

## MAYOR LOUKAS CARRER & METROPOLITAN CHRYSOSTOMOS



When the Second World War broke out, there were about 275 Jews living on the Greek island of Zakynthos in the Ionian Sea. Until 1943 the island was under Italian control and the Jews remained unharmed, however, after Mussolini's fall, the Germans occupied the Italian territories and on September 9, 1943 a German force landed on the island.

The German commander ordered all Jews to be assembled so that they could be deported to the mainland and from there to the camps in Poland. To prepare for the deportation, the German officer summoned the Greek mayor, Loukas Carrer, and ordered him to prepare a list of all the Jews on the island. The mayor went to the local church leader, Metropolitan Chrysostomos for assistance. Chrysostomos volunteered to negotiate with the Germans and told Carrer to burn the list of Jewish names. He then approached the German commander and implored him not to deport the Jews. The Jews were Greek citizens, he said. They had done no harm to their neighbors and did not deserve to be punished by deportation. When the German would not listen and insisted on receiving the list of all local Jews, Chrysostomos took a piece of paper, wrote the mayor's and his own name on it and handed it over. "Here is the list of Jews your required", he said.

The German authorities were resolved to continue with their plans. Realizing their attempt to stop the deportation failed, the Metropolitan and the mayor warned the Jews on the island, told them to leave their homes and go into hiding in the mountains. Chrysostomos promised that the Greek islanders would provide them with food and shelter. Two thirds of the Jews followed the instructions and stayed in hiding until the island was liberated. In August-September 1944 three small German boats came to deport the Jews. However the small German force was unable to round up all the Jews, and the community was left relatively unharmed.

*On March 14, 1978, Yad Vashem recognized Loukas Georgios Karrer and Metropolitan Dimitrios Chrysostomos as Righteous Among the Nations. Their courageous act is included in school curricula in Israel and is taught to Israeli students.*

Sources: <https://www.yadvashem.org/righteous/stories/chrysostomos-karreri.html>

<https://www.mixanitouxronou.gr/ean-apofasisete-na-apelasete-tous-evreous-tha-parete-ki-emenai-iroiki-apantisi-tou-mitropolitou-zakinthou-stous-germanous-pou-esose-272-simplites-tou-apo-veveo-thanato/>

## **Story on Metropolitan Dimitrios Chrysostomos**

composed by team 2

### **A letter to his family**

*Dear family,*

*I am writing this letter to explain the situation to you and the fact that I had to leave you without explaining anything.*

*As you already know, Loukas Carrer, the mayor, came to me to ask for help because the Germans wanted us to tell them the names of our Jews. We finally agreed that Carrer would burn the list and everything else that had the names of our Jews. I volunteered to negotiate with the Germans.*

*So I went to the German commander and did everything I could, I begged him not to deport the Jews from our island. I said: "They are Greek citizens and they don't deserve to be pushed for nothing." But the commander didn't even listen. All he said was that he wanted the names of Jews on Zakynthos.*

*I went back to Carrer and we discussed what we could do. We finally made a list – it only had his name and mine on it. So I took it back to the German commander and gave it to him, saying\_ "Here is the list of Jews you required."*

*He looked at it, first was confused and then he got furious, shouting at me and threatening me with death. I only repeated "This is the list you wanted. Do whatever you think you have to do." I wasn't scared, however, but rather proud of what we had done.*

*The German commander finally realized that his plan had failed. He said: "Get out of my sight for now. You'll hear from me."*

*When going home I made sure nobody followed me, so I went straight to Carrer. We then split to make sure we would see all our Jews and tell them to pack a few things and leave their homes to hide in the mountains. We reassured them that we would bring food and that they would have shelter.*

*The next step was to talk to some of the Zakythians who live up in the mountains. They promised to hide the Jews and give them whatever they need. In case that the Germans will search in the mountains, they will pretend that the Jews are family members.*

*I hope that the Jews will be okay and that the Germans won't find them. All my prayers are for them. God help them.*

*Dear family, I am very sad that this had to happen. But I am sure you will understand.*

*With all my love and hopes for a brighter future,*

*Yours,*

*Dimitrios*