

# Christmas Time



CLICK THE LOUDSPEAKER AND LISTEN.



**Christmas** is the holiday that commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ. It is on 25th December. Before Christmas there is a period of three-week expectancy called **Advent**.

### **WHY DO WE CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS ON 25<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER?**

A lot of people wonder why Christmas is celebrated on 25<sup>th</sup> December and why Christmas lasts for two days in Poland. The oldest known author who has written about the date of Christ's birth is Roman Hipolit. In 204, in the comment on the Book of Daniel (4,23,3) he wrote:

*The first coming of our incarnated Lord, who was born in Bethlehem, was on the eighth day before the January calenda, that is on 25<sup>th</sup> December.*

There are different explanations of choosing 25<sup>th</sup> December for Christmas. The most popular interpretation is that Christians have chosen the date as a symbolic one. This day was close to Winter Solstice. After the solstice days become longer and longer and there's more light every day. Jesus Christ is the Light who has come on the earth to free people from darkness, sin and death.



## THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

The meaning of Christmas Eve and Christmas Time is that Jesus Christ has come on the earth as a Human Being to reconcile people with God, bring peace and show how much God loves each person. This is why people spend this time in the family circle. Christmas show such values as openness, love, peace and reconciliation.

It's Christmas Eve on 24<sup>th</sup> December evening. At this time Polish people have the very sumptuous and ceremonial Chrismas Eve Supper in the circle of family and relatives. The supper should consist of twelve dishes and there shouldn't be any meat, mostly fish. This is a very special time. At first, everybody prays and then a father reads a passage from the Gospel according to Luke about the birth of Jesus Christ. Later on people share „oplatek” (an unleavened white wafer) with each other, say wishes and kiss. Sharing „oplatek” is the symbol of reconcialtion, forgiveness and love. Then the Supper starts and lasts for a few hours. During this time St. Nicolas brings presents for children or they find them under the Christmas tree. It's time for singing carols too. Another tradition is an empty place setting on the table for an unexpected guest. After the Supper, at midnight Catholics go to church for Shepherd's Mass. Next Day, on 25<sup>th</sup> December it's Christmas and on 26<sup>th</sup> December is the second day of Christmas Time. On this day the death of St. Stephan is commemorated who is mentioned as the first martyr for faith.



LOOK AT THE PICTURES WHICH SHOW POLISH CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS. MATCH THE WORDS AND PHRASES BELOW WITH THE CORRECT PICTURES. DRAG THEM UNDER THE PICTURES.



Family singing carols

Looking out the first star - the symbol of Bethlehem Star

Christmas Crib Carol singers

Krakow Christmas Cribs

Presents from St. Nicolas



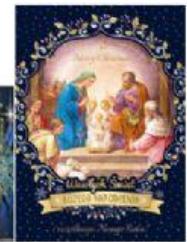
Decorating houses with lights

Christmas headdress

Nativity play

Christmas tree tuning

Christmas Wreath



Candles  
Empty place setting on the table for an unexpected guest

Christmas Eve Supper on 24<sup>th</sup> December  
Sharing „oplatek” and giving wishes

Christmas postcards

## POLISH CHRISTMAS EVE DISHES

CLICK THE NAME OF EACH DISH UNDER THE PICTURE, LISTEN AND REPEAT.



Borscht with dumplings



Pierogi (dumplings) with  
cabbage and mushrooms



Carp



Herring



Herring salad



Vegetable salad



Noodles with poppy seeds



Kutia (poppy seeds,

wheat seeds and delicacies)



Mushroom soup



Sour cabbage and mushrooms



Dried fruits compote



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Fish and vegetables



Poppy seed cake



Fruit cake



Cake with nuts



Cheese cake



Gingerbreads



Gingerbread cake



Silesian Christmas dessert soup



Christmas cookies  
(gingerbread and delicacies)

Now write down Christmas traditions that you cultivate at your home. What dishes do you prepare for Christmas?

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