



Reflections after the St-Joseph-church process

What do we think of the course of the process so far?

Now, in the church, there is the temporary use of the food team and the social grocer, where I am volunteer. And that the academy will use the organ again after a year and a half.

Josefien Maes once gave a guided tour for interested organizations in the neighborhood. According to her, the city would provide the basic infrastructure, but proposals for projects should be reported to the manager, who will then decide what is possible and what is not. And since that manager is still not there, nothing happens.

On the contrary, we see that the church is not being maintained. It is not being polished, we think. And when something comes loose, like at the front left just before the stairs to the choir, it will not be repaired. We also wonder how the organ is now that it hasn't been played for a year and a half. It was in perfect condition when the church was sold. It will cost a lot more money, just because the city is letting the beautiful building deteriorate.

What do we expect from the future?

The church council wanted it to be something for the neighborhood. They certainly didn't think of an infill with purely commercial activities. There is sufficient retail space available in Wondelgemstraat for this purpose. In the first place, they thought of an interdisciplinary meeting and reflection space: a place for connection and silence. A working group has already met several times around this. This working group consists of representatives of the House of Man, the Protestant Rabot Church, the Islamic mosque association Fatih Camii and the parish team of Saint Joseph. The church council also wants the organ to be used, e.g. for concerts. For this purpose, the space in the church should be large enough as a sound box for the organ.

In addition, I have already heard several proposals blowing. These range from a covered playground over a bicycle repair store to a combination of the Eetcafé Toreke with a Rabot sandwich store on your plate where people cook and the church serves as a café and meeting place, things that now happen separately in the former circle and the community center. For the second hand clothing store and the social grocery store, the church would



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also be a much more suitable location than the community center now. The services that are now in the community center - the OCMW, the housing store, the work store, the community work, play-o-theek Pipo - should be able to get a place in the church, some say. When I think about the finances for a moment. Maybe vzw Eetcafé Toreke or vzw Sociale Kruideniers Gent can pay part of the costs for the use, but for a de facto association like the Voedselteam Rabot, the fire insurance tenant liability and the insurance BA company that the city demands are already quite a float...

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