

# CENTRO STUDI CHERUBINO GHIRARDACCI

**ONLINE TALK | FAITH IN THE PERIPHERY | 09.03.2021**

**CHARLOTTE ARDUI, KU LEUVEN**

During the post-war years, Flanders developed in to a 'nebulous city': the region became almost entirely urbanized and is covered today with a ubiquitous, low-density built fabric. As part of this rapid suburban expansion, a very important number of parish churches were built across Flanders. Today, because of their age, location and typology, post-war churches are confronted with several societal challenges. The research project Faith in the Periphery looks at these modern churches as resources for future urban development. Churches are indeed very valuable assets in this regard: often strategically located and representing large volumes, they (still) play an important role in the local community as a mental and geographical beacon. Beyond merely adapting a given church building to new functional requirements, we seek to develop balanced strategies for the adaptive reuse of churches that capitalizes upon their socially and spatially structuring capacity. In order to identify and operationalise this capacity the research will mainly rely on research-by-design. We believe that architectural design forms a pathway through which new insights, knowledge and practices come into being. As we will illustrate on the basis of a few examples, this approach reveals the often hidden potential of churches sites, and aspires to create new insights as to their future use. Hence, the underlying motivation is to contribute to the more general imperative of strengthening the future resilience of the Flemish Nebulous City.



René Van Steenberghe, Church of Sint-Jozef Werkman, Laakdal © Olmo Peeters, 2018

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## PROGRAMME

- 17.30** Welcome and greetings
- 17.35–18.00** Introduction by **Luigi Bartolomei**
- 18.00–18.40** Introduction by prof. **Sven Sterken** (KU Leuven)
- Charlotte Ardui** (KU Leuven) on her PhD research  
"Faith in the Periphery"
- 18.40–19.00** Question time and closing remarks

The meeting will be held on **Zoom**. If you are interested, please send us an email at [posta@ghirardacci.org](mailto:posta@ghirardacci.org)

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