

NOTRE-DAME-DE-TOUTE-GRACE CHURCH

THE SACRED ART REVIVAL OF THE 20th CENTURY

Drawing Maurice Novarina, architect



Between 1926 and 1937, a large sanatorium complex was built on the high plateaux of Passy. Canon Jean **Devémy**, chaplain at the Sancellemoz sanatorium, was given the responsibility for building a church there that was to become the key building in the revival of 20th century sacred art.

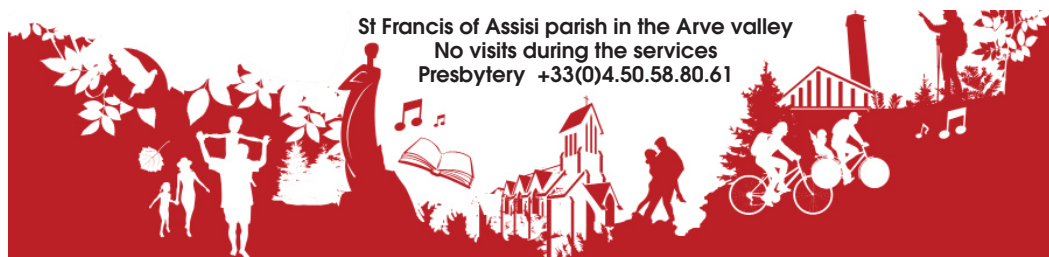


The architecture, entrusted to Maurice **Novarina**, drew its inspiration from the sturdy Savoyard chalets. The 5-m deep porch roof is supported by six solid pillars. The clock tower, rising to a height of 28 m, draws your gaze up towards the peaks of the Fiz mountains. The local green stone (Taveyannaz sandstone) was chosen for the structural work, spruce for the timberwork and Ardennes green slate for the roof (restored in 2012). Advised by his friend the Dominican father Marie-Alain **Couturier**, for whom “any true artist is someone inspired”, the canon “counted on genius” and invited the greatest modern artists to create the decoration, without taking their religious beliefs or political ideology into account.

This is what is called the “LESSON OF ASSY”.

And that is how Fernand **Léger** came to design a 152 sq.m mosaic for the façade. In the centre, a medallion portraying the face of the VIRGIN MARY. All around it, nine symbols invoked by Christians to extol Mary in the LITANIES.

St Francis of Assisi parish in the Arve valley
No visits during the services
Presbytery +33(0)4.50.58.80.61

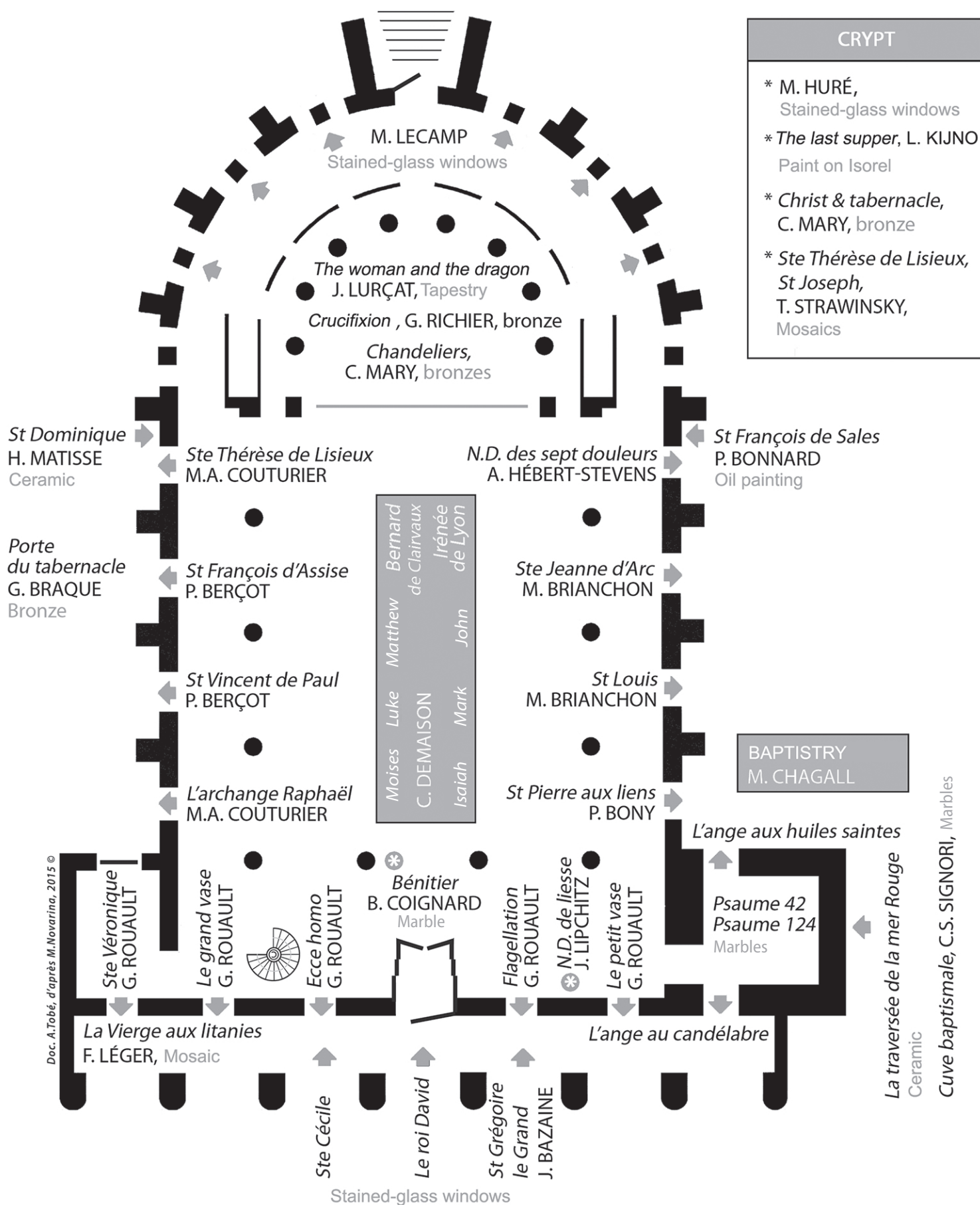


THE CHURCH OF NOTRE-DAME-DE-TOUTE-GRÂCE

Founder Canon Jean Devémy, architect Maurice Novarina, Adviser Marie Alain Couturier o.p.

Building : 1937-46, consecration : 1950

Property of Annecy diocesan association





PLAN - ELEVATION. The nave with four bays, flanked by two side aisles, is prolonged by a semi-circular chancel with an ambulatory illuminated by Marcelle **Lecamp's** stained-glass windows. The organ loft extends above the side aisles. The spaces are separated by semicircular arches, mounted on monolithic circular pillars made of Combloux granite. The altars and floor slabs are made of Comblanchien limestone. The coffered ceiling is made of Burgundy oak. The roof's eight braces, sculpted in Hungarian oak by Constant **Demaïson**, depict two great prophets - MOSES and ISAIAH - the four Evangelists and two doctors of the Western Church - IRENAEUS of LYON and BERNARD of CLAIRVAUX.

THE CHANCEL. The chancel conch, lined with a tapestry designed by Jean **Lurçat**, illustrates chapter XII of the Apocalypse of Saint John: THE WOMAN AND THE DRAGON. It is completed by two trees: THE TREE OF EARTHLY PARADISE and THE TREE OF JESSE, depicting the family tree of Mary's husband, Joseph. In the centre, Germaine **Richier's** CHRIST ON THE CROSS, metamorphosis of the bronze into "he too appeared disfigured, inhuman, his appearance unlike that of mortals" (Isaiah 52:14), arms outstretched in an immense tenderness: "Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end." (John 13:1). On either side, two bronze candlesticks by Claude **Mary**, Richier's pupil and assistant.

THE SIDE ALTARS. The Altar of the Blessed Sacrament is decorated with a ceramic piece on which Henri **Matisse** depicted ST DOMINIC preaching the Gospel. (The church was entrusted to the Dominicans between 1941 and 1994.) The DOOR OF THE TABERNACLE, a bronze statue by Georges **Braque**, depicts a Fish, the symbol of the early Christians with the Christogram ICHTHYS (Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour). Pierre **Bonnard** painted a canvas for the southern side altar - in memory of his nephew, Dr Jean **Terrasse**, who had taken part in the creation of the complex - showing ST FRANCOIS DE SALES, Bishop of the Diocese of Annecy, visiting the sick.

THE WESTERN FACADE. At the base, five stained-glass windows designed by Georges **Rouault**: the DERISION OF CHRIST and FLAGELLATION OF CHRIST, two VASES depicting the words of the prophet Isaiah, and SAINT VERONICA. In the organ loft, Jean **Bazaine's** stained-glass windows evoke three holy musicians: ST GREGORY THE GREAT, KING DAVID and SAINT CECILIA.

THE SIDE BAYS are illuminated by the stained-glass windows designed by Marie-Alain **Couturier** o.p. (SAINT THERESE OF LISIEUX and the ARCHANGEL RAPHAEL), Paul **Berçot** (SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI and SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL), Paul **Bony** (SAINT PETER IN CHAINS), Adeline **Hébert-Stevens** (OUR LADY OF THE SEVEN SORROWS) and Maurice **Brianchon** (SAINT JOAN OF ARC and SAINT LOUIS).

AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE BAPTISTERY, OUR LADY OF LIESSE, that Jacques **Lipchitz** dedicated to the "harmony of mankind on earth". The Baptistery was decorated by Marc **Chagall** (the ceramic CROSSING OF THE RED SEA, two monochrome stained-glass windows, ANGEL WITH HOLY OILS and ANGEL WITH CANDLESTICK as well as two marble stone bas-reliefs, LAMENT OF A LEVITE IN EXILE and DAVID'S SAVIOUR). The Carrara marble font is signed Carlo Sergio **Signori**.

AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE NAVE, there is the Carrarra marble stoup by Benoît **Coignard** (1994) on which the opening words of the Book of Genesis are inscribed in Hebrew, "In the beginning God created...".

Under the chancel, **THE CRYPT** with Ladislav **Kijno's** Last Supper, Claude **Mary's** CHRIST ON THE CROSS and the TABERNACLE, two mosaics by **Strawinsky** (ST THERESE OF LISIEUX and ST JOSEPH), as well as sixteen stained-glass windows by Marguerite **Huré** illustrating the Eucharist Scenes.

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