

## Krystyna Budnicka



This is a picture of me taken for my passport in 2001 in Warsaw. I have been strongly involved with the Jewish community in Poland since 1990. I was the vice-chairperson of the Children of the Holocaust Organization for a few years. I'm very attached to the people there. And it makes me very happy to see young people in Poland rediscovering their Jewishness and returning to their long-lost roots. No, I don't feel any inner discord or conflict. And people here, my friends and acquaintances, understand me, I think. On Yom Kippur, a Sunday, I went to mass in the morning, and in the evening I lit a candle in the synagogue for my loved ones. I'm sure my mother understands me. From her perspective such earthly matters are simpler. I've never hidden the fact that I'm a Jew at all. Everyone knows who I am. I went to Israel for the first time in 1961. Everyone at work was astonished when I came back a few weeks later. I think they were sure I would stay there. But I didn't want to stay there. I've been to Israel twice, in 1961 and 1989. I love it very much, but I would never take the decision to move there because my roots are here. Israel is a very special place for me because it's a Jewish country, the cradle of both Judaism and Christianity. My country. Mine is the grave of Rachel and mine the grave of Christ. I'm no missionary, so for me Judaism and Christianity form a kind of whole. I'm very happy when I'm in Israel and I always want

to return there. But my home is here, and it's here that I feel relatively secure. I'm alone here, because I have no family, but I'm not lonely. I don't think I would be happier anywhere else. Perhaps in Israel? If I had emigrated years ago. I've been a Catholic for a long time. A Catholic Jew. I am consistent in my choice. I come from a very religious family and religious faith is in my genes.