

Institute of National Remembrance

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Candles lit in memory of Captain Witold Pilecki – 25 May 2021

Tribute to Captain Witold Pilecki, who was murdered 73 years ago in the Mokotów prison in Warsaw was paid in 27 Polish towns and cities . On 25 May 2021 at 9.30 p.m. – the hour of his death – candles of memory were lit at monuments and other commemorations devoted to Captain Pilecki.



On 25 May 1948, at 9:30 p.m., the communists killed one of the bravest defenders of Polish independence. Witold Pilecki's body was buried in an unknown place, probably on the so-called "Łączka" next to the wall of the Military Cemetery in Powązki. It was only in September 1990 that the Supreme Court acquitted Captain Witold Pilecki and his companions, revealed the unjust nature of the sentences issued, and emphasized the patriotic attitudes of the convicts.

In July 2006, the President of the Republic of Poland Lech Kaczyński, in recognition of Witold Pilecki's merits and his devotion to the affairs of his homeland, honored him with the Order of the White Eagle posthumously. This year, tribute to Captain Witold Pilecki, who was murdered 72 years ago in the Mokotów prison in Warsaw, was paid in 27 Polish towns and cities.

On 25 May 2021 at 9.30 p.m. – the hour of his death – candles of memory were lit at monuments and other commemorations devoted to Captain Pilecki. The ceremonies were attended by representatives of the Institute of National Remembrance, local authorities, scouts, students and those who were willing to join us and take part in this event.



Candles in
Pilecki's memory
lit in Warsaw



Candles in
Pilecki's memory
lit in Białystok



Candles in
Pilecki's memory
lit in Chorzów



Candles in
Pilecki's memory
lit in Gdańsk



Candles in
Pilecki's memory
lit in Kierz
Niedźwiedzi



Candles in
Pilecki's memory
lit in Cracow



Candles in
Pilecki's memory
lit in Oświęcim



Candles in
Pilecki's memory
lit in Olsztyn



Candles in
Pilecki's memory
lit in Wrocław

This is what Witold Pilecki's last moments might have looked

like.

Witold Pilecki

Witold Pilecki began his service to Poland during the Bolshevik war of 1920. He fought during the September 1939 campaign, and then within the structures of the Polish Underground State. In 1940, entrusted with a mission by the Union of Armed Struggle command, he voluntarily let himself be arrested and deported to the KL Auschwitz German extermination camp in order to gather information and organize an underground conspiracy there. Threatened with the risk of exposure, he managed to escape from the hell of Auschwitz.

In 1944 he fought in the Warsaw Uprising. A year later he found himself in the 2nd Corps of the Polish Army in Italy, from where, by the decision of General Władysław Anders, he returned to Poland which was already under communist rule. His mission was to reestablish the intelligence structures of the Polish Government-in-Exile destroyed after the war. Arrested in May 1947, he was taken to the detention center on Rakowiecka Street in Warsaw, where communist torturers subjected him to a cruel investigation. Despite torture, he remained

steadfast and faithful to the motto: God, Honor and Fatherland.
Sentenced to death in a show trial, he was murdered on 25 May 1948,
at 9.30 p.m.

Throughout the People's Republic of Poland, all information about the achievements and fate of Captain Pilecki was subject to strict censorship. His burial place is still unknown. In 2006, Witold Pilecki was posthumously awarded the Order of the White Eagle, and in 2013, he was promoted to the rank of Colonel.

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