

## Invitation

### DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

Sunday, April 19

Our Lady of the Bright Mount, Polish Parish extends a warm welcome to all Christian faithful for a special day of prayer and celebration on Divine Mercy Sunday.

We will recite the "Chaplet of Divine Mercy" and celebrate a special Mass to honor the relic of St. Sister Faustina Kowalska.

All faithful will be able to partake in the sacrament of reconciliation, in English and Polish.

The agenda for the day is as follows:

**9:00AM and 12PM** - Mass in Polish

**3:00PM** - Chaplet of Divine Mercy (in Polish and English)

followed by a Mass in Polish and English

**6:00PM** - Chaplet of the Divine Mercy (in Polish and Spanish),

followed by a Mass in Polish and Spanish

**8:00PM** - Showing of the film "Faustina" (Polish with English subtitles)

**10:00AM to 8PM** - all faithful will be able to individually view and pay homage to the display of the relic of St. Sister Faustina (except during celebrations).

**10:00AM to 8 PM** - Guests are invited to the Parish hall to dine and taste a bit of Poland. We will be serving Pierogi, Bigos, Polish tripe and BBQ. We will also have Polish pastries and coffee.

**1:30 to 2:30 p.m.** Entertainment

**Krakusy and Podhale Folk Dancers**

We graciously invite all the faithful and their guests to partake in this wonderful and traditional celebration at the Polish Parish.

Rev. Marek Ciesielski SChr. Pastor  
3424 W. Adams Blvd. - Los Angeles  
(323) 734-5249

## Dear Friends,

On Wednesday, April 22 we will celebrate the "10<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday of Polish Cinema" with a Gala Opening at the Egyptian Theatre in Hollywood.

The Festival will open with a reception and screening of "Perfect Guy for My Girl" (Idealny facen dla mojej dziewczyny) directed by Tomasz Konecki and starring Marcin Dorociński, Magdalena Boczarska, Izabela Kuna, Danuta Stenka, Krzysztof Globisz, and Daniel Olbrychski. From April 23 to May 3 Polish films will be shown at the Laemmle Sunset 5 and the Spielberg Theatre at the Egyptian.

Your donations are critical to the success of the Polish Film Festival - Los Angeles. Please consider making your contribution by March 20<sup>th</sup> so your invaluable support can be acknowledged in the Festival's program book. Sponsorship opportunities can be found on our web site [www.polishfilmla.org](http://www.polishfilmla.org).

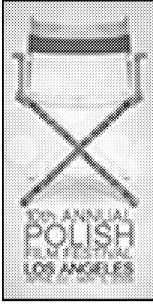
To receive an invitation to the Gala Opening we kindly ask for a minimum \$60.00 contribution to the Polish American Film Society, a 501c3 nonprofit organization. You can make your tax-deductible donation on line at [www.polishfilmla.org](http://www.polishfilmla.org), or by sending a check to 7726 Ethel Ave., North Hollywood, Ca. 91605.

If you cannot attend the Gala Opening, we hope you will still contribute to this very worthwhile cause which provides the community with the opportunity to experience an eclectic mix of Polish contemporary cinema.

Thank you for your support of the Polish Film Festival - Los Angeles. Without your generosity and support, this event would not be possible.

Please forward this message to your friends!

Sincerely,  
**Wladek Juskiewicz**  
Festival Director



## UCLA Lecture...

### 20th Anniversary of the Collapse of Communism

By: **Betsy Cepielik**

On March 4, Royce Hall at UCLA was the venue for a lecture on the Collapse of Communism by Dr. Jurgen Kocka of the Free University of Berlin. In spite of the unusual rainy weather, the meeting room was filled to capacity. This was the first in a series of lectures and programs that will be ongoing for a year.

Eight consulates helped to host the event. Present were consular representatives from Poland, Hungary, Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, and Austria.

Dr. Kocka compared the fall of Communism to the French Revolution of 1789. However, this was known as the "Velvet Revolution."

Poland was the first of the countries to hold a free election, in January 1989. The communists lost, and Lech Wałęsa was elected president. The Solidarity movement took place in the 1980's.

Hungary began a multi-party system in February 1989 and held elections in June, ousting the communists. Next to follow were the German DR (East Germany) and Czechoslovakia. The East Germans were inspired by the Poles and the Hungarians. There were mass demonstrations and migration. On September 11 the border was opened. 100,000 East Germans moved to West Germany and Austria. In October Gorbachev's visit caused demonstrations for reform and national unity. In late October there were larger demonstrations and tanks were rolled in. Finally, on November 9, the Berlin Wall was opened. In March 1990 a free election was held, and the communists lost.

In November 1990 there were workers' strikes and massive demonstrations (750,000 people) in Prague. In a week, the communist leaders resigned. Havel was elected president. Romania was still under the Stalinist rule of Nicolai Ceausescu. In December there were protests and violence, resulting in an execution and a new president. In Bulgaria there were problems regarding citizenship for Turks and Muslims. In their election, the former communists won.

Six different countries, but they had much in common. The professor likened it to a domino game. Poland and Hungary were the first to set the examples in their change of ideologies-from communist to multi-party systems and free elections and a market economy. The speed of the changes was what made it revolutionary. The only country that experienced violence was Romania. In the others, the regimes collapsed and the leaders stepped aside without violent means. National identity and autonomy were strong and there was now freedom of expression and movement.

Gorbachev instigated Glasnost (publicity) and Perestroika (restructuring.) The Soviet Union did not intervene, which allowed these countries to break away from its rule.

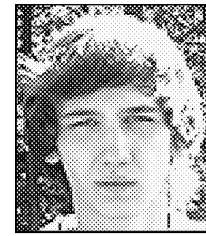
A Q and A session followed.

There were several people there who had lived in Poland when it was under communism, and they felt that the role of Poland was underplayed by the speaker. The role of the Catholic Church in Poland was also overlooked. Also, an issue was raised that many of the Poles and the country's socio-economic system never embraced true communism, as defined by Marxism-Leninism. The speaker confirmed that it was "a failed attempt at communism."

The speech was well organized and concise, but left the Polish people dissatisfied with the rather brief account of their suffering.

A reception followed.

Prior to finalizing this article, I showed it to two former residents of Poland who



## Janek's Corner

**Janek Szczepański**  
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## U.S. - Poland Parliamentary Youth Exchange Leadership Program

Have you ever dreamt about the mutual cooperation between two countries that are on the opposite edges of the world? It is more than real now. After the collapse of the 'communist era' in Poland, its cultural and economic ties have been broadened enormously.

Thanks to the ongoing steps undertaken by both sides of the cooperation agreement, the US-Poland parliamentary exchange was begun this year. The introduced scheme is based on the similar project focusing on the US-German cooperation.

The Leadership Program is a four-week exchange program focusing on civic education and leadership for 15 secondary school students and 2 educators each from Poland and the U.S. for a total of 34 participants. Program features for all participants include civic education workshops in Washington, D.C. and Warsaw, Poland; high school exchanges; presentations to classes and civic groups in host communities; a community service project; internships; host family stays; cultural excursions; and a joint summer camp to bring together teachers and educators from both countries to reflect on the experience of the exchange and to plan for future activities.

The program is outstandingly supported by American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS and its program partners - World Link, the Kościuszko Foundation, American Civics Center, and the Education for Democracy Foundation.

This year students from Nowy Sącz, Poland, were matched with their Chicagoan peers, and Gdańsk, Poland was clustered with Des Moines, Iowa. □

## Claim by Polish researcher

*Did German Firm Schaeffler Process Hair From Auschwitz?*

*The Schaeffler car components group, already in trouble due to the financial crisis, is now also being confronted with its history. After the use of forced laborers in World War II became public, there is a new, terrible suspicion: Schaeffler is believed to have processed hair from gassed Auschwitz victims.*

### Auschwitz

An article in *SPIEGELONLINE* dated March 2 tells of... German car components supplier Schaeffler appears to have been more deeply involved in the political system of the Third Reich than previously assumed, according to research conducted by SPIEGEL TV in Poland.

It was already known that a company acquired by Wilhelm Schaeffler in 1940 in the town of Kietrz in what is now Poland employed forced laborers, but Polish researchers are now also linking the name Schaeffler to the processing of human hair from the Auschwitz death camp.

The deputy head of the Auschwitz Museum's research department, Dr. Jacek Lachendro, told SPIEGEL TV that part (1.95 tons) of the hair still exhibited in Auschwitz today was found in a factory in Kietrz at the end of World War II.

The original statements given about the site where the hair was found showed the factory belonged to Schaeffler's company, Lachendro told SPIEGEL TV. He presented a bale of cloth made from human hair. The bale was found at the factory after the war.

He also said there were transcripts from the interrogation of former factory workers claiming that in 1943, two train wagon loads of hair were delivered to the factory in Kietrz. Tests conducted later by Polish authorities found that it was human hair containing traces of Zyklon B -- the

*Hair to page 11*

## German museum row defused

A March 4 article in *Euro News - World News* reports... A row in Berlin over a new museum that will show the plight of Germans forced out of Eastern Europe after World War Two appears to have been defused.

The nomination of conservative politician Erika Steinbach to run the museum has been withdrawn after a storm of protest from Poland.

Many in Poland accuse Steinbach of pushing an agenda to promote Germans as victims of a war they began.

Chancellor Angela Merkel had been under pressure from fellow conservatives to back Steinbach, but also had to weigh up the protest from Warsaw.

But now the lobby group that Steinbach heads, the League of Expelees, has bowed to pressure and withdrawn her nomination.

Some 12.5 million Germans were expelled from Poland, Hungary and the then Czechoslovakia after the defeat of the Nazis. □

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attended the symposium. I asked for their reactions to Dr. Kocka's presentation and if they would like to add their thoughts/feelings...

*Grażyna Gąsiorowska*: "Regarding the Solidarity Movement, Dr. Kocka did not tell (should have told) the audience... This Movement was preceded by a number of student protest rallies and many arrests as far back as the 1960's, as well as worker demonstrations in the early 1970's. All of these movements were crushed by the police and military brought from the former Soviet Union."

*Dariusz Zamojski*: "For me the last word 'suffering' was a little weak and people remember the last sentence and the last word. I do not want Polish people to suffer anymore. I lived under communism long enough and participated in demonstrations, I was roughed up on the streets by the ZOMO, but I never suffered. I was fighting, we are fighters!"

"Yes, Dr. Kocka's speech was organized and concise, but left the Polish people dissatisfied with his *very brief account of their fight and input in dismantling the communist regime.*" □