

17. European Workshop

On dealing with the past of Auschwitz burdened by violence.

Invitation to broaden perspectives.

*2026 August 11 – 16,
Centre for Dialogue and Prayer
Oswiecim, Poland*



Since 2010 the Maximilian-Kolbe-Foundation organizes an annual workshop on dealing with the past of Auschwitz burdened by violence. Within the framework of the workshop 30 representatives of different European societies are invited to enter a joint process of learning on dealing with the experience of violence and its consequences in the exemplary analysis of the present significance of Auschwitz.

Analysing Auschwitz and its consequences – beyond the concrete case – gets an exemplary meaning for dealing with violence experience and its after-effects in general. Auschwitz stands for experiences having a lasting effect on the identity of our civilization. Europe has been marked and hurt by the experience of violence in the 20th century. Auschwitz and the connected experiences symbolized by Auschwitz are playing an important role in this context. This is shown in the different forms, contents, functions and ways Auschwitz is remembered by different European societies. These differences which are based on varying historical experience and contexts have great impact on the relationships within societies as well as between nations.

The workshop intends to invite the participants to jointly visualize the experiences made in connection with Auschwitz and to reflect on the different perspectives and contexts of experience and interpretation contributed by the participants. It is essential to make these differences visible and to make them comprehensible to one another and to oneself so that the negative impact of the history of violence might be overcome. The workshop intends to give an impulse for the work of the participants in their individual contexts.

In addition to the joint learning efforts of the participants, the project aims at giving a concrete testimony of the Church's efforts to achieve a treatment of the history of

violence aiming at reconciliation, at solidarity with the survivors, at respect for the sufferings of the victims which is marked by an understanding and the responsibility for the tense after-effects of this history. The joint and self-critical reflection on the role of the Church when dealing with a past burdened by violence is an indispensable component of our work.

Program

Tuesday, 11 August	THE GROUP
	Arrival until 03:00 p.m.
04:00 p.m.	Introduction into the aims and the programme of the Workshop - Dr Jörg Lüer <i>Vice-president Maximilian-Kolbe-Foundation, Germany</i> - Marta Titaniec <i>Polish Council for Jewish-Christian-Relations, Poland</i>
	Welcome words from the director of the Centre of Dialogue and Prayer, Dariusz Chrostowski
	Detailed introduction of the participants
06:00 p.m.	Dinner
07:00 p.m.	"Dealing with violent burdened past as a challenge". - Andrzej Kacczyk <i>Vice-Director of the Auschwitz Museum, Poland</i>
Wednesday, 12 August	THE CAMP
07:00 a.m.	Eucharistic Mass
07:30 a.m.	Breakfast
08:20 a.m.	Walk to the Basic camp
09:00 a.m.	Guided tour through the Basic camp of Auschwitz
12:45 p.m.	Lunch
01:45 p.m.	Departure by bus
02:00 p.m.	Guided tour through Auschwitz – Birkenau
06:00 p.m.	Supper
07:00 p.m.	Exchange in small groups and plenary session

Thursday, 13 August	THE SURVIVORS
07:30 a.m.	Eucharistic Mass
08:00 a.m.	Breakfast
	Meeting the survivors
09:30 a.m.	- Grzegorz Tomaszewski
10.30 a.m.	Coffee Break
10:50 a.m.	- Zdzisława Włodarczyk
12:30 a.m.	Meeting in Plenary
01:00 p.m.	Lunch
02:15 p.m.	Departure by bus
02:30 p.m.	Visit of Marian Kolodziej exhibition in Harmeze - Rev Dr Manfred Deselaers <i>Centre for Dialogue and Prayer, Poland</i>
04:30 p.m.	Coffee break
05:00 p.m.	Meeting in Plenary
06:00 p.m.	Supper
07:00 p.m.	“ Reflections on the role of the church in dealing with a violent past and reconciliation ’.
	- Auxiliary Bishop Dr Maciej Małyga, Wrocław
	Discussion
Friday, 14 August	DEALING WITH HISTORY AS A CHALLENGE
08:00 a.m.	Breakfast
09:45 a.m.	Walk to the Basic camp
10:30 a.m.	Celebration of Eucharistic Mass on the occasion of the 84 th Anniversary of P. Kolbe’s death
01:00 p.m.	Lunch
02:00 p.m.	Transfer by bus
	“ Where am I ”.

Extended guided tour to Oswiecim (Old Marketplace, Jewish Centre, Maximilian Kolbe church, Living in Oswiecim after WWII)

- **Dr Piotr Setkiewicz**

Researcher at the Museum Auschwitz, Poland

06:00 p.m.

Supper

07:00 p.m.

Lectures by participants on World War II and Auschwitz as it is remembered in their countries (I)

- **Dr Robert Zurek**

Director, Kreisau Foundation for European Understanding, Poland

- **Dr Jörg Lüer**

Vice-President, Maximilian-Kolbe-Stiftung, Germany

Discussion

Saturday, 15 August

07:30 a.m.

Eucharistic Mass

08:00 a.m.

Breakfast

09:00 a.m.

Lectures by participants on World War II and Auschwitz as it is remembered in their countries (II)

- **"The Second World War in Bulgarian memories"**

Elisaveta Belobradova, Member of Parliament, Bulgaria

- **"Shifting Memories: WWII Remembrances in Ukraine from the Soviet Era to the Present War".**

Andrii Shestalink, Historian, Ukraine

Discussion

10:45 a.m.

Coffee break

11:00 a.m.

OPEN SPACE 1

01:00 p.m.

Lunch

03:00 p.m.

OPEN SPACE 2

04:30 p.m.

Coffee break

05:00 p.m.

Plenary session
Report from the **OPEN SPACE**, discussion.

07:00 p.m.

Dinner – Celebration – Music

Sunday, 16 August

07:15 a.m. Breakfast
08:00 a.m. Transfer by bus

Spiritual reflection - Way of the Cross

- **Marta Titaniec**, Polish Council for Jewish-Christian-Relations, Poland

11:00 a.m. Feedback and reflection on the workshop
12:00 p.m. Lunch
End and departures of the participants.

Languages at the conference: **English, Polish and German**

Location of the workshop:

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This 17. European Workshop on the topic „Dealing with the past of Auschwitz burdened by violence” is organized by the Maximilian-Kolbe-Foundation.

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