Borkowska, Anna

(d. 1988), Mother superior of a small convent of Dominican nuns located in Kolonia Wilenska, a town near Vilna, Lithuania. During World War II, Borkowska aided Jews in her area who were being persecuted by the Nazis.

The Germans invaded Lithuania in mid-1941 and began murdering the Jews there almost immediately. During the summer, thousands of Jews were massacred in Ponary, a site about six miles from Vilna. At that time, Borkowska agreed to hide in her convent 17 members of Jewish Zionist youth groups for short periods of time. Later, she helped the Vilna Ghetto underground by sneaking weapons into the ghetto. Abraham Sutzkever, the Yiddish poet and partisan fighter active in the Vilna Ghetto, later recalled that the first four grenades obtained by the Vilna underground were a gift from Borkowska—and she even showed resistance leader Abba Kovner how to use them. She also provided them with other weapons.

The Nazis found out about Borkowska's activities in 1943; in September she was arrested, the convent was closed down, and the other nuns moved elsewhere. One was sent to a labor camp. Borkowska survived the war, and in 1984 was designated as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.