

International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the Holocaust

On the 27th of January, 2016, within the former German camp KL Auschwitz-Birkenau, a ceremony took place in remembrance of the 71st anniversary of the liberation of its prisoners. The theme of the ceremony was "Returnings". More than 7,000 prisoners, barely alive, remained after the liberation of the German camp KL Auschwitz – Birkenau.

As the Shalom Ministry Association in Oświęcim we also organized prayer from 27.01.16 to 29.01.16 in various sub-camps of KL Auschwitz-Birkenau such as; Pławy, Harmęże, Budy-Bór, Rajsko and Monowice. The innocent blood of Jews and other nations that were murdered there continues to call out to God for vindication, Who hasn't forgotten the cries of these victims or the pouring out of their blood. "For he who avenges blood remembers; he does not ignore the cry of the afflicted." (Ps. 9:12)

As we remembered all the victims we especially thought of the ones who, despite the unimaginable trauma they had experienced, tried to return to normal life. Some returned to their families and their ruined cities. Others tried to start normal lives after the hell of destruction. Nevertheless the horrors of Auschwitz remain in their hearts and memories for the rest of their lives.

The main ceremony started at 12:30 PM in the building of "Sauna" in the former camp Auschwitz II-Birkenau. Those gathered were

blessed by the presence of about 80 former prisoners of the former German camp Auschwitz. "This is not just a museum, not just a remembrance, but a warning," said the president of Poland, Andrzej Duda, at the ceremony. At 2PM at the monument in honor of the victims prayers were said, both by Jews and Christians. Afterwards former prisoners, together with the president of Poland and Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic, the president of Croatia, who also took part in the ceremony, placed wreaths on the monument to the victims of the camp.

About 1.1 million people lost their lives from 1940 to 1945 in the concentration and extermination camp Auschwitz-Birkenau that the Germans established. More than 90% of the victims were Jews, transported to this place from the different countries that were under German occupation. The General Assembly of the United Nations established January 27 as the official anniversary of the liberation of prisoners of KL Auschwitz-Birkenau. It is designated as the International Day of Remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust.