

28. January 2022

Education and culture

## Commemoration of the victims of National Socialism in the city center of Bocholt

### Pupils of the Mariengymnasium actively participate in commemorations

About 30 people from Bocholt took part in a so-called Stolperstein walk through the city center of Bocholt on January 27, 2022. Pupils of the Mariengymnasium actively participated in the commemoration event.

The reason for the tour along the Stolpersteine to the houses where people of Jewish faith once lived who were murdered in Auschwitz is the Day of Remembrance of the Victims of National Socialism. On January 27, 1945, the Auschwitz death camp was liberated.

Hermann Oechtering and Josef Niebur of the VHS working group Synagogue Landscapes began the commemorative event by recalling the approximately 1.3 million people, mostly of the Jewish faith, who lost their lives in the Auschwitz death camp. Oechtering described the last days and hours as follows: "The smell of death was wafting everywhere [...] Even shortly before the liberation of the camp on January 27, 1945, the SS had attempted to burn the maltreated corpses in crematoria. Only about 3,000 people survived the inferno that lasted five years."

The murdered people of Jewish faith in the Auschwitz extermination camp also included 38 children, women and men who were born in Bocholt or had once lived here. Sigmar Seif alone survived.

Students of the Mariengymnasium supported the VHS working group Synagogue Landscapes as well as the municipal department of culture and education at the commemoration event. At several stops in the city center, the participants stopped at stumbling stones, where they learned about the circumstances of the lives and deaths of former Bocholt Jews.

At the end, Oliver Brenn, Head of the Department of Culture and Archives, thanked the students and participants on behalf of the city of Bocholt and referred to the importance of an ongoing culture of remembrance with a quote from Holocaust survivor Esther Bejarano: "You are not guilty of this time. But you are guilty if you do not want to know anything about that time. You must know everything that happened then. And why it happened."





*Die Schülerin Sarah Terweile und der Schüler Lloyd Schlier gedachten mit weiteren Schülerinnen und Schülern des Mariengymnasiums aktiv mit.  
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