

I am very curious about the major commission for my brother Hubert and of course, I am willing to collaborate on it. I was asked to bring a large part of the drawings and watercolours of plants and landscapes I made at home. Hubert has told me that the altarpiece will depict the adoration of the Mystic Lamb, as this is its principal subject, befitting a painting that will be displayed in a chapel where people will pray on a daily basis. I have explained to Hubert: "If an image of the Virgin Mary will be included in the altarpiece, it is important that you add lots of plants, since flowers are intrinsically connected to Mary. It is therefore self-evident that several well-known plants from our fields and pastures such as lilies, irises, peonies, violets and cuckoo-flowers should be depicted."

I am now going to mass in the church of St John on Sundays. Hubert helps organise the liturgical services. I also play a part in the Sunday service. As I used to do in Maaseik, I sing in the ladies' in St John's church during mass.

On weekdays, the choir rehearses frequently because polyphonic is not a simple musical style. But if we do our best, we'll manage.

As Hubert hears us sing during rehearsals, he peeks around the sacristy's corner and enjoys the sound of our voices. I know what he is thinking: he wants to capture the arrangement of singers and musicians for his painting. He will have to do a great deal of brainwork to determine the position of the singers and musicians without distracting from the altarpiece's subject ...

I, Margaretha Van Eyck