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RES OPPORTUNAE NOSTRAE AETATIS

STUDIES ON THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL
OFFERED TO MATHIJS LAMBERIGTS

EDITED BY

DRIES BOSSCHAERT – JOHAN LEEMANS

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FAREWELL TO ROME!
A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE FINAL DAYS
OF THE OLD CATHOLIC OBSERVER
AT THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

I. INTRODUCTION*

The conclusion of the Second Vatican Council, on 8 December 1965, also marked the end of the activities of the various ecumenical observers at the Council and it meant the transition to ecclesial life “after the Council”, which is something that Mathijs Lamberigts has experienced, embodied and researched in the course of his long career. This applies to his research on the Council itself, to his research on Louvain Augustinianism (frequently misnamed “Jansenism”) and on Augustine himself, all of which contribute both to theological *ressourcement* and to revisiting and overcoming conflicts of the past. This includes the conflict that led to the existence of what are now the Roman-Catholic and Old Catholic Churches in the Netherlands¹, which, after centuries of often acrimonious dispute (and failed attempts at reconciliation), have been in dialogue at various levels since the Second Vatican Council². Indeed, many ties connect his work with Old Catholic theology, the author’s discipline and the focus of this essay, for instance when it comes to contemporary ecumenism, or shared church historical and theological interests, or even historical roots. In fact, also the Dutch Old Catholic Seminary, as it is currently based at Utrecht University has Louvain origins³!

* I am grateful to the editors for their feedback on an earlier version of this contribution and to the Rev. Ole van Dongen for proofreading the text.

1. See D. SCHOON, *Van bisschoppelijke Cleresie tot Oud-Katholieke Kerk: Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis van het katholicisme in Nederland in de 19de eeuw*, Nijmegen, Valkhof, 2004; ID., *Een aartsbisschop aangeklaagd in Rome*, Hilversum, Verloren, 2019.

2. See J. VISSER, *Zur Vorgeschichte und Entstehung des Berichts der Internationalen Römisch-Katholisch – Altkatholischen Dialogkommission*, in *Internationale Kirchliche Zeitschrift* 100 (2010) 6-24. The international dialogue has been documented in: *Kirche und Kirchengemeinschaft: Erster und Zweiter Bericht der Internationalen Römisch-Katholisch – Altkatholischen Dialogkommission 2009 und 2016*, Paderborn, Bonifatius, 2017.

3. Cf. A. BERLIS – J. HALLEBEEK, *Das Seminar der niederländischen Kirche*, in G. ESSER – M. RING (eds.), *Zwischen Freiheit und Gebundenheit: Festschrift zum 100jährigen Bestehen des Alt-Katholischen Seminars der Universität Bonn (1902-2002)*, Bonn, Alt-Katholischer Bistumsverlag, 2002, 238-260; F. SMIT – J. JACOBS, *Van den Hogenheuvel*

This contribution is concerned with the “last days in Rome” of the official Old Catholic observer, Petrus Johannes (“Peter”) Maan (1913-1993), who returned to the Council for its last days on 1 December 1965, leaving again on 8 December. Maan was Dean of the Metropolitan Chapter of Utrecht, pastor of St. Gertrude’s Cathedral in Utrecht, and a professor at the Old Catholic Seminary in Amersfoort. He carried on a double correspondence during the Council, which he regarded as his “Council diary”; it has, so far, never been published. One part of the correspondence was with the Old Catholic episcopate, in which Maan reports more formally on what took place during the Council. The other part of the correspondence, which is just as frequent (daily, or almost daily), is with his family in Utrecht, where his wife and four daughters lived⁴. The letters pertaining to this correspondence are often more relaxed and also show how Maan experienced the Council personally. However, he also informs his family, which must have been well aware of the goings on at the Council, in detail as to where he goes, whom he meets and what he discusses. This contribution focuses on the latter, more informal correspondence, in the hope that this will shed yet a different kind of light on the manner in which Maan experienced the final days and closure of the Council than the more formal correspondence that he conducted with the Old Catholic episcopate. Prior to presenting and discussing his letters, a brief overview of extant research on the Old Catholic observer and his two substitutes, who stood in for Maan when his presence was needed in the Netherlands, will be offered, given that this has become a topic of some interest in recent years (only).

II. STATE OF RESEARCH

The Old Catholic observer at the Second Vatican Council and the two Old Catholic substitute observers are understudied topics. The Old Catholic observership involved, besides Maan, two further theologians, the German (Rev. Prof. Dr.) Werner Küppers (1905-1980) and the Swiss (Rev.) Herwig Aldenhoven (1933-2002). Küppers was already a senior Old Catholic theologian and ecumenist⁵, Aldenhoven would go on to

gekomen: Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis van de priesteropleiding in de kerk van Utrecht, 1683-1723, Nijmegen, Valkhof, 1994.

4. The personal letters are in the private possession of Ms. S.C. Smit-Maan, IJmuiden, who kindly granted me access to these letters.

5. See A. HENSMANN-ESSER (ed.), “*Abenteuer in Rom*”: *Texte aus dem Nachlass Werner Küppers im Alt-Katholischen Seminar der Universität Bonn*, Bonn, Alt-Katholischer Bistumsverlag, 2017.

become one⁶. The arrangement with one main observer and replacements was necessitated by Maan's obligations as a parish priest, seminary professor and family man in the Netherlands. Recent research has focused primarily on Maan and Küppers, with some general coverage of Aldenhoven's contribution. Hensmann-Esser published the complete reports of Küppers on the parts of the Council that he attended in a book that also provides a survey of the observership as a whole with a particular focus on Küppers' contribution to it⁷. I contributed an earlier survey of the activities and reports of the three observers⁸, a contribution on Maan's liturgical observations⁹, and an essay on freedom of speech and the observership¹⁰. What is, so far, not available are more detailed studies of particular parts of the Council. The present essay makes a modest attempt at this, focusing on the closing days of the Council, as one clearly demarcated period of the observership. This was certainly the case for Maan, who arrived in Rome for the Council's last week, effectively relieving Küppers of his duties, given that the latter had been covering the earlier part of the Council's last session.

III. THE CONCLUSION OF THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL IN LETTERS

1. 1 and 2 December 1965

Maan's final days in Rome begin when he returns to the eternal city by train. He travels by way of Switzerland; *en route*, he briefly pauses in that country in order to meet family members (he was married to a Swiss

6. See U. VON ARX, *Herwig Aldenhoven – Altkatholische Impulse für das Verständnis von Gott und Kirche*, in A. BERLIS – S. LEIMGRUBER – M. SALLMANN (eds.), *Aufbruch und Widerspruch: Schweizer Theologinnen und Theologen im 20. und 21. Jahrhundert*, Zürich, Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 2019, 506-513.

7. HENSMANN-ESSER (ed.), *Abenteuer* (n. 5).

8. P.-B. SMIT, *Oud-katholieke waarnemers op het Tweede Vaticaans Concilie (1962-1965)*, in *Trajecta* 22 (2013) 29-56; see also Id., *Katholieke heroriëntatie: Bijdrage tot geschiedenis van het oud-katholicisme in relatie tot de Rooms-Katholieke Kerk*, in *Trajecta* 24 (2015) 331-350, which focuses on the discussion of the Roman Catholic Church in the correspondence between two leading Old Catholic bishops, Andreas Rinkel, Archbishop of Utrecht, and Urs Küry, Bishop of the Old Catholic Church of Switzerland, especially also during the Second Vatican Council.

9. P.-B. SMIT, *Liturgical Observations on the Second Vatican Council by a Forgotten Catholic: The Old Catholic Observer's Perspective on the Liturgical Developments at the Second Vatican Council*, in *Questions Liturgiques / Studies in Liturgy* 97 (2016) 84-103.

10. P.-B. SMIT, *Silence Is Golden: Freedom of Speech and the Old Catholic Observer at the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965)*, in P.-B. SMIT – E. VAN URK, *Parrhesia: Ancient and Modern Perspectives on Freedom of Speech*, Leiden, Brill, 2018, 177-198.

wife)¹¹. The journey as such was uneventful and Maan arrived safely on 1 December 1965, settling into the *Pensione Castello*, which housed many of the observers¹². Things really get going on the next day, when he reacquaints himself with other observers, noting that there is now also someone from the Church of Yugoslavia (“kerk van Jugo-Slavië”; presumably the Serbian Orthodox Church that had sent an observer to the Council’s fourth session)¹³. He attends the Council Mass at St. Peter’s and collects his mail, informing his family of the various presents that he had received in addition to the Council’s documents¹⁴. Soon, he also mentions what will become the most important event for Maan personally during these last days: he is invited to take an active part in a service of prayer of the pope and the observers:

I dined pleasantly with the man from Alexandria and spoke with Prof. and Ms. Kueppers afterwards. During this conversation, a call came through inquiring as to whether an Old Catholic could participate in the service of prayer that would be celebrated by the Pope together with some observers this coming Saturday. I agreed to do so in principle and believe that it is for the best if I take on this role. It is of course a bit complicated because Kueppers is also here, yet it is probably desirable that I act as the first observer over here. The service of prayer will be held in the St. Paolo fuori le mura at five o’clock, this coming Saturday¹⁵.

Maan also notes that the invitation is somewhat awkward as he has to pull rank and make sure that he and not Küppers fulfills this liturgical

11. Frida Margaritha Federer (20 June 1917, Lucerne – 10 December 2003, Arnhem).

12. Maan – Family, 1 December 1965.

13. R. BORDEIANU, *Orthodox Observers at the Second Vatican Council and Intra-Orthodox Dynamics*, in *Theological Studies* 79 (2019) 86-106, pp. 97-98.

14. Maan – Family, 2 December 1965, the presents include: a biography of Carolus Borromeus, a beautifully illustrated edition of the *Divina Commedia*, which is a present from the pope, as well as a photo album of the pope’s visit to India (“een fotoboek van de reis van Zijne Heiligheid naar India, maar dat is niet erg interessant”).

15. Maan – Family, 2 December 1965: “Ik at gezellig met de man uit Alexandrië en sprak daarna met Prof. en Frau. Dr. Kueppers. Tijdens dit gesprek kwam het telefoontje of een Oud-Katholiek a.s. zaterdag kon optreden in een bidstond, die a.s. zaterdag door de paus samen met enkele Waarnemers gevierd zou worden. Ik gaf in principe mijn toestemming en geloof dat het beste is, als ik hier maar optreed. Het is natuurlijk een beetje moeilijk, omdat Kueppers hier ook is, maar het is misschien toch gewenst dat ik als eerste Waarnemer hier optreed. De bidstond wordt a.s. zaterdag om 5 uur in de St. Paolo fuori le mura gehouden”. – Ms. Kueppers (Küppers) to whom Maan refers is the Swiss Elsbeth Bailly (1912–2001), who married Werner Küppers in 1935. – The Alexandrian observer that Maan refers to remains nameless and I was not able to find out who he might have been; the fourth session was attended by the following representatives of the (Greek Orthodox) Patriarchate of Alexandria: Archimandrite Nikodemos Galiatsatos, patriarchal pro-vicar for Cairo, Dr. Theodoros D. Mosconas, librarian of the patriarchate, and Dr. Vasos Canavatis, legal counselor of the patriarchate.

(and representative) role, Küppers being a rather assertive kind of person.

Writing in the evening of 2 December, Maan recounts how he has experienced the atmosphere of Rome by telling two anecdotes. The first touches on the extent to which he has gotten used to being in the context of the papal court: when he is buying stamps, there is some excitement because the pope exits the Vatican, but he notes that he considers this a rather normal event, as he has become used to such things happening in Rome¹⁶. (At the same time he also narrates how the beauty of Rome still struck him with unexpected force¹⁷.) Later in the day, he attends a reception at the Dutch representative at the Holy See, Count de Marchant d'Ansembourg¹⁸. The atmosphere at the reception, at which the Dutch Council fathers and their staff are, of course, present, is best characterized by Maan's own account, in which he both lists whom he encountered at the reception and what sort of conversation he had with one of them, the Cardinal Archbishop of Utrecht, Bernardus Johannes ("Bernard") Alfrink (1900-1987; in office: 1955-1976):

As soon as we had passed the official barrier, it was all very pleasant. There weren't too many people present and one only had to speak one language. I told Cardinal Alfrink the story about Egmond, where a ship had *nearly* run ashore. The inhabitants of Egmond were standing atop of a dune, praying: "Lord, let this chalice *not* pass us". Unfortunately, the ship ran ashore in IJmuiden. I also talked with the consul general, Mgr. Jansen (Rotterdam), Mgr. Niermans (Groningen), Mgr. de Vet (Breda) and a large number of dignitaries. Gabriël Smit was also there and asked whether he shouldn't

16. Maan – Family, 2 December 1965, noting a "een reuze opwinding omdat Paus Paulus uitreed en ik dacht bij mijzelf hoe verwend we eigenlijk zijn, dat dat op ons geen indruk maakt".

17. Maan – Family, 2 December 1965; he also recounts how Rome's "magic" ("Zauber Roms" [*sic*]) had struck him: "Stel jullie voor: ik had de St. Pieter gezien zonder dat het bijzondere indruk op mij had gemaakt; ik had de Pieta gezien maar alleen maar met het idee: ze is er weer. Maar toen ik van de Via Arenula naar de Piazza Venezia wandelde voltrok zich het wonder. Ik weet niet waar ik doorkwam maar ik eindigde op de Foro Piscatorio, bij het Theatro Marcello en het was zo wondermooi, dat ik bij mijzelf dacht: dit is de reis al waard geweest" (1).

18. F.R.W.H.M.J. Graaf de Marchant d'Ansembourg (1902-1976), Dutch representative (legate) to the Holy See, 1956-1967. Cf. Maan – Family, 2 December 1965 – Maan comments "De Gezant: Graaf Marchant D'Ansembourg stond ons netjes op te wachten. De enige Oud-Katholiek die hij kende bleek een verkeerde te zijn, maar verder was het een beminlijke man. Ook was er Mgr. Damen die als rechterhand van de gezant fungeerde". – Maan probably means that the "Old Catholic" that the legate was acquainted with belonged to a group calling itself "Old Catholic" but not being affiliated with one of the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht.

become Old Catholic again. I responded that his wife should become Old Catholic first, in that case¹⁹.

Maan also notes a brief conversation that he had with the legate, learning about his ecclesial and theological self-positioning, yet disagreeing with him as to whether the Second Vatican Council actually permitted him to do so:

The legate also came over to me and said that he just kept to the Council's document on the freedom of conscience. I told him that such freedom of conscience does not apply to Roman Catholics, but he wasn't willing to accept that²⁰.

Back in *Pensione Castello*, Maan dines with his Swiss acquaintance Prof. Johannes Feiner, a staff member of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity ("Secretariat"; since 1988 a Pontifical Council), who updates Maan further regarding the latest developments at the Council. Although Feiner is tired, he is also contented with the Council's course, which is apparent from the kind of humor that he shares with Maan:

[Feiner] informed me about the events of the past few weeks. He was tired, yet also satisfied. He told me the story that after 9 December, Ruffini will be made a member of the New Catholic Church, and that there will be a Requiem for the conservatives, while the evil spirits will be driven out of their leader (exorcism). Etc. Etc.²¹.

Maan concludes this letter with an outlook on the days to come, noting that 3 December will be relatively quiet, while Saturday 4 December will be extremely busy with not just a session of the Council, but also with

19. Maan – Family, 2 December 1965: "Toen we de officiële barrière gepasseerd waren, was het heel gezellig. Er waren niet teveel mensen en je hoefde maar één taal te spreken. Ik vertelde aan Kardinaal Alfrink het verhaal van Egmond waar een schip bijna gestrand was. De Egmonders stonden op het duin en baden: Heer, laat deze kelk niet aan ons voorbijgaan. Het schip strandde helaas in IJmuiden. Ik sprak verder met de Consul-Generaal, met Mgr. Jansen (Rotterdam), Mgr. Niermans (Groningen), Mgr. de Vet (Breda) en een reeks hoogwaardigheidsbekleders. Gabriël Smit was er ook en vroeg of hij toch maar niet weer Oud-Katholiek zou worden. Ik antwoordde dat eerst zijn vrouw maar Oud-Katholiek worden moest". Gabriël Smit (1910-1981), was a well-known author from Utrecht (where Maan was a parish priest), who had left the Old Catholic Church to join the Roman Catholic Church in 1934 (he left it again in 1969).

20. Maan – Family, 2 December 1965: "De Gezant kwam nog een keer bij me en zei dat hij zich maar hield aan het stuk dat op het Concilie aangenomen was over de gewetensvrijheid. Ik zeide dat die gewetensvrijheid niet gold voor Rooms-Katholieken, maar dat wilde hij niet aanvaarden".

21. Maan – Family, 2 December 1965: "die me weer verder inlichtte over de gebeurtenissen der laatste weken. Hij was wel moe, maar ook voldaan. Hij vertelde het verhaal dat 9 december Ruffini opgenomen wordt in de Nieuwe Katholieke Kerk, het Requiem gehouden wordt voor de Conservatieven en dat hun voorman in een plechtige dienst de boze geesten uitgedreven worden (exorcisme). Enz. Enz."

a visit to the Basilica of St. Paul-outside-the-Walls and its Benedictine abbey. There the service of prayer of the pope and the observers will take place, which will again be followed by a reception of the Dutch bishops in the Dutch College (*Pauselijk Nederlands College*). Maan was not inclined to go to the latter event, but had been compelled to do so nonetheless. In the remainder of the week, he will visit Msgr. Höfer on Sunday evening²², participate in a reception offered by the observers to the staff of the Secretariat and, following the closure of the Council, travel by train back to Switzerland.

2. 3 December 1965

As Maan describes it, the next day, 3 December, is indeed relatively quiet, yet not without its own developments. For instance, Maan tries to get into the habit of attending the services of the observers again, only to find out, when arriving at the Methodist Church in Rome, that this day's service had been cancelled, given that there is no plenary session of the Council. He returns to the *Pensione*, in order to meet the people there whom he had hoped to meet at the service²³. For lack of other activities, he decides to take in some tourist attractions, visiting the Sistine Chapel, the Niccoline Chapel, as well as admiring the Codex Vaticanus – of particular interest to him as a biblical scholar²⁴ – and an exhibition of Etruscan art²⁵. Lunch is enjoyed with the (Lutheran) Bishop of Iceland, Sigurbjörn Einarsson, with whom Maan has in common that

22. The German priest and theologian Mgr. Dr. Josef Höfer of the “Paderborn circle” was “Ecclesiastical Counsellor at the German Embassy to the Holy See” since 1954 and worked influentially towards a more ecumenical course of the Roman Catholic Church, cf. e.g., the succinct remarks in: C. JONES – G. WAINWRIGHT – E. YARNOLD (eds.), *The Study of Spirituality*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1986, p. xvi.

23. Maan – Family, 3 December 1965: “Ik was netjes om 8.15 bij de Methodistenkerk voor de dienst der Waarnemers, maar die was vandaag net niet doorgedaan, omdat er ook geen conciliezingting was. Ik ging voor alle zekerheid nog even naar het pension terug omdat ik had gehoopt juist bij die dienst enkele mensen te ontmoeten, maar dat lukte dus niet”.

24. Maan taught Hebrew at the local grammar school in Amersfoort and lectured in New Testament at the Old Catholic Seminary in the same city; he had also contributed significantly to the Old Catholic translation of the New Testament (1953). See K. OUWENS, *Oud-katholieke vertalingen*, in H.W. HOLLANDER (ed.), *Spectrum van Bijbelvertalingen*, Zoetermeer, Boekencentrum, 1994, 120-125.

25. Maan – Family, 3 December 1965. The actual art collection of the Vatican Museum does not impress him all that much, however: “Ik was eigenlijk speciaal voor de schilderijen naar het Vaticaan Museum gegaan, maar ik moet zeggen dat ik de Pinacothek eigenlijk het minst belangrijke vind. Het is geen vergelijking met Prado of Kunstmuseum in Wenen”.

he has also studied in Basle. The more difficult part of the day comes in the afternoon, following a brief siesta: a meeting with his substitute, Werner Küppers, whom he tells why he has decided to take part in the service with the pope personally; it is part of his role as the formal observer of the Old Catholic Churches²⁶. Following on this and in keeping with the personal character of his correspondence, he also reveals that he has bought a present for his youngest daughter, but does not let on as to what it might be²⁷. However, he does more than shopping and lobbying: he also takes care to prepare the upcoming service with the pope. To this purpose, he rings the ecumenist and World Council of Churches' staff member Lukas Vischer²⁸, who refers him to Fr. John F. Long, S.J.²⁹, who is based at the Secretariat, to which Maan then makes his way. After chatting with one of the staff members, a Dutch lady with whom he talks about celebrating *Sinterklaas* – a remark that is probably both meant to share in his family's excitement as to this upcoming feast and to report on what he's doing in Rome exactly – Maan is able to learn more about the service. With regard to this service, he recounts what the outline will be and who will participate. In doing so, he also shares that, together with Msgr. Henry F. Davis³⁰, he will be responsible for part of the intercessions, which are to follow the pope's homily. Furthermore, he notes that the service is concluded by a jointly prayed Lord's Prayer and "Now thank we all our God", an internationally known hymn³¹. Next, Maan

26. Maan – Family, 3 December 1965: "Om vier uur ging ik naar Kueppers, die ook wel graag dienst gedaan zou hebben met de Paus. Ik heb die mogelijkheid ook wel overwogen, maar vond toch dat ik mijn officieel waarnemerschap moest laten prevaleren. Ik heb tegen Kueppers gezegd dat het voor hem jammer was, dat ik niet een paar dagen later gekomen was, maar dat ik, nu ik er was, me ook wilde laten zien. We wandelden samen naar de Piazza Navona, waar Kueppers en vrouw naar Hans Kueng gingen luisteren en ik de kerststalletjes bekeek".

27. Maan – Family, 3 December 1965: he describes a Christmas fair with all kinds of entertainment, noting: "Ik deed niets van dat alles, maar kocht papier en enveloppen en een cadeautje voor Trudi. Weet je wat het is? Ik zeg het niet!".

28. On whom, see, e.g., A. KARRER, *Lukas Vischer (* 1926)*, in S. LEIMGRUBER – M. SCHOCH (eds.), *Gegen die Gottvergessenheit: Schweizer Theologen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, Freiburg i.Br., Herder, 1990, 521-538; on his observership, see M. QUISINSKY, *Lukas Vischer als "nichtkatholischer Beobachter" von Konzilsereignis, Konzilsrezeption und Konzilshistoriographie*, in *Münchener Theologische Zeitschrift* 63 (2012) 308-326.

29. John F. Long, S.J., was a specialist in eastern Orthodoxy and served as a staff member at the Secretariat.

30. Davis was a professor of theology at the University of Birmingham, an expert at the Council and a consultant to the Secretariat, cf. Y. CONGAR, *My Journal of the Council*, Colledgeville, MN, Liturgical Press, 2012, p. 95.

31. Maan – Family, 3 December 1965, also noting how he made sure that he got the medallion made on the occasion of the Council's previous session: "Ik ging met lijn 77

tells how he read an Italian newspaper and had dinner with “brother John” from Bulgaria³². With the latter he discusses newspapers, in particular the availability of Bulgarian ones in Rome, in which the Bulgarian is not interested: they are not available and should they be available, they wouldn’t be reporting what was happening anyway³³. By way of conclusion, he looks forward to the following day, which will be busy indeed³⁴.

3. 4 and 5 December 1965

When resuming his communications on 5 December, covering that day and the previous one, he notes how there had been a lull in the Council’s proceedings due to the President of Madagascar’s visit to the pope. In

naar huis en belde daar Lukas Vischer op om nadere gegevens over de dienst van morgen te krijgen. Hij verwees me naar Father Long S.J. en zo ging ik naar het Secretariaat. Daar sprak ik eest met Loes, die een sinterklaaspakje gekregen had van de zusters van het Hollands College. Ze was er erg gelukkig mee en ik vond het ook leuk dat de Hollanders het Sinterklaasvierden nergens kunnen laten. Overigens heb ik mijn pakje ook gevonden, dat ik zondag netjes zal openmaken. Father Long had de tekst van de dienst. Eerst zingen de broeders van Santo Paolo, dan doet een Methodist de eerste schriftlezing uit het O.T. dan doet een andere waarnemer de tweede schriftlezing en de Evangelielezing wordt door een Griek in het Grieks gedaan. Dan houdt de Paus een homilie en volgt de voorbede, die door mij en Mgr. Davis, een R.K., verzorgd wordt. We sluiten met een gemeenschappelijk Onze Vader en ‘Dankt, dankt nu alle God!’ Het wordt een besloten dienst, waarbij wel de kardinalen aanwezig zijn en ook de bisschoppen worden uitgenodigd. Na afloop is er een ontvangst door de Paus, maar daar wordt dan niet meer gesproken. Toen ik bij Father Long weg ging, kwam ik Arrighi tegen, die ik meteen kon interpellieren over de conciliepenning van de vierde zitting. Die krijg ik nog en ik ben daar erg blij mee”. – Maan’s report on the order of service differs from how Congar reports on the actual order of service, cf. CONGAR, *My Journal* (n. 30), p. 864.

32. I.e.: Archimandrite Joan, chief secretary of the metropolitan See of Sofia.

33. Maan – Family, 3 December 1965: “Ik at met broeder Johannes uit Bulgarije. Ik zal hem een briefje meegeven voor Dimitrov. Ik vroeg of hij ook Bulgaarse krant las, maar die waren in Rome niet te krijgen en het interesseerde hem ook niet. Als er wat gebeurde, stond het er toch niet in. We werden vanavond getraceerd op forel die erg lekker smaakte. De Engelsen hadden de Internuntius te eten: de bisschop, die wel nooit kardinaal zal worden want de goede man heet Cardinale. De Amerikanen hadden Suenens te eten, dus het was een goede dag voor Castello”.

34. Maan – Family, 3 December 1965: “Morgen wordt het een uitverkochte dag. Eerst conciliezingting, dan naar huis; om 1 uur worden we met een bus afgehaald om bij de monniken van S. Paolo te gaan eten. Daarna bezichtigen we het klooster en ik ben erg benieuwd, vooral naar de manuscripten, die er schijnen te zijn. Om vijf uur is de dienst, dan de receptie bij de Paus en als ik er nog kans voor zie is er daarna nog de receptie voor alle bisschoppen hollaendischer Zunge op het Hollands College. Zondag hopen we het dan wat rustiger te hebben. Ik kan ’s middags naar een heiligverklaring, maar ik doe dat beslist niet. ’s Avonds ga ik met Kueppers eten bij Mgr. Hofer, Gesandtschaftsrat bij de Duitse legatie bij de H. Stoel. Maandag is er meen ik weer zitting van het Concilie en de dinsdag is dan vrij. Maandagavond geven de Waarnemers een receptie voor de leden van het Secretariaat”.

this period, Cardinal Felici presents the Council fathers with a variety of mementoes and presents (which Maan interprets as *Sinterklaas* gifts for the benefit of his readership)³⁵. A further part of the prelude to his report on the visit to St. Paul-Outside-the-Walls, which is the main part of his letter, is a piece of Roman humor. Many Romans don't agree with the connection that is made between the beatification of John XXIII and that of Pius XII, claiming that the beatification of the latter should really be regarded as the first miracle of the former³⁶.

Maan's report on the visit to and liturgical celebration at the abbey and basilica of S. Paolo fuori le mura, is extensive and gives good insight into his experience of this event. He begins by reporting on the visit to the monastery itself, commenting appreciatively on its famous cloister. Most attention is given, however, to the meal served to the observers: this took place in the refectory and was rather copious and accompanied by the usual prayers and readings. What struck Maan the most, however, was the fact that the abbot served his guests himself and continued to do so throughout the meal. Maan regards this as a very eloquent illustration of what Jesus meant when he said that those who are great among you should be the lowliest (Mark 10,43). He also stresses that the abbot seemed to be actually enjoying himself and not to be putting on a show³⁷. Following the meal, coffee and *Benedictine* is served, and the guests have the opportunity to visit the library and to admire the famous "Bible of San Paolo fuori le Mura", a richly illuminated Carolingian manuscript (ninth century). While exploring the compound, Maan also visits the chapel, where he enjoys part of the service of hours, considering it a much-

35. Maan – Family, 5 December 1965: "Felici speelde voor conferencier. Hij had al eerder aangekondigd dat hij enkele 'res gratissimas' mee te delen had (zeer aangename zaken), maar enkele leden hadden 'res gravissimas' verstaan. Hij vond dat vreemd omdat hij (Felici) altijd 'felicia', prettige dingen, zei. Maar die res gratissimas waren echter Sinterklaascadeautjes. Alle bisschoppen krijgen van de Paus een gouden ring (er blijkt dus nog geld genoeg te zijn). Verder krijgen ze een diploma. En ze krijgen nog een afbeelding van een Maria-ikoon. Van de stad Rome krijgen ze een medaille, waarin voor ieder zijn eigen naam is ingegraveerd. Verder mochten ze naar een concert, waar de Waarnemers niet eens toegelaten worden. O ja, ze kregen ook nog een boekje over de relieken van St. Petrus en daarvan kregen de Waarnemers ook een exemplaar. Omdat er ook nog enkele concilienstukken werden uitgedeeld en de afbeelding van de ikoon nogal groot was, gingen de patres zwaar beladen naar huis of ze van een verjaarspartijtje kwamen".

36. Maan – Family, 5 December 1965: "De scherpe tong van de Romeinen bestaat nog steeds. Men is het er niet mee eens dat de zaligverklaring van Joh. XXIII aan die van Pius XII gekoppeld is en zegt: als Pius XII heilig verklaard wordt, is dat het eerste wonder van Johannes XXIII".

37. Maan's Dutch contains a pun here: he did not have the impression that the abbot "opschepte", which can both mean "serving food" and "to boast".

needed moment of quietness in the midst of the hustle and bustle of the Council³⁸.

The service in the S. Paolo is the next topic that Maan considers, evaluating the service from an ecumenical perspective, while describing it liturgically. He first notes that the papal throne is positioned in front of the altar, with the cardinals seated to his right, the observers to his left, and the bishops facing him. The service is revolutionary from Maan's perspective: never before did the pope participate in a service with non-Roman Catholics. The order of service does not state that the pope presides over the service, but rather that he participates in it. Maan wonders what many bishops and cardinals may have thought of this. The pope's homily is much appreciated by Maan, stressing that it was a very simple speech, but for that reason all the more impressive; the pope refrained from using big words, but pointed to the fact that a new climate of mutual friendship, mutual edification and mutual conversation had grown³⁹. After the service, the participants return to the abbey, where Cardinal Bea gives a speech, to which the Bishop of Ripon, John

38. Maan – Family, 5 December 1965, “We gingen met twee bussen naar S. Paolo, want er zijn meer dan 100 Waarnemers op het ogenblik. We werden daar ontvangen door de Abt van het klooster en door enkele bisschoppen die tot de orde der Benedictijnen behoren. Het klooster is niets bijzonders, al hebben ze natuurlijk een prachtige kloostergang. Er waren geen dames toegelaten. We konden onze spullen in verschillende kamers kwijt en gingen toen naar de Refter. Daar was keurig gedekt; we hadden zelfs naamkaartjes bij onze borden. Een heleboel waarnemers zaten langs de wand; de andere waarnemers aan tafels, die midden in de refter waren neergezet. Als gewoonlijk begon het eten met een lezing, die op een typisch zangerige toon werd voorgedragen, daarna kwam het tafelgebed. Toen daarna de soep opgedragen werd, kam de grote verrassing: de abt zelf met een paars kalotje en een witte voorschoot om serveerde, en hij heeft dat de hele maaltijd volgehouden. Het was een bijzonder duidelijke illustratie van het woord: wie onder u de meeste is, die zij aller dienaar. Bovendien deed de Abt het met groot genoegen en zonder dat men het idee had dat hij opschepte. We kregen eerst soep, toen spaghetti, daarna kip, en cake met fruit toe. Alles zeer smakelijk klaargemaakt en begeleid door een karafje witte wijn en een glas rode wijn. Na het eten volgde weer een lezing en na het dankgebed gingen we de refter uit en werd koffie, Benedictine en snoepjes geserveerd. Ondertussen hielden de deelnemers aan de dienst een korte conferentie. Daarna konden we de bibliotheek bekijken en daar was inderdaad een prachtig Vulgata-handschrift uit de 9^e eeuw met mooie illustraties en schitterende initialen. Ik kwam later in de kapel terecht en had het genoegen de getijden mee te maken, die me gelukkig nog goed vertrouwd waren. Het was een heerlijk ogenblik van stilte, dat je die dag wel nodig had”.

39. Maan – Family, 5 December 1965: “Toen werd het langzamerhand tijd om naar de S. Paolo te vertrekken en we bereikten de kerk via de kloostergang. Daar straalde de zaak van licht. Midden voor het altaar was de zetel van de Paus: rechts van hem zaten de Kardinalen, links van hem zaten wij, en tegenover hem zaten de bisschoppen. De dienst was van revolutionaire betekenis, omdat het de eerste maal was dat de Paus meedeed aan een niet R.K. dienst. Er stond ook in het boekje niet dat de Paus presideerde, maar dat hij participeerde. Heel wat bisschoppen en de meeste kardinalen zullen wel vreemd hebben opgekeken. De speech van de Paus was zeer eenvoudig, maar maakte juist daardoor een

Moorman, the senior Anglican observer, responds on behalf of the observers. Finally, all the observers receive presents from the pope, in particular a heavy bronze table bell with depictions of the four evangelists on it, as well as a certificate. The pope bids each observer farewell personally with a handshake⁴⁰.

This impressive meeting and service of worship and encounter with the Benedictines and the Pope, however, is not the end of this day yet: also the Dutch episcopate offers a farewell reception, which Maan attends, travelling there with the Dutch ecumenist Thijssen⁴¹. In the course of this full day, he is also invited to give an interview about the service with the pope for Radio Beromuenster and assists Ludwig Kaufmann, S.J., with the translation of the speech of the Bishop of Ripon for the Swiss periodical *Orientierung*. In the evening he meets with Leon van Alting Geusau⁴², as well as with a representative of the Alexandrian Church, the Swedish bishop Silén⁴³, and Prof. Feiner again⁴⁴.

The next day, 5 December, Maan attends a service of the observers, led by Bishop Moorman; Maan attends it in the company of Patrick Rodger of the World Council of Churches⁴⁵. Subsequently, he relaxes by visiting the Villa Borghese and the Valle Giulia; he concludes his letter of this day by looking at what the evening, and the next day will have in store. This includes a dinner party at the invitation of Msgr. Höfer for the evening of 5 December, and, on the next day, a reception offered by the observers to the Secretariat, as well as a dinner party with the translators at the *Pensione Castello*. Tuesday will be dedicated to the final session of the Council with the promulgation of the final documents. In the context of this conclusion, it is also anticipated that the pope will announce

diepe indruk. Hij gebruikte geen grote woorden, maar wees erop dat er een nieuw klimaat van wederzijdse vriendschap, wederzijdse stichting en wederzijds gesprek gegroeid was”.

40. Maan – Family, 5 December 1965: “Na afloop van de dienst gingen we weer naar het Klooster terug, waar Bea een toespraak hield en de Bisschop van Ripon uit naam van de Waarnemers sprak. De Paus was ook in een stemming van Sinterklaas. We kregen allemaal een bronzen tafelklok met de symbolen van de vier Evangelisten erop. De klok zat in prachtige doos met op het slot het wapen van de paus. Bovendien kregen we ook een diploma, zodat we zwaar beladen de S. Paolo verlieten. De Paus had nog in verschillende talen gesproken en we kregen allemaal een hand van hem”.

41. (Msgr. Dr.) Frans Thijssen (1904-1990), a Dutch priest, scholar and ecumenist, at this time also serving as a staff member of the Secretariat. Thijssen was a close colleague and friend of Johannes Cardinal Willebrands.

42. A Dutch priest and reporter, leading the *Nederlands Documentatiecentrum* during the Council.

43. I.e. Sven Silén, Bishop of Diocese of Västerås (1962-1975).

44. Maan – Family, 5 December 1965.

45. The Anglican priest and theologian Patrick Rodger was Executive Secretary for Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches at this point.

the beatification of both of his predecessors and the revoking of the bull of 1054 that had formalized the schism between the Eastern and Western Churches⁴⁶. Subsequently, Maan will be interviewed by Kaufmann and attend a reception offered at the Capitol.

4. 6 December 1965

When Maan writes the next day, 6 December, he notes that he bought a present for his eldest daughter, yet does he not reveal what it might be⁴⁷. Subsequently he recounts how the dinner party at Msgr. Höfer's place, who lives in a small German hospital outside of Rome, also included the auxiliary bishop of Paderborn (Paul Nordhues) and Prof. Küppers and his wife. As Prof. Küppers dominates the conversation too much to Maan's taste, he rebukes him, which is not taken all too kindly⁴⁸.

The morning of 6 December is spent at the service for the observers, as well as at an Orthodox service in English at the Council itself, which he appreciates, despite the novelty of hearing Orthodox chants in English⁴⁹. Following the service, Cardinal Felici addresses the Council and distributes gifts (Maan jokingly remarks that the bishops receive an "annulus" [a ring] and thus may be considered "annulled"). He also encounters a few persons whose attention Maan had drawn because of his part in the service with the pope, which is also a form of recognition

46. Maan – Family, 5 December 1965: "Vanavond ga ik met Kueppers naar Mgr. Hoefer, waar we te eten gevraagd zijn. Morgen is de laatste dienst voor de Waarnemers, dan de laatste besloten zitting van het concilie. 's Middags is de receptie van de Waarnemers voor het Secretariaat en 's avonds eten we in Castello met de tolken. Dinsdag is de slotzitting van het concilie waarin de laatste stukken gepromulgeerd gaan worden. Daarna interview met Kaufmann, daarna zitting met het Secretariaat en daarna ontvangst op het Capitool. Woensdag wordt het Concilie gesloten. Men verwacht mededelingen van de paus over de zaligverklaring van zijn beide voorgangers en het intrekken van de bul, waardoor in 1054 het schisma met het Oosten een feit werd. 's Avonds is er dan nog een receptie van de buitenlandse delegaties bij de slotzitting, maar ik weet niet of ik daar nog aan toekom".

47. Maan – Family, 6 December 1965: "ik wandelde naar de Piazza del Esedra en kocht bij de boekenstalletjes wat voor Fiete. Maar het is niet een...".

48. Maan – Family, 6 December 1965: "Om tien over zeven ging ik met Kueppers naar de Villa Stuart, een klein Duits ziekenhuis waar Mgr. Hoefer woont. Het was een aardig eindje buiten Rome en je had er een mooi uitzicht over de stad. We werden aardig ontvangen door Hoefer, die ook de wijbisschop van Paderborn had uitgenodigd. We aten in de eetzaal van de zusters en gingen later in de kamer van Hoefer koffie drinken. Kueppers praatte weer als gewoonlijk en liet de anderen nauwelijks aan het woord komen. Ik heb er later iets van gezegd, maar Herr Professor was daar helemaal niet van gesticht. Gelukkig is hij niet haatdragend".

49. Maan – Family, 6 December 1965: "We werden op het Concilie vergast op een Orthodoxe dienst in het Engels. Het was heel merkwaardig dat de zang goed tot zijn recht kwam. Het was een zeer stichtelijke dienst".

of the Old Catholic Churches⁵⁰. Beyond that, he recounts a lunch with Küppers and his wife as well as with bishop Silén; an attempt to visit an exhibition about Dante in the Palazzo Venetia is botched: the museum is closed on Mondays. During his walk home, he buys a gift for another one of his daughters, again not revealing what it is⁵¹. He also drops by at the Secretariat, presenting a gift there, and saying his farewells⁵². In *Pensione Castello*, the day concludes with a dinner party offered by the observers to the various translators at the Council. Each translator receives a gift and a limerick⁵³. Maan forwards the one about Johannes Feiner to his family:

You talk about major and minor
We'll give you a perfect headliner (Schlagzeile)
In concelebration
and expert translation
we find no one finer than Feiner.

He also tells that each of the waiters is acknowledged and that further presents are exchanged⁵⁴.

5. 7 December 1965

Maan's final letter dates from 7 December – on 8 December, the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary (according to the Roman Catholic tradition), on which the council was closed, Maan left Rome

50. Maan – Family, 6 December 1965: “Na de dienst was er weer verhaaltjes vertellen van Felici en geschenken uitdelen. De bisschoppen hebben nu een annulus (ring) gekregen, en dus kunnen ze als geannuleerd worden beschouwd. Ik sprak met Groot en andere heren, die op mij opmerkzaam waren geworden door de dienst in de San Paolo”.

51. Maan – Family, 6 December 1965: “...wandelde over de Piazza Navona naar huis, waar ik wat voor Marti kocht. (Maar het is niet om op te eten)”.

52. Maan – Family, 6 December 1965: “Ik pakte mijn boek voor het Secretariaat prachtig in sinterklaaspapier en ging naar de receptie. Daar bood ik mijn boek aan, dat gelukkig zeer gunstig ontvangen werd. Verder deed ik daar de ronde. Ik moest de dochters de speciale groeten doen van mevr. Skydsgaard”.

53. Maan – Family, 6 December 1965: “We aten heel gezellig. Horton had de zaak georganiseerd en de tolken over de verschillende tafeltjes verdeeld. Ik zat met Broeder Johan, Feiner en Bisschop Silen. Men had voor elke tolk een toespraak en een cadeautje en ook een limerick. Die voor Feiner heb ik overgeschreven...”.

54. Maan – Family, 6 December 1965, “Voor elk van de kelners was er een yell:

Is Luigi alright?
Yes, Luigi is alright.
Who is alright?
Luigi is alright! u.s.w”.

He also recounts that he has eaten a St. Nicolas treat (“banket”) on the 5th of December that his family either sent him or had packed for him; he also thanks his daughter Nel for sending him a letter.

prior to posting a letter. In this letter, he comments especially on the entrance of the delegation from the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the acts of reconciliation between the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Churches. He recounts how touching the entrance of the Constantinopolitan delegation was, comparing it to the grand finale of an opera and stressing how the reconciliation with Constantinople was greeted with the strongest applause in the course of the Council⁵⁵. This session of the Council in the morning is followed by an extensive lunch⁵⁶. Maan enjoys this in the company of amongst others the Czechoslovakian Josef Hromadka and the US American Robert McAfee Brown, both left-leaning protestant theologians. The lunch has such an effect on the observers that Maan has to postpone his interview with Kaufmann to the next day, following the closing ceremony of the Council, after which he will also attend an Anglican reception, offered by John Finlow, the Church of England's permanent representative to the Vatican⁵⁷.

IV. AFTER THE COUNCIL – FAREWELL TO ROME!

In the correspondence with his family, no letter can be found, in which Maan narrates his impressions of the very last day of the Council, when it was closed on the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary according to the Roman Catholic tradition – Maan likely commemorated Mary's conception in a somewhat less exuberant manner (and will have been aware of the fact that precisely this celebration concerned one of the few truly dogmatic differences between the Roman and Old Catholic Churches)⁵⁸. In order to gain an impression of how he looks back on the Council, it is therefore helpful to turn to an article that he contributed to

55. Maan – Family, 7 December 1965: “vandaag gingen we naar binnen toe en hadden onze gewone plaatsen. De dienst had het bekend verloop alleen was het een ontroerend moment toen de delegatie uit Constantinopel binnen werd geleid. Ik hoop dat mijn plaatjes goed zijn gelukt, want dit gedeelte was precies de finale van een opera, zeer kleurrijk en levendig. Ik denk dat deze verzoening met Constantinopel het grootste applaus heeft gekregen uit de geschiedenis van het concilie”.

56. Maan – Family, 7 December 1965.

57. Maan – Family, 7 December 1965; Maan spells the name of Finlow as “Findlay”. Finlow was appointed in September 1964, replacing Canon Bernard C. Pawley, with whom Maan had been in touch a lot earlier. Cf. SMIT, *Oud-katholieke waarnemers* (n. 8).

58. See the survey in A. BERLIS, *Maria in altkatholischer Sicht*, in *Internationale Kirchliche Zeitschrift* 99 (2009) 33-66. – In the liturgical tradition that Maan's Church emerged out of, 8 December would have commemorated the “*Conceptio Beatae Mariae Virginis*” as such, cf., e.g. the calendar of the 1744 *Breviarium Ecclesiasticum* mentions

the periodical *De Oud-Katholiek* following the closure of the Council⁵⁹. Naturally, it lacks the personal tone of his correspondence, yet it does provide an impression. Maan first comments on the feast on which the Council closed, both citing the orthodox theologian Nissiotis on the “western mania of dogmaticising” and stating that, in the end, the Second Vatican Council had really been a council of and for the Roman Catholic Church. This Church has wanted to say some things differently, but has also wanted to remain the Roman Catholic Church⁶⁰. He adds, self-critically, that something different may have been too much to expect, yet, he notes at the same time that the initial expectations had been higher⁶¹. Subsequently, he comments on the diversity within the Roman Catholic Church that has been revealed (both in terms of theological schools and in terms of traditions that are part of the Roman communion), the rediscovery of theology as a vital function of the Church (“levensfunctie van de kerk”), the emphasis on the missionary dimension of the Church, and the fruits of the liturgical movement that the Council could pick, identifying the latter as one of the most significant aspects of the Council. Furthermore, he stresses the reappraisal of the episcopal office (“herwaardering van het bisschopsambt”) and the enormous change of course regarding ecclesiology and ecumenism. In this context, he writes: “when previously the identity of the Roman Catholic Church and the Kingdom of God was taught, now a much more reticent formula was used that also leaves room for others”⁶². The term “church” was reserved by the Council for the Orthodox and Old Catholic Churches, yet other churches were nonetheless referred to as communities with an ecclesial character⁶³. From Maan’s perspective, at the Second Vatican

this feast on this date (rank: *solemne minus*). – Kind reference of the Rev. Dr. Mattijs Ploeger, Old Catholic Seminary (Utrecht University).

59. P.J. MAAN, *Afscheid van Rome*, in *Oud-Katholiek* 82:2213 (15 January 1966) 13-15.

60. *Ibid.*, p. 13: “in de allereerste plaats een concilie van en voor de Rooms-Katholieke kerk geweest is. En de Rooms-Katholieke kerk heeft bepaalde dingen anders willen zeggen, maar heeft toch de Rooms-Katholieke kerk willen blijven”.

61. *Ibid.*: “maar toch had men in de aanvang hoger gestemde verwachtingen”. – This is true, yet the Council had also been greeted with substantial scepticism on the part of the Old Catholics initially, cf. SMIT, *Oud-katholieke waarnemers* (n. 8), and ID., *Katholieke heroriëntatie* (n. 8).

62. MAAN, *Afscheid* (n. 59), p. 14. Presumably this is (at least) a reference to the famous formula *subsistit in* (*Lumen gentium* 8). On its interpretation and significance, see, e.g., K. SCHELKENS, *Lumen gentium’s ‘subsistit in’ Revisited: The Catholic Church and Christian Unity after Vatican II*, in *Theological Studies* 69 (2008) 875-893, and F.A. SULLIVAN, *Quaestio Disputata: Further Thoughts on the Meaning of ‘subsistit in’*, in *Theological Studies* 71 (2010) 133-147.

63. MAAN, *Afscheid* (n. 59), p. 14.

Council the Roman Catholic Church has rediscovered its own Catholicity in a number of ways. This pertains to both the renewed attention to mission and social justice and to the revitalized ecclesiology and the ecumenical attitude resulting from it. This leads to a conclusion for him as an Old Catholic theologian, by finishing his piece entitled “Farewell to Rome” (“Afscheid van Rome”)⁶⁴, by saying that “we also say farewell to Rome as the symbol of everything that went against the Gospel and against Catholicity”⁶⁵.

V. CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

The above account of the (main) Old Catholic observer’s last days in Rome, based on his private correspondence with his family back in Utrecht, allows a few concluding observations. To begin with, it is striking how much Maan assumes that his family knows about the Council’s proceedings. Through the lens of this correspondence, the Council seems to be a very familiar affair indeed. This is certainly added to by his asides for the benefit of his family regarding presents and the feast of St. Nicholas. Furthermore, it is also clear that Maan is networking avidly, but not in a particularly ambitious way; he seems to enjoy himself as well when meeting dignitaries from the Roman Catholic Church and other churches. Yet, in addition to this, the anecdotes that he narrates often go beyond the merely entertaining and humorous: of course, the Dutch legate’s misinterpretation of a conciliar document is a little funny, yet Maan also communicates his understanding of the (new) Roman Catholic perspective on the freedom of conscience through it. In another example, his account of a Benedictine abbot’s table service, Maan is clearly touched by the man’s example of evangelical ministry (by being the least of all). Beyond such more incidental anecdotes, aspects of Maan’s style of representation and observership are also apparent from the correspondence. He has travelled to Rome intentionally to be formally present at the Council’s closure in his role of main observer on behalf of the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht and also takes this role upon him (not allowing others to infringe upon it). He recognizes the revolutionary character of the service of prayer with the pope and prepares himself thoroughly, while also noting that his role in this service has also made others aware of the Old Catholic Churches. First and foremost, however,

64. The *double entendre* is also there in Dutch.

65. MAAN, *Afscheid* (n. 59), p. 15.

he is a keen observer of the changes that the Roman Catholic Church goes through at the Second Vatican Council and how this will have to impact the stance of the Old Catholic Church vis-à-vis of it. Quite in line with this, a round of talks started virtually immediately after the Council between the two Churches in the Netherlands, leading to a joint service of vespers of the Roman and Old Catholic Archbishops of Utrecht on St. Willibrord's Day 1966 (7 November) and the lifting of formal demands for dialogue on the part of the Roman Catholic Church. Dialogue has, indeed, replaced polemics more and more in the course of the decades following the Second Vatican Council⁶⁶, although, as the international dialogue concluded in 2016, much work still remains to be done. In order to facilitate this, bridges need to be built; one way of doing so is, of course, by cooperating in the field of church history and ecumenical theology, the Universities of Louvain and Utrecht as well as the Old Catholic Seminary (Utrecht) offer vantage points for this!

Herengracht 559 HS
NL-1017 BW Amsterdam
The Netherlands
p.b.a.smit@uu.nl

Peter-Ben SMIT
Utrecht
Bern
VU Amsterdam

66. Cf. VISSER, *Zur Vorgeschichte* (n. 2).