

Zoltan Blum At The Synagogue In Dej



Here I am at the synagogue in Dej, Cluj county, on the Holocaust Memorial Day, on 12 October 2004. I am lighting a candle because every Jew who was deported is doing in the same manner. There, in Dej, there were six Jews who were deported, including myself, and each of us lighted a candle for the six millions of Jews who were deported. The Day of Holocaust Commemoration was established in Romania on 9 October but in 2004 it took place on the 12th because the 9th was on Sabbath.

Now I'm the only Jew left in Gherla.

After I came back from deportation, I didn't observe all the religious traditions. I have to admit I didn't keep the kashrut, for instance. Since there weren't enough Jews for a minyan in Fizesul Gherlei anymore, I came to Gherla for the large holidays: Purim, Pesach, Yom Kippur, and Rosh Hashanah. But I didn't keep the Sabbath as a holiday - I worked on Saturday... That was a sin. I did recite the Kaddish for my parents though. Now I'm the only Jew left in Gherla. I always go to Dej or Cluj for the high holidays. And I fast.

One more thing about the deportation. Speaking of the Righteous among the Nations... There were priests who said 'What are you doing to these people?' But there were also priests who said 'Take them away, they don't have the same faith as we do!' That's why I say that a man's soul is his true religion. I may not be an educated man, but you should take my word for it! One must respect other human beings, regardless of their differences. Think of the Ten Commandments. People who have lost their parents can at least visit their tombs. But what about us Jews? Where can we go to mourn our parents? In Heaven?! They turned them to ashes - and that's a terrible crime.