



News of Polonia

Serving the Polish Community since 1995

Wiadomości Polonijne

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TODAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2007, in Polish churches throughout the world, Poland's Freedom is being celebrated, DZIEŃ NIEPODLEGŁOŚCI.

We celebrate the Anniversary of Poland's freedom from the grip of the Russians, Prussians, and Austrians. The land of our ancestors was partitioned but valiant Poles never gave up their quest for a free Poland. At the Treaty of Versailles the dream of the Poles was finally realized.

For many years we Poles of Los Angeles have come to our church to celebrate our day of Freedom – November 11. We come to church, hear speeches, put flowers in front of the plaques commemorating Poles of yesteryear...

Many of us forget the tears, bloodshed, killing, tyranny and inhuman treatment of war until we come back the next year to honor these Polish days of Remembrance. I look in front of me and see the ladies and gentlemen who will never forget their years in the service of Poland during those traumatic days of war. They will carry their pain and memories with them for the rest of their days. Thank you Ladies and Gentlemen...

HOW CAN WE EVER REPAY YOU FOR YOUR HEROISM, AND SERVICE TO POLAND the land of our forefathers

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Independence Day Gala

By: *Krysta Close*



Jacek Nowaczyński

Consul General Paulina Kapuścińska

On the evening of November 8th at 7:30 pm in downtown Los Angeles, the lights were shining brightly on the stage of Zipper Hall and the audience was abuzz. There was a palpable excitement in the air for the event about to commence: a celebration of Poland's Independence Day organized by the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Los Angeles. The festive evening began with the Polish and American national anthems, performed gracefully by Midnight Winds, a USC-based ensemble. Paulina Kapuścińska, Poland's new Consul General in Los Angeles, opened the official part by welcoming a large representation of the diplomatic corps, Polish Army veterans, and an overflowing audience composed of the émigré community and their numerous American friends. In her brief remarks, Consul Kapuścińska spoke of the importance of November 11 in the modern history of Poland and bestowed a Gloria Artis medal, given by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage in Poland, upon Marek Żebrowski, Director of the Polish Music Center at USC and a co-organizer of the evening's events.

The main attraction of the evening, however, was the program of Polish film music. The Midnight Winds and USC Strings were joined on stage by a cast of celebrities, including the double bass virtuoso, Darek Oleszkiewicz, the renowned vocalist, Anna Jurkiewicz, and Maestro Krzesimir Dębski, the acclaimed composer, conductor, violinist and pianist. The varied and entertaining presentation began with the wind quintet arrangement of Paderewski's famous *Menuet*, and was followed by Chopin's Nocturne in C-sharp minor performed by cellist Lars Hoefs and pianist Marek Żebrowski. Immediately afterwards, the entire ensemble came on stage for a performance of *Urodziny* [Birthday Music] by Dębski, sung by Anna Jurkiewicz under the direction of her husband and composer.

The musical feast of high-quality entertainment followed as Dębski - with his mixture of good-natured humor and engaging stage presence - introduced several selections of his own music from feature films and TV serials. Anna Jurkiewicz, a charming and excellent vocalist, gave lively and heartfelt interpretations of Dębski's hit songs from *The Clan*, *Lonely Hearts*, *Cantabile - They Came at Dusk*, *For Good and Ill*, finishing with *Helena's Song* from *Ogniem i mieczem* that brought the full house to its feet in a prolonged standing ovation.

Between Dębski's award-winning film scores, other Polish film composers were also represented on the gala concert's

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Reply to an article in The Wall Street Journal

Victims of a Forgotten Soviet Holocaust

November 8, 2007; Page A21

"Holocaust Denial and Tehran," by Roya Hakakian published on Nov. 3, brings us to an important point in world and Polish history that needs to be more fully understood.

The Polish people who arrived in Pahlavi, Iran in 1942 were victims of an unknown holocaust. The vast majority of the over 200,000 Polish citizens who arrived in the port of Pahlavi, were ethnically Polish, not Jewish. Most people today do not realize that at the beginning of the war in 1939 Russia was allied with Germany. Poland was attacked simultaneously by both Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany and was basically divided in half at the war's beginning.

The Polish people who stepped onto free soil in Iran in 1942 were not escaping the Nazis (though their country was still occupied) but had just been released from Soviet gulags in Siberia where they had been imprisoned for two years, with over two-thirds of their number dying there. When the Nazis attacked Russia, Soviet Russia became one of "The Big Three" allies and released its prisoners who eventually crossed the Caspian Sea to freedom in Iran.

Eve Jankowicz Skillman, N.J.

Victims of a Forgotten Soviet Holocaust

By: *Eve Jankowicz*

I was very pleased when the *Wall Street Journal* published my letter on November 8. I really liked the header the newspaper chose since it included the keyword "holocaust." But then I immediately had misgivings. Why didn't I include more information, such as the poor physical condition of the Polish people as they stepped on Iranian soil at Easter time in 1942? Why didn't I write that pictures of these Poles look exactly like those of Jewish concentration camp victims we have all seen so many times? Why didn't I write that many, many more hundreds of Polish people died shortly after arriving in Iran? They were taken directly from the boats on stretchers straight to the hospital where they died. Why didn't I write that thousands and thousands more died in Kazakhstan while waiting in sickness and starvation to finally leave the USSR for good? So close to freedom, these Polish people died and lay in unmarked graves to this day. One had to be physically well to be allowed out of the USSR, so many would buck up as well as they could, only to die on the tin can "ships" which carried them across the Caspian Sea to Iran.

I should have included numbers. I should have written that approximately 1.7 million people from Eastern Poland, primarily ethnic Poles, were forcibly deported to Siberia and elsewhere in the huge USSR. Of that number, only about 230,000 arrived in Iran in 1942 alive. The rest had all died. I did not include these facts because I wrote quickly and sent my response the day after the opinion's publication. I could kick myself that I didn't include more! However, I had to make major corrections in my letter, and I had to educate the readers a little. Also I didn't realize until now that speed of response is probably the most important

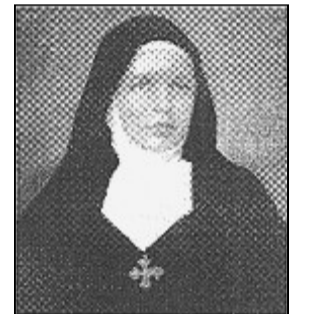
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Beatification of Mother Celine Borzecka

Noting that the beatification occurred on October 27, 2007,



The Venerable Servant of God Mother Celine Borzecka, C.R. Foundress of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Resurrection



The Venerable Servant of God Mother Hedwig Borzecka, C.R. Co-Foundress of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Resurrection

What does Mother Celine have to say to today's world? How is she relevant? Why did the Church beatify her? Perhaps we find the answer in the simple phrase – she was a WOMAN FOR ALL SEASONS. She has something to share with children, teens, spouses, parents, grandparents, patriotic citizens, widows, single parents, religious, founders, and seniors.

The Congregation of the Sisters of the Resurrection was founded in Rome in 1891 by a widow, Celine Borzecka, and her daughter, Hedwig. The formation of the Congregation was the first time in the history of the Catholic Church that a religious community of women was founded by a mother and daughter.

Celine, the daughter of a wealthy land owner, was born in Eastern Poland. From her early childhood she fervently desired to dedicate herself entirely to God. At the age of 21, in accord with the wishes of her parents, Celine married Joseph Borzecki. She continued to grow as a woman of prayer and sacrifice. Sixteen years following her marriage, her husband, Joseph, was stricken with paralysis. He died several years later, leaving Celine with their two small daughters, Celine and Hedwig.

In 1875, the young widow and her children came to Rome, seeking the Will of God in whatever way it would be manifested to them.

On January 6, 1891 God called Celine and Hedwig to begin the Congregation of the Sisters of the Resurrection. Today the Church recognizes both as Venerable, or as persons who have lived lives of heroic virtue. Mother Celine and her daughter, Hedwig, lived lives that were permeated with the faith-vision and optimism so needed in our world today. They were confident that people needed a message of hope. They desired to help others discover the fact that Jesus lives and is with them always!

The years prior to the foundation of our Congregation were difficult and laden with

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