

# *Catholic Monasteries as Testing Grounds for Cultivating Various Facets of Sustainability on the religious heritage spectrum*



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## The heritagization and re-religionization of Catholic monasteries

### Context

- Catholic monastic estates are scattered throughout the Netherlands.
- While there were over 1.000 monasteries in religious use in 1970, today there are less than 80.
- Many have been repurposed, but in that process, there is a loss of historical, religious and communal values.

### Religious re-use

- At the same time, new Christian communities have emerged which have developed their own take on monasticism.
- This millennium, they have even started to acquire and inhabit monumental monasteries.

NEW COMMUNITIES REENCHANT THE MONASTERY AS A RELIGIOUS SITE, AUGMENT ITS HERITAGE VALUE, GAIN CREDIBILITY THROUGH CLAIMING TRADITION, AND ATTRACT A DIVERSE AND YOUNG AUDIENCE

Religious  
'continuity'

Ecological  
sustainability

Using and  
augmenting  
heritage  
values

Communal  
participation

### Sustainability through reinterpretation?

From the old communities' perspectives, we could say that their heritage changes from being a living tradition into a source of inspiration interpreted differently by different stakeholders.

So, what exactly is sustained at these places and by whom?