



NOTRE-DAME  
DES VICTOIRES

HOLY  
GAMES  
L'ÉVANGILE C'EST SPORT!



# MARATHON OF CHURCHES



Give, Lord, give victory !

- Visit
- Indoor path
- Prayers
- Outdoor path

[www.notredamedesvictoires.com](http://www.notredamedesvictoires.com)

*"All athletes in training win severe disciplines,  
they do it to receive a laurel wreath that is about to fade,  
and we, for a crown that does not fade." (1Co9,25)*



# Summary

## Indoor path

- 01 The Victory of Truth
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- 03 The Victory of Good
- 04 The Victory of Trust
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- 06 Thank you and again!

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# INDOOR PATH



- 01 The Victory of Truth
- 02 The Victory of Joy
- 03 The Victory of Good
- 04 The Victory of Trust
- 05 The Victory of Peace
- 06 Thank you and again!

STEP 1: IN THE CHOIR OF THE BASILICA  
*In front of the paintings of the life of saint Augustin*

# THE VICTORY OF TRUTH

*with Saint Augustin*



With Saint Augustine, let us discover that “to return to God” is “to return to one’s heart”. It is not fleeing from the world, but on the contrary discovering God in the world. It is to discover that God was «already there», that his grace is already given and that we are always behind in relation to God’s gift: God always precedes us.

*Biography of St. Augustin p24*

# Address

I remember a choice in my life that allowed me to get out of a mistake and find a path of life and truth. I thank inwardly for the people who helped me there.

If I have faith, I can remember my encounter with the Lord. And if I am a non-believer but want to meet God, I can pray like this: «Lord, if you exist, let me meet you.»

## My notes

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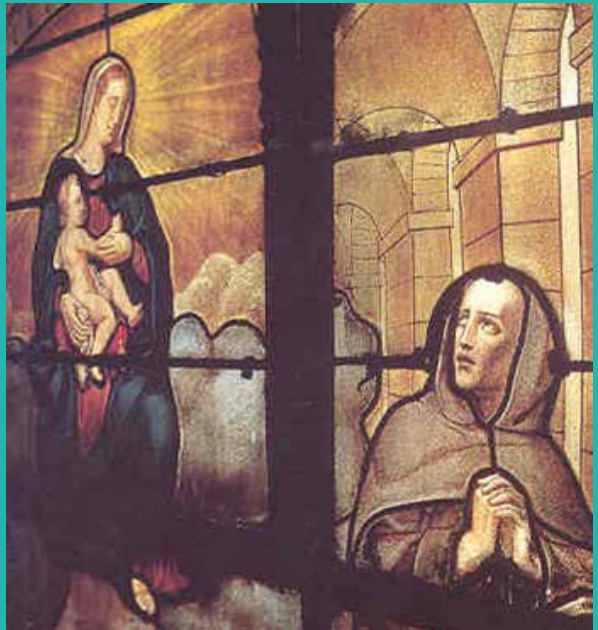
## Prayer of Saint Augustin

With all the strengths You gave me, I have sought You, desiring to see what I have believed. And I struggled, and I suffered. My God, my Lord, my only hope, grant me never to be weary of seeking You, that I may seek Your face with passion without ceasing. You who have given me to find You, give me the courage to seek You and to hope to find You more and more. Before You my solidity: please keep it. Before You my fragility: please heal it. Before You all that I know, all that I do not know. By the door You have opened for me, I enter welcome me. From where You have enclosed me, I call: open for me. Grant me not to forget You, grant me to understand You. My God, my Lord, grant me to love you.

STEP 2: IN FRONT OF BROTHER FIACRE'S  
STAINED-GLASS WINDOW  
*above the statue of Saint Augustin*

# THE VICTORY OF JOY

*with Brother Fiacre*



Brother Fiacre was well known during his life. So many Parisians came to see him at the convent of the "Little Fathers" (of which no trace remains today except for the church of Notre-Dame des Victoires) that, soon, the horse-pulled carriages that were used to get there took the name of the Brother: they are still called «les fiacres (the cabs)».

*Some aspects of the life of Brother Fiacre p24*

# Address

I remember a great joy in my life, and I thank for the people who lived it with me or rejoiced for me.

If I am a believer, I can thank the Lord for the joy he has given me to live and entrust him with my expectations and hopes. I can also entrust to the Virgin Mary a couple hoping for a child.

## My notes

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## Giving thanks with Mary: Magnificat

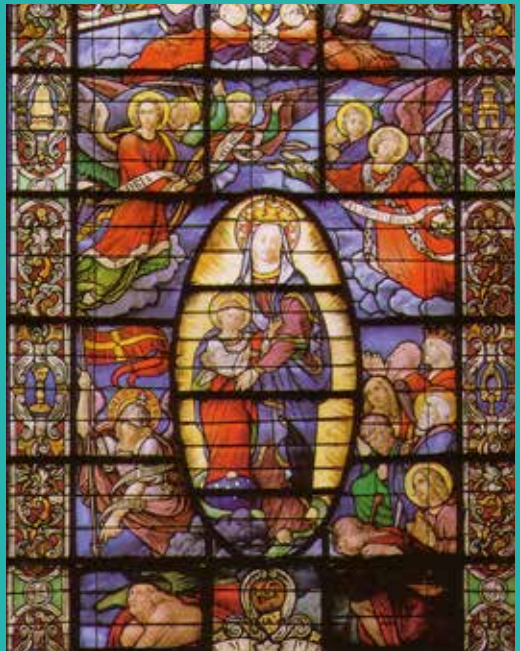
“My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior;  
Because He has regarded the lowliness of His handmaid;  
For behold, henceforth all generations shall call me blessed;  
Because He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name;  
And His mercy is from generation to generation on those who fear Him.  
He has shown might with His arm,  
He has scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart.  
He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and has exalted the lowly.  
He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty.  
He has given help to Israel, his servant, mindful of His mercy  
Even as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his posterity forever. Amen.”



STEP 3: IN FRONT OF THE STAINED-GLASS WINDOW  
OF OUR LADY OF VICTORIES  
*above the statue of Our Lady of Victories*

# THE VICTORY OF GOOD

*with Our Lady of Victories*



More than 37,000 ex-votos cover the walls of the basilica: they bear witness to the countless graces received in this place, yesterday and today. These marble plaques were, in fact, placed by people who prayed here, were answered, and came to thank for the graces received: births, success in a competition, healings, conversions... Mary's victories are multiple and continue to this day!

*More details p25-26*

# Address

I remember a victory I won over Evil: for example, a day when, in adversity, I managed to show patience and charity; or a forgiveness that I managed to give to someone who had hurt me... and I taste again the joy of my victory, the joy of goodness.

If I am a believer, I can thank the Lord who is always there to bring good out of all Evil.

## My notes

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## Prayer to Our Lady of Victories

“Our Lady of Victories, you always welcome the prayers of your children with kindness. Obtain for us the grace to participate fully in the victory of your Risen Son by not standing in the way of the work of the Holy Spirit in us. Immaculate Heart of Mary, inexhaustible treasure of grace, we entrust ourselves to you, as well as to our families and loved ones. Teach us to answer yes to God, in humility, purity of heart, simplicity and abandonment to his will, for our own sake, for our salvation and that of the whole world. Refuge of sinners, keep us under your maternal protection. Through your hands, may divine mercy be given to us so that it sanctifies our hearts and those of sinners, making them like Jesus. Through your intercession, O Mary, strengthen our faith, sustain our hope and revive our charity. Amen.”

# THE VICTORY OF TRUST

*with Saints Louis and Zélie Martin*



When little Thérèse fell seriously ill at the age of 9, it was to Notre-Dame des Victoires that her father wrote to ask for a novena of masses for the healing of his daughter. During the novena of masses, the Virgin appeared to Thérèse and healed her, to which she testifies in her manuscripts: «A miracle was needed and it was Our Lady of Victories who did it.” (Ms A, 30r°)

*More details p26*

# Address

I remember a person who has my full confidence. I give thanks for the presence of this person in my life and remember a time when his presence was a real support or help for me.

If I am a believer, I can ask the Lord to increase my trust in Him. I can entrust a family - mine or another - to the intercession of Saints Louis and Zélie Martin.

## My notes

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## Prayer through the intercession of the “Martin couple”

“Lord, You have given us Saints Louis and Zélie Martin to show us the beauty of the sacrament of marriage and the fruitfulness of a family life placed under your gaze. We entrust to You all the families of the earth: may Your grace sustain the daily existence of the couples, and may the young find in the family a support that will help them to grow in Your love. May every family be a dwelling of goodness and peace for children, the elderly and those who are poor or isolated. We ask You this through the intercession of Our Lady of Victories, whom Saints Louis and Zélie Martin loved to pray to so much. Amen.”

# IMPOSSIBLE VICTORIES

*with Saint Joseph*



«Is there a wonder that the Lord cannot do?» (Gen 18:14). God himself, in the Bible, reveals to us that nothing is impossible for him: He is the Almighty, the One who can do all things. He is the One who works wonders... But do we really believe it?

*More details p27*

# Address

I remember an event that is for me «like a miracle», something that was, against all odds, possible, when I had thought it impossible: a reconciliation, a success, an encounter...

If I am a believer, I can thank the Lord and ask Him to continue His wonders for me and in me, certain that nothing is impossible for God!

## My notes

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## «Invincible Prayer» to Saint Joseph

*of Saint Francis de Sales (1567-1622)*

“Glorious Saint Joseph, Spouse of Mary, grant us, we beseech Thee, thy paternal protection through the heart of Jesus Christ.  
O Thou whose infinite power reaches out to all our needs, rendering possible for us that which is impossible, look upon the concerns of thy children with fatherly countenance. In the troubles and sorrows that afflict us, we have confident recourse to thee. Deign to take under thy loving protection this important and difficult endeavor, the cause of our worries, and dispose its success to the glory of God and to the benefit of His faithful servants. Amen”.

# THANK YOU AND AGAIN



MERCI N. D. des VICTOIRES.  
● Je te CONFIE la SUITE. ●  
C. R. 2006

## The double grace

When Louis XIII asked for the victory of his army, he was also given a child: Louis XIV, called «Dieudonné (God-given)». When little Thérèse came to ask for confirmation of her recovery, she received unexpected graces in the secret of her heart: «The graces she granted me moved me so deeply that my tears alone expressed my happiness as on the day of my 1st communion...»

# Address

It seems that this is the signature of Our Lady of Victories: to give, in addition, an unasked grace, at the same time as She grants what has been asked of Her... So, what do I ask Her for the future?

And when I am heard, I will have to think about rereading what happened around this answer to see if there would not be an additional grace that would have been granted to me.

## My notes

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## Prayer of Blessing

*of Psalm 66*

“May God take us in favor and bless us, may His face be illuminated for us; and Your way will be known on earth, Your salvation, among all nations. May the peoples, God, give You thanks; may they thank You all together! Let the nations sing their joy, for You govern the world with justice; You govern the peoples with righteousness, on earth You lead the nations. May the peoples, God, give You thanks; may they thank You all together! The earth has given its fruit; God, our God, blesses us. May God bless us, and may the whole earth adore Him.”



N° 4773.

THANKS  
TO MARY IMMACULATE  
WILLIAM AND MARY COGLAN.  
15<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 1868.

V. P.

N° 4056.

TWO CHILDREN OF MARY,  
THANK THEIR DEAR MOTHER,  
FOR CONTINUED PROTECTION,  
ESPECIALLY FOR THEIR  
PAPAS RESTORATION TO HEALTH.

M. P. A. P.

N° 3878.

NOUS AVONS INVOQUÉ MARIE,

N°37014

In memory of  
**ANNA ROSE IVORY FORAND**  
born 8 september 2008  
died 12 september 2008  
consecrated to  
the blessed Virgin Mary.

# OUTDOOR PATH



07 Notre-Dame des Victoires

08 Saint Eustache

09 Saint Roch

Discover  
a way of praying

# NOTRE-DAME DES VICTOIRES



## Intercession of the Virgin Mary

At Notre-Dame des Victoires, many come to pray to God through the intercession of the Virgin Mary. Because She was given to us as mother by Jesus himself (Jn 19:25-27), She is very close to us. Because She is all pure, She is also very close to God and can intercede for us.

Let us therefore place our intentions at Her feet, She will know how to present them for us to God. Let's trust Her!

# Why pray to the Virgin Mary?

## Mary, Mother of the Church

John, the Evangelist, relates one of Jesus' last words: «Woman, behold your son». Jesus entrusts the Apostle John to his mother. Then Jesus entrusts Mary to his disciple: «Behold your mother» (John 19:25-27). Subsequently, Mary will be designated as the mother of Christians, of all those who recognize the Messiah of God in the features of the crucified one and proclaim his Resurrection. On the day of Pentecost, we find Mary present in the midst of the disciples. Since her initial «yes», Mary has always shown perseverance in the faith. Over the centuries, Catholics have always seen Mary as the disciple par excellence. In it, everything that God can achieve in a human being who accepts God's holiness is manifested.

## The Intercession of the Virgin Mary

To invoke Mary is to appeal to Her closeness to Jesus, to Her intercession with God. For generations, Catholics have confided to Mary their worries, their concerns for the world, their desire to advance in the faith. Some commemorate the events of Christ's life by reciting the rosary and reciting the «Hail Mary». Everything that happens in the places of pilgrimage is of this order. Mary precedes us on the path. Before us, She lived Her «pilgrimage of faith».

\* \* \* \*

Source: <https://eglise.catholique.fr/>

For no creature can ever be placed on the same footing as the Incarnate and Redeeming Word. But just as the priesthood of Christ is partaken out in various forms, both by ministers and by the faithful, and just as the one goodness of God is really diffused in various forms among creatures, so the one mediation of the Redeemer does not exclude, but instead gives rise to a varied cooperation on the part of creatures, dependent on the one source. This subordinate role of Mary the Church professes without hesitation; it never ceases to experience it; She commends Him to the hearts of the faithful, so that this maternal support and help may help them to attach themselves more intimately to the Mediator and Saviour." (Lumen Gentium n°62)



Visit  
a church

# SAINT EUSTACHE



**In order to visit**

Tours in French, English,  
Spanish and Chinese:



*Audio tours offered by Art Culture et Foi*

# From the chapel of Sainte-Agnès to the present church

A modest chapel, which became a parish church, was built in 1213. It is dedicated to Saint-Eustache, housing relics of this Roman martyr. Over the years, the church had to be enlarged because of the increase in the population. The first stone of the current church was laid on August 19, 1532, but it was not consecrated until April 26, 1637, more than a century later.

In 1655, Colbert, parishioner and first churchwarden of Saint-Eustache, had two chapels built under the towers of the façade, which seriously compromised their solidity. The façade had to be demolished as well as the first bay of the nave and the side aisles. On 22 May 1754, the Duke of Chartres - the future Philippe-Égalité - laid the first stone of the current portal. The construction remains unfinished... even today!

In 1793, the church was closed to Catholic worship to become a temple of Agriculture. Reopened in 1795, it was partially conceded to theophilanthropists: serious damage was caused to the church and its furniture.

The nineteenth century was to be, for Saint-Eustache, as for many other Parisian monuments, the era of repairs and restorations. From 1846 to 1854, the building was completely restored.

After the events of 1870-1871, many repairs were again carried out. In the 1990s, after many difficulties, the organ was restored by a Dutch company - Van den Heuvel. Saint-Eustache now has one of the most important instruments in France.

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Source: [www.saint-eustache.org/histoire-et-patrimoine/histoire-de-leglise/](http://www.saint-eustache.org/histoire-et-patrimoine/histoire-de-leglise/)



Discover  
a Saint

# SAINT ROCH



## Saint Roch, a pilgrim who helps the unfortunate

The only son of wealthy bourgeois merchants, Roch was born in Montpellier around 1350 in the middle of the Hundred Years' War. At birth, he bore a red mark on his chest in the shape of a cross. His parents died when he was still a teenager.

Generous, charitable, like his parents, Roch took great care of the many poor. He studied medicine. Before leaving Montpellier to go on pilgrimage, he distributed all his belongings. On his way, he passed through many cities ravaged by the plague; he visited, cared for and healed the sick until his arrival in Rome. There he met Pope Urban V.

When he left Rome three years later, he took up his pilgrim's staff again. Roch ends up catching the plague himself: he withdraws into a forest so as not to infect others. Only a dog comes to feed him, bringing him a loaf of bread stolen from his master every day. The latter, intrigued by the animal's merry-go-round, follows him into the forest and discovers Roch injured, whom he rescues.

On his return to France, he was arrested. Mistaken for a spy, he was convicted and thrown into prison. He treats and heals his fellow prisoners and never reveals his identity. He died five years later around 1379. Thanks to the cross that marks his chest, his uncle - the governor who had arrested him - and his maternal grandmother recognized him.

Roch's body was transported to the city of Venice.  
Saint-Roch is celebrated on August 16th.

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Source: <https://www.paroissesaintroch.fr/>





# To go a little further

## The life of saint Augustin

An illustrious Doctor of the Church, Saint Augustine, who became Bishop of Hippo (now Annaba, in north-eastern Algeria), was one of the four Fathers of the Latin Church. His feast day is August 29. His mother, Saint Monica, is celebrated on August 28.

Saint Augustine (354-430) is passionate. All his life, he never stopped looking for «the sublime». After having lost his way and dispersed in carnal pleasures, his journey led him to gather his being, to unify it in the quest for Wisdom and Truth, to reorient and purify his desires. For sin is not in the desires themselves, but in seeking to satisfy them in and through creatures rather than in God.

Hence the apparently paradoxical discovery that the movement that accompanies the process of elevation to a higher state is also an interiorization, a descent into the most intimate part of oneself to the heart, the seat of deep desires and decision, where God is even more interior than man is to himself: «you were within me» as Augustine would say.

To return to God is to return to one's heart. It is not fleeing from the world, but on the contrary discovering God in the world. It is to discover that God was «already there», that his grace is already given and that we are always behind in relation to God's gift: God always precedes us.

When Augustine recounts his return to God, he thus understands that it is above all the work of grace in him, but a work in which he has cooperated by his intelligence, which recognized itself as insufficient, and by his will, which was wounded but desiring, and which had to be healed. Hence a double conversion: that of the “intellect” to believe and that of the “will” to want to live by faith in God.

Augustine thus has not first of all an intellectual experience of God, but an affective experience, that of «the One who made us directed to him» (I.1), who, having created man in his image, is the only one who can restore his beauty after the fall.

# Brother Fiacre's prayer

At the beginning of the 17th century, a community of religious, the «little Fathers», lived here under the rule of Saint Augustine. The monks, wishing to have a chapel built for their congregation, appealed to King Louis XIII. The latter agreed to give subsidies, on the condition that the chapel be called «Notre-Dame des Victoires», in gratitude to the Virgin Mary for the help given during his recent victories and for the consolidation of the kingdom. The first stone of the church was laid in 1629.

Among the monks was the humble Brother Fiacre. He fell ill and was cured thanks to the medicines given by Queen Anne of Austria, wife of Louis XIII. When he learned of this, Brother Fiacre felt impelled, in gratitude, to pray to the Virgin Mary so that the queen, who had been married for many years, could give a prince to France.

One evening in the year 1637, while the friar was in prayer, he heard crying and saw the Blessed Virgin holding a small child in her arms. Brother Fiacre thought it was Jesus and fell on his knees before him. But Mary revealed to him that this child was not her son, but «the child that God wanted to give to France.» She asked him to warn the Queen, and to make three novenas for her: one to Notre-Dame de Paris, one to Notre-Dame de Cotignac and one to Notre-Dame des Victoires.

The Queen was informed of the apparitions and messages of the Blessed Virgin to Brother Fiacre. On November 9, 1637, Brother Fiacre began three novenas, which ended on December 5, 1637. On September 5, 1638, the future Louis XIV was born.

Louis XIII, in thanksgiving, consecrated France to Mary on February 10, 1638.

## The Victories of ND des Victoires

More than 37,000 ex-votos cover the walls of the basilica: they bear witness to the countless graces received in this place, yesterday and today. These marble plaques were, in fact, placed by people who prayed here, were answered, and came to thank for the graces received: births, success in a competition, healings, conversions... Mary's victories are numerous and continue to this day, as evidenced by the fact that even today ex-votos are still in her name.

Stained-glass windows were also offered in thanksgiving, as well as bronze and silver hearts. Since 1843, medals and military objects, tributes to our soldiers and testimonies of gratitude, have been regularly offered and placed in display cases near the statue of Our Lady of Victories. Not to mention the novenas, candles and flowers

laid every day by pilgrims from all over the world or regular faithful. These simple and moving signs have been accumulating for a century and a half, and transform the site into a living witness to God's love and mercy through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Victories.

Behind each of these particular victories, it is the good news of the victory of Good over Evil that is announced to us here and as evidenced by the stained-glass window above the statue of Our Lady of Victories. On it we see the Child Jesus in the arms of his Mother who is crowned by the angels - with a real golden crown - while Satan sees his false crown - grey (bottom left of the window) - falling from his head.

May Our Lady of Victories give us this confidence in the victory of Good, and help us to always respond to Evil with Good!

## Saints Louis and Zélie Martin

In the history of saints, Louis and Zélie Martin are the first spouses to be canonized together. Their holiness was formed on a daily basis; they lived it in heroic fidelity and perseverance, with one another and through each other, putting God in the first place in their lives.

Both were very attached to the Basilica of Our Lady of Victories. A watchmaking student in Paris, Louis confided in her, coming assiduously to the basilica. Later, in 1863, he wrote to Zélie: «I had the happiness of receiving communion at Notre-Dame des Victoires, which is like a little earthly paradise. I also had a candle burned for the whole family. (CF 2 bis). Zélie also confides in Notre-Dame des Victoires, especially since her parish, the church of Saint Léonard in Alençon, has a large statue of her.

This is why, when little Thérèse fell seriously ill at the age of 9, it was to Notre-Dame des Victoires that he wrote to have masses said for the healing of his daughter. During the novena of masses, the Virgin appeared to Thérèse and healed her, to which she testifies in her manuscripts: «A miracle was needed and it was Our Lady of Victories who did it. (Ms A, 30r°) ». So, she came to thank the Virgin for her healing when she came to Paris on November 4, 1887, before going to Rome.

From father to daughter, in joys and sorrows, Notre-Dame des Victoires has watched over the Martin family. A Thérèse high place, the basilica is now also a place of pilgrimage following in the footsteps of the holy spouses and parents of little Thérèse. A chapel is dedicated to them, in which they can be prayed to and venerated, for their relics are inserted in the altar of the chapel. As she accompanied them, Our Lady of Victories will know how to accompany all those who entrust themselves to their intercession.

# The impossible Victories

Jesus looked at them and said, «It is impossible for men, but for God all things are possible.» (Mt 19:26)

Job turned to the Lord and said, «I know that you can do all things, and that no plan for you is impossible... In fact, I have spoken, without understanding them, of wonders beyond my reach, of which I knew nothing... It was by hearsay that I knew you, but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore I retract and repent over dust and ashes.” (Job 42:1-6)



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