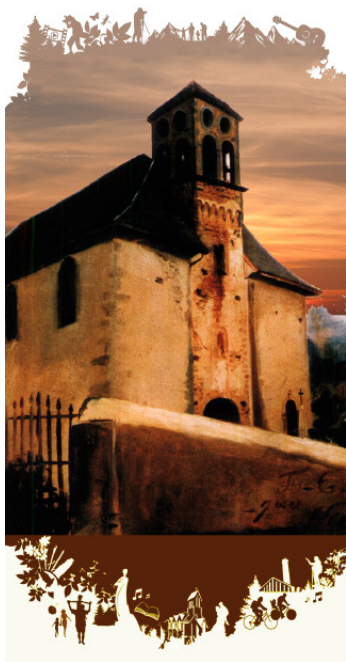


ST-PIERRE & ST-PAUL CHURCH

St Francis of Assisi parish in the Arve valley
(No visits during the services)



*On the left,
Painting by F. Tissot,
1866, Coll. D. Grivet*



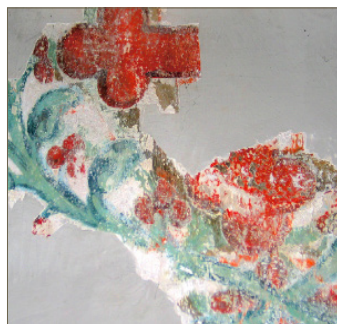
*On the right,
Poster by Roger Broders,
1932*

A MULTI-FACETED HISTORY

The precise origins of the parish and church are not known.

The building evolved in three phases:

- A **Romanesque** style church, mentioned in a deed of gift to Peillonex Priory in **1012**. The Lombard strips inside the tower bear witness to those times.
- A new church consecrated in **1486** by Monseigneur François de Savoie (painting opposite).
- A new church with Baroque style decorations, re-consecrated in **1701** (N.B. In the 17th and 18th centuries the inhabitants of Haut-Faucigny rebuilt their ruined mediaeval churches).



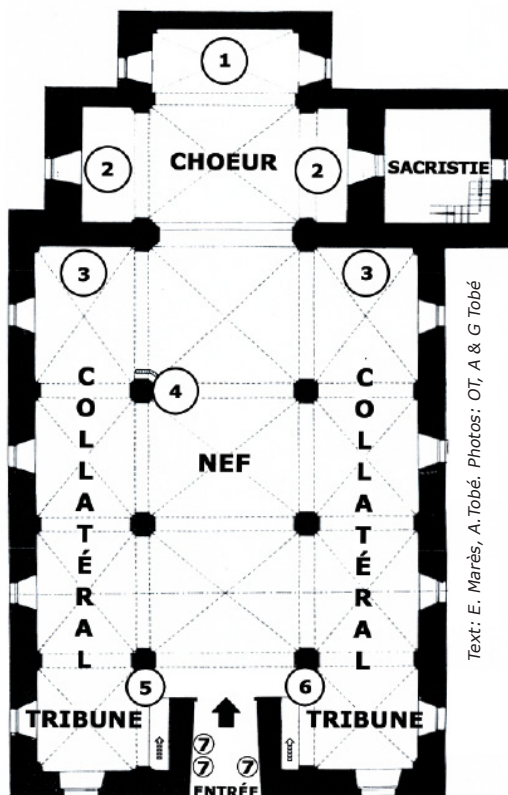


The massive appearance of the building contrasts strongly with the polychrome interior decorations. Baroque art, marked by the principles of the **Counter-Reformation**, had to move the faithful and draw them into their faith: **exuberance** was only matched by learning the holy story.

The nave with three bays delimited by pillars with a cruciform cross-section is flanked by two aisles. The ceiling consists of painted groin vaults. A **stucco** cornice highlights the form of the building's walls.

The flat chancel is formed with two bays, the first one being wider to accommodate the **choir stalls** facing each other.

The decoration is signed **Rosa** (1891), an artist of Italian origin. The vaults are decorated with floral and plant themes, small medallions and some cherubs. Shaded **trompe-l'œil** motifs can be seen on some vaults. The cross ribs and wall arches support grey tracery on a blue background. The pillars are coated with a pinkish artificial marble.



Text: E. Marés, A. Tobé. Photos: OT, A & G Tobé

ST-PIERRE & ST-PAUL DE PASSY CHURCH'S PROTECTED FURNISHINGS

Some objects benefit from protection in respect of ancient monument listing.

The following are covered:

- the Roman inscriptions (7),
- the font (2),
- the font cabinet (5),
- and the stoup (6).

The following are listed:

- the high altar & main reredos (1),
- the side reredos (3),
- and the choir stalls (2).



1. The high altar & main reredos

(Ancient Monuments Supplementary Inventory 1980, see last page)

2. The choir stalls (Ancient Monuments Supplementary Inventory 1980)

The choir stalls are rows of seats attached to each other and aligned along the walls of the chancel. They allow two positions: seated or standing (seat raised), with support from a structure called a "misericord" or mercy seat. Usually there are two rows of stalls facing each other in the chancel, topped with a high back with a simple diamond shape sculpted in relief.

3. The two side altars

(Ancient Monuments Supplementary Inventory 1980, see last page)

4. The pulpit (Ancient Monuments 1936)

This piece, sculpted during the last quarter of the 17th century by an unknown artist, owes its originality to its support, a bearded Atlas dressed in the fashion of a 17th century peasant. The front panel of the pulpit represents an angel's head. The other panels are adorned with scrolls and the profiles of grotesques. The door is sculpted with rosettes. The back is a bas-relief depicting the Prefiguration of the Passion of Christ.

5. The font cabinet (Ancient Monuments 1936)

Dating from the 18th century, this piece of walnut furniture has three visible faces. The central panel bears a bas-relief illustrating Christ's baptism. The left-hand panel shows a fountain and the one on the right a stag grazing on the banks of a stream.

6. The stoup (Ancient Monuments 1952)

The circular fluted bowl is carved out of limestone. An engraved inscription gives the donor's name: François Thierriat, notary, along with the date: 1716.

7. The Roman inscriptions (Ancient Monuments)

Three ex-votos¹ dedicated to the god Mars, found on the "Outards" site, downhill from the church, have been sealed into the porch since the last consecration.

1. The first one concerns an Allobroges from the Voltinia tribe, steward of the public treasure, then priest.

The second one was engraved in thanks for the salvation of a Roman functionary from a family of magistrates: a Duumvir (one of two magistrates dispensing justice) and a Triumvir (one of three magistrates in charge of settling disputes between the state and private individuals). Lastly, the third one discovered in 1930, relates the fulfilment of a wish of a Duumvir magistrate from the city of Vienne.



The main reredos drew its inspiration from St Peter's **Baldachin** in Rome. It is divided into **three horizontal bands**. The altar (restored in the neoclassical style) is sculpted with papal insignia (tiara and keys). The tabernacle is a 19th century miniature temple whose capping houses a crucifix and the Dove of the Holy Spirit. The wooden door includes the sculpture of a **pelican**, Christ's zoomorphic form.

The second band is in turn divided into three vertical **parts**: the central panel depicts St François de Sales and the Blessed Amedeo IX, Duke of Savoy. The Holy Trinity is depicted on the Vault of Heaven.

Sculpted representations of St Peter (LH) and St Paul (RH) are separated by **twisted** columns with intertwined vine leaves and bunches of grapes. The upper band includes three medallions (it is thought that these pieces were sculpted in the 19th century to replace the baroque motifs that were perhaps damaged): the inflamed heart, symbol of divine love, Our Lady of the Assumption and the Marian monogram.

The side reredoses, in the **neoclassical** style were executed by Passerat, the Sallanches sculptor. The one on the right (1832) is dedicated to Marian devotions: a statue of the Virgin Mary is placed in a niche topped with a curtain. A sculpted baldachin dominates the composition and protects the inflamed heart surrounded by cherubs. The second reredos (1833) has a sculpted baldachin including statues similar to those on the other one. The central panel represents Pentecost - the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles and the people with them, fifty days after Easter.

Originally, the **presbytery** was situated to the north of the church. The current rectory, to the west of the church, has been in use since 1816. The building with an **ogee** door and twin windows, is thought to date from the 17th or 18th century.

Also of note, a **marble block** that came from what was probably the Outardstemple, reused as quoin stone at the top of the wall, on the left-hand side of the east end of the church (above the stele).

Down below, a **mission cross** commemorating the 1824 patron saint day.

Backing on to the east end of the church, a **stele**, erected in memory of the victims of the St-Gervais Spa catastrophe (1892).

Lastly, between the Town Hall and the Church, the **War Memorial** commemorating all the wars of the 20th century is dedicated by the "District of Passy to its Children who Died for Law and Humanity 1914-1919".



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