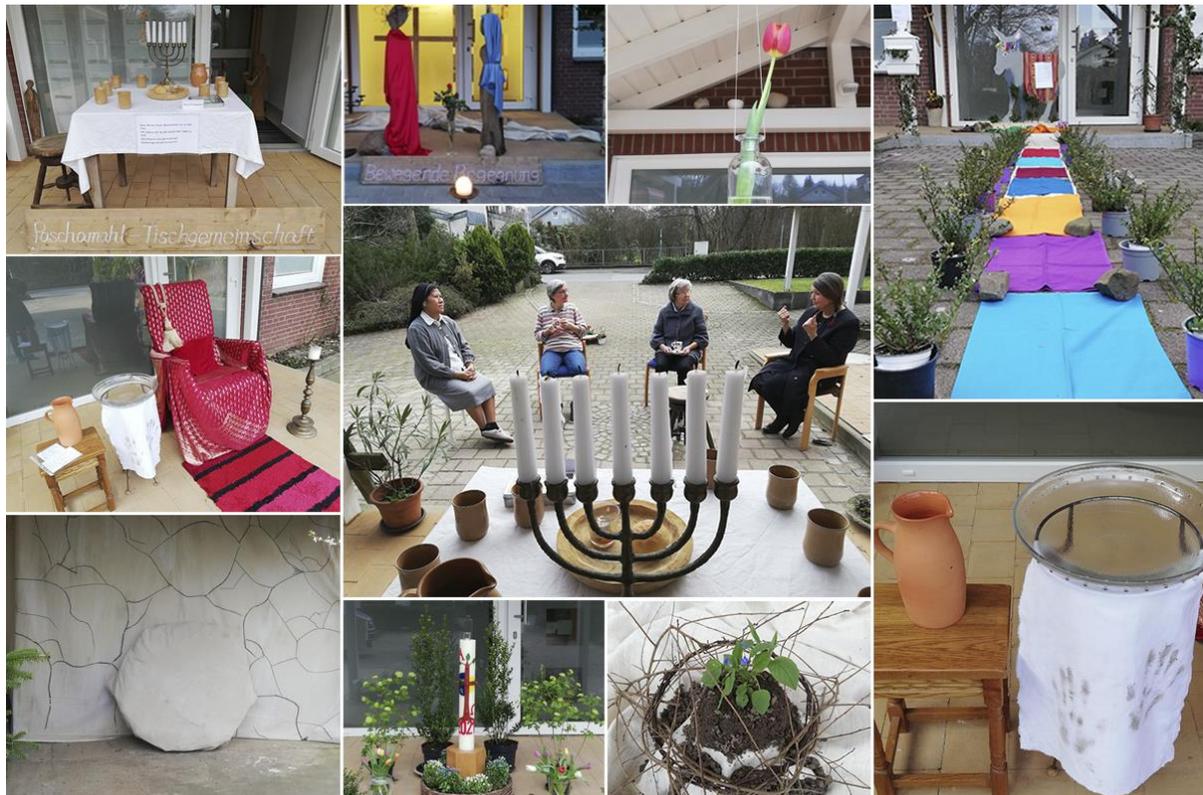


Lent and Easter at Emmaus Community, Coesfeld, Germany



How could we prepare ourselves for Easter during 2021, another year marked by the pandemic? The Emmaus Community undertook two major activities during Lent: setting up Stations of the Cross and writing a card to every sister in Annenthal.

Due to Covid 19, we could not hold gatherings for prayers or special events as we wished during this important liturgical time, but there were many other creative ways to engage with people. The idea of arranging our own Stations of the Cross was born of the experience last Advent when we saw the people's interest in our large Advent wreath laid in the drive yard.

The four of us chose eight themes for six Lenten weekends, Good Friday, and Easter week: Passover Meal--Table Community; Hand Washing – Innocence; Moving Encounter; Carrying Together; Fallen But Not the End; The King is Coming; Dead and Buried; Risen – Alleluia. At each station were a wooden panel with the theme of the week written on it, a text, symbols, and a prayer, all developed and displayed on the porch of our new house. Of course, we did not forget to hang an invitation with its explanation on the street in front of the house.

The reaction was, indeed, more than we expected. Our sisters from Annenthal, neighbors, friends, acquaintances, passers-by, deliberately or by coincidence, came by, were inspired, sometimes stayed a while, and took the prayer we prepared.

Though we tried not to disturb visitors while they had quiet time before the station, we did engage with them, explaining its meaning to as many people as possible.

Meanwhile, we also wrote cards containing greetings, well wishes, or some spiritual messages and delivered them to about sixteen sisters every Sunday, so that all of nearly a hundred sisters in Annenthal received our surprise card by the end of Lent. These were small practices of love for neighbors and a bonding with our elderly sisters in an era of reduced personal contact. Needless to say, the sisters' happy reactions made us even happier.

Concrete actions always bring more meaning to our life. Since our life as religious often centers on faith in the Resurrection, the core of Christianity, this Easter became undoubtedly no less significant than other years with more numerous face-to-face encounters.