

Institute of National Remembrance

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Celebration of the National Day of Remembrance of Poles Rescuing Jews under German occupation

On 24 March 2024, the IPN commemorated Poles rescuing Jews during World War II in Rzeszów and Markowa. Exactly 80 years have passed since Ulma family's martyrdom for sheltering Jews.











The celebration began with the naming of the Rzeszów-Jasionka Airport after the Ulma Family. The ceremony was attended by the President of the Republic of Poland Andrzej Duda. The Institute of National Remembrance was represented by the IPN's Deputy President Mateusz Szpytma, Ph.D.

For more than two years, the Rzeszów-Jasionka Airport has been the main hub for international humanitarian and military aid to Ukraine fighting off Russian aggression. It is also the venue for many diplomatic meetings, as world leaders travelling to Ukraine usually arrive at Rzeszów Airport.

The Polish President pointed out that thanks to the naming of the Airport after the Ulma Family, this extraordinary story will be spread

around the world and it will serve as a testimony for the future generations. He also referred to the discussion about the attitudes of people towards Jews during the Second World War.

Let all those who today allow themselves to judge those times, and who allow themselves to say any word against the Poles at that time, in the face of the Holocaust, be mindful and also take it upon themselves to consider in their honesty the aspect that those who helped risked their lives. How many of you would know how to shoulder such a risk? – said President Duda.

The main event commemorating the National Day of Remembrance of Poles Rescuing Jews under German Occupation was held in the Museum of Poles Saving Jews in Markowa, where a ceremony of awarding state medals to those who have distinguished themselves in commemorating the Ulma family took place. President Duda awarded state honors to 21 people in recognition of their contribution to nurturing the memory of Poles who saved Jews. One of the awarded was Mateusz Szpytma, Ph.D.

The celebrations in Markowa ended with a solemn Mass at the St. Dorothy Parish Church, celebrated at the tomb of the blessed Ulmas. The service was presided over by Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, Prefect

of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints, who proclaimed the Ulma's beatification in Markowa on 10 September 2023. Cardinal Semeraro was also awarded with the Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland by President Duda.

At the War Cemetery in Jagiello-Niechciałki, the IPN's Director of the National Education Office Adam Pleskaczyński, Ph.D., laid flowers at the monument commemorating Jews murdered by the Germans in Markowa.

The monument is dedicated to the memory of Jews, citizens of the Second Polish Republic murdered in Markowa in 1942-1944 by the Germans, exhumed from the places of execution and transferred to this cemetery in 1947. The matzeva-shaped monument, erected on the grave of the murdered Jews, was commissioned by the Institute of National Remembrance.

[Read more about Poles saving Jews.](#)

[Read more about the Ulma family and their beatification.](#)

[Watch a series of testimonies of many other Polish families who sheltered Jews during the WW2.](#)

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