

Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Avenue du Casino 30 – 1820 Montreux



At the end of the 19th century, the need arose to offer foreign visitors staying in the region a place of worship, as well as for the Italian workers who were arriving to build the Montreux hotel complex.

It was Vaud's French residents who initiated the project. One among them, staying at the Hôtel Helvétie (then the Hôtel de Paris), financed most of the Church's construction.

The Church was consecrated on 17 March 1885 to the Sacred Heart of Jesus by Mgr Gaspard Mermillod, then Bishop of the Diocese of Lausanne-Geneva (he became Cardinal in 1890). Quickly filling up, the Church had to be made larger twice, in 1904 and 1912. It features Romanesque Revival architecture, while the furnishings are more in the neo-Gothic style. The benches and confessional are original, made of solid oak.

After its grade II classification as a historic monument in 1978, the Church was restored. This work made it possible to change the liturgical furnishings to meet the directives promulgated by the Second Vatican Council.

The Kuhn organ (1905, restored in 2018) can be used to perform music from the Romantic repertoire.



Through the choice of the saints represented, the many stained glass windows tell the story of the local Church and the former diocese of Lausanne, which became the diocese of Lausanne-Geneva-Fribourg in 1924, a story that's now part of history.

Noteworthy women are depicted on the left, and men on the right.

Some of the stained glass windows were damaged by a violent hailstorm in 2005. They were replaced in 2010-2011 with contemporary stained glass windows using a unique process that was a world first for a church: printing transparent enamels onto glass from digital images.



In these creations, the statues reflect the spiritual affinities of parishioners over the decades, as well as today's churchgoers: Our Lady of the Rosary, Our Lady of Fatima, Jesus and Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque (messenger of the Sacred Heart of Jesus), Saint Therese of the Child Jesus, Our Lady of Lourdes, Child Jesus of Prague, Saint Joseph, Saint Vincent (deacon and martyr, patron of winegrowers), Saint Anthony of Padua.

Marguerite-Marie Alacoque (1646-1690)¹, messenger of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

This 24-year-old young woman entered the Visitation Monastery in Paray-le-Monial. Here, she was to experience the miracle of the apparitions of the Heart of Jesus. At a time when communion was rare, a life of faith was rooted in prayer and, more particularly, in the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

First recognised as a saint by popular opinion, her beatification was officially pronounced in 1864, and her canonisation in 1920.

Christ appeared to Saint Marguerite-Marie three times. On 27 December 1673, Jesus revealed the wonders of his Love to her. For the first time, on a Friday in 1674, He showed her His wounds and asked her to receive communion on the 1st Friday of each month, and to pray the Holy Hour on Thursday evenings, "united with his agony in Gethsemane". During the final apparition in June 1675, this message was delivered to her: "Here is this Heart which loved men so much, that it spared nothing to show them its love; and instead of recognition, from most of them it receives only ingratitude, indifference and even contempt in this sacrament of love." Jesus also asked for the institution of a particular feast to honour his Heart on the Friday after the octave of the feast of the Blessed Sacrament.



*"By forgetting yourself, you will possess him. By abandoning yourself to him, he will possess you. Go then, full of faith and in loving confidence, to deliver yourself to the mercy of his Providence, to be his land that he may cultivate as he pleases and without resistance on your part, remaining in humble and peaceful adherence to his good pleasure."*²

Letter from Saint Marguerite Alacoque to a nun



Painting of the King of Divine Mercy,
1934, Eugeniusz Kazimirowski

Closer to our times, another young woman, **Sister Marie-Faustine Kowalska** (1905-1938)³, also had a mystical experience. It is through her that the Lord Jesus transmitted His great message of Divine Mercy to the whole world, and showed a model of Christian perfection based on faith in God and a merciful attitude towards our neighbours. She was canonised in the year 2000.

"O my Jesus, each of Your saints reflects one of Your virtues; I desire to reflect Your compassionate Heart, full of mercy; I want to glorify it. Let Your mercy, O Jesus, be impressed upon my heart and soul like a seal, and this will be my badge in this and the future life."

from Sister Marie-Faustine's Diary, n°1242⁴

Today, the faithful of the parish demonstrate great devotion to Divine Mercy. Eucharistic adoration takes place every Friday at 3pm, in front of the altar on the left aisle under the benevolent gaze of the merciful Christ represented in the painting.

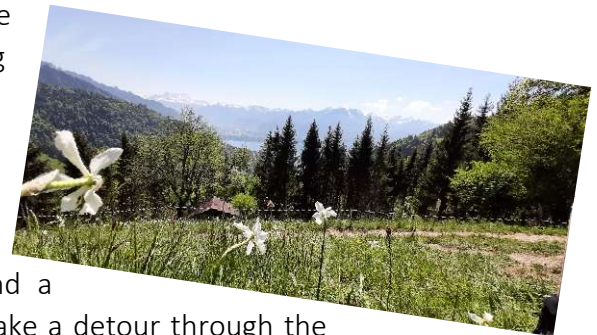
Did you know?

- ★ During construction, the priest's apartments were located above the entrance. According to the cantonal regulations in force since the Reformation, the facade of Catholic churches should not resemble a church! During the first extension, the upper windows were transformed into a rose, those on the 1st floor into niches, and the corner turrets were added.
- ★ On the statue of the Infant Jesus of Prague in one of the ambulatory chapels, the colour of the vestments changes depending on the liturgical period!
- ★ At the entrance, under the organ gallery, you can see the old coat of arms of the Bishopric of Lausanne, on which the coat of arms of the Bishopric of Geneva, attached in 1821, also already appeared. The coat of arms of Fribourg Cathedral would be added in 1924.
- ★ Here, Mass is delivered in French, as well as in Italian, Portuguese and even Aramaic!



Nearby

- 🕒 Heading east, a 60-minute stroll along the lake will take you to Villeneuve Church, passing by the most visited monument in Switzerland, Chillon Castle.
- 🕒 To the north-east: the Catholic chapel of Notre Dame des Narcisses in Les Avants (known for its sledging slope from Sonloup and the narcissus fields in May) and the Catholic chapel of Glion, both accessible by mountain train.
- 🕒 To the west: a 30-minute stroll along the lake allows you to reach Clarens Church, where you will find a completely different atmosphere. Along the way, take a detour through the Montreux-Clarens cemetery (av. Eugène-Rambert, Clarens), which hosts the graves of painters, doctors, theologians, singers and musicians, from here and abroad: Oskar Kokoska, Eugène Rambert, Joan Sutherland, Horst Tappe, Carlo Boller, Alexandre Vinet, Sydney Chaplin, Vladimir Nabokov, Henri Deblüe. The cemetery was designed with the aim of attracting visitors and encouraging them to walk while letting their minds wander since its construction in 1817. From April to October, it's possible to travel by boat to visit the churches of Notre Dame in Vevey, Sainte Thérèse of the Child Jesus in Clarens, Sacred Heart of Jesus in Montreux and Sacred Heart of Jesus in Villeneuve (CGN circuit Clarens-Montreux-Territet-Chillon-Villeneuve-Bouveret-Vevey).



¹ <https://sacrecoeur-paray.org/decouvrir/ste-marguerite-marie-st-claude/>

² Prayer taken from <https://nominis.cef.fr/contenus/saint/2028/Sainte-Marguerite-Marie-Alacoque.html>

³ https://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/documents/ns_lit_doc_20000430_faustina_en.html

⁴ Prayer taken from https://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_20000430_faustina_en.html