

# Institute of National Remembrance

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## The Commemoration of the 78th anniversary of the massacre in Ostrówki and Wola Ostrowiecka – Ostrówki, 29 August 2021

































A mass for the 1,050 inhabitants of Ostrówki and Wola Ostrowiecka cruelly murdered by the UPA (Ukrainian Insurgent Army) on 30 August 1943 took place at the parish cemetery in Ostrówki.

After the mass flowers were laid and candles lit at the memorial of those murdered in 1943. Representatives of the Institute of National Remembrance – Marcin Krzysztofik, Director of the Branch Office in Lublin and Leon Popek, Ph.D., Deputy Director of the IPN's Office for Commemorating the Struggle and Martyrdom – participated in the ceremony. The official commemoration event was also attended by Deputy Marshal of the Lublin Province, Zbigniew Wojciechowski, Deputy Consul of the General Consulate of the Republic of Poland in Lutsk, Adam Myśliński, representatives of Polish NGOs and local



residents.

The President of the Institute of National Remembrance, Karol Nawrocki, Ph.D. wrote a letter to the participants of the ceremony commemorating those murdered during the Volhynia massacre.

Babies, infants, adults and the elderly were killed. They were brutally murdered only because they were Poles. Each and every victim had their own personal tragic story to tell.

The figure of the Mother of God in Ostrówki remains a silent witness to the bloody events dating back 78 years. The fact that it now stands in the middle of a field, which once used to be the center of a bustling village, is more meaningful than many films or scholarly works.

President Nawrocki did not fail to mention the righteous Ukrainians who often risked their lives to help Poles.



A local inhabitant, Kalennyk Lukashko could serve as a perfect example. He aided three Poles hiding in the forest. After his compatriots had murdered them, he gave the victims a proper burial.

Oleksandra Vaseyko, his daughter, to whom he had indicated the burial place of the Poles, is another example. She prayed at their graves for over 70 years and kept their memory alive. It was also Ołeksandra Vaseyko, commonly known as Grandma Shura, who helped Polish archaeologists find other mass graves of the victims of the Volhynia genocide” – wrote the President of the Institute of National Remembrance.

The President of the Institute of National Remembrance also touched upon the issue of forgetting about the Volhynia massacre.

The truth about the Volhynia massacre cannot be concealed, falsified or relativized. True Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation can only be built on the basis of this truth.

Due to the efforts of Leon Popek, Ph.D. in 1992, 2011 and 2015 exhumation works were carried out in the death pits located in the former villages. As a result, the remains of about 670 people were discovered. All the victims found there were buried in the parish cemetery in Ostrówki. The cemetery and a partially destroyed figurine of the Mother of God, behind which the church once stood, are the only traces of the former village, which then was a two-hundred-year-old parish. The exhumation works in Ostrówki have not been completed. The remaining victims (over 400 people) still resting in nearby death pits await proper burial and commemoration. The celebrations in Ostrówki, along with a pilgrimage of the victims' families to the place of their relatives' murder, have been held every year for the last 30 years.

More on the [Volhynia massacre](#)

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