

Joan of Arc Pilgrimage

June 14-23, 2024

Stay in monasteries as we visit
Joan's 'Deep France'
(i.e. *la France Profounde*)



The Meuse River flows through the tiny village of Domrémy.

“Across the night of history's blackest pages, one name is scrolled as by a shaft of sun: Joan of Arc, the glory of the ages, who battled hate, and lost- And losing, won.” Albert Bigelow Paine

This last summer, we stayed in *Domrémy*, France for nearly 3 months. What a balm to the soul. We were treated to 75-degree average temperatures. After reading about the Canadian wild fires' smoke throughout the states, and an average of 104 degree temperatures in Dallas, we counted our blessings. Now, God willing, we will be happy to go back to 'Joan of Arc country' once again, for a June, 2024, Joan of Arc pilgrimage. This will be our fourteenth opportunity for taking a group on this fascinating journey.

Even 600 years later, Joan still attracts Catholics, Protestants, and others. Indeed, Joan of Arc speaks to everyone. Our travel philosophy remains the same - one of going back to the essentials of simplicity, and quality time in some places instead of 'rush-rush' in many. Although we will indeed see much, we want to experience the places we visit more as spiritual travelers than as consumers; to first see them through the eyes of believers and/or seekers, and secondly from such perspectives as historical, architectural, sociological, touristic, etc. So, as usual, we will purposely remain a small group. Before going to the itinerary, let's take a quick glance at Joan of Arc...



For more than 600 years now, Orléans has celebrated around May 8, Joan of Arc's victory and unexpected liberation of their city. Each year they choose a 17 year-old girl, who must be from Orléans, and who displays good morals, and kindness, to represent their heroine, during week long activities and celebrations. (photo: Bob Perler)

Did you know that:

- at 17 years old, Joan of Arc remains the youngest supreme military commander in history, male or female. Louis Kossuth said: *"Consider this unique and imposing distinction. Since the writing of human history began, Joan of Arc is the only person, of either sex, who has ever held supreme command of the military forces of a nation at the age of seventeen."* Mr. Kossuth (1802-1894) was Regent-President of Hungary in 1849.

- those who knew her from childhood frequently described her as *"...simple and good, frequenting the Church and Holy places."* And they left us many specific examples of her life while growing up in Domremy, such as: *"Often, when she was in the fields and heard the bells ring, she would drop to her knees."* Dominique Jean Waterin, laborer of Greux, Trial of Nullification, 1456

- her very specific, consistently fulfilled prophecies, of things that often appeared impossible at the time given, were famous even in her own time. *"I told them things that have happened, and things that shall happen yet."* Joan of Arc, Trial of Condemnation, March 3, 1431 Mark Twain said, *"... There have been many uninspired prophets, but she was the only one who ever ventured the daring detail of naming, along with a foretold event, the event's precise nature, the special time-limit within which it would occur, and the place—and scored fulfillment."* Mark Twain, Joan of Arc-An Essay, 1896 Jeane Dixon was one of the best-known American astrologers and psychics of the 20th century. However her 50% success rate of fulfilled prophecy pales when compared with Joan's 100%.

- Joan of Arc is apparently the most attested person in history up to the 16th century. As Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (author of Sherlock Holmes) states, *"...next to the Christ, the highest spiritual being of whom we have any exact record upon this earth is the girl Jeanne."*

- she has many parallels and similarities with the saints/prophets of the Bible.

- the church authorities at that time, were responsible for burning her at the stake as a witch on May 30, 1431. Then, officially recognizing their mistake nearly 500 years later, she was canonized a saint on May 16, 1920. She is now one of France's Secondary Patron saints and her legacy to both France and the world run deep.

- even at the stake she was heard asking for the forgiveness of those executing her (reminiscent of Jesus), as well as for her own sins: *"She also most humbly begged all manner of people, of whatever condition or rank they might be, and whether of her party or not, for their pardon and asked them kindly to pray for her, at the same time pardoning them for any harm they had done her. This she continued to do for a very long time, perhaps for half an hour and until the end. The judges who were present, and even several of the English, were moved by this to great tears"*

and weeping, and indeed several of these same English, recognized God's hand and made professions of faith when they saw her make so remarkable an end.” Jean Massieu, Trial of Nullification, 1456

How did this seventeen-year-old, illiterate, French peasant girl save France from English domination? After all, as you might guess, women's rights were not exactly in the forefront during the 15th century. For Joan, the answer was always quite simple: she was God-sent. Listen to her words to the King the first time they met, *“Gentle dauphin, I am Joan the maid, and the King of Heaven commands that through me you be anointed and crowned in the city of Reims as a lieutenant of the King of Heaven, who is King of France”*

During her Trial of Condemnation, she testified that He frequently sent His angels and messengers to help her, and only through Him was she able to do all she did.

Could this be true? After examining all the records available, we believe the best and most logical explanation behind Joan of Arc's amazing feats and life is just as she always said: God called her to action, and she obeyed His call. And not just any god, but the God of the Bible. Through this, France was saved, and world history was changed forever.

Itinerary

Each day we will gather for some combination of the following: beginning with some silence and a little music, prayers/meditation, info on activities of the day, addressing questions, and the *Question du Jour* (Question of the Day) discussions. This time shared together has been a highlight for many who have come with us.

June 14, 2024: We will all meet at Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris on Friday, June 14, 2024, at 10:30am, at a designated rendezvous place. This has worked very well for past pilgrimages. Those just arriving from the states will not have to go into Paris in order to link up with the pilgrimage. Also, as some people have expressed a desire to be able to use their frequent flyer miles, and/or be flexible before or after the pilgrimage, we've found that it is better that everyone make their own flight arrangements. Consequently, the price has been reduced accordingly to take this aspect into consideration. BTW, it is strongly encouraged for all pilgrims to arrive the day before, i.e. June 13, 2024.

Reims, ‘Base St Thierry’ June 14-16, 2024-We begin this pilgrimage at the summit of Joan’s amazing, brief career: the anointing and crowning of Charles VII in the *Cathedrale Notre Dame de Reims*. This Cathedrale is a Gothic art masterpiece which has been listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1991.

France is well known for its many inspiring churches, Basilicas and Cathedrals, but this one is exceptional. It is truly fit for a King. In fact, twenty-nine Kings of France were anointed and crowned here between 1027 and 1825. On July 17, 1429, Charles VII, with Joan of Arc in attendance with her banner, would join this select group of anointed, crowned kings.

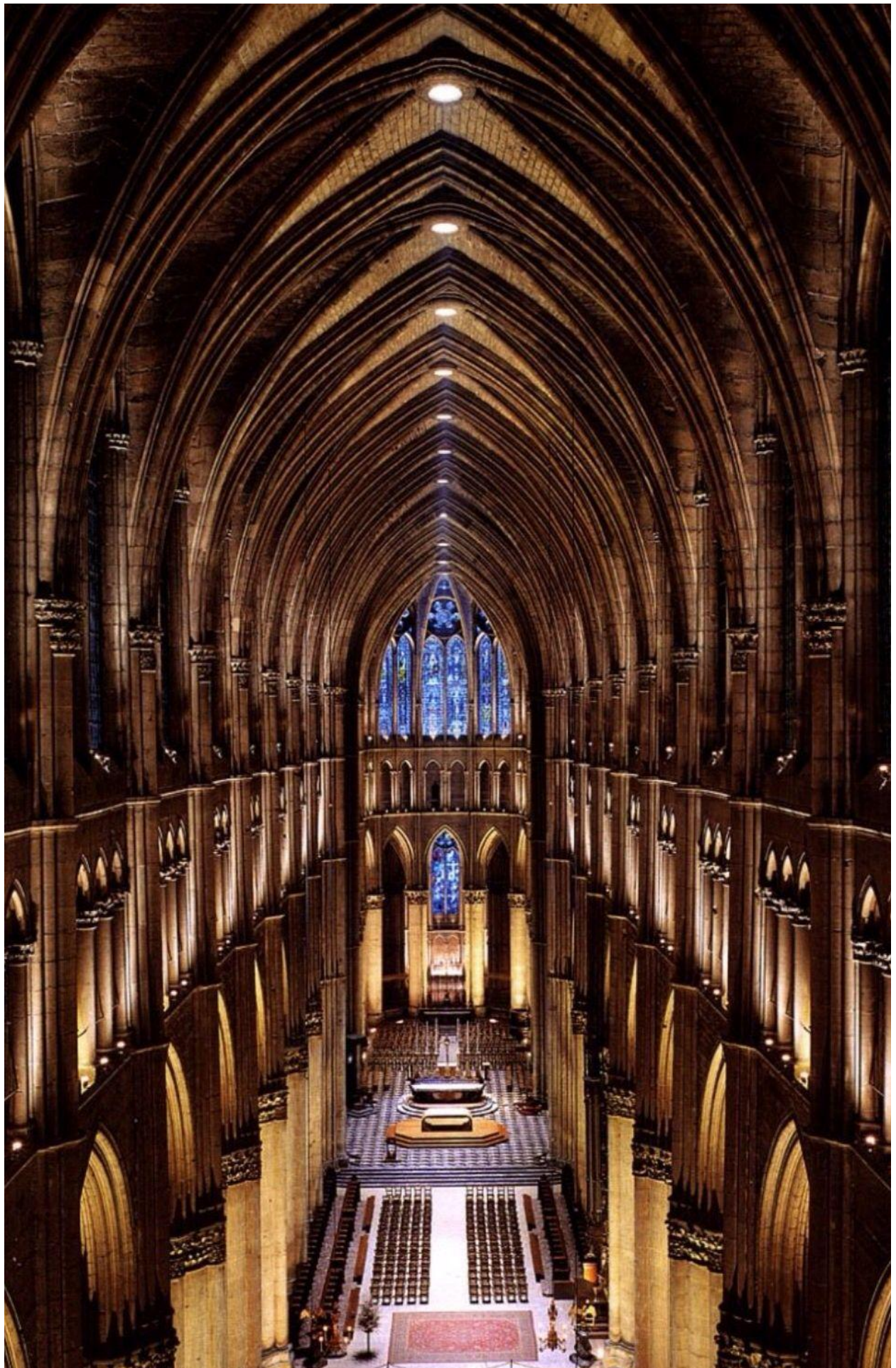
Crowning Charles would not be enough. Under the French medieval protocol of succession, a king had to first be anointed with God’s holy oil before he could be crowned King (following David’s example in the Old Testament). For Joan, and others, the anointing was in fact seen as the most important part of the ceremony.

Like the Kings of the Old Testament (e.g. see 1 Samuel 10:1 or 2 Samuel 5:3), the coronation represented the sealed alliance between God and the new sovereign. In exchange for this divine anointing, the king promised 1) to rule according to the law, 2) to protect his peoples, and 3) to support the Faith. Specifically, it was based on Paul’s teachings in Romans 13, where the idea is that all true authority comes from God: *“Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.”* Romans 13: 1

After this five-hour ceremony, kneeling before the King and embracing his knees, in tears, Joan told him: *“Noble King, now is accomplished the pleasure of God, who willed that I should raise the siege of Orleans and should bring you to this city of Reims to receive your holy coronation, thus showing that you are the true King, him to whom the throne of France must belong.”* This marked the end of Joan’s God-ordained mission, as had been revealed to her more than once by God’s messengers. Her mission had been quiet clear from the beginning. *“I am come from the King of Heaven to raise the siege of Orleans, and to lead the Dauphin to Reims to be anointed and crowned.”* Trial of Condemnation.

France’s relationship with God was unique among the nations. Established in the 2nd century, France still remains in unbroken communion with the bishop of Rome. Despite its current secular leanings, France is still referred to by Rome as the *“eldest daughter of the church.”*

Next page. Fit for a king! It’s impossible to capture the immensity of the Cathedrale de Reims with a photo. Still, look at the small rows of 5 chairs each at the very bottom to get an idea. (staff photo)





Charles VII anointed and crowned on July 17, 1429 in Reims Cathedral, with Joan of Arc in attendance with her banner. (artist: O.D.V. Guillonnet)

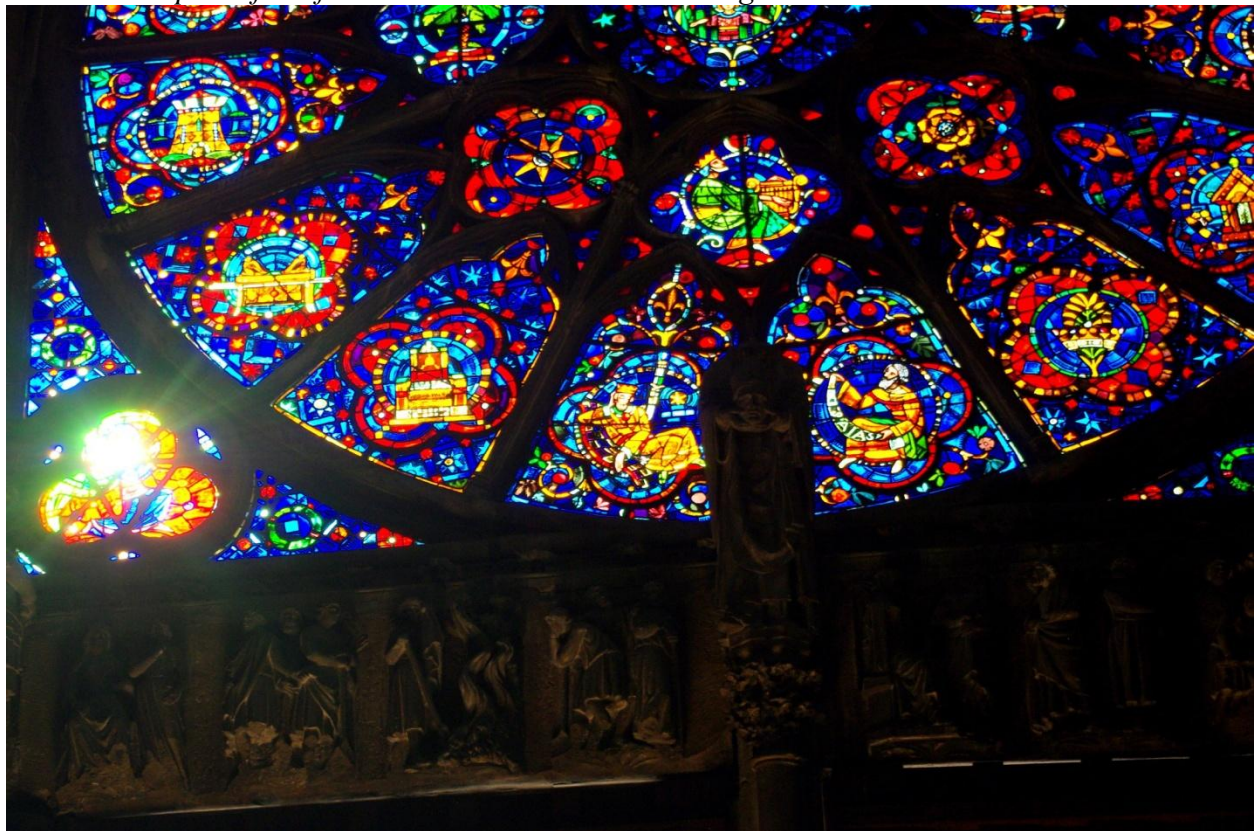
The *Monastère des Bénédictines de Saint-Thierry* is a monastery just outside of Reims in the middle of champagne country. From the moment their large double doors close behind us, we enter into a different world; one of stillness, spacious green grounds, sweeping views, softly chirping birds, and a welcoming environment.

Different orders of monks or nuns have lived in this peaceful place since the 6th century. Today it's these Benedictine Sisters. They are a poor but very hospitable community. They will serve us some of our meals while in Reims. The food is simple, healthy, often very good, and typically French.

Their gardens (they grow some of their own fruit and flowers) overlook the surrounding vineyards and countryside, which extend all the way to the city of Reims and its famous cathedral, some eight kilometers away. Lovely!

For those interested, you may attend some of the sisters' prayer services, and/or hear their soothing singing. We'll meet with one of the sisters, who will share with us her life there, and answer any questions you may have.

Below: *"Let there be light!"* Genesis 1: 3. *The stained glass windows are excellent here. Below is a small part of the famous Rose Window. Marc Chagall's windows are also a stand-out.*



Pg. 9, Top: Entrance to the sister's large gardens at *St. Thierry*.

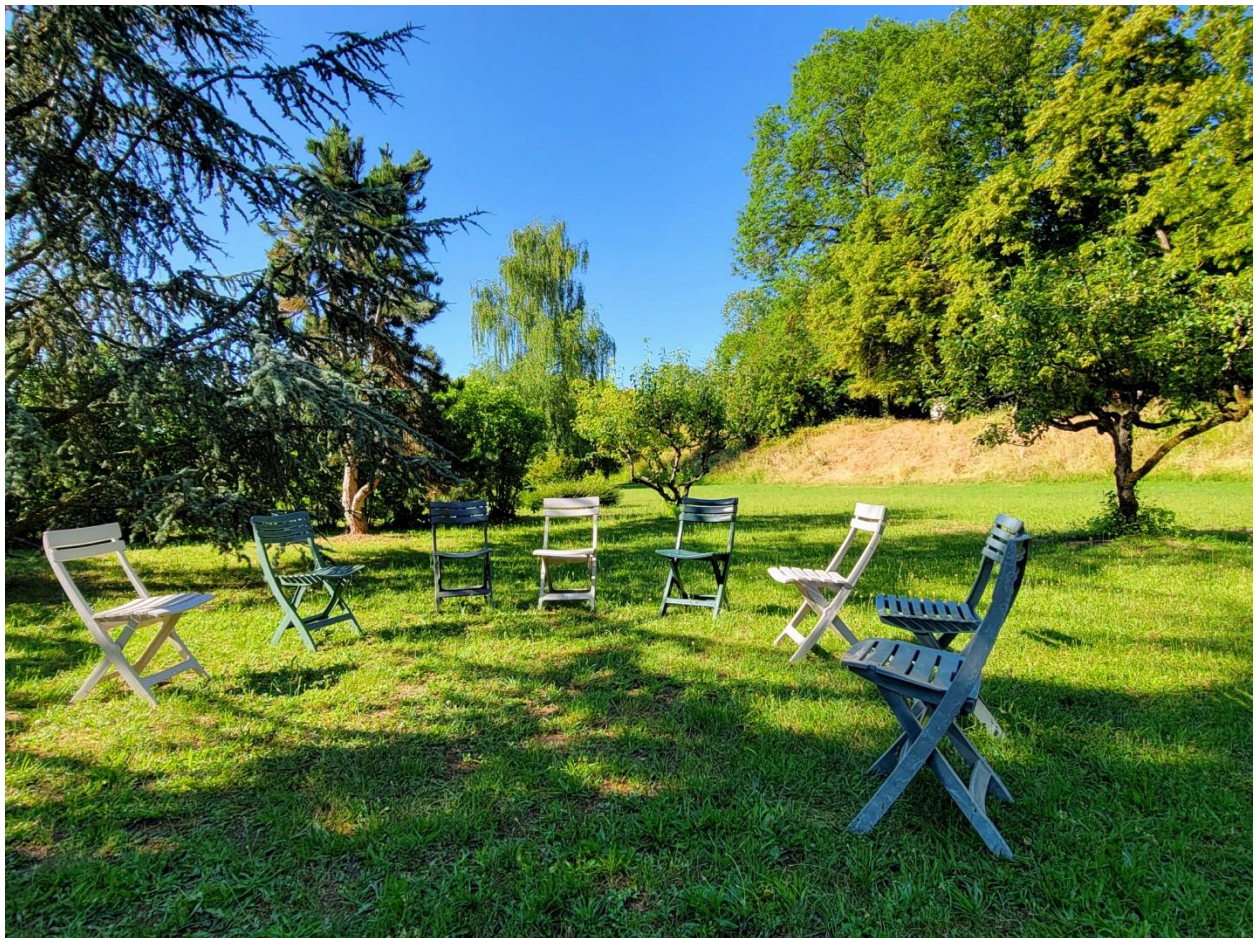
Pg. 9, Bottom: Joan perpetually on guard in front of the *Cathedrale de Reims*.

Pg. 10, Top: From our bedroom at *St Thierry*, lots of 'green'.

Pg. 10, Bottom: On *St Thierry's* grounds, there are lots of choices for the *Question du Jour*.

Pg. 11, Top: Here, just next door to the sister's monastery, *St Thierry*, the fields of champagne grapes spread out for miles and miles.







Next stop, *Domrémy*! (below) Photo taken from the Basilica





June 16-20, 2024, 'Base Domrémy-la-Pucelle': We'll stay here in *Domrémy-la-Pucelle* (Domrémy the Maid) 4 nights. There are some great reasons to take our time in Joan's birthplace and home village. First of all, it is the center of what we call 'Joan of Arc country', an exceptionally beautiful part of France, and a good example of '*la France profonde*' ('the deep France'). That is, the lovely pastoral countryside that few tourists ever see, much less experience.

Secondly, *Domrémy* is a wonderful place to search for both Joan's roots and her spirituality. As you might imagine, there is a wealth of Joan of Arc experts living in this area. They have always been very generous to us with their time. One such person is Roger Melcion. He is involved in many areas of the Joan of Arc sites in *Domrémy*. It is a pleasure to share his company. He is so nice, helpful and knowledgeable that one wonders where all his gifts came from.

Certainly, part of the explanation lies in the fact that Roger is a direct descendant of Joan's family, specifically from Joan's brother, *Jacquemin*. He tells us that is why he always tries to give his best for those seeking information about Joan. That is quite a high standard to shoot for. It is his calling and mission in life. He says, *"We've learned a lot from Joan, and we still need her. Her story is unique, and it touches my heart deeply, and this is what I want to share with others."*



The skies and the countryside in 'Joan of Arc country' are exquisite.

Domrémy is a favorite of many pilgrims who have come with us, and it is close to our hearts as well. Sometimes, in some of her old haunts here, her presence still seems palpable to me. And during such moments, she still seems very much alive, as indeed she is in God's Forever.

It only makes sense that she was nurtured here in this exceptionally beautiful environment, with her friends and family close to her. She'd need a strong, loving foundation to work from for all that laid in front of her. And it was in *Domrémy*, where she first saw and heard her divine messengers: *"When I was thirteen, I had*

a voice from God to help me to govern myself. The first time, I was terrified. The voice came to me about noon: it was summer, and I was in my father's garden...I heard the voice on my right hand, towards the church, and there was a great light all about... I vowed then to keep my virginity for as long as it should please God...I saw Saint Michael many times before I knew that it was him...Afterwards he taught me and showed me such things that I knew that it was he. He was not alone, but duly attended by heavenly angels. I saw them with the eyes of my body as well as I see you. And when they left me, I wept, and I wished that they might have taken me with them. And I kissed the ground where they had stood, to do them reverence...Above all Saint Michael told me that I must be a good child, and that God would help me. He taught me to behave rightly and to go often to church. He said that I, Jeanne, would have to go into France.

"He told me that Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret would come to me, and that I must follow their counsel; that they were appointed to guide and counsel me in what I had to do, and that I must believe what they would tell me, for it was at our Lord's command...And they told me that my King would be restored to his Kingdom, despite his enemies. They promised to lead me to Paradise, for that was what I asked of them." Joan of Arc, Trial of Condemnation

In 2024, we will again be blessed to be staying at *La Maison en Chemin avec Jeanne* (*The House on the Road with Joan*). This is a privilege. The mission of the Chaplains, Jean Louis and Bernadette, is twofold: first of all, they are charged with being the guardians of the Basilica, and secondly their job is welcoming those on pilgrimage to Joan's hometown.

Here's their 'mission statement': *"Want to take a break from the pressures of daily life? Alone, as a couple, with your family or in a group, you can take a time of retreat with Saint Joan of Arc, here where her vocation was born and nurtured. In calmness and beauty, you will find a brotherly welcome, a discreet and respectful ear, and, if you like, of course, an accompaniment in prayer."*

They are wonderfully situated on top of the hill (see pages 11-bottom, and 15-18), and just a stone's throw from both the Fairy Tree site and the Fountain of the Fevers, where Joan often heard her heavenly messages. Although *Domrémy* itself is a lovely small village, being able to stay on top of this hill is a different world all together. It's quiet and peaceful, and from here we can go visit the Basilica (open all day long, and just steps away), whenever we like. The Basilica itself tells Joan's story in eloquent and powerful fashion through paintings, mosaics, stained glass windows and sculpture. This time, the creation is worthy of its subject. And on the practical side of things, they do have a washing machine and dryer here.

Below: From this viewpoint, you can see the Basilica dedicated to Joan of Arc on the left, and just next door, on the right (with the red roof) is our 'home', Joan's pilgrimage house.



We'll spend some time at the Fairy Tree location. Although the tree was cut down in the 17th century, the location remains the same place as the "Fountain of the Fevers", and a small fountain still flows there to this day. During Joan's time, it was reputed to flow with 'healing water', and still today, some come to take some of this water home with them. The site remains very calming and pastoral. *"The questionnaire prepared for the interrogation at Domrémy (from the Trial of Rehabilitation) touched points that are still capable of startling historians. For example, the Fairy Tree. It is striking to see more or less the same description from each of these peasants who reported without embarrassment the legends of the Fairy Tree. This ancient folklore reflects a culture very much their own, and was transmitted from one generation to the next. Joan's godfather reported what he had heard about this Fairy Tree: 'I heard tell often that women and the*

enchantresses who are called fairies used to dance there beneath that tree, but, according to what they say, ever since the Gospel of John was read in these parts, they do not go there anymore. In our time...during Sunday mass, the young girls and men of Domrémy go out to that tree and often they eat there and ... go to the fountain and while walking about and singing they drink the water of that fountain and play roundabout and pick flowers’. There is no hint of devil worship or sorcery in any of their testimony.” Regine Pernoud and Marie-Veronique Clin, Joan of Arc-Her Story.



Coming back up the hill from the Fairy Tree, we see Joan's Basilica, dominating the valley.

“Not far from Domrémy there is a tree that they call ‘The Ladies Tree’, others call it The Fairy Tree; nearby, there is a spring where people sick of the fever come to drink, as I have heard, and to seek water to restore their health. I have seen them myself come thus; but I do not know if they were healed...I do not know, and have never heard if the fairies appear there; but my brother told me that it is said in the neighborhood: ‘Jeannette received her mission at the Fairies’ Tree.’ It is not the case; and I told him the contrary...there were prophecies which said that

from the neighborhood of this wood would come a maid who should do marvelous things. I put no faith in that.” Joan of Arc, Trial of Condemnation, Feb. 24, 1430.



The Fairy Tree spot, is secluded within some trees (see above, the trees in the shade, in the very back, center of the photo above), with lovely views. We always take a few minutes of silence there to try and imagine what was. At the spot where the water comes from the fountain, there is a little stone marker, saying, *“Here flows the fountain of the Maid, known in the time of Saint Joan for curing fevers.”*

(Prosecutor) *“Did Saint Catherine and St Margarite speak to you at the fountain close to the (Fairy) tree?”*

(Joan) *“Yes, I heard them there.”* Trial of Condemnation. See page 18.





As the fog rolls out, dawn is just breaking in the Meuse valley. (Domremy)

This fox must have gotten used to me being out alone for the sunrise.
 This morning he came over and laid down at my feet. Amazing.
 We didn't speak much, just enjoyed the moment.



Page 20, top: The village, Domremy, is tucked in just next to the Meuse River
 Page 20, bottom: La Basilique seen from the other side of the valley. (photo: Bob Perler)
 Page 21, top: A bit more of pastoral 'Joan of Arc country'





Below: An oasis of light appears on a darkened hillside in 'Joan of Arc country'.







Above: *Joan with St Catherine. Statue in Domremy.*



Page 22: From a church in Luneville. It has 29 beautiful stained glass windows on Joan's life. We hope to be able to visit it.

Page 23, bottom: We never know what face Joan of Arc's lovely countryside will present to us. Here, in spring, we see a 'green, green, valley'.

Below: Joan blessing her childhood church, St Remy.



Some of our day visits in and close to *Domrémy* include: *Vouthon-Bas*, *la Chapelle de Bermont*, *Maxey-sur-Meuse*, *St Remy* (the village church Joan often attended), *Vaucouleurs*, *la Chapelle de Beauregard*, and *Sionne*. Just a word on these destinations.

1. *Vouthon-Bas*-this small village, located in a bucolic setting close to Domremy, is Isabelle Romee's (Joan's mother) birthplace, and where she married Joan's father, Jacques d'Arc. A monument has been dedicated to Isabelle and Joan just outside of the village.

2. *St Remy*, Joan's childhood church (above). Joan stated St. Margaret appeared to her here. To this day it still serves as the village church. There is still Joan's holy water font there, or stoup. It is the vessel containing holy water that people touch when entering and leaving the chapel. It is generally placed near the entrance of a

church. Joan certainly touched this one hundreds of times, and it is still used today by the many who come here.

3. *Vaucouleurs*-After first convincing the ‘Captain’ of *Vaucouleurs* that she was God-sent, Joan was sent from this small town to see Charles VII in *Chinon*, soon to be anointed and crowned King of France. Among other things, we'll see *la Porte de France* through which Joan left on her way to see the King, and the chapel where Joan often went to pray (we know exactly where she was kneeling).



Overlooking Vaucouleurs

4. *La Chapelle de Beauregard* - When *Geoffroy de Bourlemont* came home from the 7th Crusade (1248-1254 AD), he wanted to build a place of thanksgiving to his God, and this was the result. It has just recently been restored. Its name literally means ‘the Chapel of the Beautiful View’. And so it is. Overlooking the Meuse River valley, it is well deserving of its moniker and still today remains a harbor of peace (see p. 27, top).

Local tradition says that Joan of Arc came here often to pray. It would make sense. Roger Melcion, mentioned previously, is convinced of this, and if anyone

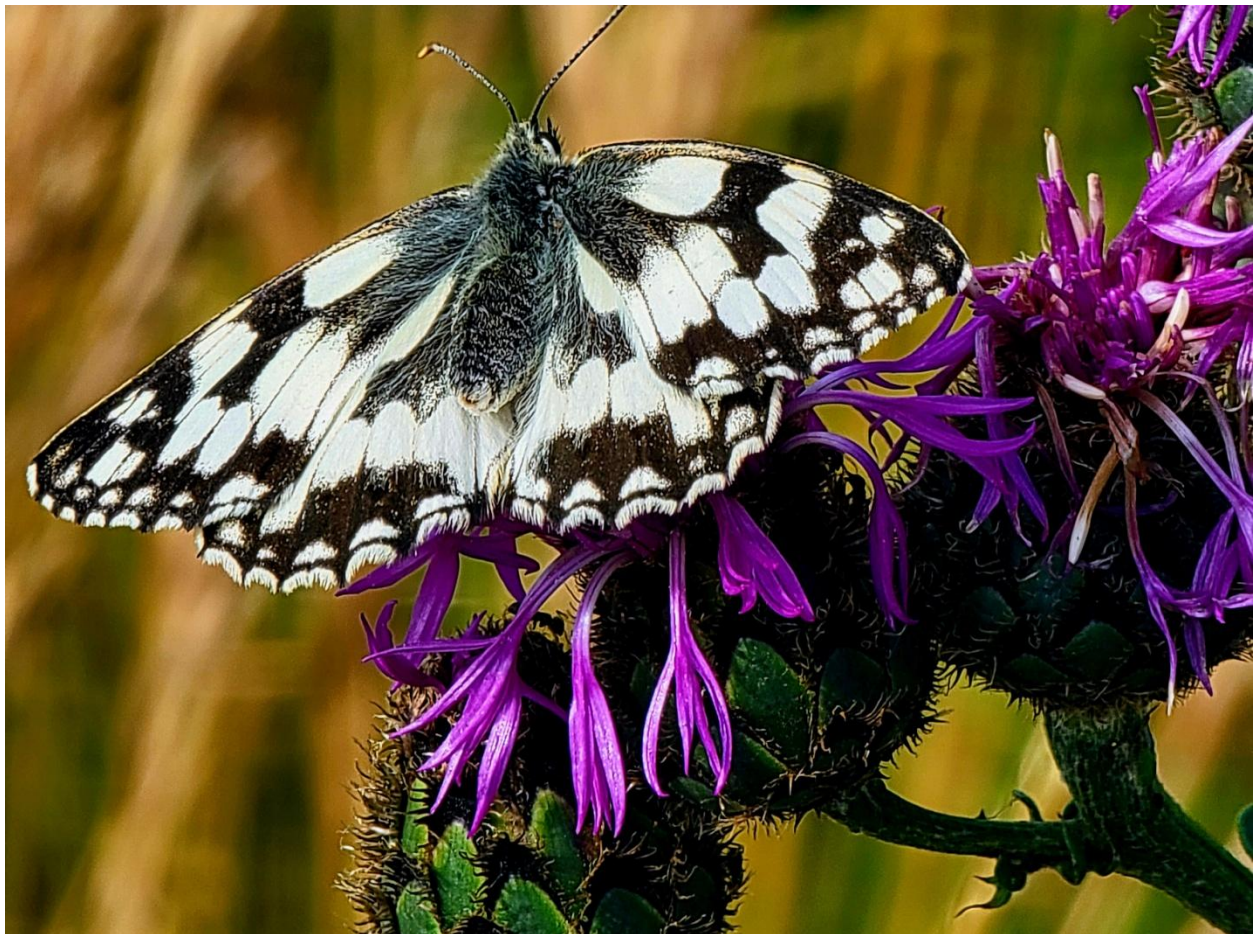
would know, it would be him. These stories have been passed down from generation to generation, and of course Joan frequently went to churches and other



Above: Joan is often portrayed holding her sword upside down, representing God, who is handing it to her down from Heaven. This statue is in Vaucouleurs



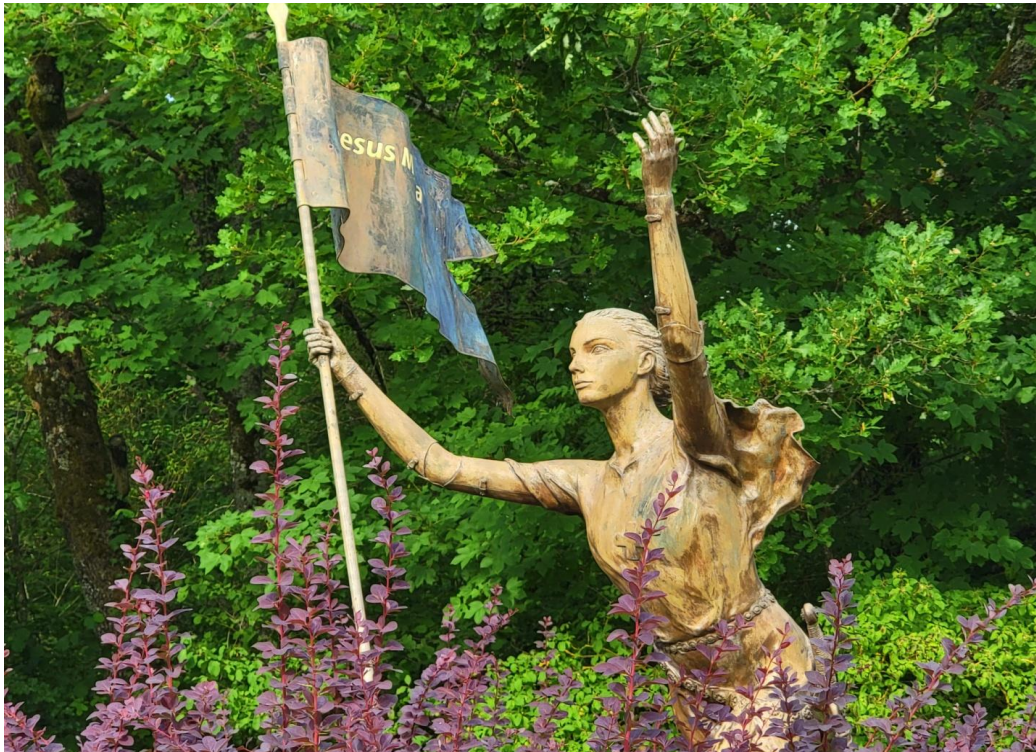
From the plateau of the *Chapelle de Beauregard* we see sweeping views of the Meuse Valley.



Page 27, below: When we reached the plateau of Beauregard last summer, we were greeted with hundreds of these beautiful butterflys. We'd never seen them before; nor since. Maybe next year?

small chapels in the area. And *Beauregard* is within easy walking distance from both *Domrémy* and *Bermont*. This site provides some wonderful views of some of the very heart of 'Joan of Arc country'.

5) *La Chapelle de Bermont* - According to the Trial of Rehabilitation testimony, Joan often went to this simple chapel for prayer. It is still located in the woods, close to *Domrémy*. *Bermont* provides a lovely, quiet, countryside atmosphere. They have recently uncovered underneath several old layers of plaster/paint in the chapel, some images have been dated to shortly after Joan's death, and the belief is (for very good reasons, we think) that these are actually paintings of Joan made by those who knew her at that time: the monks/hermits of the *Chapelle de Bermont*. We'll also see *Maxey-sur-Meuse*, a small neighboring village. Maxey, now a charming little village, was Burgundian during Joan's time, and the *Domrémy* children often had neighborhood scuffles with the Maxey kids.



Joan's computer designed statue at Bermont. Is this her?
When rallying her troops during the Battle of Orleans, Joan exhorted them onward,
"In God's name! Let us go forth bravely!"

There is now a new Joan of Arc statue located at the *Chapelle de Bermont*. The face for this statue was actually taken from the 15th century images mentioned above. They created her face from a computer-generated, three-dimensional program. Take a look at this statue on p. 28. Could this be what Joan looked like? Several experts believe it is. But we can't know for sure this side of Heaven.



La Chapelle de Bermont

As in St. Remy, there is a holy water font in Bermont. This one was also certainly touched by Joan hundreds of times, and still today is used by the many who visit this serene chapel.

“I know it pleased her to go often to the Hermitage of the Blessed Mary of Bermont, near Domrémy. Often I saw her go there. She was there when her parents thought she was with the plough or in the fields; and when she heard the Mass-bell, if she were in the fields, she would go back to the village and to the Church, in order to hear Mass. I have been witness of this many times. I have seen her confess at Easter-time and other solemn Feasts. I saw her confess to Messire Guillaume Fronte, who was then Cure of the Parish of Saint Remy.”

Jean Morel, of Greux, laborer, Trial of Rehabilitation
Pages 31, 32, and top of 33, reveal more of ‘Joan of Arc country’



Above: Jacques d'Arc, Joan's father, watches another glorious sunrise.



Catherine taking a stroll in the flowers, of the neighboring village, Coussey









Nestled in the forests sits the little village, *Sionne*, home of *Hauviette*, Joan's good friend.

p. 33, bottom: During Joan's time, the *Chateau de Boulemont*, located on a high hill, rented out war saddles and harnesses to those in Domremy, and neighboring villages. It is impressive. Although closed inside during June, we'll still go up the mount to see what we can. It can be seen from all over the valley.

"Joan was a good, simple, sweet girl. She often and gladly went to church and the holy shrines, and she was often put to shame by what people said about her devotion as a church-goer... She worked just like the other young girls. She did the household chores, and spun, and sometimes, I have seen her, she watched her father's flocks...I did not know when Joan went away, but I cried very bitterly about her going. I loved her very dearly, you see, because she was so kind, and I was her friend..." Hauviette, Trial of Rehabilitation; see p.33, bottom. We'll visit Hauviette's picturesque village, and see where she used to live.

Before leaving this area, a little about French food is in order here. The French are well-known for their excellent food and wine, and for good reason. And, we will take advantage of it! Charles de Gaulle said, "How can you govern a country with 365 different kinds of cheese?" However... when you eat a "real" French lunch or dinner in a restaurant, you must count on being there 2-4 hours. It's

a nice way to relax, eat well and enjoy each other's company. However, **ATTENTION!** (WATCH OUT!) If you have two full meals in a restaurant per day, and a *petit déjeuner* (breakfast), your day will be reduced by some 5-7 hours just sitting in a restaurant. There are too many other interesting and important things to take advantage of in France besides just the food experience. That's where the *traiteur* comes in. When there are interesting activities coming up, and time is of the essence, then we will take advantage of a *traiteur* (kind of a French delicatessen who specializes in daily fresh dishes... often very good!).

We've already prepared menus with these specialists for times such as these. This way, we believe we will have the best of both worlds on those days: good fresh French food, and the time necessary to undertake the day's activities.

Leaving *Domrémy*, we now head to the lovely, medieval town of Troyes. Troyes has been in existence since the Roman era. In medieval times it was an important international trade center. But of course, our interest here is Troyes' role in Joan's story. We'll have lunch here, and visit the *Cathédrale Saint Pierre-Saint-Paul*. This impressive cathedral has seen its share of French history. This is where the infamous Treaty of Troyes was signed in 1420, giving the affiliation of the city to the English king, and where Joan and the Dauphin later received the fealty of the citizens of Troyes on July 10, 1429.

Charles' situation was critical at that time: the army's food supplies were exhausted, a strong Burgundian garrison held the center of the city, and as always, the French captains were divided about their preferred course of action. The 'Bastard of Orleans' tells how Joan intervened once again: "*And so the Maid went and entered the council of the king, saying these words more or less, 'Noble Dauphin, command your people to come and besiege the city of Troyes, and do not waste more time in long councils, for in God's name, within three days I shall lead you into the city of Troyes, by love or by force, and either way with courage: Burgundy will be stupefied by it.'*" Joan posted troops along the ditches outside the wall and strengthened them with artillery, "*...and she worked so well that night and the next day that the bishop and townspeople, shaking and trembling, made their obedience to the king.*" Simon Charles, another eyewitness to these events, adds the following: "*A large number of foot soldiers followed her, and she ordered them to make bundles of sticks to fill the ditches. They made many, and the next day Joan issued a call for the assault, giving the order to put the bundles in the ditches. Seeing this, the inhabitants of Troyes, fearing an assault, sent word to the king to negotiate their surrender. The king reached an agreement with the inhabitants and he entered Troyes with great ceremony, and Joan carried her standard near him.*" Joan of Arc Her Story, Regine Pernoud and Marie-Veronique Clin, p.6.

Medieval Troyes (City photo)



We'll have lunch at this old restaurant below



After lunch in Troyes, we head to the site of Joan's biggest, most unlikely, and important victory: *Orléans*. *Orléans* has a wealth of things to see regarding *Jeanne d'Arc*. Here's some we'll be sure not to miss:

1) First of all, a word about our 'home' there. The monastery of *St-Benoit-sur Loire* is located just outside of *Orléans*. We'll spend three nights there. This world-renowned monastery was founded in c. 630 AD, and is one of the oldest abbeys of the Benedictine Rule. The founder, Saint Benedict (c. 480 – 547AD), is honored by both the Catholic and Anglican Church, as the patron saint of all of Europe, and also of students. His remains are housed in this monastery to this day.

Much history has been recorded at St. Benoit. Joan of Arc and the French Revolution both passed through here, but their visits could not have been more different. Charles VII, accompanied by Joan while on their way to Reims for his anointing and crowning, came peacefully through on June 21-22, 1429.² On the other hand, the French revolutionaries of the 18th century passed through pillaging and destroying, as was consistently their trademark. The monks there still follow the Rule of St Benedict and sing Gregorian chants and Psalms during services. You're invited to sing along and participate in these services as you like. The wonderful eleventh-century abbey church, built in the Romanesque style, is always just steps away. And a quiet Loire river-walk is but short walk as well.

There are six different services each day, some very short (15 minutes), and others lasting as long as 75 minutes. We'll meet with one of the monks who will tell us about his life as a monk, and answer any questions you may have. Today a community of approximately forty monks resides within its walls.

Our rooms here are, as with most monasteries, clean and simple. No TV, telephone or frills, but providing all the essentials. Like at St Thierry, there are some rooms with private bathrooms here. Others are found at the end of the hallways. We aren't surrounded by material luxury, but rather by a luxury of things we may have forgotten. Such as simplicity, peaceful surroundings, and some silence.

While in *Orléans*, we will take some of our meals here in the monastery. We're hoping that, as usual, Brigitte Bardot will once again be our effervescent, smiling host in charge of the kitchen, (as you might have guessed, that's just her nick-name). The food will be again simple, healthy and often tasty; French style.

If you speak some French, your experience in France will of course take on an added dimension. However if you don't, it's not a problem. Most people who have come with us don't speak any French at all. We will be translating for most tours, activities etc. (FYI-Catherine is French and Chris is American, and both speak French and English fluently).



A sunset walk along the Loire River is always a good idea.



Above: *St Benoit-sur-Loire Monastery*
P. 39, le chateau, *Sully-sur-Loire*



2. As a child, *Le Chateau de Sully*, with its fairy tale like appearance, corresponded with what I always expected to see in a castle. Joan spent a couple of months here before her capture. And from here she wrote her second letter to the citizens of Reims, dated March 16, 1430. “*Joan the Pucelle has received your letters mentioning that you fear being besieged,*” she wrote, reassuring them that she would intercept any army that marched on their city. “*If it should so happen that I do not encounter them coming to you, shut your gates, because I will be with you shortly. And if they are there I shall make them put on their spurs in such haste that they will not know where to put them.*” Indeed, when she at last arrived at Reims, her enemies had all fled before her.



Above, our favorite picnic site at *Sully-sur-Loire*

Below, and next page: *La Cathédrale Sainte-Croix d'Orléans*





3. *La Cathédrale Sainte-Croix d'Orléans* (The Cathedral of the Holy Cross of Orleans-). This marvelous cathedral was built from 1278 to 1329. During the Siege of *Orléans*, it was visited frequently by Joan of Arc, and it was here that she went to give thanks to God for His great victory over the English.

The *Journal of the Siege of Orléans* was compiled during that time. It states, “*The English siege, maintained in front of Orléans since the twelfth day of October 1428 ...*” until the day of Joan’s arrival, had lasted seven long months. Joan ended it in seven days. Le Duc d’Alençon tells us, “*I heard from the captains and soldiers who took part in the siege, that what had happened was a miracle; and that it was beyond man’s power.*” He continued, “*In all she did, except in affairs of war, she was a very simple young girl; but for warlike things, such as bearing the lance, assembling an army, ordering military operations, directing artillery, she was most skillful. Every one wondered that she could act with as much wisdom and foresight as a captain who had fought for twenty or thirty years. And especially in making use of artillery that she was so wonderful.*”

4. Site of *Les Tourelles*-the main fortress protecting the English in 1429 was called *Les Tourelles*. This is gone now, but we’ll go to the river site to see where it once stood. From this viewpoint, it’s not difficult to imagine what once was.



Above: *Hotel Grosloot*, just steps away from the *Cathédrale Sainte-Croix d'Orléans*.
There's still bullet holes in Joan's statue (middle, bottom) from WWII.

5. *Hotel Grosloir* is a beautiful Neo-Renaissance mansion on the *Place de l'Etape*, steps away from the Cathedral in *Orléans*. It has some beautiful stone sculptures portraying scenes from Joan's life, and other artistic Joan of Arc works. The mansion, which once hosted King Charles IX, Henri IV and Catherine de Medici, is now open for visitors to admire part of the interior. It is also known as the *Grande Maison de l'Etape* and the *Maison du Gouverneur*. Built in the mid-sixteenth century, King Francois II came here with all his court, as a protest against the Protestant Reforms going on at that time. In 1790 it became the town hall. Today, some rooms are open to visitors and are also used for wedding ceremonies of residents of *Orléans*. It's well worth the time to take a look here.

6. *Jargeau* is a small town on the southern bank of the *Loire*, about ten miles east of *Orléans*. The *Battle of Jargeau* took place on June 11-12, 1429. It was Joan's first offensive battle, and the first sustained French offensive in a generation. Le Duc d'Alencon, Joan's friend and one of the commanding officers said, "*Joan breathed the will of God into French troops, ensuring them their victory, saying, 'Act, and God will act!' ... a stone hit her on the head here (it split her helmet in two as she was climbing a scaling ladder), causing her to fall. But driven on by her determination she got up and exhorted her companions forward ... the French (then) took Jargeau and set off in pursuit of the running English.*" The English suffered heavy losses. Trial of the Rehabilitation, 1455

Le duc d'Alencon (a.k.a. the Bastard of Orleans) also made some other interesting comments about this battle, including this one revealing Joan's gift of prophecy: "*During the assault on the town of Jargeau, Joan said to me at a moment when I stood in a certain spot, that I should withdraw from that spot and that if I did not withdraw, 'that machine...' pointing out to me a war machine (a catapult) which was in the town, 'will kill you'. I withdrew and just a little time after, at that very spot where I had been, someone was killed. His name was my Lord de Lude. Realizing all that, a great fear came over me and I was amazed at Joan's words, and all these events that came about.*" Trial of the Rehabilitation, 1455

June 23, 2024, **Paris-CDG airport:** We'll spend our last night near Paris, in a hotel next to Charles de Gaulle airport, where we'll have our farewell dinner, after which the pilgrimage officially comes to a close.

Next morning, June 26, help yourself to the self-service breakfast (included). For those interested, you can take the shuttle (included) to the airport (i.e. Roissy Charles de Gaulle airport) to catch your flight home. For those planning a longer stay in France/Europe, it could also drop you off at the train or subway station. Both are also located at CDG airport. Many will be taking their flight home on that Monday, the 24th. Some, however, may wish to take the train to *Rouen*, where Joan was burned at the stake on May 30, 1431.

Below: a statue in Jargeau, representing when Joan was struck with a rock there.



For ourselves, Catherine and I are always happy to return to “Joan of Arc country”, and it’s still a thrill to share it with others. It never gets old or second-

hand. Every time we go, we too find ourselves on pilgrimage. If it is good for you, come join us in 2024. In any case, wherever your path takes you, *Bon Voyage!*



One last sunset in Joan of Arc Country

On all our previous pilgrimages we have stayed very close to our detailed itineraries. However, please keep in mind that this itinerary is meant to be a guideline, and is not carved in stone. Once in France, we reserve the right to make any changes that we may feel at the time would be best for the group, and we encourage people to be flexible in their approach to pilgrimage.

Your travel hosts, guides, translators and fellow pilgrims are Chris and Catherine Snidow. Catherine was born in Valenciennes, France. A social worker in France, she met Chris at Taize, France, and later moved to the USA where they married. She became a Registered Nurse and is currently teaching Nursing Aide students in Dallas. Speaks French, English and some German. She loves among other things, sharing a good meal with friends, gardening, walking, bicycle rides and reading.

Born in W. Virginia, Chris played in bands in Texas, California, France and Holland. Composer-producer of several critically acclaimed CDs, including a Joan of Arc CD and DVD based on the 2007 Sound and Light show performed in the *Basilica of Saint Joan of Arc* in Domremy.

His brand new, updated, and EXPANDED version of Joan of Arc and the God of the Bible-THE WITCH THAT WASN'T, has just been published, and is now available in English on Amazon.com at:

https://www.amazon.com/Joan-Arc-God-Bible-Witch/dp/1496130839/ref=sr_1_1?crid=M5CWB397I728&keywords=Joan+of+Arc+and+the+God+of+the+Bible-THE+WITCH+THAT+WASN%E2%80%99T+SNIDOW&qid=1693849148&s=books&sprefix=joan+of+arc+and+the+god+of+the+bible-the+witch+that+wasn+t+snidow%2Cstripbooks%2C1361&sr=1-1

A later version is available in French.

And a book just released in Jan. 2022: *The Godly Paths of Long Ago-Two Decades of Joan of Arc Pilgrimages*, is also found on Amazon at:

https://www.amazon.com/Godly-Paths-Long-Ago-Pilgrimages/dp/B09QKFY81L/ref=sr_1_1?crid=ZC8UE912S95X&keywords=The+Godly+Paths+of+Long+Ago-Two+Decades+of+Joan+of+Arc+Pilgrimages&qid=1693851843&s=books&sprefix=the+godly+paths+of+long+ago-two+decades+of+joan+of+arc+pilgrimages%2Cstripbooks%2C268&sr=1-1

Chris is a Registered Nurse. Speaks English, French and some Dutch. They currently live in Dallas, TX with their amazing cat, Palmie, and are active members of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, TX.

(Photos by Chris Snidow unless otherwise attributed)

Joan of Arc Pilgrimage

June 14-23, 2024

TERMS AND CONDITIONS: Price: \$3,899.00

Payment, refunds and cancellation fees: A \$450.00 per person deposit is required for registration. Full payment, including single room supplements if applicable, is due postmarked no later than March 7, 2024. If full payment is made later than March 7, 2024, a \$200.00 Full-Payment-Late-Fee will be added on the trip price. The deposit is non-refundable, except in event of the trip's cancellation by Chris Snidow and Catherine Henon-Snidow. You can pay by check or credit card (through PayPal). Participants are responsible for all PayPal fees, bank fees, checking fees or any other fees that have been added on.

Single accommodations may be available (there are a limited amount available) for a supplemental charge of \$529.00, which provides single room accommodations throughout the pilgrimage. A \$150.00 per person deposit is required for single room registration. First come first served for all single accommodations.

We reserve the right to cancel this trip due to inadequate registration that makes this trip economically unfeasible for us to operate, though we would inform you of this at the latest by May 1, 2024. In such a case, we would refund to you the total trip cost. However, we are not responsible for additional expenses incurred by participants preparing for the trip (e.g. clothing, equipment, medical expenses, airplane reservations, etc.). Participants are responsible for unanticipated price increases which result from a significant devaluation of the U. S. dollar, or significant gasoline increases. No refunds can be given once the trip begins, or for any meals, lodging, activities, or any other services not used.

If you cancel:

From March 15, 2024-April 15, 2024 then you forfeit 25% of total cost of the trip.

From April 16, 2024-May 1, 2024 then you forfeit 50% of total cost of the trip.

From May 2, 2024-May 17, 2024 then you forfeit 75% of total cost of the trip.

From May 18, 2024-June 14, 2024 then you forfeit 100% of total cost of the trip.

WHAT IS INCLUDED ON THIS TRIP:

1) Transportation costs while on this trip in France, with the following exceptions:

a) Any air fare or other transportation expenses to or from France are not included.

b) Participants are completely responsible for meeting group in Paris, France, at Charles de Gaulle airport on Friday, June 14, 2024 at 10:30am, at the designated place.

2) All sleeping accommodations (double rooms) at religious communities or monasteries, hotels, *gites*, and *chambres d'hotels*.

3) Twenty-four out of twenty-nine meals are included (82%).

4) All admission fees for Jeanne d'Arc related activities.

5) All meetings and/or conferences with various scholars, experts, and/or historians of Jeanne d'Arc and her times throughout the pilgrimage.

-This tour requires a blend of adventuresome spirit, physical fitness, walking ability, mental alertness, and a capacity for accepting situations as they exist and not as we might find them in America. We regret that we are unable to accept requests for special diets or itinerary variations. Disabled travelers requiring special attention or treatment while on tour must be reported when reservations are made. A companion who is able to provide the required assistance must accompany any person who is unable to travel independently or who needs assistance.

-Due to limited vehicle storage capacity, each tour member is permitted only two pieces of luggage. The size of the "suitcase" we recommend is: 9" X 22" X 14". The size of the "carry on" bag is: 17" X 10" X 10". This is the size of our own baggage and allows us to also take them with us on the plane. [NOTE: If you have ever had the airlines lose your luggage, as we have, you will appreciate being able to keep them with you.]

-Chris Snidow and Catherine Henon-Snidow do not assume any responsibility for loss or damage to baggage or passengers' belongings.

-Chris Snidow and Catherine Henon-Snidow reserve the right to refuse to accept any person as a member of the tour/pilgrimage for any reason. They also reserve the right to require any participant to withdraw from the trip at any time who presents a significant risk to the health or safety of themselves or others, which cannot be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level by Mr. Snidow and Ms. Henon-Snidow's reasonable accommodations.

-We reserve the right to make any schedule or itinerary (and price) changes due to unanticipated circumstances.

Contact info for Chris and Catherine Snidow
cowrind@sbcglobal.net, Telephone: 469 953 1271
Dallas, Texas 75218 USA---www.pilgrimwitnesses.com

CONTRACT AGREEMENT

Joan of Arc Pilgrimage

June 14-23, 2024

I fully understand all the terms and conditions of this agreement, and I agree and hereby enter into this contract with Chris Snidow and Catherine Henon-Snidow.

Name as stated on passport (print please): _____

Mailing address: _____ City _____ State _____
Zip Code _____

Passport # : _____ Expiration Date: _____

Country of Issue: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Telephone: (Home) _____ (Work) _____ (Cell) _____

E-mail address: _____

Accommodations desired:

Double: Yes _____ No _____

Sharing a room with (if you know): _____

When available, single room: Yes _____ No _____

In the event of emergency, please contact:

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____

Day time phone # _____ Night time phone# _____

Cell Phone # _____ Email address: _____

NOTICE: We accept no responsibility for any loss or injuries of any nature, regardless of their cause.

Signature: _____ Today's Date: _____

To sign up, and pay by check:

- 1) Fill out, date and sign contract.
- 2) Sign and date the following forms.
- 3) Send contract and all forms with your check for deposit to:

Chris Snidow
9320 Biscayne Blvd.
Dallas, TX 75218 USA

Or, you may pay by credit card. To pay by credit card you must go through PayPal. PayPal charges a variable fee (usually around 3%) for their services, if the transaction is completed in the United States. If outside of the United States, the additional fee is slightly higher. Initially they take their fee out of the money we receive, but then we will add that fee back to you. Long story short, paying by check will save you the additional approximately 3% PayPal fee (or more outside of the USA).

However, some people do prefer to pay by Credit Card. If that is you, then:

- 1) Fill out, date and sign contract
- 2) Sign and date the following forms
- 3) Send contract and all forms to address above.
- 4) Then log in to your PayPal account. Click on Goods or Services, put in our email address, put in the amount to pay, plus PayPal's fee (2.9% or 3.9%, depending on where the transaction is completed). Use our email address (i.e. cwrrind@sbcglobal.net) for the payee. Please call us for any questions: 469 953 1271.

**AGREEMENT TO ASSUME ALL RISKS OF TOUR TRAVEL (a/k/a
PILGRIMAGE OR RETREAT) STAYING IN FRANCE &
TRANSPORTATION, AND TO RELEASE CHRISTIAN C. SNIDOW AND
CATHERINE M. HENON FROM ANY AND ALL LIABILITY RELATED
THERE TO.**

ASSUMPTION OF RISK

I, _____, fully understand that participation in a tour group (also known as a PILGRIMAGE or RETREAT) that will be traveling and staying in France for up to 10 days exposes me to certain INHERENT RISKS, including, but not limited to, transportation accidents (such as an accident in a vehicle). I fully understand that these risks include but are not limited to loss or damage to personal property, injury or fatality due to collision with a vehicle, equipment failure, whether or not caused by the negligence of a tour leader, or illness. Nevertheless, I wish to engage in this tour travel in France (a/k/a PILGRIMAGE or RETREAT), and I AM WILLING TO TAKE COMPLETE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY OWN HEALTH AND SAFETY AND TO ASSUME ALL RISKS OF INJURY, ILLNESS OR DEATH, whether foreseen or unforeseen, that may befall me as a result of my participation in these activities, specifically the
Joan of Arc Pilgrimage of June 14-23, 2024.

This agreement shall be interpreted in accordance with the law of the State of Texas, and is permanently binding.

Signature: _____

Today's Date: _____

RELEASE AND COVENANT NOT TO SUE

Therefore, as consideration for being permitted to participate in this travel tour in France, I hereby agree that I, my assignees, heirs, and legal representatives **RELEASE CHRISTIAN C. SNIDOW AND/OR CATHERINE M. HENON**, their agents, employees and representatives from any and all liability arising from any and all actions, claims or demands that I, my assignees, heirs or my legal representatives, may hereafter have and that I, my assignees, heirs, and legal representatives will not make a claim or demand against **CHRISTIAN C. SNIDOW AND/OR CATHERINE M. HENON**, their agents, employees and representatives for **PROPERTY DAMAGE, ILLNESS, PERSONAL INJURY, OR DEATH** arising from my participation in any tour and/or travel activities, and any activity related thereto, including transportation of any kind while in France, regardless of whether such property damage, illness, personal injury, or death results from **THE NEGLIGENCE OF CHRISTIAN C. SNIDOW AND/OR CATHERINE M. HENON-SNIDOW** (but not their reckless, willful, or fraudulent conduct), and/or from **ANY DEFECT IN EQUIPMENT AND/OR VEHICLES USED DURING THIS TOUR**. This agreement shall be interpreted in accordance with the law of the State of Texas, and is permanently binding.

Signature: _____

Today's Date: _____

HOLD HARMLESS

I agree to INDEMNIFY AND HOLD CHRISTIAN C SNIDOW AND/OR CATHERINE M. HENON HARMLESS with respect to any claim made against either one or both of them by any other person or any third party that relates to my participation in travel in France and/or any tour related activities that would be covered by the Release and Covenant Not to Sue if made directly by me.

This agreement shall be interpreted in accordance with the law of the State of Texas and is permanently binding.

I have carefully read this agreement and I fully understand the contents. I understand that this is a release of liability and a legal contract between me, Christian C. Snidow and Catherine M. Henon, and that it affects my legal rights. I am signing this document of my own free will.

Today's Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Postal Code: _____ Country: _____

Travel Insurance

You will be glad to know that up to this point, we have never had a car accident while on pilgrimage. Nor has anyone on pilgrimage with us ever had an injury necessitating a visit to the Emergency Room, or even seeing a doctor. With one exception: myself. I was once clawed by a feral cat, and had to see a doctor to get some antibiotics.

We have indeed been blessed. And we take this safety record very seriously. We are committed to doing all we can to ensure that this record continues. Having said that, we remain aware of the possibility of something happening that would require the services of a doctor or hospital care for one of our participants. We've heard stories of people that while traveling internationally, thought they had adequate health insurance coverage with their credit cards or US Health insurance, only to find out otherwise once overseas. Consequently, travel medical insurance covering "*overseas medical treatment/evacuation/repatriation services and accidental death and dismemberment*" is mandatory for all participants.

In reality, we are now copying what most Travel agencies and guided tour organizations do automatically. We are calling this plan our 'Better Safe than Sorry' plan. This would mean, among other things, that you would be at least partially covered medically if something did happen while on pilgrimage with us. This kind of insurance is inexpensive for short limited travel such as this. With our insurance company, for the state of Texas, the price for \$50,000 coverage in 2015 was \$28.49 for primary, and \$46.75 for a couple. For \$100,000 coverage it was \$38.17 for primary, and \$54.89 for a couple. And so forth, up to \$1,000,000 coverage.

You may contact our insurance agent if you like. She works through all insurance companies, and can run quotes for you no matter where you live, and also enroll you as your agent, if you so desire. You may contact her directly at: 1-800-880-0414. Her name is Eloise Chapman, of The Chapman Group (www.chapmangroup.com). She has been a great help to us, but whatever works best for you is fine with us.

We will need to have verification from you in writing by April 15, 2023. Please send us a copy of your insurance wallet I.D. card either by postal mail or email. We are not mandating that you get Travel Insurance for trip cancellation, etc. Although you may want to consider this as well, we are only mandating the above health care coverage. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Please sign below that you have read, understood and will comply with this policy.

Signature: _____ Today's Date: _____

