



A view of our old convent next to our new monastery

This is our new monastery: Diesterstraat 68

Of the photo on the right, the entire first floor belongs to us.

To the left you have the entrance to the monastery with visiting rooms, kitchen, dining- and livingroom. To the right there is the entrance to the chapel for those who want to join us in prayer and the bakery. The second floor of the left side is where we have our other work-spaces.

The third and fourth floor of the left side is where we have our bedrooms.



Entrance to the monastery (# 68) ↑, entrance chapel (#70) ↑



The new chapel with the stained glass windows of our old interior chapel.



Close-up of our altar, which we received When the Franciscan Friars left St-Truiden Francis receives the Rule from the Pope.



The other side of the chapel.

Our stained glass windows are 24 images of the highlights of the liturgical year. Below each image of each liturgical feast is a stained glass window of a word or short phrase relating to this feast.

The cycle starts with Advent and Christmas

Do not cling to what happened in the past and do not give all your attention to what once happened;
See, I am going to make something new, it is already sprouting, don't you know that?

Yes, I will make a road in the desert and rivers in the parched land.

Isaiah 43, 18-19

Yes, 2024 will be something new: a new monastery, a beautiful new chapel, a new officiant for our daily Eucharist, a different hour of the daily Eucharist and on Sunday we will go to the small church opposite our monastery for the Eucharist. 800 years ago, St. Francis brought innovation by depicting the birth of Jesus by building a 'living Nativity scene' in a cave. We celebrate this event every year in the liturgy, and this year too we pray for a renewed heart inspired by the birth of our Messiah.

2023 had started well, with intense discussions regarding the new Constitutions of the Poor Clare Order. All Poor Clares worldwide have received questions about this; the search for answers has made us think more deeply about our calling, our community life and our prayer life as a community. 2023 also marks 800 years since St. Francis received the Pope's approval of his Rule. This is depicted on our new altar (see picture on the other side).

In many ways the past year was an ordinary year: we took care of our inner life through conferences by Rev. F. Tercic; our triduum was provided by Rev. F. Luc Van Hilst and for our retreat we could count on army chaplain 'Padre' Erik Pétré. We were very pleased to welcome our bishop for a visit in June. Many celebrations have also taken place in our chapel: the monthly Taizé celebrations, intense St. Clare celebrations (on the eve and on the day itself) - each with a festive reception. St. Francis was also honored. As an annual tradition, we participated in the 'Evening of Churches' at Pentecost, where our community sang the Compline in the church opposite our monastery. Many other celebrations took place (including the baptism of Tjeu Vanhoor).

Outside our monastery we also participated in all kinds of sessions. And let us not forget the blessed and sisterly encounters on the annual meeting day of the Poor Clares in Ostend.

Unfortunately, we also had to say goodbye to several good people: Sr. Agnes Degraeve of the community of Tongeren met her Lord in April, the Assistant of the Poor Clares of Flanders, Walter Verhelst ofm, passed away in June and Sr. Joanna's brother, Theo Jansen, in October.

2023 will mainly go down in history in our community as 'the year of moving'. There have been many meetings to finalize everything. We are grateful for the expert help we have received from the legal department of the diocese and the many people who care about us: Mr. Roger Daenen, Mr. Alex Nicolaï, Mrs. Reinhilde Pieters, Mr. Erik Van Meel, our Dean Rev. F. Wim Ceunen and many others. But our greatest support is Mr. Polly Vanmarsenille. Under his expert guidance, we started cleaning up our library at the end of January; in September there was the emptying of the attics; October/November there were preparations for the actual move on Monday, November 20th and the following days. That was a tough time! But we are happy now. Happy and grateful for this new monastery that we can call our new home every day. Where we also hope to welcome you in 2024!

Regarding our celebrations for the end of 2023 and the changes after the departure of P. Frans Cuypers:

* On the eve of Christmas, Sunday December 24th, midnight mass is at 8 p.m. in our new chapel, Diesterstraat 70.

* Christmas Day, Monday December 25th, the Eucharist will be celebrated at 9:00 am. It is the last celebration in our old chapel at the Diesterstraat 66. This will be graced by the Choir St. Gregorius conducted by Magda Jossa. Also welcome at the small reception.

* Boxing Day, Tuesday, December 26th, will be the last Eucharist celebration led by Rev. F. Frans Cuypers, ofm, at 9:00 am in our new chapel, Diesterstraat 70. We will provide a small reception. We are deeply grateful to F. Frans for the many years he has led in our community. And that he has borne joys and sorrows with us for so many years. We wish him God's blessing on his new mission with our friars in Hasselt.

* From December 27th on, the weekday Eucharist celebrations (except on Tuesdays) will be held at 8:00 am in our new monastery chapel (# 70), led by Rev. F. Gust Coppejans. On Tuesdays the celebration will take place in the St. Gangulfus Church opposite our monastery at 6 p.m. We are very grateful towards Rev. F. Coppejans for taking this on! For Sunday celebrations we will join the 9:00 am celebration at the St. Gangulfus Church.

Welcome to come and celebrate with us in our new monastery at Diesterstraat 68, 3800 Sint-Truiden, Belgium

Merry Christmas and Blessed 2024!