



The manger on the mantel holds a wonderful surprise ...

Before we light the Christmas tree and decorate the halls,
My mother clears the mantelpiece for something dear and small.

She takes it from a special box marked "Handle Me With Care,"

And sets it on the mantel in the place she has prepared.



hat is this precious item that is first to be displayed? Why does my mother always start the season in this way?

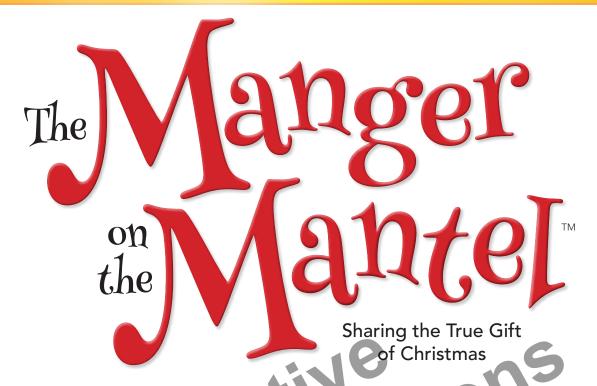


It is the tiny manger from my family's manger scene,
The manger on the mantel,
and I'll tell you what it means.

My parents shared the story with me when I was quite young.

They told me that God promised he would send the world his Son.





As a young child watches his mother unpack the family Nativity scene, he reflects on the events of the first Christmas night and the precious gift God put on display in the Bethlehem manger.

Start a new tradition this year as you share the joyful message discovered in the Manger on the Mantel. Find the Manger on the Mantel activity sheet at the center of this book and follow the instructions for assembly. Put your manger on display.

Lach day of December, pick a present from the manger. Follow the directions for the day, remembering that

the good and loving things we do are done

because God gives us the good and loving

gift of Jesus!

