

"The opposite of  
love is not  
hate, it's  
indifference.

- Elie Wiesel

## Poland Remembrance Tour 2017

During our tour to Poland, we visited many memorable and historically significant places which we as students will remember and never forget.

At the start of the tour, we received two pebbles. One to keep as a memory and the other to place out of a sign of respect at a place that we thought was most symbolic.

The first was The Schindler's Museum. Many of you would have heard of the name Schindler from the famous Spielberg film Schindler's List. He employed Jews to work in his factory, in the hope of them not being sent to the concentration camps. He saved over 1,000 Jews who are still known today as *Schindler Jews*.

Next, we went to the memorial site of the labour camp Płaszow, where stands the second biggest mass grave of the persecution of minorities marked by the statue of the *Broken Hearts*. The curved necks with the rock on top illustrate the force and oppression upon the prisoners. The crack through their hearts shows the loss of hope and the deterioration of memories of the Jews. Some of us chose to place our stone at Płaszow because the vast emptiness of it provoked heartfelt emotions.



Later in the evening we visited the 68 chairs of Krakow... 68 representing the 68,000 people in the ghetto. In groups we discussed if sitting on the chairs was morally correct. We came to the overall conclusion that people, although you could, shouldn't sit on the chairs because they symbolise the Jewish memory will never be forgotten. For our evening meal, we went to the Jewish quarter where we ate a traditional Jewish meal, and listened to very talented Jewish musicians, symbolising the failure of the destruction of Jewish culture under the Nazis.



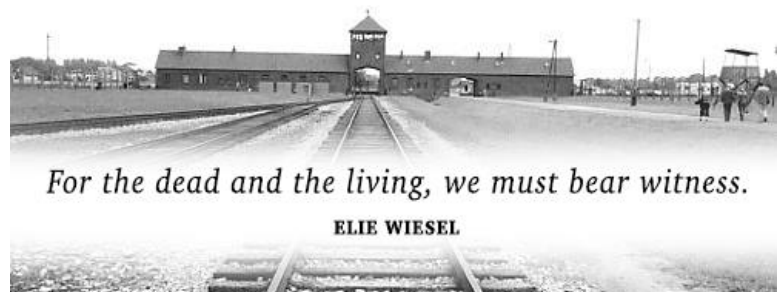
The penultimate day could arguably be said to be the most harrowing experience of the tour. This was when we went to Auschwitz – Birkenau, the labour and death camps. We started off at Auschwitz where over 1,200,000 people were killed, tortured and starved. The sheer scale of mass murder carried out here shocked and touched all of us. We saw a room of hair that was collected from prisoners of the camp and sold to factories which showed the devastating reality of the Nazi regime.



Many people have and think Auschwitz is the main concentration camp; however Birkenau is a nearby larger one where the persecution of minorities was on a greater scale. The infamous train tracks running through the entrance is at Birkenau where the historically moving photo is taken.

Six million Jews and other targeted groups lost their lives in the holocaust; there were twenty two more camps like Auschwitz – Birkenau, with up to 900 extra subcamps across Europe.

As ambassadors... we shall remember.



*For the dead and the living, we must bear witness.*

ELIE WIESEL