LYON & NOTRE-DAME DE FOURVIÈRE

A LONG AND RICH HISTORY

Its 20 centuries-long heritage makes the Notre-Dame de Fourvière hill an exceptional spot in the heart of Lyon.

At the Roman Empire time, the city of « Lugdunum » (Lyon's former latin name, which means « the hill of light ») was built in the roman way ; it soon became the capital city of the Gauls, and, in importance, a second Rome. The « Fourvière » name is probably inherited from « Forum Vetus » (latin « Old forum »). The first Christians came to Lyon in the middle of the 2nd Century. Many of them, such as the bishop Pothin, or Blandine, the Lyon's Patron Saint, were persecuted, and died as martyrs.

At the end of the 12th Century, the first Fourvière Chapel was erected on the hill ; it was damaged during the French Wars of Religion (16th Century), but then rebuilt and enlarged. From the Renaissance time, Lyon became an important european trading town, then reputed for its silk industry.

In 1870, the Prussian Army was on its way to invade Lyon ; should war spare the town, the citizens promised to build a big church, dedicated to Mary. The construction, managed by the Fourvière Commission, started in 1872. Such important project, designed by the architect Pierre Bossan, with the help of Louis Sainte-Marie Perrin, lasted for almost one century.

The new church was consecrated **in 1896**, and elevated to the rank of basilica in 1897 by the Pope Leon XIII. Such honorific title reveals both the importance and the influence of this Fourvière Marian shrine for Lyon and its area.

SEPTEMBER 8

THE ALDERMEN'S VOW

In 1642, after a decade of epidemics (scurvy and plague), the Aldermen, in charge of the city, made a vow, as deciding they 'd go up to Notre-Dame de Fourvière once a year to offer a symbolic gold coin and a 7 pound white wax candle, should Lyon be delivered from plague for a long time. Such vow was granted. Since, every year on September the 8th (Mary's Nativity day), the Lyon and Metropolis local elected officials go up to Fourvière for a memorial ceremony, renewing the « Aldermen's Vow ».

DECEMBER 8

A LONG AND RICH HISTORY THE LYON LIGHT FESTIVAL'S ORIGIN

An inauguration ceremony was planned on **December the 8th**, 1852, as the golden Mary's Statue 'd just been set up on top of the Chapel's bell tower. Due to inclement weather, the festivities were cancelled. Seing the weather improve at nightfall, the people of Lyon spontaneously decided to place lit candles on their window sills and balconies, in honor of the Virgin Mary. Ever since, the tradition of December, 8, continued, and the citizens of Lyon are now very attached to that popular annual event.

FOURVIÈRE TODAY

Notre-Dame de Fourvière is a private site located within the Lyon's Unesco World Heritage Site. With over 2,5 million visitors each year, it is the most important touristic site in the Auvergne-Rhône- Alpes area. It belongs to the Fourvière Foundation, that employs around 15 permanent workers, and another 400 volunteers.

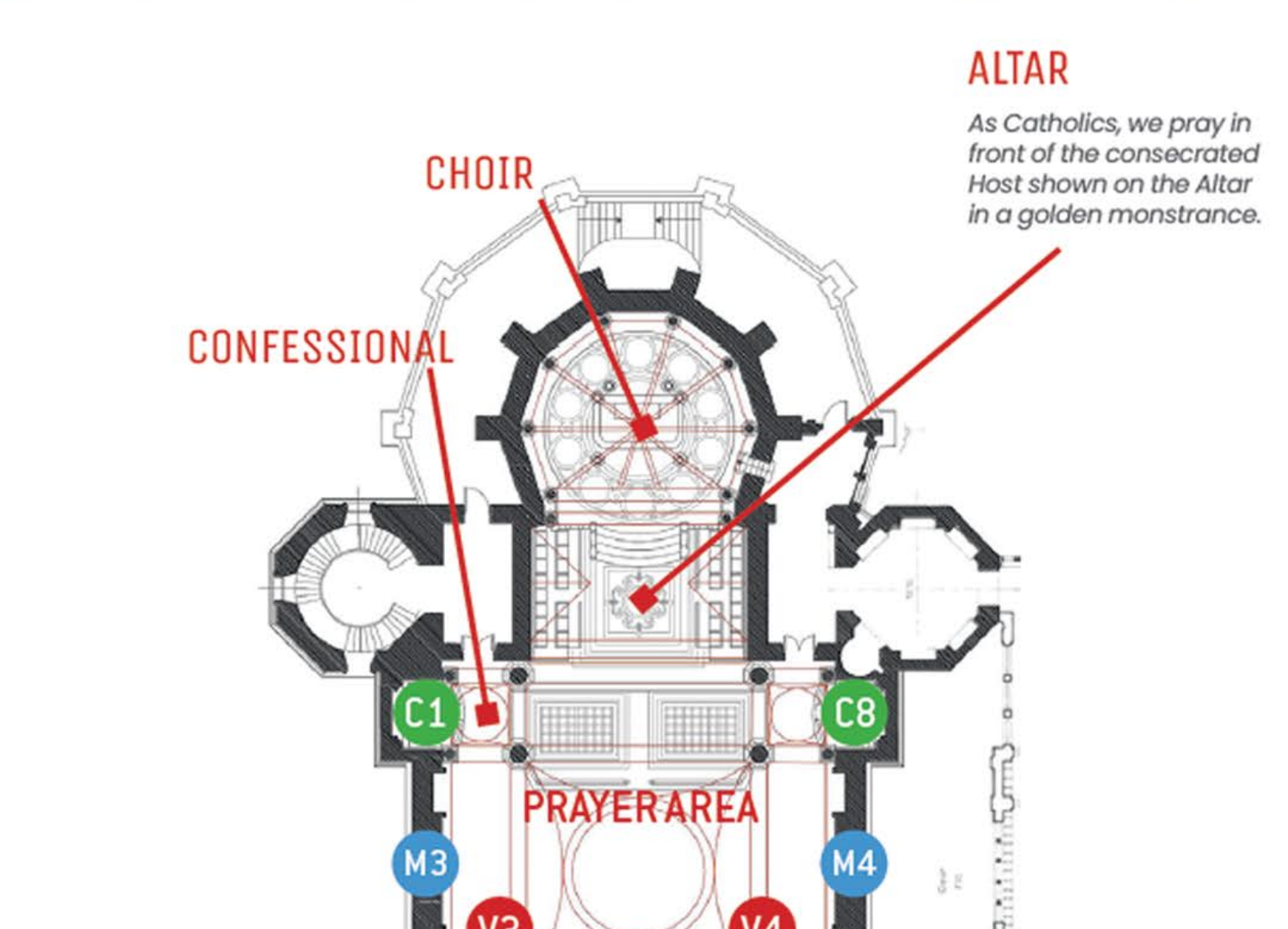
From 2016 to 2022, the Fourvière Foundation carried out a big development and renovation project of the site. The Historic Monument classified buildings have been restored, and welcoming facilities were created (welcome office, business dedicated meeting rooms, 3 restaurants, museum…). Today, Fourvière is an active and enjoyable village site, open to all.

A SPONSORSHIP CAMPAIGN TO ENHANCE CULTURAL HERITAGE AND SITE TRANSFORMATION

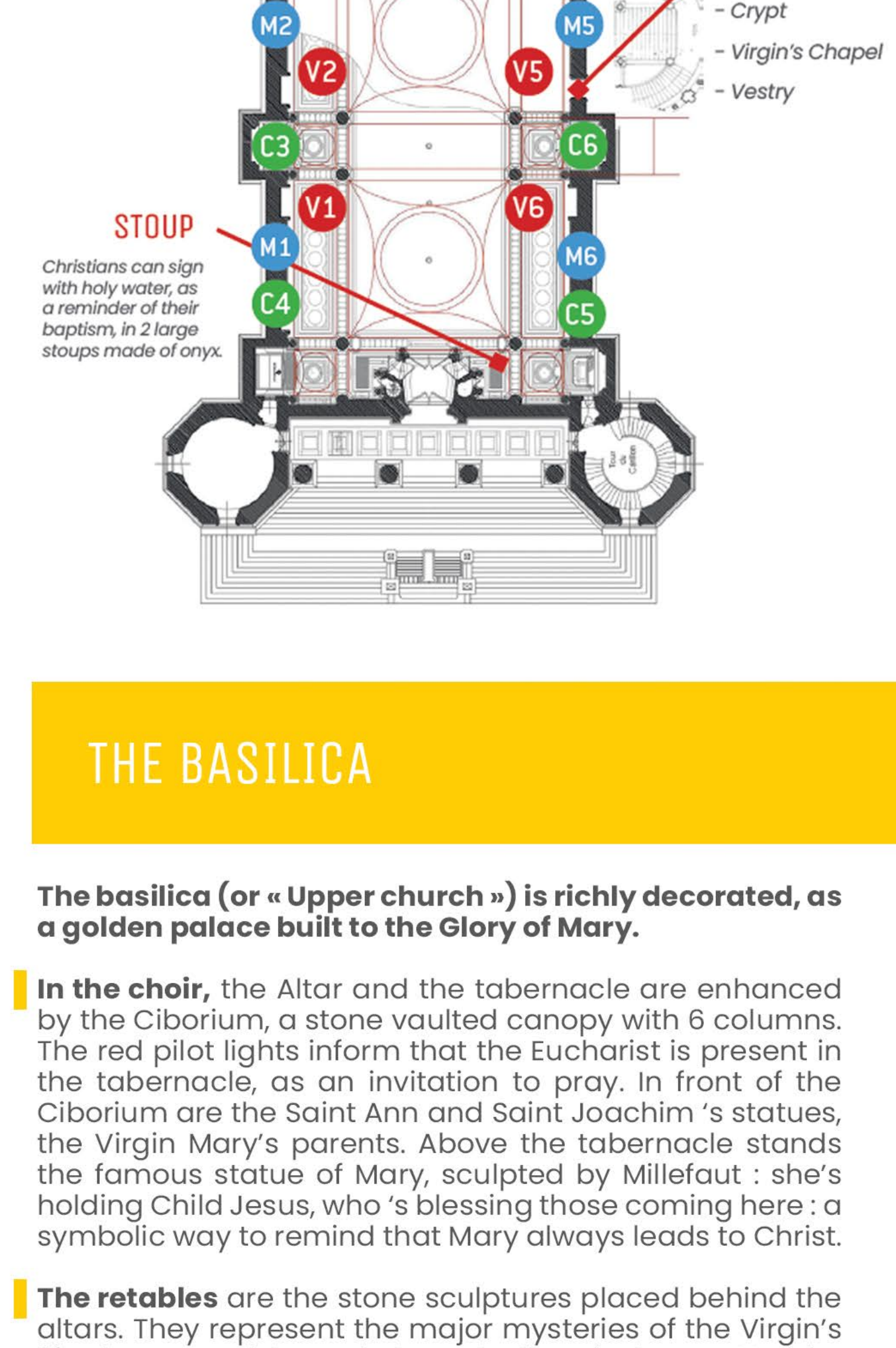
« Save Fourvière and support the basilica » is the new 2023-2025 sponsoring campaign of the Foundation, as the basilica urgently needs restoration work. **It also aims to promote accessibility, social inclusion, digital and ecological transformation of the site.**

Additional information / Support the project :

WWW.FOURVIERE.ORG



TOUR GUIDE



ALTAR
As Catholics, we pray in front of the consecrated Host shown on the Altar in a golden monstrance.

ACCESS TO:
- Crypt
- Virgin's Chapel
- Vestry

STOUP
Christians can sign with holy water, as a reminder of their baptism, in 2 large stoups made of onyx.

THE BASILICA

The basilica (or « Upper church ») is richly decorated, as a golden palace built to the Glory of Mary.

In the choir, the Altar and the tabernacle are enhanced by the Ciborium, a stone vaulted canopy with 6 columns. The red pilot lights inform that the Eucharist is present in the tabernacle, as an invitation to pray. In front of the Ciborium are the Saint Ann and Saint Joachim's statues, the Virgin Mary's parents. Above the tabernacle stands the famous statue of Mary, sculpted by Millefaut : she's holding Child Jesus, who 's blessing those coming here : a symbolic way to remind that Mary always leads to Christ.

The retables are the stone sculptures placed behind the altars. They represent the major mysteries of the Virgin's life, that are celebrated along the liturgical year : Nativity (C1), Presentation in the Temple (C2), Annunciation (C3), Visitation (C4), Intercession at Cana (C5), Compassion under the Cross (C6), Pentecost with the Apostles in the Upper Room (C7), Assumption (C8).

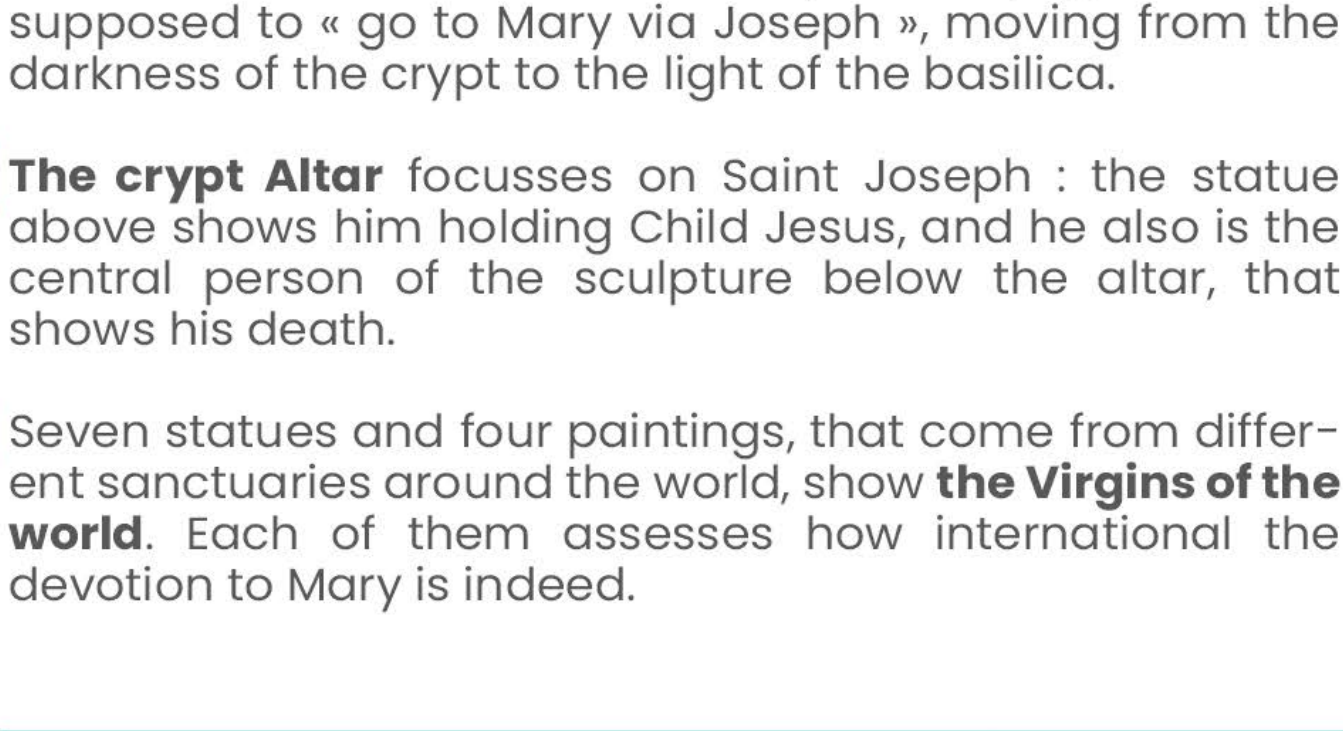
The mosaïcs upon the walls remind :

-The proclamation of the dogma Mary Mother of God (Council of Ephesus, 431)(M1), and the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception in 1854 by the pope Pius IX (M3).

-The intercession of Mary, who answered the Christians' prayer in Rome against the Ottoman danger (Battle of Lepanto, 1571) (M2), and Mary's answer to the King Louis the 13th's vow, imploring he had a son as a successor on his throne, in 1638. (M4)

-Two major events for the Church of France : the arrival of Saint Pothin as first Bishop in Lyon, around Year 150 (M6), and Saint Joan of Arc's Epic, « sent for the consolation of the poor and the needy » (M5) (as written by Saint Thérèse of Lisieux).

The tainted-glass windows are a complement to the Virgin's litanies (i.e. honorific titles) that are on the choir's capitals and the nave's ones ; they relate the Mary's « royalties» : Queen of Patriarchs (V1), Queen of Martyrs (V2), Queen of Angels (V3), Queen of Apostles (V4), Queen of Confessors (V5), Queen of Prophets (V6). Upon 5 of those 6 windows, Mary is represented holding Her Son Jesus.



THE CRYPT

The crypt, or « Lower Church », is dedicated to Saint Joseph. Its floor area is the same as the basilica's, and it was originally conceived by Pierre Bossan as being the main entrance of the Sanctuary : the pilgrims were supposed to « go to Mary via Joseph », moving from the darkness of the crypt to the light of the basilica.

The crypt Altar focusses on Saint Joseph : the statue above shows him holding Child Jesus, and he also is the central person of the sculpture below the altar, that shows his death.

Seven statues and four paintings, that come from different sanctuaries around the world, show **the Virgins of the world**. Each of them assesses how international the devotion to Mary is indeed.

THE EXTERIOR

Dimensions of the basilica

86m
length

35m
width

48m
height

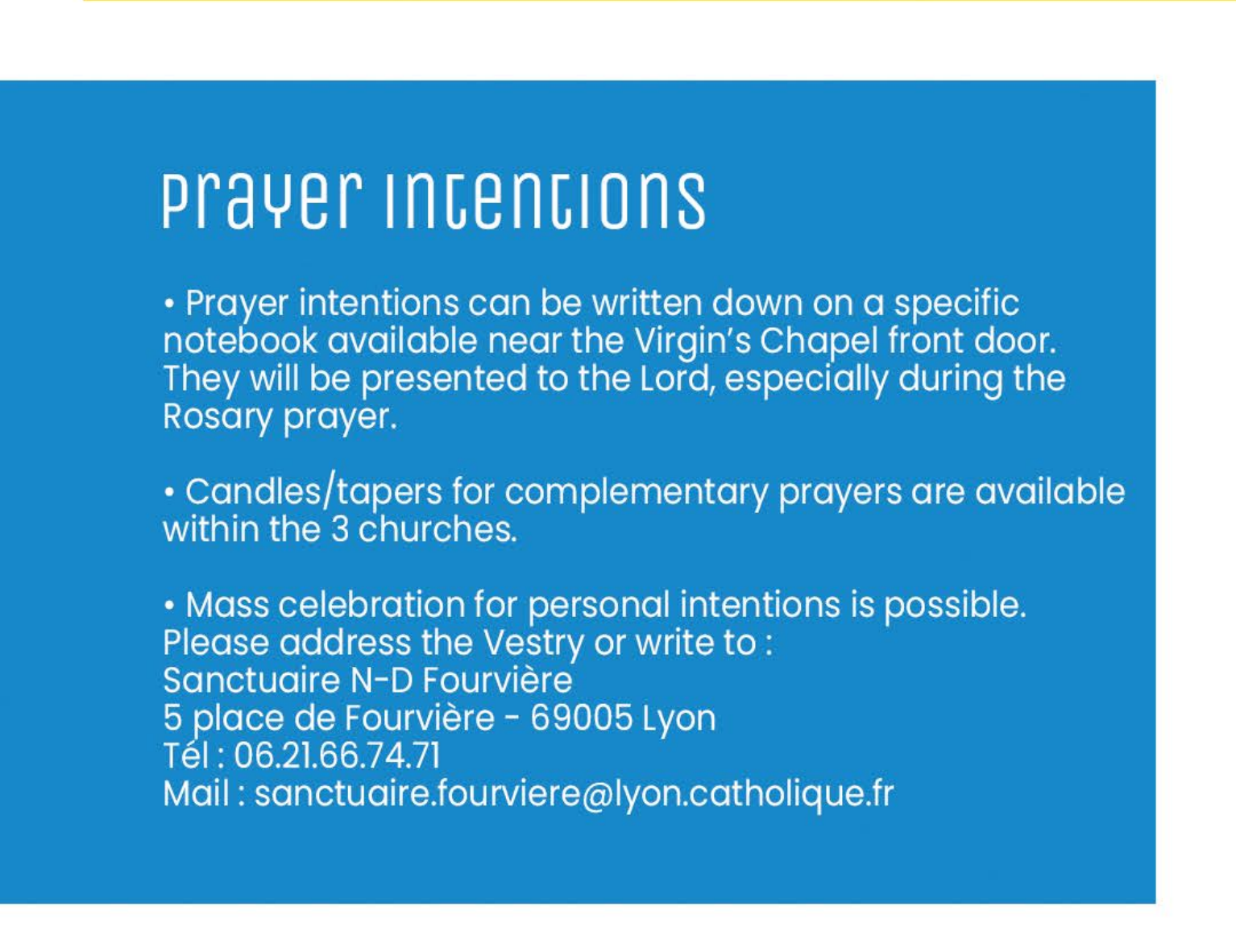
Construction :
1872 - 1896 (dernière sculpture achevée en 1972).

The outside decoration shows stories of the Old Testament, that depict heroines who prefigure the « Promised Virgin » :

-On the North side, the theological virtues : Faith (Miriam, the Aaron's sister , and Deborah), Hope (Judith and Esther), Charity (Rachel and Rebecca).

-On the South side, Chastity is exemplified by Suzanna, and Humility by Jephthah's daughter

The towers' names are the cardinal virtues : Strength, Justice, Prudence and Temperance.



PASTORAL LIFE

FOURVIÈRE MASS TIMES

On weekdays : masses at 7:30 am, 11:00 am, 5:30 pm

On Sundays : masses at 7:30 am, 9:30 am, 11:00 am, 5:30 pm, and anticipated Sunday mass on Saturday at 5:30

PRAYER INTENTIONS

- Prayer intentions can be written down on a specific notebook available near the Virgin's Chapel front door. They will be presented to the Lord, especially during the Rosary prayer.
- Candles/tapers for complementary prayers are available within the 3 churches.
- Mass celebration for personal intentions is possible. Please address the Vestry or write to :
Sanctuaire N-D Fourvière
5 place de Fourvière - 69005 Lyon
Tél : 06.21.66.74.71
Mail : sanctuaire.fourviere@lyon.catholique.fr

CONFESSIONS

A priest is available for confessions, everyday from 9:00 am to 11:00 am and from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm, plus from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm on Sunday.

PRAYERS AND WORSHIP

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament :
everyday, except on Sunday morning

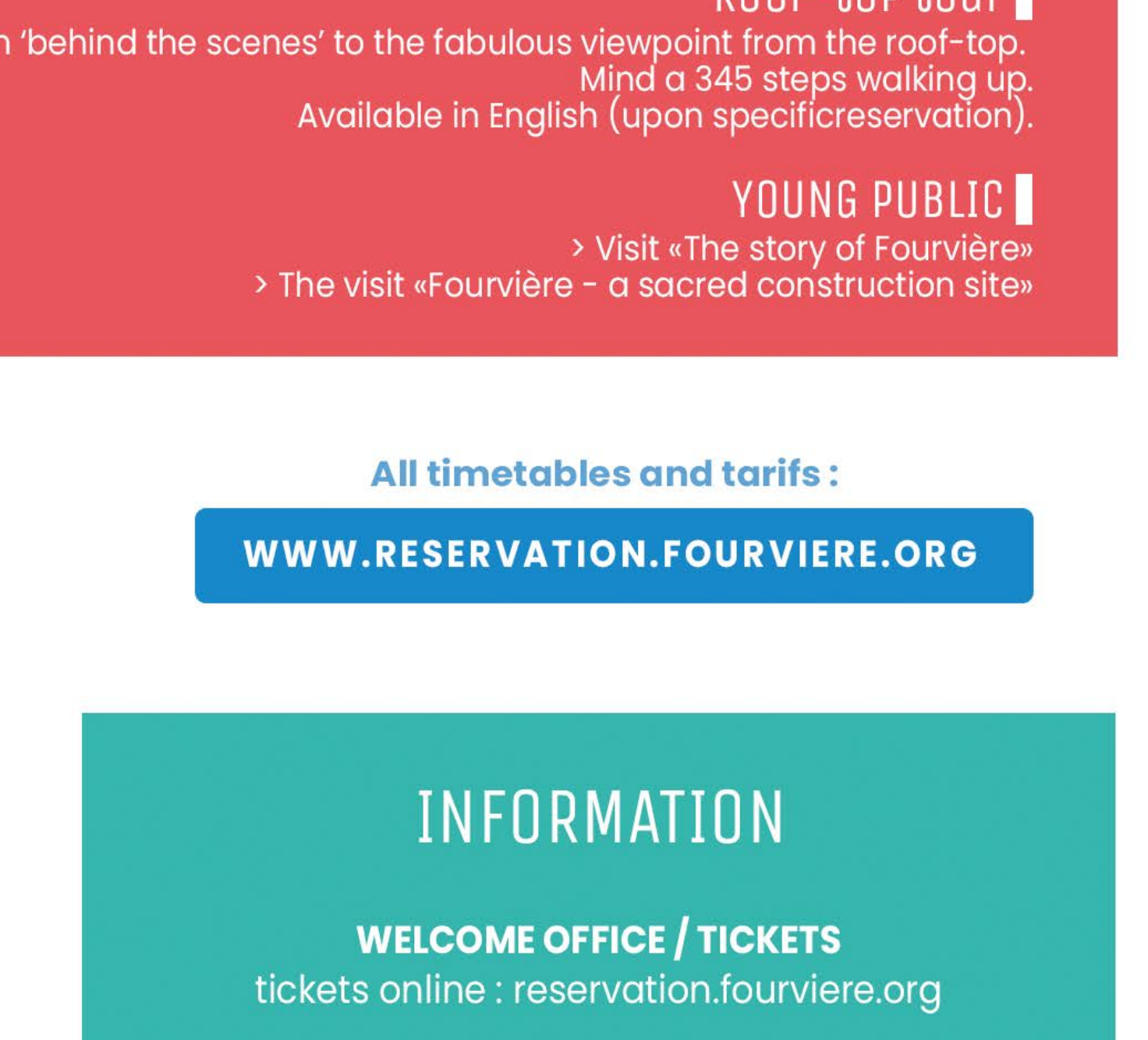
DAILY ROSARY

Monday through Friday at 4:30 pm in the Virgin's Chapel.

GROUPS AND PILGRIMS WELCOME

Students, schools, parishes, families...
A deacon can help organizing specific tours and pilgrimage time at Notre-Dame de Fourvière (prayers, Marian programme, testimonial, picnic break...).

Deacon details :
Adel CAMEL :
06.34.73.50.78
a.camel@lyon.catholique.fr



WELCOME AND TOURS

FREE ENTRANCE

Free entrance in the Sanctuary,
everyday from 7:30 am to 8:00 pm

GUIDED TOURS

A set of various specific discovery tours is available

FOURVIÈRE'S ESSENTIALS
The basilica's key points of interest : history of the site, the mosaics, the tainted-glass windows, the architecture and the symbolism.

ROOF-TOP TOUR
From 'behind the scenes' to the fabulous viewpoint from the roof-top. Mind a 345 steps walking up. Available in English (upon specificreservation).

YOUNG PUBLIC
> Visit «The story of Fourvière»
> The visit «Fourvière – a sacred construction site»

All timetables and tarifs :

WWW.RESERVATION.FOURVIERE.ORG

INFORMATION

WELCOME OFFICE / TICKETS
tickets online : reservation.fourviere.org

PILGRIM'S STOP
04.72.38.89.59 / sanctuaire.fourviere@lyon.catholique.fr

MUSEUM
musee@fourviere.org

RESTAURANTS
Café Pignol : 04.78.37.39.61
La Salle à Manger : 04.28.69.01.50
Bulle : 04.30.30.32.06

ONLYLYON TROPHÉES DU TOURISME
Sites touristiques emblématiques Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes
La Région Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes