



## Faces of Marianjoy

Marianjoy is comprised of associates that come from many varied cultures, backgrounds and experiences. We value these differences as we firmly believe it makes us stronger as an organization.

**Associate Name:** Paula Eppenstein

**Department:** Clinical Development/Clinical Education

- **What is your country of origin or the country of origin of your ancestors?**  
Poland
- **What specific aspects from your culture or background that would you like to share?**  
Stories from my grandmother: a hardworking society, economical (don't waste anything), celebrations of events involving food. Fond memories of wonderful aromas when my grandmother would bake breads, pastries, etc. Warm hospitality-anyone is welcome into the home or to sit down to dinner. Pride in their heritage and accomplishments.
- **Are there specific days or times of the year that are considered special or sacred – if so, why?**  
Palm Sunday/Easter: leading up to Easter, some fasting was involved as a means of atonement; Easter itself was more of a celebration of our redemption  
Christmas Eve: seemed to be more special than Christmas Day; the supper on this day is referred to as Wigilia-in our house it was a solemn celebrated occasion closely connected with family. Christmas Day was more lower key in our family growing up.
- **What are some of your family customs that you recall from your childhood (or from current times)?**  
Palm Sunday: placing blessed palms behind holy pictures in the home (it was felt to “protect” the home from misfortune). Easter: dying eggs (which symbolize life) on Good Friday. On Holy Saturday, all food that is to be eaten on Sunday is blessed by a priest (Swieconka). What was usually blessed was bread, butter lamb, the eggs, horseradish, sausage, etc.) and this served as breakfast on Easter morning. Christmas Eve: The meal was meatless and involved 7 courses (vegetable, kapusta, fish, potatoes, meatless pierogi, stewed prunes and dessert). Before eating, we would break the traditional wafer (Oplatek) and exchange good wishes with everyone around the table. We would then open presents and attend midnight mass.
- **Are there dietary preferences, special recipes or other traditions around food or food preparation, if so, please describe?**  
Sauerkraut and potatoes, sauerkraut soup (kapusta), gołąbki, kiełbasa  
Pierogi-dumplings filled with meat, cheese, sauerkraut or fruit. Pastry fingers (paluszki)  
Kolacky.
- **What languages are spoken or written?**  
At home growing up, both Polish and English. Unfortunately I never really learned to speak Polish as a child.