

● The National Bank of Poland is putting into circulation coins commemorating Irena Sendler, Zofia Kossak and Sister Matylda Getter, the Poles who saved Jews, of the following face values:

2 zł – struck in standard finish, in Nordic Gold, on 1 December 2009,

20 zł – struck in proof finish, in silver on 2 December 2009.

The National Bank of Poland

holds the exclusive right to issue the currency in the Republic of Poland.

In addition to coins and notes for general circulation, the NBP issues collector coins and notes.

Issuing collector items is an occasion to commemorate important historic figures and anniversaries, as well as to develop the interest of the public in Polish culture, science and tradition.

Since 1996, the NBP has also been issuing occasional 2 złoty coins, struck in Nordic Gold, for general circulation.

All coins and notes issued by the NBP are legal tender in Poland.

NBP

National Bank of Poland

COINS



COINS ISSUED IN 2009 COINS ISSUED IN 2009



Information on the issue schedule and on how to purchase the coins can be found at the www.nbp.pl website

The coins were struck at the Mint of Poland in Warsaw.

Edited and printed: NBP Printing Office

Poles Who Saved the Jews
*Irena Sendler, Zofia Kossak,
Sister Matylda Getter*

Poles Who Saved the Jews – *Irena Sendler, Zofia Kossak, Sister Matylda Getter*

● The Jews, who were Polish residents, perished as a result of World War II and ensuing Nazi occupation. The 3.5 million-strong Jewish population was destroyed by cruel terror, forced settlement in ghettos and mass extermination in the gas chambers of Treblinka, Auschwitz and Belzec.

● Helping Jews in Poland was punishable by death. Against the background of such a grim reality, special respect is commanded by the conduct – humanitarian, full of courage and bravery – of those Poles who dared to save Jews, inevitably exposing themselves and their families to death.

● **Irena Sendler** (1910–2008). Before World War II, she worked as a social worker in the Social Care and Public Health Division. When persecution of Jews had started, she organised a network of social workers who jointly created a secret Jewish aid organisation.

● The social workers smuggled food, medicine and vaccines against typhoid into the ghetto which had been created in November 1940.

● At the turn of 1941–1942, large numbers of ghetto Jews were dying of starvation and diseases. The group of social workers decided, with the approval of Jewish organisations in the ghetto, to rescue Jewish children. They were led out in different ways and then placed in Polish families or convent orphanages.

● At the end of 1942, the Polish Council to Aid Jews was set up and Irena Sendler became the head of children's department.

● **Zofia Kossak** (1890–1968) is known as an outstanding writer. She was a co-founder and ideologist of the Front for the Rebirth of Poland (FRB), an underground social and Catholic organisation created in 1940.

● In the summer of 1942, together with Wanda Filipowicz, Witold Bienkowski, Władysław Bartoszewski, Janina Wąsowicz, Stefan Szwedowski and other social and political activists, she initiated setting up the Committee to Aid Jews, later on renamed to the Konrad Żegota Provisional Committee to Aid Jews. The code name "Żegota", coined by Zofia Kossak, was retained in the future name of the Council to Aid Jews which was founded in December 1942.

● „Żegota” has remained for ever a symbol of aid provided to the Jews during the time of Nazi occupation.

● In August 1942, when Warsaw ghetto inhabitants were deported to the extermination camp in Treblinka, the FRB issued a leaflet entitled: Protest by Zofia Kossak, where she wrote that the world was looking at that crime, most dreadful than anything ever seen before, and kept silent. Anyone who keeps silent in the face of massacre becomes an accomplice in murder. The one who does not condemn it – consents to it.

● The work and activity of Zofia Kossak considerably influenced and strengthened Polish people belief that it was necessary to help the Jews.

● **Sister Matylda Getter** (1870–1968) was greatly devoted to educational and didactic activity, already before World War II. She was the Mother Superior of the Warsaw province of the Congregation of the Franciscan Sisters of the Family of Mary. On the outbreak of World War II, Sister Matylda Getter was nearly 70 years old but the age did not prevent her from helping the needy persecuted by invaders.

● Her energy, wisdom, practicality, and courage lit fully up at the war time. During the Nazi occupation, a lot of Jews: children, young people and elders stayed temporarily in the modest, wooden house – the seat of the Congregation of the Franciscan Sisters of the Family of Mary in Warsaw, in 52 Hoża Street. Then, the children were sent to convent orphanages, adult girls – to work for trusted people and their families, elders – to convents of the Congregation located in secluded spots.

● The activity of these wonderful women has been highly appraised by Israel's Yad Vashem (the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem) which recognised them as one of the first **"Righteous among the Nations"**.

Halina Grubowska
Jewish Historical Institute

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FACE VALUE **20** ZŁ

metal **Ag 925/1000** ■ finish **proof** ■ diameter **38.61 mm**
weight **28.28 g** ■ mintage (volume) **100,000 pcs**

OBVERSE: In the centre, an image of the Eagle established as the State Emblem of the Republic of Poland. Below the Eagle, a stylised image of a wall with a breach in the middle and broken barbed wire. To the left of the wall, an image of the Star of David. At the bottom, an inscription, 20 ZŁ. To its left, the notation of the year of issue, 2009. On the right-hand side and at the top, a semicircular inscription, RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA (Republic of Poland). The Mint's mark, M/W, under the Eagle's left leg.

REVERSE: At the top, a stylised image of a bust of Sister Matylda Getter. On its right, a circumscription, SIOSTRA MATYLDA/GETTER (Sister Matylda/Getter). At the bottom, a stylised image of a bust of Irena Sendler; below, a circumscription, IRENA SENDLEROWA. At the bottom and on the right-hand side, a stylised image of a bust of Zofia Kossak; below, a circumscription, ZOFIA KOSSAK. On the left-hand side, a semicircular inscription, POLACY RATUJĄCY ŻYDÓW (Poles who saved the Jews). In the background, stylised images of birds.

Coin designer: **ROUSSANKA NOWAKOWSKA**



FACE VALUE **2** ZŁ

metal **CuAl5Zn5Sn1 alloy** ■ finish **standard** ■ diameter **27.00 mm**
weight **8.15 g** ■ mintage (volume) **1,400,000 pcs**

OBVERSE: An image of the Eagle established as the State Emblem of the Republic of Poland. On the sides of the Eagle, the notation of the year of issue, 20-09. Below the Eagle, an inscription, ZŁ 2 ZŁ. In the rim, an inscription, RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA (Republic of Poland), preceded and followed by six pearls. The Mint's mark, M/W, under the Eagle's left leg.

REVERSE: A stylised image of a wall with a breach in the shape of a hand, in the middle. On the right-hand side, above the wall, an inscription, ŻEGOTA. On the left-hand side, above the wall, an image of barbed wire. At the top, a semicircular inscription, POLACY RATUJĄCY ŻYDÓW (Poles who saved the Jews).

ON THE EDGE: The inscription, NBP, repeated eight times, every second one inverted by 180 degrees, separated with stars.

Obverse designer: **EWA TYC-KARPIŃSKA**
Reverse designer: **ROUSSANKA NOWAKOWSKA**