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09.05.2024, 09:56

The Righteous and the Merciful. The Rescue of Jews by the Poles and the Tragic Consequences for Ulma Family from Markowa

Mateusz Szpytma, *The Righteous and the Merciful. The Rescue of Jews by the Poles and the Tragic Consequences for Ulma Family from Markowa*, Warsaw 2023, 2nd edition, supplemented, 152 pp., ISBN 978-83-8229-835-2

The Markowa massacre is a textbook example of German bestiality during the Second World War. Like many others, it was not properly appraised. [...]

But what happened in Markowa on 24 March 1944 is not only an example of blatant injustice, but also proof of how much good a person can do. [...] Like the Good Samaritan in Christ's parable, Józef and Wiktoria Ulma decided to help people of other nationalities and faiths. The biblical injunction to love one's neighbour meant more to them than the death penalty that threatened Poles for helping Jews. And it

was with their lives – their own and those of their children – that they paid for their commendable stand.

They were not alone. During the Second World War, around a thousand Poles died saving Jews. We commemorate their heroism every year on 24 March – on the National Day of Remembrance of Poles who saved Jews under the German occupation, which for several years has been celebrated on the anniversary of the Markowa massacre. We also try – as far as possible – to commemorate each individual Pole who saved Jews with dignity.

(from the Preface of the President of IPN Karol Nawrocki)

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