

## HARTHEIM CASTLE MEMORIAL

On 5 May, we visited Hartheim Castle. We got up early and then got on the bus at 8 o'clock. The journey took about an hour and a half and this was the first time we had a good view of the countryside around Bad Ischl and Ebensee. During the ride we were given an introduction to the themes of the trip and the place we would be visiting. We were all very interested and learned many new things.

When we arrived, we immediately saw the enclosure, which was smaller than we had expected. There was an enclosure outside where there were goats. Many of us stopped by to pet them and feed them with blades of grass we found on the ground.

At the beginning of the visit, we had half an hour to explore the exhibition of the castle on our own, which has the motto "Value of Life". In the process, we discovered many interesting things. For each room there was a small, detailed description of the pictures and artefacts. When we read the little cards with the stories of the people concerned, it was as if time had stopped at that moment.

After visiting the exhibition, we met up with the young people from Ebensee and Wangen who were on the trip with us. We split into two groups and started to visit the castle. We first walked around the castle and then entered the interior. During the explanations of the museum guide, we felt the fear and awe of this castle. The castle was so small, but so many people were deported and murdered there. The frightening thing was that it was so close to a housing estate and very few people from the surrounding area did anything about what was happening.

We perceived the castle as beautiful and peaceful from the outside and frightening and suffocating from the inside.

At the end of the visit, we all came out of the castle together. We realised that appearances of the beautiful castle can be deceiving. The visit was very thought-provoking for us young people and showed us how important it is that this history is never repeated.

