

Kaddish for Israel ben Meir Rubinstein

On the morning of October 22, the minyan gathered in the courtyard of al. Jerozolimskie 33 to say the first Kaddish for Israel ben Meir Rubinstein.

I will give them, in My House
And within My walls,
A monument and a name
Better than sons or daughters. (Is 56:5)

After an in-depth investigation, the data of a man who was murdered in the Holocaust and whose name is still unknown. Last Thursday, the 15th of the month of Heshvan, marked the 78th anniversary of his death, the day on which the Kaddish was first said.

Izrael ben Meir Rubinstein, whose family was murdered in Treblinka, was murdered on November 13, 1943. After the family was transported to the death camp, Izrael Rubinstein joined the Polish underground – a branch of the People's Army that operated against the Nazis. He hid in a monastery in Warsaw and was shot during one of the operations by another group of the underground, who mistook him for a Nazi. According to the testimony of the operations commander who fought beside him and saw him shot, nuns from the convent where Israel Rubinstein was hiding came to the scene and probably brought his body for burial. The grave, if it exists, has not yet been found. Rubinstein's pseudonym in the Polish underground was Jurek Świcki. The incident in which he died took place in Warsaw at Aleje Jerozolimskie 33.

The Holocaust machine took the lives of six million European Jews, but it is not the number that we should keep in mind, but the irretrievably lost human life behind it. Many of the victims have not received a dignified memorial, and their names have been lost. That is why it is so important

for our institution to preserve the memory of each individual.

Early Friday morning, October 22, at the site of Israel ben Meir Rubinstein's death, a minyan – a prayer quorum of ten male halakhic Jews – gathered for the first time for the Kaddish, one of Judaism's most important prayers. The director of the WGM, Albert Stankowski, was a member of the minyan.

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