

A photograph of a grassy field with many small white daisies and yellow flowers in the foreground. In the background, there are several trees, some with bare branches and some with green leaves, under a clear blue sky.

# How to create a Garden of the Righteous

Tips, ideas and suggestions for your school or your city

# Welcome

These tips will help you create your new Garden of the Righteous!

Links to further insights are blue and underlined: if you are looking up these tips in a digital format you will just have to click your mouse, otherwise use your smart-phone by framing the corresponding QR-code.

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# What is the European Day of the Righteous?

After [Gariwo's call](#), 6 March has been set to be the European Day of the Righteous by the European Parliament with [Written Declaration number 03/2012](#). On 7 December 2017 Italy became the first country to officially join the marking of that recurrence, with the law that establishes also at a national level a Day in memory of the Righteous of the humanity.

Every year we celebrate the example of the Righteous of past and present, to spread the values of responsibility, tolerance and solidarity.

Building on Yad Vashem's definition, we have broadened the Righteous concept to include the men and women who have rescued human lives during genocide and defended human dignity in totalitarianism, in the gloomiest times of history all over the world. We chose to hold this ceremony on 6 March because it is the date of the passing away of [Moshe Bejski](#), the great creator of the Avenues of the Righteous in Yad Vashem.

Today the European Day of the Righteous is celebrated with several initiatives in Italy and in the world; the most common way to do it is the creation of new Gardens of the Righteous or the dedication of new trees in the existing ones.

Following are a series of tips and suggestions to create your new Garden.



Gariwo's call



Written Declaration n. 3/2012



Moshe Bejski

# Who are the Righteous?

According to us, the Righteous **are not victims**, but those who commit themselves to rescue the persecuted during genocides, to defend the human dignity stepped on by the totalitarian regimes, and to testify to the truth in order to never forget. During the years, we have honoured the Righteous of the Holocaust, the Armenian genocide, of Gulag, Rwanda, Cambodia, Latin America; the civil courage of journalists, intellectuals, diplomats, religious people, ordinary citizens; the example of the “Righteous of our time”, who stand up against fundamentalism and assume their **responsibilities** in front of the challenges of present times.

It is always useful to consider, in the choice of the Righteous, the personal risk that an individual has run, an element that becomes even more important for the Righteous of our time.

## Who decides who are the Righteous?

It would be important to create structures capable of making shared choices about the people who are going to be nominated for the recognition as the Righteous. You could think of a Committee approving the proposals. Nominations should be evaluated after carrying out thorough researches about the Righteous in books, testimonies and meaningful publications, or with the support of a Scientific Committee.

You can look at the [list of the Righteous](#) of the various genocides available on our site, or consult the archive of the Genocide Memorials, such as the one of Yad Vashem.

To help in choosing the Righteous, while fully respecting the autonomy of the Gardens, Gariwo has created the [Charter of the Righteous of GariwoNetwork](#), with some criteria to identify the exemplary figures to be honored, in line with our orientation. However, Gariwo is always available to the Gardens to evaluate the candidacy together and examine even the most controversial cases.



List of the Righteous



Charter of the Righteous  
of GariwoNetwork



# What are the Gardens of the Righteous?

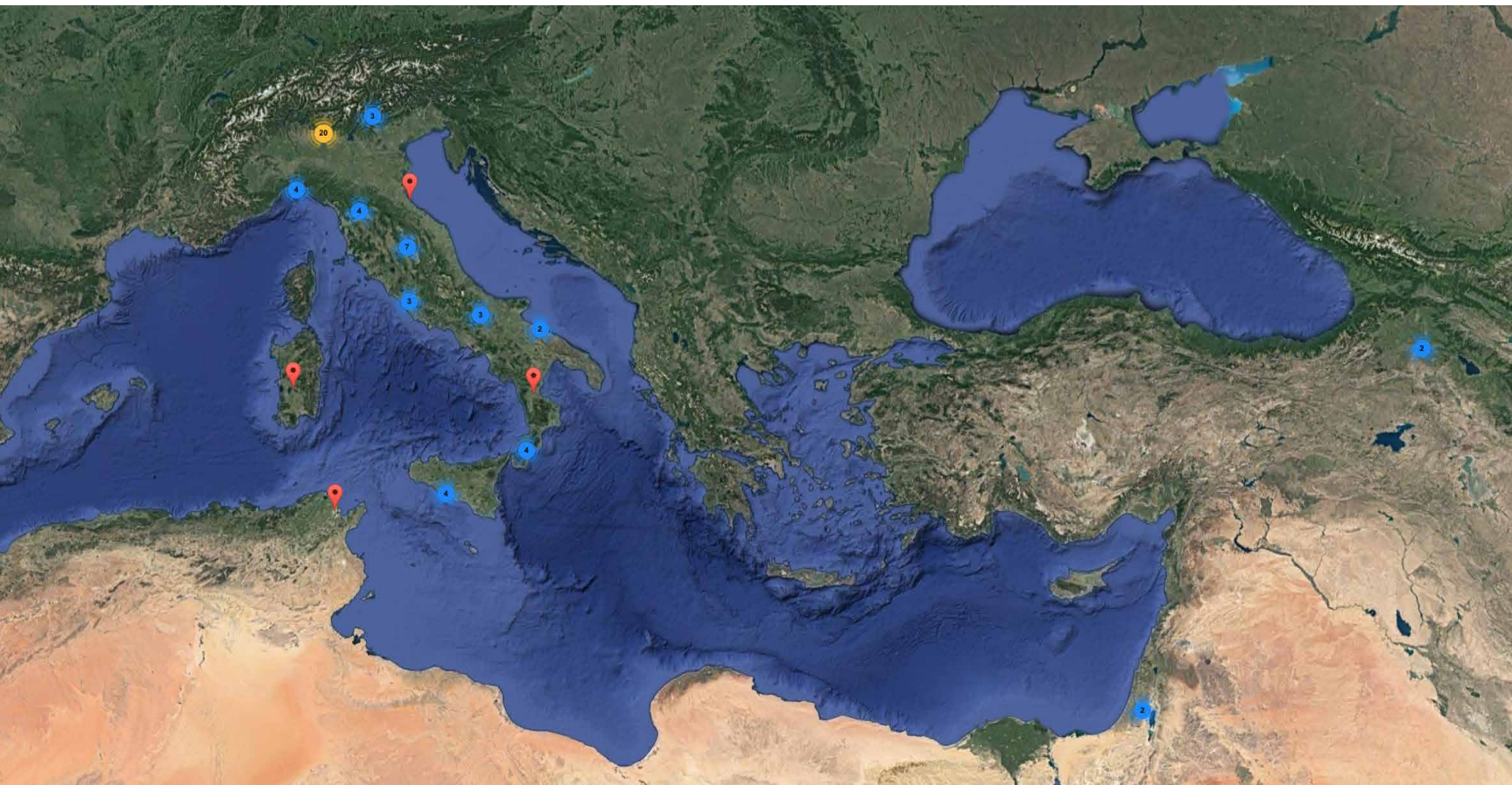
The Gardens are just like open books which are telling the stories of the Righteous. They are public spaces, places of memory, meeting and dialogue, in which it's possible to organize initiatives for students and citizens, to keep alive the examples of the Righteous all the year round, not only by planting new trees.

This is why we created a widespread network, **GariwoNetwork**, to connect those who have already created (or want to create) a Garden in their own city, following the criteria written in the Charter of the Righteous.

On our website, you can find the [list of the Gardens of the Righteous](#) in Italy and worldwide.



All the Gardens of the Righteous



# What is GariwoNetwork?

*GariwoNetwork* is a network designed to connect all the subjects involved in spreading the message of the Righteous, from teachers to associations, to the representatives of the Gardens of the Righteous in every part of the world. The foundation of the Network is the [Charter of Responsibilities 2017](#), launched at the end of the series of conferences *The Crisis of Europe and the Righteous of our time* and signed by important Italian and international personalities.

Users of this network have at their disposal a dedicated page within our site, accessible with credentials provided by the editorial staff of Gariwo, where it is possible to talk about experiences and projects and get in touch with other users to create synergies and collaborations.

*GariwoNetwork* was launched on 16 November 2017 at the Cariplo Foundation in Milan, with an international conference on the topics covered in the Charter and testimonies on educational projects and on the Gardens of the Righteous in Italy, Europe and the Middle East.



Charter of Responsibilities 2017





# The experience of Milan

The [Garden of the Righteous Worldwide](#), located in the park of Monte Stella, was born in 2003 on Gariwo's proposal. In 2008, the Association for the Garden of the Righteous – formed by the **Municipality of Milano**, **Gariwo** and **UCEI** (Italian Union of Jewish Communities) – was constituted to ensure the management and the planning of the activities.

During the inauguration of the Garden of Milan, we have honoured Moshe Bejski, Pietro Kuciukian and Svetlana Broz, promoters of the Garden of the Righteous in Jerusalem, Yerevan and Sarajevo.

From year to year we have chosen a theme to characterize every ceremony (i.e. “The unheard witnesses”, “The public institutions in the service of good”, “Religious and laical people: one only responsibility”, “Yesterday and today the Righteous are always necessary”, “The moral and civil resistance of women for their dignity”). Then we invited the honoured exemplary figures, their relatives or representatives to unveil memorial stones or plaques that we have dedicated to them.

During the year we also organize [guided tours for schools](#) and citizens.



Garden of Milan



Guided tours



# Create your Garden of the Righteous

If your town still lacks a Garden of the Righteous, you can create it and inaugurate it on the occasion of the 6 March. You can ask your City Hall to see if it is willing to devote an area to this purpose, and you can cooperate with a school, a university, an association, an institution in order to locate the ideal area to create the new Garden. In the last few years, it is more and more frequent the creation of [spread Gardens](#), which develop in different areas in the city – such as schools –, creating various places of memory.

When you need to identify the figures to commemorate, think of what is closer to your community. Trees must be chosen accordingly to the climate of your town. In Israel they chose the olive and the carob tree, in Milan we plant blackthorns, in Riva del Garda pomegranates. Near every tree you should indicate the name of the Righteous you wish to honour and, in case you still have space, even his actions. You could place granite memorial stones, but you could use other materials, like metal plaques.

There are also other ways to honour these exemplary figures, with names carved on a wall or a stele inside a school, in a lecture room or in a City Hall. Such a choice has been made for the [Memorial in Yerevan](#), for the Garden of Milan after its redevelopment and for the Righteous Among the Nations honoured in Yad Vashem... since it has no more space available for the trees!

In order to have more information for a Garden of the Righteous in your city, please contact us: [segreteria@gariwo.net](mailto:segreteria@gariwo.net)



The spread Garden of Catania



The Memorial in Yerevan





# Share your ceremony!

Send us the pictures you took at your event and the names of the Righteous you have honoured: we will create a dedicated page on our website and we will add your city to the places that, both in Italy and all over the world, remembers the Righteous.

You can also send us a brief report of your initiative, you will help us to have more information to tell it.

Thank you for deciding to celebrate the Righteous with us.  
Keep follow us!

