

VOSNE-ROMANEE

VISIT GUIDE TO SAINT MARTIN'S CHURCH



THE PATRON SAINT

The church is dedicated to Saint Martin, celebrated on November 11. Saint Martin, nicknamed "the glory of Gaul," was born in 316 in what is now Hungary, to an officer of the Roman army, and he himself joined the army.

"Martin" means "dedicated to Mars," Mars being the god of war in Rome.

Assigned to Gaul, during a patrol near Amiens on a winter evening in 338, he offered half of his cloak to a poor, destitute man freezing in the cold.

The following night, Christ appeared to him, wearing the cloak he had given.

He converted. He lived as a hermit and then founded a community of monks. He became the bishop of Tours and dedicated himself to evangelizing the countryside.

Saint Martin is depicted several times in the church.

A sculpture and a 17th-century painting depict him as the bishop of Tours.



Under the bell tower, the tympanum features a fresco created by Jean Jacques Borghetto showing him as a Roman soldier sharing his cloak. At his feet is Abbot Krau, who adopted the motto: "Non recuso laborem" (I do not refuse the labour).



The statuette of Abbot Krau is the subject of deep-rooted popular veneration in the village. Families take turns hosting it in their homes according to an age-old tradition.

He is even freely depicted in the corner of a painting.



ORIENTATION

The orientation of churches is an important characteristic of religious architecture.

Generally, Christian churches are oriented so that the choir, where the altar and priest are located, is situated to the East, with the main entrance and facade to the West.

However, the church in Vosne-Romanée is oriented to the West.

Orientation has a cosmic or religious significance.

Most often, the building is directed towards the East, where the sun rises, which explains the verb "to orienteer."

The direction of the East corresponds to the sunrise, to rebirth, and thus refers to the resurrection of Jesus.

This general rule has always been observed since the 5th century, except in particular circumstances related to the terrain.

This is the case in Vosne-Romanée. Why this inversion?

A document signed by President Joly de Bévy, the last lord of Vosne, provides the explanation:

The bell tower had fallen into ruins on September 29, 1771, and had to be completely rebuilt.

An act drawn up by the king's notaries on July 27, 1772, in the presence of Joseph Joly de Bévy, gives the reasons for this inversion:

"The entrance to the church is in a very inconvenient and uncomfortable position, as the entire village is located to the east of the said church and the entrance to the west, resulting in two inconveniences: first, all the inhabitants are obliged to walk around the church to find the door opposite all the dwellings; second, this entrance, having neither a vestibule nor a canopy, suffers greatly from the west wind, which often in winter brings rain and snow into the middle of the church when the door is open."

The plaque placed on the facade above the new entrance attests to the date of this event: July 28, 1772.

The prior at that time was Jean Bonnafoux du Terrail.

He entrusted Mr. Amant Seloudre, the Curé, with overseeing the work.
Thus, the entrance to the church was arranged to the East under the rebuilt bell tower.

The altar was placed to the West, and the sacristy was arranged in the chapel of the baptismal fonts, which was itself moved to the entrance of the church.

CLASSIFICATION AS HISTORICAL MONUMENT

The church itself is not classified as historical monument.

However, it contains **two 18th-century elements classified as historical monuments.**

1) The wooden half-panelling

Protection date: 04 12 1914

They are said to come from the abbey of Cîteaux and were brought by the last Abbot of Cîteaux, Dom Trouvé, who was expelled from the abbey by the Revolution.

He retired to Vosne-Romanée, where he died in 1797 at the home of his nephew Barthélémy Trouvé, in the house bequeathed to him by his father-in-law Karl Joseph Riepp, the great organ builder.

2) The bell

Protection date: 05 12 1908

It is a bronze bell cast in 1740 to replace the one that was in place and cracked. It bears the inscription of its godfather Simon Joseph Jacquinot, secretary to the King, and its godmother Guillemotte Vienot, wife of Mr. Claude Marey A NUIS 1740.

There are two other bells from 1853 and 1854. Intended to announce prayer times to the faithful, they were also used to alert to dangers.

A regulation specified that the bell ringer should be paid by the commune of Vosne-Romanée for the morning bell and by the church for the Angelus.



THE TRIUMPHAL ARCH

It separates the nave from the choir of the church.

On each side, two 17th-century paintings of Saint Martin, Bishop, and Saint John the Baptist. Christ, emperor of the world, holds an orb (a globe surmounted by a cross), a Christian symbol of Christ's spiritual and temporal authority over the world.



The composition is called "salvator mundi": Christ holds the orb in his left hand and blesses with his right hand. The large cross symbolizes the domination of the Christian God over world affairs. He is surrounded by a cloud of cherubs (curly-haired, rosy-cheeked children with two small wings).

THE CHAPEL OF THE VIRGIN



Located in the apse, it features a splendid 18th-century wooden statue. Virgin of tenderness, holding the child on her left arm. Mary looks at her child with simplicity. She is dressed in the traditional red robe and blue mantle, with a light white veil on her head. On each side, two stained glass windows depicting the Virgin's parents, Saint Anne, and Saint Joachim.

Saint Joachim

Husband of Saint Anne, father of the Virgin Mary, holding a shepherd's crook, accompanied by his sheep.



Saint Anne
Mother of the Virgin Mary, wife of Saint Joachim, instructing Mary (patroness of Christian education).



THE PAINTINGS

Religious art is said to be the bible of the illiterate.

Pope Gregory the Great affirmed that art is made “so that those who do not know their letters can still read by seeing on the walls what they cannot read in books.”

In this regard, the church of Vosne-Romanée is for the believer like an open Bible.

The Gremeaud collection specifies:

“Series of paintings from the Revel school”

Gabriel Revel is a Dijon painter born on May 10, 1643, who died in Dijon on July 9, 1712.

He was a student of Le Brun, with whom he worked on the decorations of the Versailles castle.

He painted the ceiling of the chamber of requests of the Burgundy parliament in 1688 and settled permanently in Dijon in 1692.

He produced numerous works there.

He was the main painter in Dijon, where he made his career.

He was mainly a copyist inspired by Le Brun.

THE WASHING OF THE FEET (Jn 13,1-20)

Jesus washes the feet of his disciples and wipes them with the cloth he wears at his waist.

Simon Peter: “You, Lord, wash my feet?” Jesus: “If I do not wash you, you have no part with me.”



PENTECOST

The apostles are gathered with Mary in a room in a house in Jerusalem (the Cenacle). The spirit is symbolized by the dove surrounded by light, projecting tongues of fire on the apostles. The fire

symbolizes the divine presence. The tongue evokes the apostles' mission of preaching. Paul, recognizable by his bald head and beard, is in the front row. Near a pillar, an old man with a white beard would represent God the Father.



THE CRUCIFIXION



A painting on wood depicting the torture of Jesus nailed to the cross, Mary praying at his feet. It is likely a special commission for this church, as the painter depicted on the right the scene where Saint Martin shares his cloak and, on the left, probably the portraits of a couple of donors.

JESUS AND THE SAMARITAN WOMAN JOHN 4,1-42



Tired from the journey, Jesus sits by Jacob's well and asks a Samaritan woman for a drink.

"How is it that you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" Jesus replies: "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that says to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water. Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; indeed, the water I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

THE VIRGIN OF THE ROSARY

A replica of a painting by the Spanish painter Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1618-1682), the original of which, painted around 1650, is housed in the Goya Museum in Castres. One of the most copied works of the 19th century. Note that the painting bears the signature of the copyist "Alix Corr after Murillo" (Alix Corr, Belgian painter).

The melancholic reverie of Mary is expressed in a natural atmosphere full of softness. The white



shirt of the Child Jesus, whose face leans towards his mother, is slightly haloed, standing out against the ample blue mantle of the Virgin seated on a marble bench. Jesus holds a rosary in his hands, from which he has separated eleven beads (a reference to the apostles minus the traitor Judas?).

SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

In a pastoral landscape, preaching with a raised hand, Saint John carries attributes inspired by the Gospels. Clad in a garment of hair, he is accompanied by a lamb at his feet. He holds a reed crook (shepherd's staff) around



which is wrapped a scroll bearing the words: "ecce agnus Dei" = "behold the Lamb of God" (behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world).



THE LAMENTATION OF CHRIST

Mary receives the crucified body of Jesus on her knees. Mary Magdalene, with her long hair, supports one of his arms. Two other women attend the tragic scene. The instruments of the Passion exalt the suffering:

- in the distance, the ladder used to take down the crucified body
- blood flows from the wounds
- the nails, instruments of the Passion, are on the ground.



MARTHA AND MARIE



Luke 10:38-42 The two sisters of Lazarus offer hospitality to Jesus. They prepare to welcome him. A chair is in place. Impulsive Martha busies herself with the tasks of service. Meditative Mary, kneeling, remains contemplative. “Lord, does it not bother you that my sister has

left me to serve alone?” “Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things; but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”

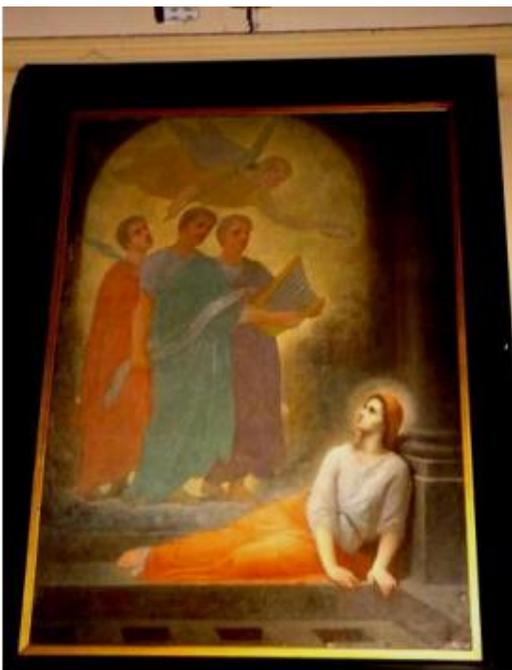
Two paintings are signed “F Félix Villé.” He was a tertiary Dominican painter.

THE RESURRECTED CHRIST

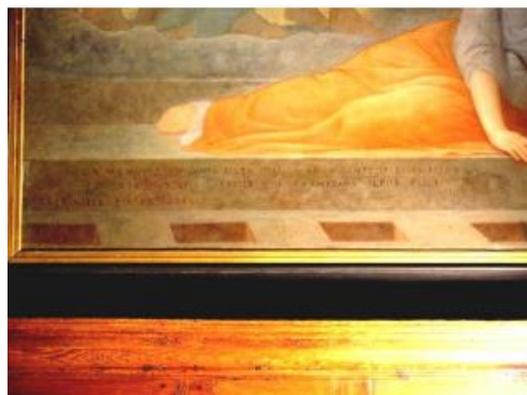
The resurrected Christ bears a still-bleeding wound. In the foreground, a Dominican monk in a white tunic and hood. The scene is surrounded by a crown of thorns. The painting is signed “F Félix Villé 1898”.



SAINT CECILIA



Above the scene, an angel holds the palm and a laurel crown. This painting resembles the works of Pierre Puvis de Chavannes (1824-1898), a famous symbolist painter, a brilliant representative of the allegorical genre. It is signed "Félix Villé Pictor 1888". On the lower beam is the inscription: "in memory of Count Liger Belair and Countess Liger Belair from Cécile de Champeaux, their daughter (born in Vosne-Romanée on March 30, 1843, and died in 1876). She was the daughter of Louis Charles Bocquillon Liger Belair, who was mayor of Vosne-Romanée, and married to Joseph Charles Marie de Champeaux.



VIRGIN AND CHILD



Virgin of tenderness. In a maternal attitude, Mary holds the naked child Jesus on her knees and presents him for adoration. The child makes a gesture of blessing to a young shepherd carrying a cruciferous cross, with three fingers raised representing the Trinity.

CHRIST ON THE CROSS

To prolong his suffering, his feet are supported on a wooden plank, allowing him to breathe. At the top of the cross, the titulus bears the inscription INRI "Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum" or Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Jews.



JESUS IN THE HOUSE OF MARTHA AND MARY



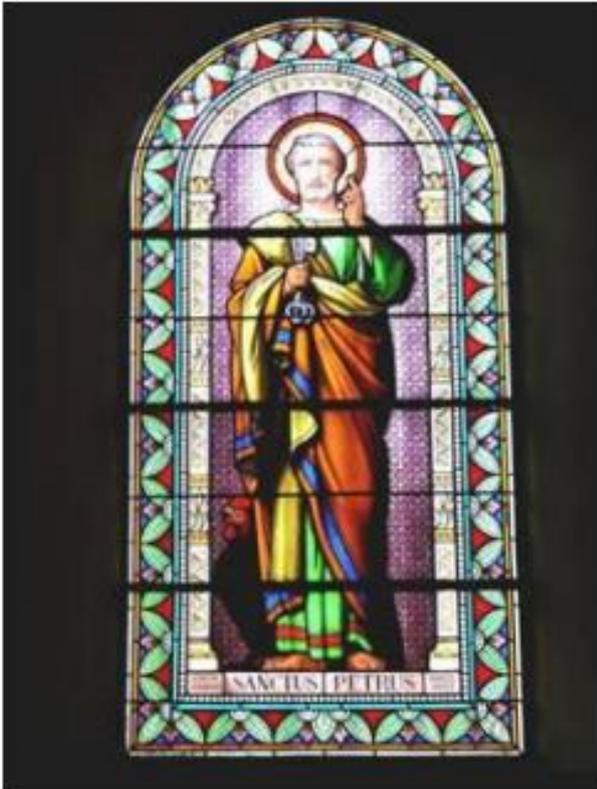
Mary at his knees.

THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI



Richly dressed figures, whose ostentatious luxury is evident, bow before Jesus. They offer a ciborium on a tray and a garment. Mary wears her blue mantle and red robe. Jesus seems to point to the star that guided the Magi.

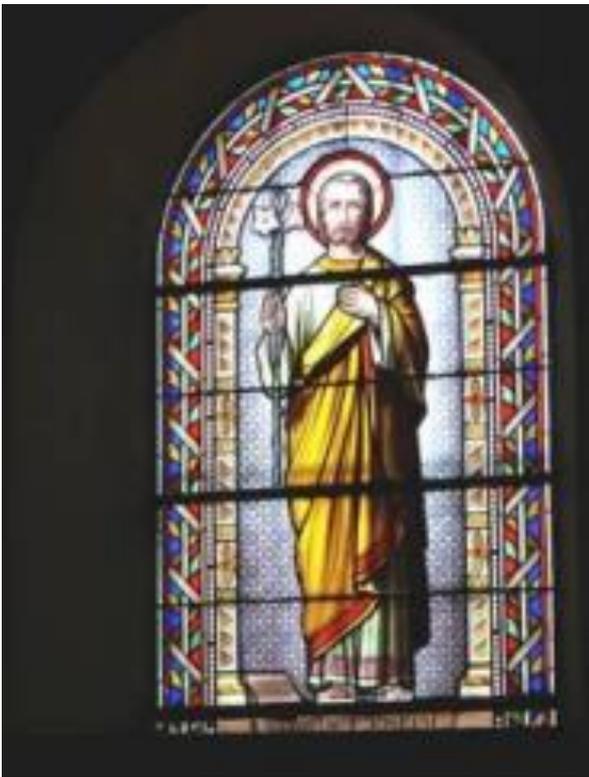
THE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS OF THE NAVE



SAINT PETER

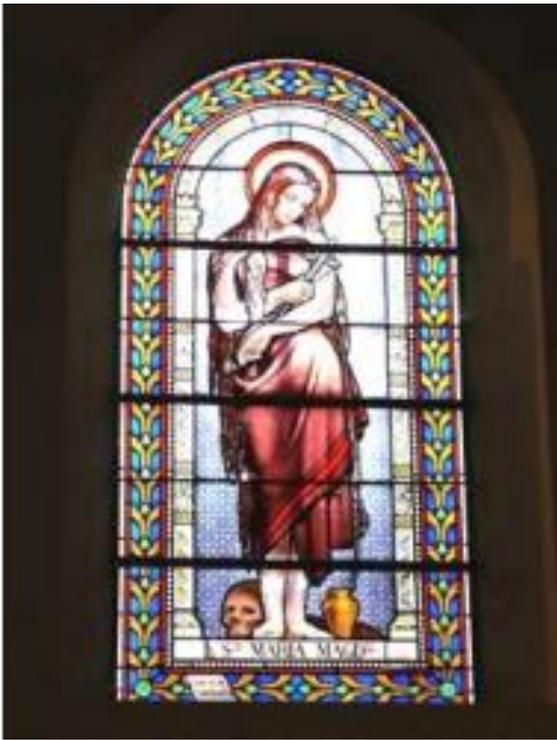
He carries the two keys: one celestial and the other terrestrial, giving him the power to open and close the gates of paradise, At his feet, the rooster of denial. Below, the inscription "pasce oves" (meas non tuas) feed my sheep (not yours), words of Christ to institute the church John XXI 15-17.

Note the inscription donated by Mrs. Dupuis Duvault, presumably Henriette Dupuis née Duvault, then owner of Romanée-Conti.



SAINT JOSEPH

Husband of the Virgin Mary, barefoot as a sign of humility, holding a staff topped with three lilies representing the triple virginity of Mary before, during, and after childbirth.



SAINTE MARY MAGDALENE

Her hair loose, floating on her shoulders, at her feet the jar of spices that Mary of Magdala brought to the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus, the long hair of Mary of Bethany who, having poured perfume on Jesus' feet, wiped them with her long hair, Mary the sinner whose sins will be forgiven because she showed much love, at her feet the skull symbol of penance.

Note the inscription "donated by Madame Chambon Massin," presumably Gabrielle Massin, wife of Chambon, granddaughter of J M Duvault, then owner of Romanée Conti.



IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

Heart burning with love, pierced by a sword. She crushes the serpent under her feet (symbolizing victory over Satan), her mantle is strewn with flowers.



SAINT CATHERINE

Daughter of a king, she wears a crown, holding a palm in one hand and a wheel studded with nails, symbols of her martyrdom. The palm represents the victory of martyrdom over death.



SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

Clad in animal skin, he makes a gesture of blessing with two fingers extended, symbolizing the dual nature of Christ, human and divine, the other three fingers representing the Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He carries the precursor's cruciferous staff, donated by the Loranchet Bissey family.

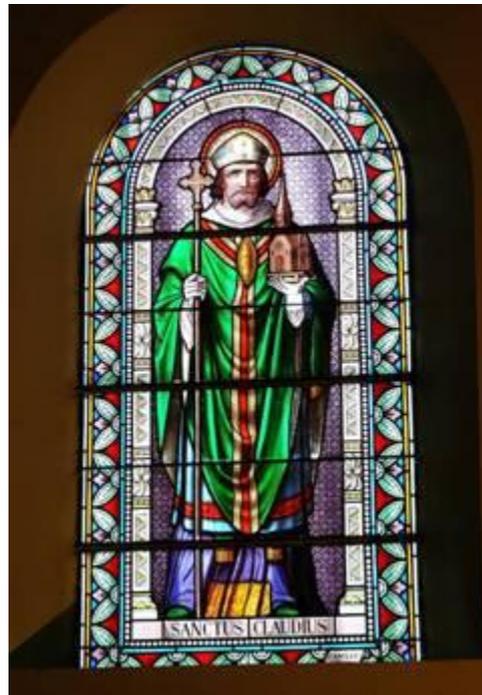


SAINT LOUIS

Louis IX, Christian king canonized in 1297, wears a crown, alluding to the holy crown of thorns of Jesus acquired by him from the king of Constantinople in 1238. Fleur-de-lis, symbols of royalty, emblem of the Capetians, coat of arms of the Champeaux de Thoisy family (gold heart and three silver stars and the motto HUC PAX MEA (here, my peace)).

SAINT CLAUDE

Metropolitan bishop of Besançon.



THE GOOD SHEPHERD

The Good Shepherd carrying a lost sheep on his shoulder. Like Christ, he is depicted wearing a robe and a blue and red mantle, cinched at the waist. He bears the cruciform halo of Christ, his long hair parted.

*Guide designed by the "Association Traditions Vosnières"
Christian BOEUF*

Translated to English by Philippe BOEUF