



CHRISTMAS IN POLAND

eTwinning project
HOW FUN IS MAKING FRIENDS

SP NR 6 Gorzów, Poland

Christmas Eve - **WIGILIA**

Christmas Eve is the most holy and meaningful day of the year in Poland.

It is a day of waiting for the birth of the Christ Child. Wigilia comes from the Latin word "vigilare" which means „to wait“.

There are Christmas trees in all Polish homes.

When I was a child we decorated our Christmas tree that day in the morning. Nowadays people prefer to decorate the trees one or even some days before Christmas Eve.



Christmas Eve Supper



Christmas Eve Supper is the most important moment for Polish families.

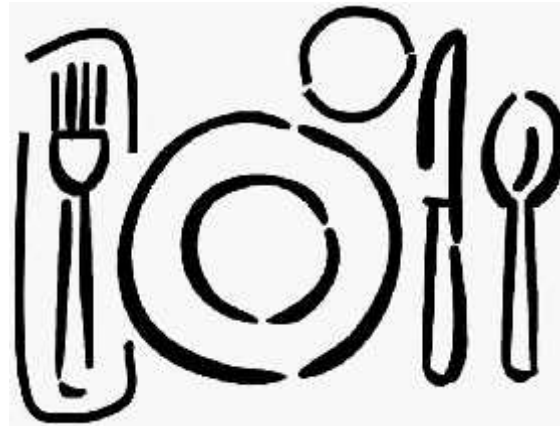
In the evening (the tradition says „when the first star is seen on the sky”) family members gather around the table . The table is covered with the whitecloth. There is some hay under the tablecloth. Berfore eating we exchange Christmas greetings and share „opłatek”. „Opłatek” is a thin wafer made of flour and water, similar in taste to the hosts that are used for communion during Mass.

For several years I have been the person who has been organising the supper for my family. There are usually about 14 people at the table. Of course they help me to prepare food...



When we set the table for Christmas Supper we always lay one extra place.

It's for unexpected guest. Our tradition says that in that special evening nobody should stay alone and hungry.



Christmas Eve Supper table



Christmas Eve Supper dishes

Tradition says that there should be 12 dishes on the table. The dishes are meatless. There are fish, especially herrings and carp prepared in different ways. There's a **beetroot soup with „uszka“**. „Uszka“ are small raviolis with mushroom filling. „Uszka“ mean „ears“ as the raviolis have got a shape similar to ears. There are also „pierogi“ (bigger raviolis) with cabbage and mushroom filling. We drink dried fruit compote. For dessert there's usually poppy seed cake and gingerbread cakes or „kutia“.

Some Polish families don't eat beetroot soup but mushroom soup.



Fish dishes



The legend has it that if you put the scale from the Christmas carp into your wallet you'll have no problem with money for the next year.



„Pierogi“ stuffed with cabbage and mushrooms.



Dried fruit compote



Poppy seed cake and gingerbread cakes

The most popular Christmas Supper desserts are gingerbread cakes and a poppy seed cake.

There are homes where gingerbread cakes are being prepared 2 or 3 weeks before Christmas by whole families. Especially children love to make and decorate them.

Last year one boy from our class (Dawid K.) prepared with his mum gingerbread cakes for the whole class and we got them on the last day at school before Christmas break. There were our names on the cakes!



Pierniki (gingerbrad cakes) were fantastic!



Kutia

In many Polish homes people eat „kutia“ for dessert. It's made from wheat, honey, poppy seed, nuts and dried fruit.

My family doesn't prepare „kutia“ but last year we invited for Christmas Eve Supper an elderly woman and she came to us with kutia. The dish was quite good I must say.



After eating and opening the presents we sing Christmas carols. We've got a lot of them.



Santa Claus is coming!

Children are waiting for presents. Santa Claus put them under the Christmas tree before the supper. Children can open their presents when the family is full and stops eating.

I remember waiting for presents when I was a child.... Adults from the family were eating and eating... We (children) didn't want to eat any more! We wanted to get our presents!



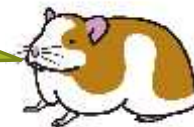
The legend has it that in this special night animals can speak like people.



You often forget about my food and water!



I don't like my cage to be dirty!
Could you, please, clean it at least 2 a week?



"Pasterka"

"Pasterka" is a special holy mass that starts on Christmas Eve at midnight.

Many families go to the church after the supper to sing carols and see a nativity scene. Every priest wants to have the biggest and the prettiest one in his church.



25th and 26th of December are days for family and friends meetings. And a lot of eating...
When the weather is good (everybody dreams about white Christmas of course) we go for walks to digest all that food...



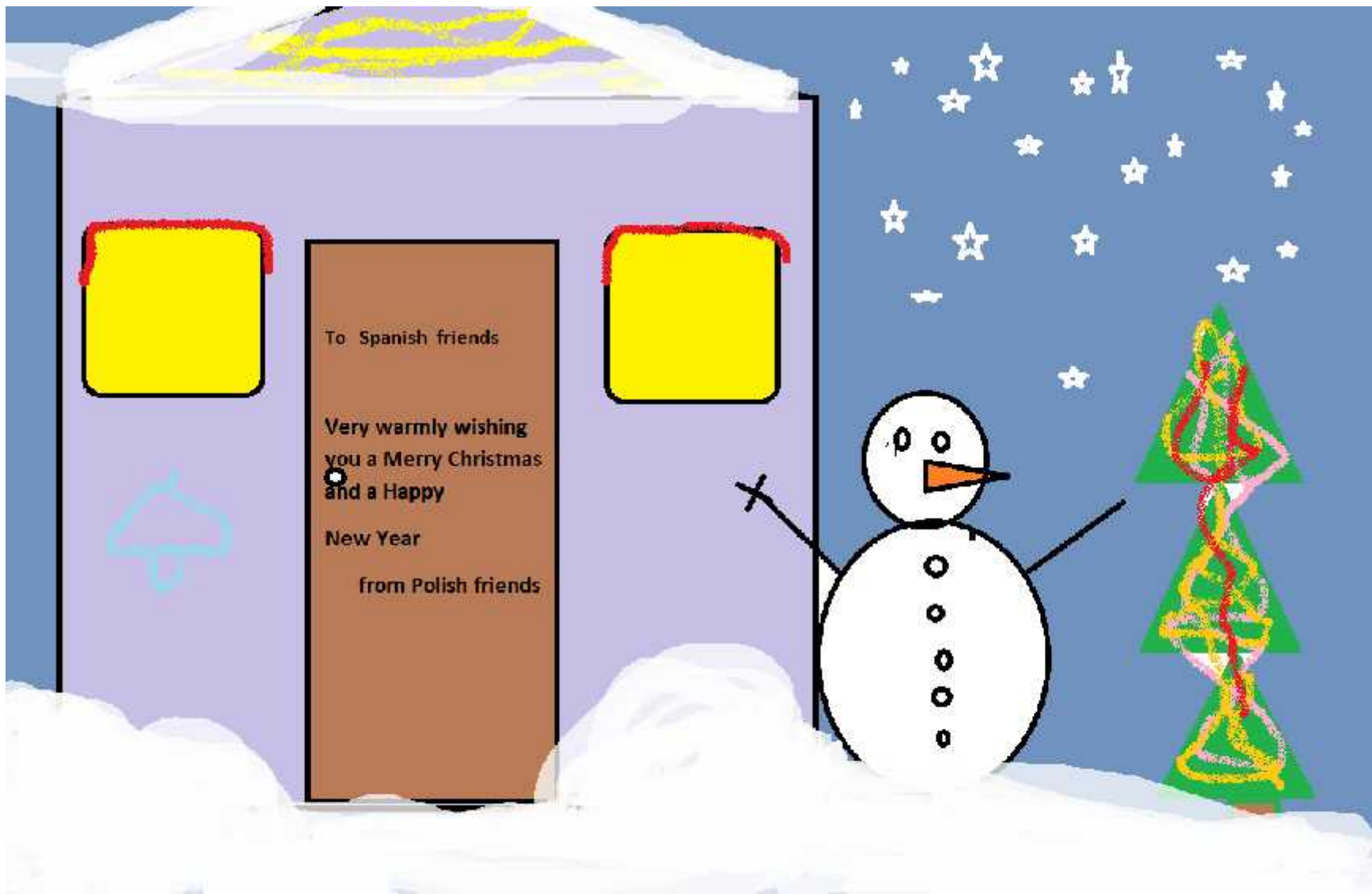


To **Spanish Friends**

Very warmly
wishing you
a Merry Christmas
and a Happy Year

from **Polish friends**

Zuzanna G.



Magda P.

There are handmade cards we sent you.
We hope you'll enjoy !

