

A brief history

The priory church of Paray-le-Monial was built in the 12th century at the time of Hugues of Semur, the sixth abbot of Cluny. It was built slightly after Cluny III of which it is an «admirable smaller version».

It was raised to the rank of minor basilica by Pope Pius IX in 1875, in dedicated the Sacred Heart, in remembrance of the apparitions of Christ to a Visitation nun, Saint Margaret-Mary Alacoque, during the 17th century, and of the great pilgrimages following these apparitions. It was restored during the 19th century by Eugene Millet, a disciple of the French architect and restorer Viollet-le-Duc.

Interesting archaeological excavations were carried out from 1997, together with the entire restoration of the building.

A few dates

- 973** Lambert, the Count of Chalon creates the first Benedictine monastery, **Paray I**
- 999** Donation to Cluny
- 1004** Consecration of the first church, **Paray II**
- 1092** Hughes of Semur, the abbot of Cluny, starts the building of a new priory church **Paray III**
- 1792** The last monks leave Paray. The City Council buys the building.
- 1794** The monks' church becomes a parish church.
- 1846** It is classified as a Historic Monument.
- 1875** It is raised to the rank of a minor basilica by Pope Pius IX
- 1986** Pope John Paul II comes to Paray and prays in the basilica
- 2005** End of restoration
- 2011** Creation of the Way of the Cross by the artist Pierre Lafoucrière and installation of the new liturgical furniture..

Much more to see in Paray-le-Monial...

Ask the tourist office for the «City and Gardens» leaflet to visit the town.

Glossary

Abbey : a major monastery, presided over by an abbot.

Ambulatory : literally : «a walkway». The aisle round, behind the sanctuary.

Apse : the semicircular recess at the east end of a church, often covered by a semi-dome.

Apsidal chapel : a small chapel giving off the apse or parallel to it (sometimes behind the main altar).

Basilica : a church built in a particularly important place, for instance a place of pilgrimage able to welcome a great many pilgrims (Rome, the Holy Land).

Major basilicas are in Rome.

In France, about a hundred churches were raised to the rank of minor basilicas during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Cathedral : the principal church of a diocese, with which the bishop is officially associated.

Choir : place where the clergy celebrates mass.

Nave : space between the entrance doorway and the choir. The main part of the church where the congregation sits.

Priory Church : the church of a community of monks of the order of Saint Benedict, under the spiritual direction of a prior, whose monastery depends on an abbey.

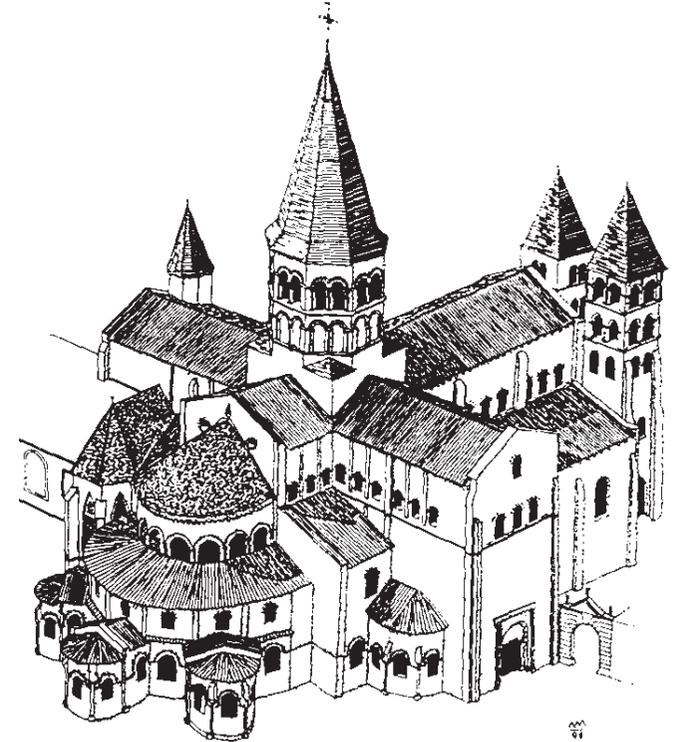
Transept : the transverse portion of a cruciform church, perpendicular to the nave on both sides, usually situated between the nave and the choir.

Paray le Monial
BOURGOGNE du SUD

Paray-le-Monial
in heart of Charolais-Brionnais



Pays d'Art et d'Histoire
Great Monastic Site
of the Order of Cluny



The Sacred Heart Basilica

Paray le Monial
TOURISME

Useful addresses

Tourist office - 25 av. Jean-Paul II

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www.tourisme-paraylemonial.fr

Amis de la Basilique - amis-basilique-paray.fr

Parish of Sacré-Cœur en Val d'Or - 30 rue Desrichard

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Sanctuaries of Paray-le-Monial

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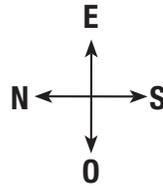
Charolais
Brionnais
un monde plein de Vie

Destination
Saône & Loire

Bourgogne
TOURISME

Ground plan

1. Porch
2. Crossing
3. Choir and apse painting
4. Ambulatory
5. Gothic chapel
6. Monks' basin
7. Baptistry
8. South doorway and cloisters
9. North doorway
10. Chevet



The basilica is an architectural masterpiece and also nowadays a meeting place for Christians. You are welcome to come in and walk round respectfully.

Dimensions

Total length.....	63.35 m
Total width.....	23.35 m
Length of transept.....	40.50 m
Height of transept (crossing).....	27.50 m
Height of nave.....	22.00 m
Height of spire.....	56.00 m

This leaflet is not intended to replace a detailed tour of the basilica.

The Tourist Office can provide guided visits in foreign languages for groups.

These tours are commented by fully qualified guides.

Please contact them to reserve your visit or to organise your trip. The guides will help you discover a millennial heritage in the heart of a unique rural landscape.

For a quick tour

Exterior

Stand in front of the church and note the difference between the two towers.

The one on the right (south) dates back to the 11th century and is the remains of the previous church. The one on the left (north) dates back to the 12th century.

As you walk along the north side you reach side door (9), the most ornate of the basilica's three doorways. Note the richness of the sculpture : rosette frieze (helixes, four-leaved clover).

Continue your walk outside and admire the pyramidal chevet, a pure masterpiece of Romanesque art. The radiating chapels, the successive projections from the ground to the bell tower, the balance between the shapes and the volumes offer a rare harmony.

Do not forget the south doorway (8) with its remains of polychromy that you will discover as you enter the priory cloisters - the last priory, built during the 18th century. Remains of polychromy.

It gives access to the mediaeval style cloister gardens which add to the serenity of the place.

Interior

Enter the church (1).

As you walk into the nave, you will be struck by the simplicity of the decoration.

The important height, made possible by the pointed barrel vault, results in a good lighting of the building.

The crossing (2) is covered by a dome on squinches.

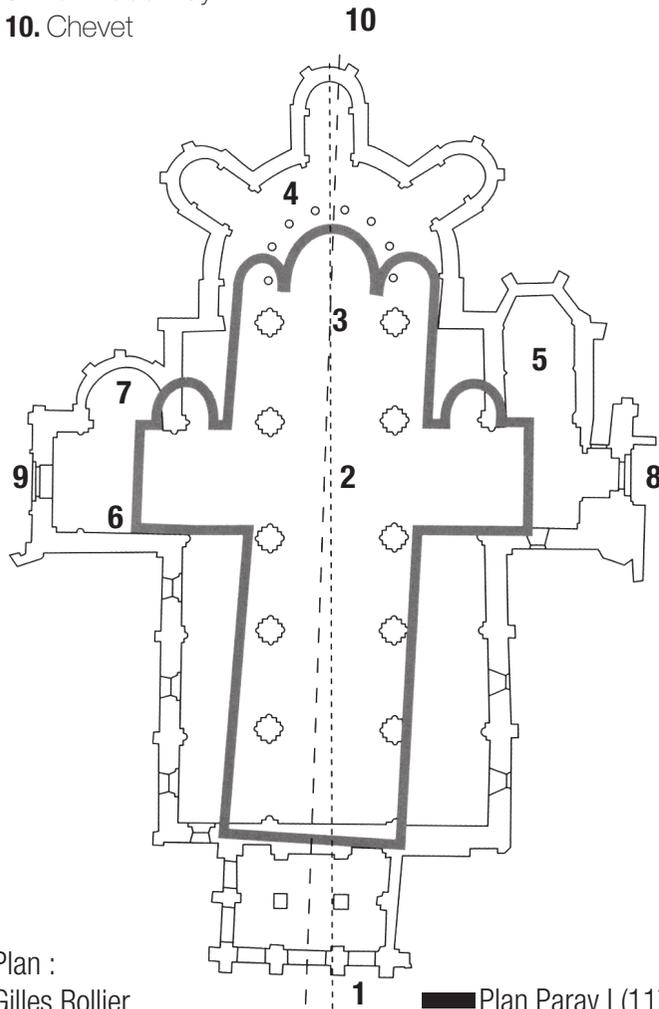
On the half-dome vault of the apse (3) a painting, discovered in 1935, represents the Pantocrator (Christ in majesty) of Byzantine inspiration, perhaps dating back to the 14th century.

The choir and its ambulatory (4) form a remarkably elegant ensemble : slender columns, chequered billet moulding, groined vault.

The gothic chapel (5) of the south transept was built in the 15th century by the Damas-Digoine family as a burial place (Chapel of the Holy Sacrament).

In the north transept, note the monks' granite basin (6) (16th century).

Acces to the high chapel only during a guided tour.



Plan :
Gilles Rollier
INRAP

■ Plan Paray I (11th)
— Plan Paray II (12th)