

**Opening of the exhibition**  
**"Between Life and Death, Stories of rescue during the Holocaust"**

28 January 2025, Strasbourg

Intervention by Theodoros Rousopoulos  
President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

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Ladies and gentlemen,

It is truly an honour to stand before you today as we open the exhibition dedicated to the stories of rescue during the Holocaust—a time of profound darkness in human history.

This exhibition brings to light extraordinary acts of courage and selflessness. The righteous among the nations, who risked their lives to save Jewish men, women, and children, serve as a powerful reminder of the immense strength of the human spirit.

I am thinking of interreligious solidarity, like that shown by the Orthodox priest Aleksey Glagolev or the Greek-Catholic priest Pavel Peter Gojdič [Goy-dich], who issued baptism certificates to Jewish children. Or families such as Oksana Semergey's from Ukraine or Maria and Peter Rehák's from Slovakia, who fostered Jewish children despite the risks to their own families.

These individuals made the courageous choice to act with compassion rather than indifference, to embrace humanity over hatred, even when the personal cost was unimaginable. Their bravery continues to inspire us, showing that even in the face of the worst atrocities, a single individual's actions can make an extraordinary difference.

We also gather here to honour the survivors—those who endured unthinkable suffering yet found the resilience to share their experiences. Take Alice Löwenthal, for example, who survived the hardship of wartime and the deportation of her two young children to Auschwitz. At the age of 38, she found the strength to start a new family. Yet, despite her resilience, Alice struggled to come to terms with the weight of her past.

The importance of remembrance cannot be overstated. Organisations like the one hosting us today play a critical role in passing this history on to future generations. By creating exhibitions like this, they help us understand that these stories are not just chapters in a textbook. They are vivid, human experiences that challenge us to confront the past and carry its lessons into the present. These stories teach us empathy and remind us of the vigilance required to safeguard humanity's future.

As you explore this exposition, may you carry with you the stories of courage and survival. Let them serve as a call to action—a reminder not only to honour those who came before us but also to ensure a brighter, safer world for those who come after us.

Thank you.