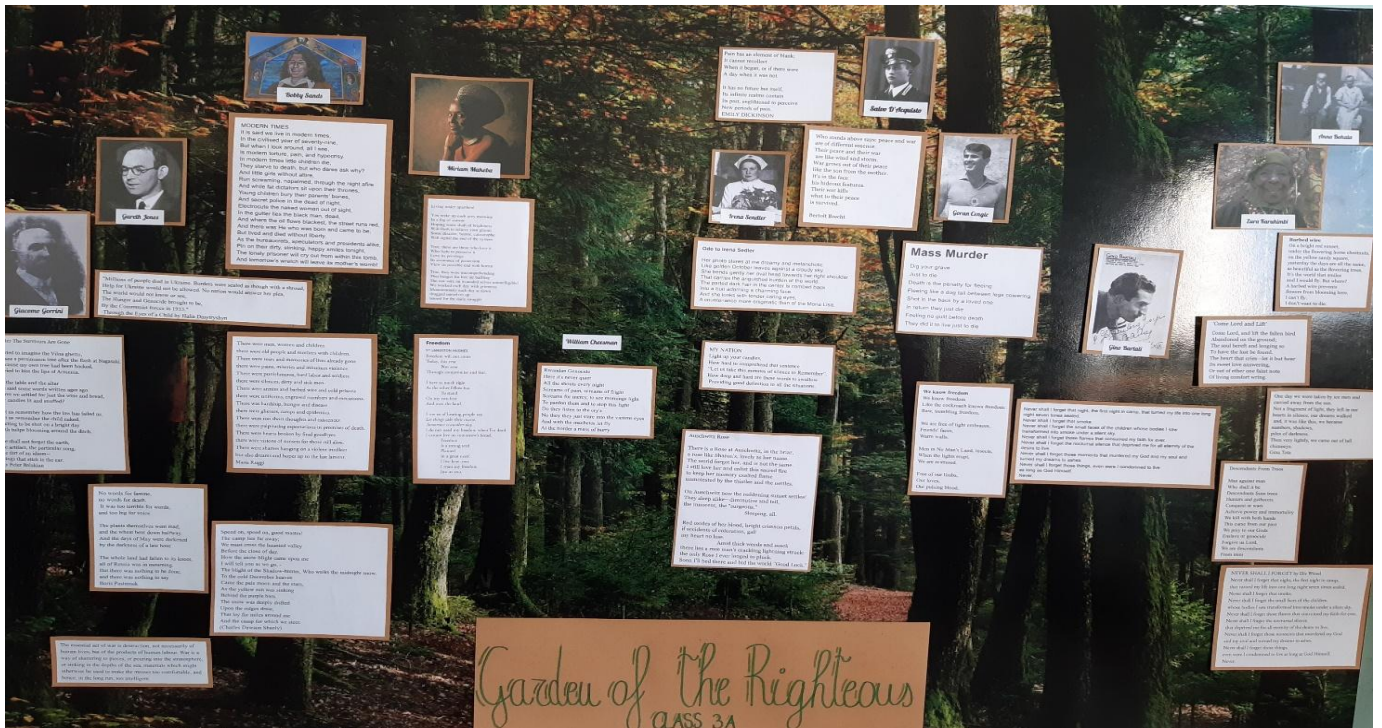


THE FOREST OF MEMORY

Garden of the Righteous



The Civic Education/English project: "The Forest of Memory – Garden of the Righteous", made by class 3A, on the themes of racial hatred, discrimination and genocide, is born with the purpose to increase the students' ethical dimension, in order to educate them to responsible citizenship and legality and help them revive the memory of the endless number of the victims of past injustices and horrors, to keep them always alive. The project represents therefore a dutiful tribute both to all the victims of injustice and to the ones who fought against any form of massacre and genocide, to save innocent lives.

Educational goals

- a) Increase the students' awareness towards delicate issues, such as: the Shoah, the massacre of the Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda, the genocide of the Armenians in Turkey and Apartheid, to help the students reflect on the meaning of personal sacrifice in the name of justice and learn how to respect oneself and others;
- b) Create a positive relationship with past events to draw important lessons from them;
- c) Acquire social and moral responsibility, including trust in oneself and in others, to foster greater mutual understanding;
- d) Consolidate the spirit of solidarity by building values that could take full account of the plurality of points of view within a society;
- e) Learn to listen and resolve conflicts peacefully.

The Students' product

A glossy cardboard poster of a forest, each tree of which symbolizes a victim of a genocide or a personal sacrifice in the name of the so many lives saved. Pinned on each tree an English poem which expresses the great sorrow in the face of all human sufferings, that each student, after learning by heart, repeats aloud in class.

Starting from extreme evil, we can convey an optimistic message: any situation can be overturned if every person takes responsibility, even if the results are not immediate. Choice is an act of individual freedom that allows every human being to act as a barrier against evil. Hence, re-reading the stories of the Righteous shows the concrete foundations of hope, creating a virtuous path: while the memory of past genocides illuminates the present, a direct relationship with sufferance allows us to better understand what happened yesterday. Yet, not forgetting is only the first part of "making memory". There is a higher form of redemption that enlivens memory, turning it into an instrument of responsibility: to act in the present brings to prevent the mechanisms of hatred and dehumanization of human beings from retaking place.