

# KOSMOI SERIES



## Information & updates

One of the Cathedral's core missions is to actively contribute to the wider social debate. This is why our **Kosmoi series** will start from Wednesday **4 December 2024**. **Cry for Peace!** is the first initiative within this series and will take shape through an alternative route in the Cathedral and several conferences in **2025** around mental well-being and the quest for peace.

The Gothic cathedral functions as a microcosm, reflecting the larger universe and the profound questions of existence. By opening up the cathedral's heritage and engaging in dialogue with experts from different disciplines, the **Kosmoi series** aims to offer new perspectives on current issues and create a platform for exchange and debate.

Older artwork can be surprisingly relevant today. Two works in our Cathedral by the Antwerp painter **Jozef Janssens de Varebeke** invite us to reflect on two major social challenges: peace and mental health. The altarpiece *Our Lady of Peace* (1924) highlights the ongoing search for peace, while the painting cycle *Our Lady of Sorrows* (1910) confronts us with the realisation that more people than we think carry silent pain in their hearts. In our demanding and stressful culture, it is not always easy for everyone to remain standing.

At the two works by **Jozef Janssens de Varebeke** and at four other sights, stepping stones provide information and depth. Writer & poet **Benno Barnard**, curator of the project, has selected a Dutch and English poem for each highlight, which can be accessed via QR codes.

In **spring 2025**, we will organise six conferences with international experts within this series. Free entrance via the Handschoenmarkt.

# CRY FOR PEACE !

## Three conferences on mental wellbeing

- 12 February 2025, 8 pm:**     *The stressed society*  
**Stephan Claes**, psychiatrist
- 24 February 2025, 8 pm:**     *Psychological vulnerability in a stressed society*  
**Christine De Clerck**, experience worker in Mental Health Care
- 11 March 2025, 8 pm:**     *Jesus' vision of happiness*  
**Erik Borgman**, theologian and professor

## Three conferences on the search to peace

The conferences around the peace theme are underpinned by the speakers' most recent publication.

- 29 April 2025, 8 pm**             **Johan Swinnen**, former diplomat
- 22 May 2025, 8 pm**             **Gerard Bodifée**, scientist & philosopher  
Publication: *Oorlog hoelang nog?*, 2024, Eertsberg  
[Oorlog - Eertsberg](#)
- 4 June 2025, 8 pm**             **Annelies Verlinden**, minister of justice  
Publication: *Eerlijk gezegd*, 2024, Lannoo  
[Eerlijk gezegd | Uitgeverij Lannoo](#)

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