

In 1817, William Van Celst's widow founded a school for poor girls. With a few friends, they formed a "spiritual community". In 1829 a larger building was erected at Sint-Jacobusmarkt. In 1847, was laid the first stone of the beautiful Neo-Gothic chapel that we still admire today. The institute will soon be in charge of a new "specialty": the reception of about thirty "penitents", in fact pregnant girls. They were separated from the other girls in all their activities, especially the mass that they had to follow from a separate gallery. In the meantime, the "spiritual community" received the canonical form and became the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. After the Second World War, the school expanded its curriculum and offered in addition to classes of commerce and language, training in tourism and public relations. At the beginning of this century, the school will be integrated into a larger structure to its great detriment. Some nuns still live in the house next to the school.