

Eucharistic Miracle of BERGEN

NETHERLANDS, 1421



The city of Bergen is famous not only for its characteristic canals but also for a Eucharistic miracle that took place there in 1421. For many months, the pastor of the Church of Saints Peter and Paul had experienced doubt about whether the Body and the Blood of Christ was truly present in the consecrated Host. The priest showed no devotion towards the Blessed Sacrament, so much so that one day after celebrating Mass he took the remaining consecrated Hosts and threw them in the river. Some months later the Hosts were found again floating in the water and stained with blood.



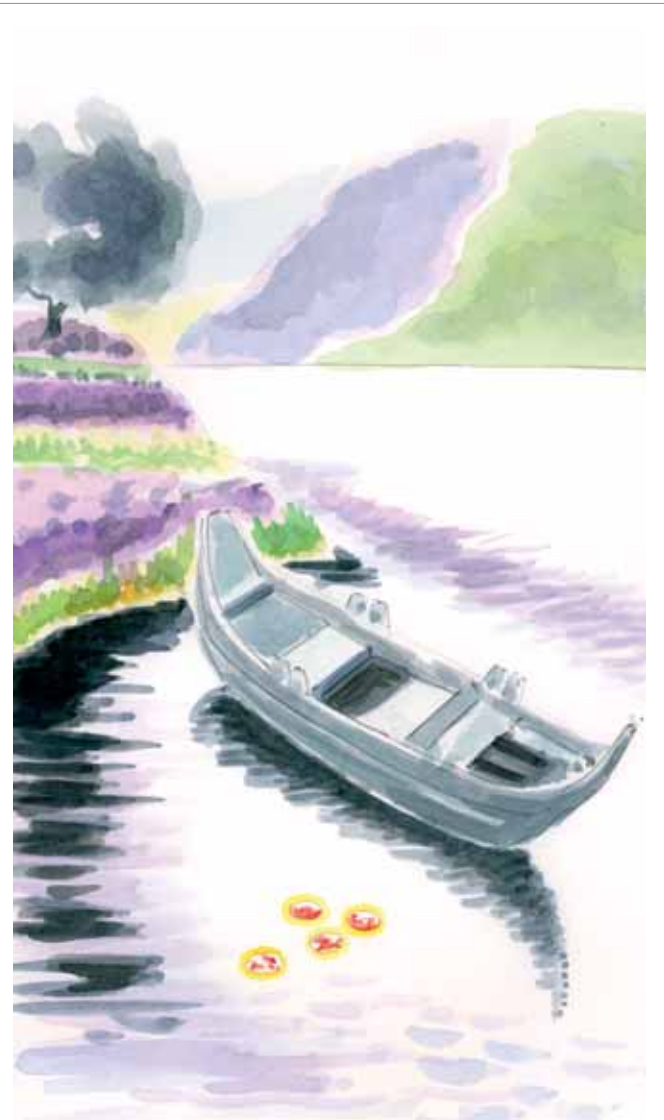
Jules Breton, *Procession of the Blessed Sacrament*, 1857



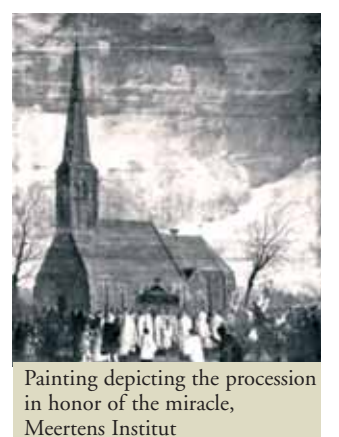
View of the Schelda River



The church of Saints Peter and Paul and the River Schelda



A model of the city of Bergen at the time of the miracle



Painting depicting the procession in honor of the miracle, Meertens Instituut

Bergen op Zoom (City on the Border), is located along the estuary of the Schelda River and has many canals running across it. In 1421, on the Sunday before the Feast of Pentecost, the pastor of the Church of Saints Peter and Paul, not believing the truth of the transubstantiation, threw consecrated Hosts left over from Mass into the canal.

Several months later, some fisherman found the Hosts floating in the water and soaked in coagulated Blood. News of the miraculous recovery of the Hosts spread quickly, and immediately many pilgrims came to see. Devotion was approved by the bishop and, though it was banned for a long period during the Protestant

Reformation, Catholics silently continued to keep alive memory of the miracle. Devotion was restored in the twentieth century and there are numerous public events to commemorate it.