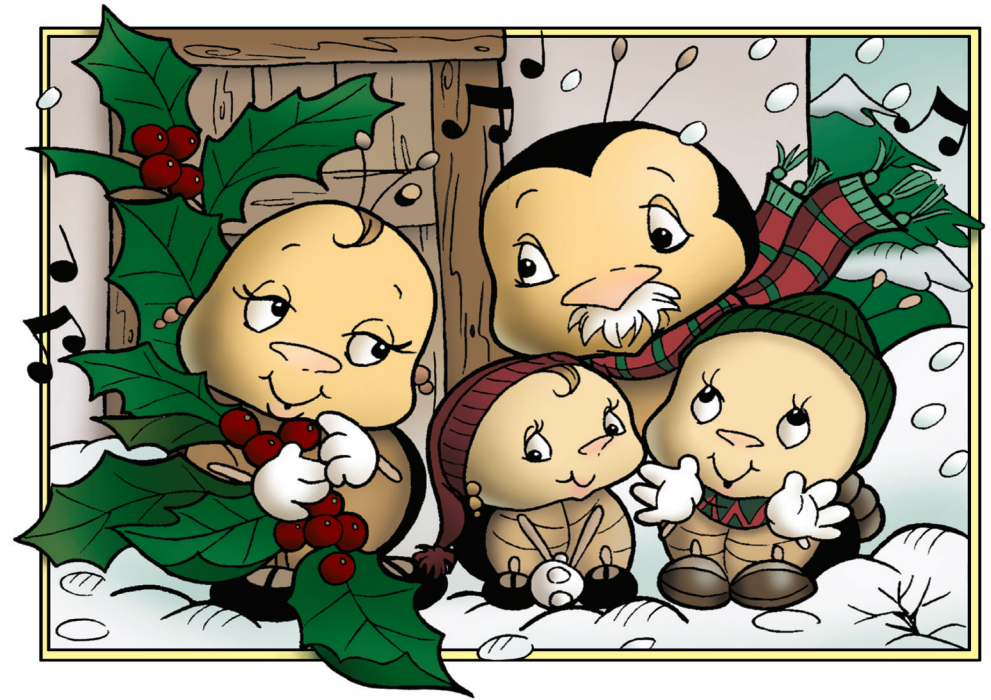
Little snowflakes tumbled gently from the sky. As the insects walked, the snow crunched under their feet. The eight softly sang a carol as they made their way through the village.

They arrived at Mr. and Mrs. Beetle's place.

"Good evening, Mr. and Mrs. Beetle," Wallace greeted them.

"Good evening to you too, Wallace," Mr. Beetle replied. "And a merry Christmas to all of you!"

"Merry Christmas," said Mrs. Beetle. "What brings you here?"



"We brought you a Christmas basket," Drudy explained. "And we'd like to sing a Christmas carol or two for you."

"How delightful!" Mrs. Beetle exclaimed. "That's very thoughtful of you."

Lincoln began singing: "Silent night, holy night." The others joined in, including Mr. and Mrs. Beetle and their children.

When the song had ended, Mrs. Beetle gave each of the insects a hug. "Thank you so much for visiting us," she said. "You have helped to make this a wonderful Christmas."







"Merry Christmas!" the eight insects called out as they went on their way to their next stop.

And on they went through the evening, bringing joy and happiness wherever they visited, and a smile to the face of each one they met. At the end of the evening, the eight said goodbye to each other before heading off to their own homes.



"That was the best Christmas ever," Bits said.

"It sure was," the others agreed.



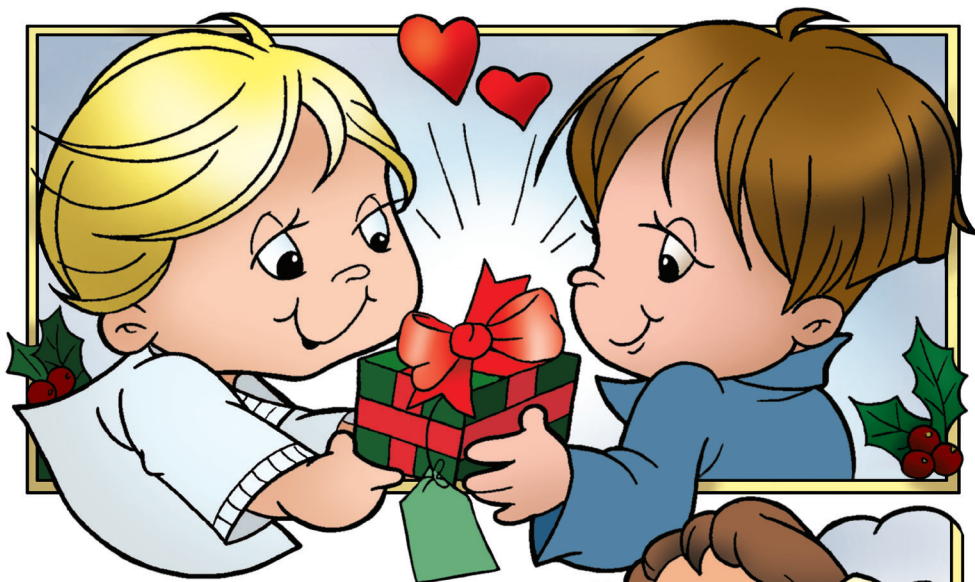
"I'd like to do something like that for Christmas," Tristan said when the story had ended. "But what could I do?"

"Good question," Grandpa Jake said. "Maybe you can do something for Derek next door, or you could make a Christmas card for your parents. There are so many things you can do for others. You can also ask God to show you what to do for people. I'm sure He'll have some good ideas."

"I'll do that," Tristan said, bowing his head to pray.







It was going to be the best Christmas for Tristan because he was doing what Jesus likes best for His birthday: Tristan was thinking about others and how to make them happy.



### Moral:

The best Christmas present you can give to others is love-filled actions of kindness. When you make others happy, you also make God happy.

