

# **POLISH FAMILY EXECUTED FOR HIDING JEWS IN WWII DECLARED MARTYRS BY POPE**

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The pope signed the decree on their martyrdom on his 86th birthday. It will allow the couple to be beatified, which is the last formal step before potential sainthood.

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A Polish husband and wife, both of whom were executed by Nazi police for hiding Jews in their farmhouse during the Second World War, were declared martyrs over the weekend by Pope Francis.

In a statement released Saturday, December 17th, the Vatican said that the “martyrdom of the servants of God” Jozef and Wiktoria Ulma along with their six young children, the oldest of whom was only 8 years old, should be recognized for hiding members of the Jewish community who were being hunted during Nazi Germany’s occupation of Poland in World War II, an act which ultimately led to their deaths, Crux Now [reports](#).

The Catholic couple, a farmer and beekeeper, who had been living in Markowa in southeastern Poland, hid several people, including a Jewish family of six and two Jewish sisters, who were being pursued by Nazis in 1942.

Tragically, in March of 1944, the Ulmas were betrayed by an informant, which led to a Nazi patrol surrounding the home, searching the property, and ultimately finding the eight Jewish people who had been hiding in the barn. After occupying forces executed the Jews, the mother and father—along with their seven children, Stanisława, age 8, Barbara, 7, Władysław, 6, Franciszek, 4, Antoni, 3, Maria, 2, and one unborn child—were also shot to death.

The pope signed the decree on their martyrdom on his 86th birthday. It will allow the couple to be beatified, which is the last formal step before sainthood can be pursued.

Pope Francis, who first learned about the Ulma family during a visit to Poland in 2016, later hailed the family as “an example of faithfulness to God and His commandments, of love for neighbor and of respect for human dignity.”