

Joan of Arc, ‘God’s Help’ -French Pilgrimage-Stay in Monasteries- June 16-June 26, 2016



“When I was thirteen, I had a voice from God to help me govern my conduct... and rarely do I hear it without a great light... He told me that I, Joan, should come into France... He taught me to behave rightly, and go often to church... and before all things he told me to be a good child and that God would help me...and that I should believe in what they (Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine) would tell me, for it was God’s command.”
Joan of Arc, Trial of Condemnation, Thursday, February 22, 1431

Joan of Arc, 'God's Help'

-French Pilgrimage-

June 16-June 26, 2016

DESTINATIONS: Bauffremont, Bermont, la Chapelle de Beauregard, Bonsecours, Chartres, Domrémy-la-Pucelle, Fort des Tourelles site, Jargeau, Maxey-sur-Meuse, Orléans, le Pont Boieldieu, Reims, Rouen, Saint-Benoit-sur-Loire, Saint-Jacques-sur-Darnétal, Vaucouleurs, Vouthon-Bas

God willing, in June 2016 we will again lead a pilgrimage to France, with the spirituality and footsteps of Joan of Arc foremost in our plans. This will be our tenth opportunity for taking a group on this fascinating journey. Our travel philosophy remains the same as before. One of going back to the essentials, of simplicity, of 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. Consequently, we will again purposely remain a small group. Too many people would impact this basic philosophy we wish to follow. Before going to the itinerary, let's take a quick glance at Joan of Arc. Did you know ...

- She is 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.*"

- At 17 years old, she remains the youngest supreme military commander in history, male or female. Louis Kossuth says: "*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. He was widely honored during his lifetime, including in the United Kingdom and the United States, as a freedom fighter and bellwether of democracy in Europe.

- 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. For example: "*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

- Even at the stake, she was heard asking for the forgiveness of those who were 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
- Her very specific and consistently fulfilled prophecies 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%.
- She has many parallels and similarities with the saints/prophets of the Bible.
- The church burned 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 France's Patron saint and her legacy to both France and the world run deep.

How did this seventeen-year-old illiterate French peasant girl save France from English domination? After all, as you might imagine, woman's rights were not exactly in the forefront during the 15th century. For Joan, the answer was always simple: God. 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 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 as she always said: God. God's help was given to her in abundance. And through this, France was saved...

Itinerary

Each day we will gather for some combination of the following: prayers/meditation, info on activities of the day, addressing questions, *Question du Jour* discussions... This time shared together has been one of the highlights for many who have come with us. Having said that...

June 16-26, 2016, Rouen: We will all meet at Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris on Thursday, June 16, 2016, between 11:00am-1:00pm. This has worked very well for past pilgrimages. This way, 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 to be able to be more 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.

As in 2015, we will again use a 'flashback' approach with our travels. From death to life. We will begin at the end: Rouen where Joan was burned at the stake. And then we'll work our way backwards in time. We've tried a few different ways of doing the pilgrimage, and have been most pleased with this approach. Consequently, upon departure from the airport, we will immediately go to Joan's final earthly resting place: *Rouen*.

Upon our arrival at *Rouen*, we will visit la *Basilique de Notre-Dame de Bonsecours*. It has been a pilgrimage site for centuries. They have the largest commemorative monument to Joan of Arc in France. This impressive monument sits on a granite terrace overlooking Rouen and the Seine valley, providing an unparalleled view of the city. And the Basilique is also exceptionally beautiful, both inside and out. These provide an excellent way to begin the pilgrimage.

After this, we will head to our resting place for two evenings: "*La Compassion*" *Centre Mambre*. This monastery, run by the Sisters of Compassion, is lovely. Located up in the hills, outside of the city of Rouen, it provides a quite atmosphere with the sounds of birds and lambs drifting through the air. It will be a relaxing environment, especially for those who've just arrived from a long flight. You may attend a service of the sisters here if you like. Each service lasts about 20 minutes. By the end of the pilgrimage, you will have experienced four different spiritual communities. They are all very different, but each one is dynamic and joyful in its own way.



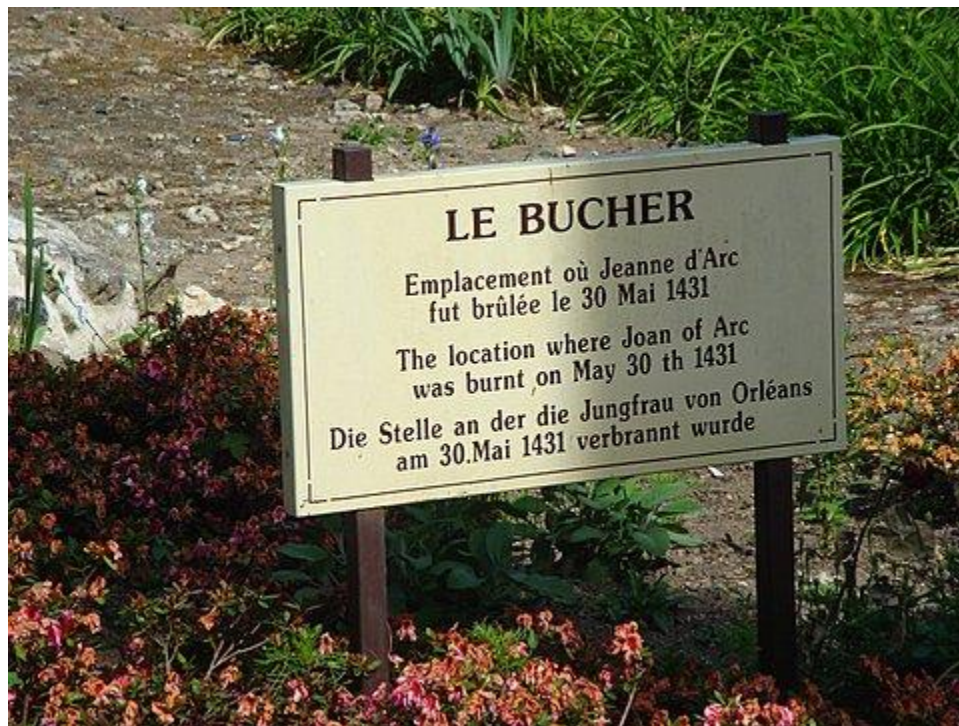
"La Compassion" Centre Mambre-Monastery outside of Rouen

We'll spend most of the next day in Rouen. To steer us along on this part of the pilgrimage, we are fortunate to have one of the best professional guides we've seen: Jacqueline Prevost. She is a great admirer and student of Joan of Arc, a lifelong resident of Rouen, and speaks good English. She will accompany us to *l'Eglise Sainte Ouen* (where her adjuration took place), *la Place du Vieux Marche* (where she was burned at the stake), and the Saint Joan of Arc Church (*l'Eglise Sainte Jeanne d'Arc*) that was built there in her honor. And we've added one more noteworthy stop: *L'Historial Jeanne d'Arc*.

This brand new state of the art interactive museum just opened in March, 2015. It is housed in the *Palais de l'Archevêche*, where Joan's actual trials took place. A massive construction project has restored the heritage-listed building to its former glory, carefully preserving historic details like the Roman crypt (the oldest part of the building), the soaring gothic archways, and the 15th century kitchens with original fireplaces. On a behind-the-scenes tour of the *travaux* last fall, *France Today* was impressed by the painstaking work of the artisanal craftsmen. To install the heating, individual tiles were carefully removed from the floors, and then replaced in the exact order. And the views from the *grenier* (the attic), over the Rouen rooftops, are mesmerizing.

The museum's scenography is enhanced by cutting-edge technology, lighting, and well-done, short films examining Joan's life. It is quite impressive, and presents Joan's story from a historical point of view, following the trial transcripts and using state of the art multimedia presentation tools. It sheds light on every aspect of Joan of Arc: her real life, the political and religious context, the historiography, and the idea of story-telling itself. Everyone in our group was as impressed as we were, and felt that *L'Historial Jeanne d'Arc* provided an excellent introduction to Joan's story, and especially the trial in Rouen.

After this, we will proceed to the old market place where Joan was burned at the stake. This old city square is very evocative, and it's not difficult to imagine even today what Joan suffered there.



Where Joan was burned at the stake.

It is fitting that we'll end this day at *le Pont Boieldieu*, where after the stake her remains were tossed from this bridge into the Seine River on May 31, 1431. However, they could not destroy her heart. Neither literally, nor figuratively. Once dead, the executioner was asked to destroy every part of her body that might remain. To his great surprise, he found Joan's heart still intact, and filled with liquid blood. During the Trial of Nullification, Friar Isambart testified to what the executioner had revealed to him about this: “...*despite the oil, the sulfur, and the carbon that he had applied to the entrails and the heart of Joan, he still could not make them burn in any way, nor could he reduce her entrails and her heart to ashes, at which he was as astonished as if by a confirmed miracle.*”

The head priest of *l'Eglise Sainte Jeanne d'Arc*, Pere Potel, is a delight, and speaks fluent English, having lived in the states for 2 years. We will have him with us for dinner at the monastery this evening, where he'll gladly answer any questions you may have.



St Ouen, Rouen-where Joan's adjuration took place.

June 18-21, 2016, 'Base Orléans', via Chartres. Leaving Rouen we will head towards *Orléans*, scene of Joan's history-changing battle. But on the way, we'll make one important stop: the famous cathedral of *Chartres*. Since it lies directly on our way, we cannot in good conscience pass it by. It is certainly one of the most beautiful cathedrals in France, known the world over for its exceptional blue stained glass windows. The majority of these stained glass windows are the originals from the 13th-14th centuries. It is a miracle that they survived World War II. Joan of Arc's mother, *Isabelle Romée* (1377–1458) would have seen these very windows while there. The architecture has seen only minor changes since the early 13th century. All in all, it is in an exceptional state of preservation, is considered one of the finest examples of French Gothic architecture and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

BTW, something has been going on there that is definitely worth mentioning. That is the dramatic changes coming from the restoration of the Cathedral. Of all the French cathedrals, Chartres is no doubt one whose original

décor, be it the sculptures or stained-glass windows, is the best preserved. Less known, however, is that 80% of the 13th century plaster has survived under the built-up dirt and successive centuries of paint. The restoration that had been so badly needed for such a long time, was begun in 2009, and is practically finished today. The goal was to simply recover the monument's initial look without redoing anything, simply cleaning it, a very high tech and complicated process. The result is frankly amazing.

The stained-glass windows, having also been under restoration at the same time, are even more luminous in these new surroundings. The color of the walls thus changes from a blackish hue to a beautiful ochre shade with white fake grouting, the architectural ribbing also covered in white, while the keystones are polychromatic (the date of these colors is not known but it has been carefully preserved). Two gaps have been left in place as proofs showing the extent of the difference.

Since at least the 12th century the cathedral has been an important destination for travelers – and remains so to this day, attracting large numbers of Christian pilgrims, many who come to venerate its famous relic, the *Sancta Camisa*, said to be the tunic worn by the Virgin Mary at Christ's birth. And large numbers of secular tourists also come to admire the cathedral's architecture and historical merit.



Chartres Cathedral.

After our visit at Chartres, we will continue to *Orléans*, where in a nearby small town, we'll check in to our home for the next 3 days: the world-renowned Benedictine monastery *St-Benoit-sur-Loire*. It is located on the Loire River, and will be a welcome respite from the 'big city' of *Orléans*. It has been nearly ten years since we brought a group of pilgrims to stay there, and we are thankful that these Benedictine monks have again agreed to welcome us. It is a privilege, as they don't accept everybody.



The ancient Benedictine Monastery of *St-Benoit-sur-Loire*
(i.e *St. Benedict on the Loire River*)

This still active monastery was founded around 630 AD, and is one of the oldest abbeys of the Benedictine rule. Saint Benedict (c. 480 – 547AD) is honored by the Catholic Church and the Anglican Church as the patron saint of all of Europe and 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 the way to Reims for his

anointing and coronation, came peacefully through on June 21-22, 1429. The French Revolutionaries of the 18th century, on the other hand, passed through St Benoit pillaging and destroying.

Today a community of approximately 40 monks resides within its walls. They still follow the Rule of St Benedict, and sing Gregorian chants during some of their short services, one of which we plan to attend. You may participate in prayer services with them if you like. There are 6 different services each day, some very short (as short as 15 minutes), and also longer ones (as long as 75 minutes). Sometimes they sing the psalms, and sometimes the very old Gregorian chants. In any case, your singing along is optional!



Benedictine monks singing Psalms during a short service at St-Benoit-sur-Loire

The rooms there are very nice, providing all the necessary essentials, but as with most monasteries, purposely simple. We won't be surrounded by material luxury, but rather the luxury of things we may have forgotten. Such as simplicity, peaceful surroundings, some silence ... And their wonderful eleventh century abbey church, built in the Romanesque style, is always just steps away.

While in Orleans we will take some of our meals here. The food will be simple, healthy and tasty; French style.



Heading to the Loire River, a couple minutes from St Benoit monastery.

St Benoit will mark the half-way point of the pilgrimage, and although we'll be busy, St Benoit provides the perfect place for a little down time. There'll be a little time to relax and enjoy the small town atmosphere; check out the post office or a café, plug in to WiFi, take a river walk ...

BTW, if you speak some French, your experience in France will of course take on an added dimension. However if you don't, this is 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).

Day-trip destinations while in Orleans include:

-the great *Cathédrale Sainte-Croix d'Orléans* (i.e. Cathedral of the Holy Cross of Orleans). Immediately after the battle of Orleans was over, Joan went here to give thanks to God for His great victory over the English. For the last few years Pere Girault (the rector, or head priest), and his assistant Dominique, have been very kind in giving us a private tour of the Cathedral. This year, i.e. in 2015, he sent his assistant to take us up to the roofs and then to the very foundations of the Cathedrale. These are things that most people never get a chance to see. After

Mass we were served a wonderful lunch. We are hopeful they'll be able to do the same for us in 2016.



Cathédrale Sainte-Croix d'Orléans

-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 to see where it once stood. It's not difficult to imagine what once was from this viewpoint. This is another interesting and appreciative site we've added to the pilgrimage recently.

-the *Château de Sully-sur-Loire* is a fairy-tale like castle. Joan spent a couple of months here prior to being captured. Weather and circumstances permitting, we will have a French picnic lunch on the Loire River, overlooking this beautiful castle. It's truly a site to behold. You'll also be able to explore the castle on your own. Once we arrive in Domremy, you will meet the Prince and Princess of Bauffremont, whose family owned this castle for many years. They remember going there during the summers to play. Not your typical 'Romper Room'.



Picnic area at Sully-sur-Loire

-*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 was the first sustained French offensive in a generation. Le Duc d'Alençon, Joan's friend and a commanding officer 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 (it split in two against her helmet as she climbed 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.



Along the lovely and historic Loire River

D'Alencon 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 which was in the town, 'will kill you'. I withdrew and just a little time thereafter, 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."*

June 21-24, 2016, 'Base Domrémy-la-Pucelle': There are some great reasons to spend time in Joan of Arc's birthplace, *Domrémy-la-Pucelle* (meaning Domremy the Maid). For one, it is located in a rural and beautiful part of France. This area is a good example of *'la France profonde'*. This means 'the deep France', i.e. the lovely pastoral countryside that few tourists ever see, much less experience. Also, *Domrémy-la-Pucelle* 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. In the past, they have been very generous to us with their time, expertise and warm hospitality. We will take advantage of this again in 2016.



From the small village of Domremy:
in the distance is the Basilica dedicated there to Joan of Arc.



A couple of kilometers from Joan's home town of *Domrémy-la-Pucelle* (i.e. Domrémy the Maid)

We'll have a guided visit of Joan of Arc's house. We'll also spend some time at the Basilica dedicated to her, the Fairy Tree location (the tree is no longer there, being cut down in the 17th century) and the "Fountain of the Fevers", where Joan stated she often heard her "voices". A small fountain still flows there, and is to this day very calming and pastoral.



Across the valley we see the Joan's Basilica, just outside of Domrémy.



At the location of the Fairy Tree and the "Fountain of the Fevers"

You'll also have some time to explore on your own and visit her childhood church St. Remy, where she stated St. Margaret appeared to her. It still serves as the village church to this day.

We have rented *gites* here (i.e. fully furnished houses). Actually, there are only three *gites* located in *Domrémy* itself, and we have rented them all. They are on the grounds of a large two-story house that was built by *Napoléon III* for one of his mistresses in 1860. These *gites* are very nice, with lovely large gardens in the back yard. It is a two-minute walk from there to Joan's house. They have fully furnished kitchens, microwaves, TVs, DVD players, washing machines...it will be a place where you can relax and feel at home. In general, *gites* provide a marked improvement over a hotel.

A little about French food is in order here. The French are of course known for their excellent food and wine. And for good reason. 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 2-3 hours. It's a nice way to relax, eat well and enjoy each other's company. While in *Domrémy*, we will be spending some of our meal times in such an atmosphere at *l'Accueil du Pèlerin* (i.e. 'The Pilgrim's Welcome'). It is a restaurant out in the countryside, on a hillside (a beautiful view!), just next to the Basilica erected in honor of Joan, and a stone's throw to where the Fairy Tree

stood. It is run by the Sisters called *les Travailleuses Missionnaires* (the Working Missionaries). They create a joyful atmosphere to go along with their excellent cuisine. Their lovely singing at the end of the meals has been greatly appreciated by all who have come with us.

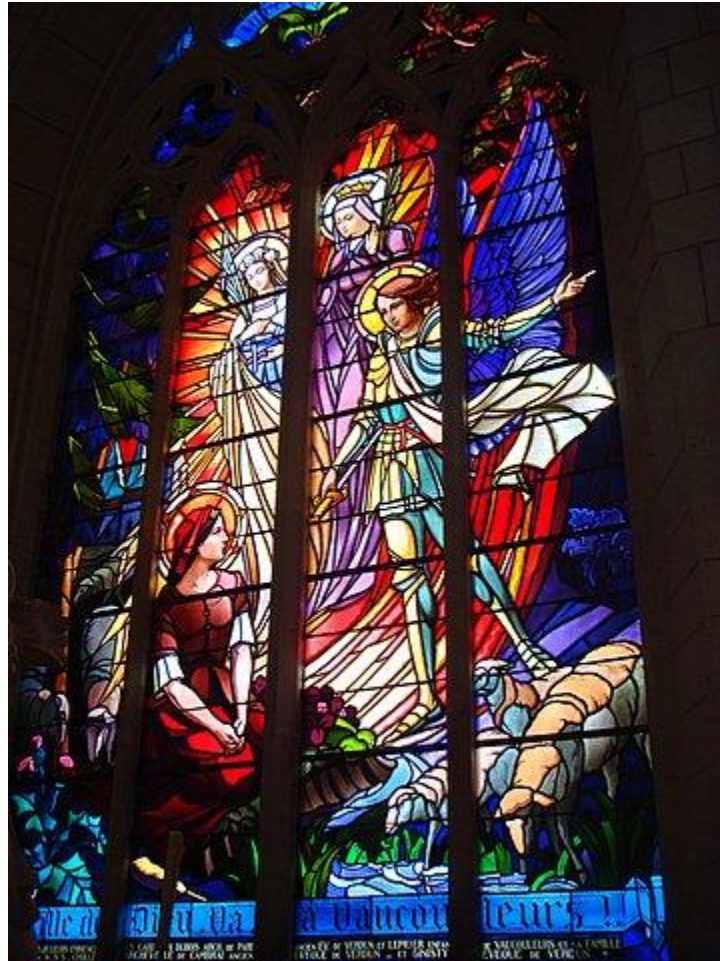
However, *ATTENTION!* (WATCH OUT!) If you have two full meals in a restaurant per day, and a *petit dejeuner* (breakfast), your day will be reduced by some 4-7 hours just sitting in a restaurant. We feel there are too many other interesting and important things to take advantage of in France besides 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 the menus with these specialists for times such as these, and arranged for them to deliver to us. This way, we believe we will have the best of both worlds: good fresh French food, and the flexibility of eating at home, perhaps a picnic, etc. We'd like to note here that unlike the vast majority of tours, most of the meals (i.e. 82% of all meals) are covered in the price.

Included in our day trips from *Domrémy* are: *la Chapelle de Notre-Dame de Beauregard*, *Maxey-sur-Meuse*, *Vaucouleurs*, *la Chapelle de Bermont*, *Vouthon-Bas* and *Bauffremont*. Just a word on each of these destinations:

Vaucouleurs-After first convincing the Captain of Vaucouleurs that she was God-sent, Joan was sent from this small town to see Charles VII, the legitimate king. We will have a good guide here, one very knowledgeable about Vaucouleurs' Joan of Arc history. Among other things, we'll visit *la Porte de France* through which Joan left on her way to see the King, and the chapel where Joan was often praying (we even know exactly where she was kneeling).



Overlooking Vaucouleurs



Inside the small chapel of old Vaucouleurs

La Chapelle de Bermont-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. Mr. Olivier is the President of the Association of Bermont. He will be there to greet us and explain (we'll be translating) the fascinating story of *Bermont*, and the images they have recently uncovered there. These images have been dated to shortly after the death of Joan and the belief is (for very good reasons, we think) that these are actually drawings of Joan of Arc by those who knew her at that time: the monks of the *Chapelle de Bermont*.



La Chapelle de Bermont

La Chapelle de Beauregard- This literally means ‘the Chapel of the Beautiful View’! Overlooking the Valley of the Meuse River, this site is well deserving of its name. For centuries sitting in the heart of a hillside wooded area, it still remains a harbor of peace today. This Celtic chapel has been frequented since the 13th century. When *Geoffroy de Bourlemont* came back here safe and sound from his 7th crusade, he decided to build this beautiful small chapel on a plateau on a hill in this idea environment. It has just recently been restored. The residents here have always heard the stories, passed down from generation to generation, about how this was a dear place to Joan of Arc, who came here often to pray. On the way, we’ll pass through the small neighboring village, *Maxey-sur-Meuse*. Maxey, a small charming village now, was Burgundian during Joan’s time, and the Domremy children often had neighborhood scuffles with the Maxey kids.



La Chapelle de Beauregard

Bauffremont-The sumptuous meal at *Bauffremont*, and wonderful people we have shared it with, have certainly been a highlight for many of our former pilgrims. The ruins of their castle sits on a hillside, overlooking a large beautiful valley, full of history. The Prince and Princess of *Bauffremont* are indeed a real Prince and Princess. However, even though descendants of royalty, they are both very kind and down to earth.



The highways and byways of Bauffremont

Their family history is amazing. Here are just three examples:

- 1) One of Joan of Arc's godmothers comes from their family.
- 2) As mentioned above, *Le Château de Sully-sur-Loire*, (where we will picnic in Orleans), was owned by their family for many years. The maternal

grandmother of the Prince was the last descendant of the Counts/Lords of Sully, and eventually sold the castle to the town of *Sully-sur-Loire*.



On the way up to Bauffremont castle...

3) The Shroud of Turin was located at their castle during 1412-1413. That means that it was there on the day Joan was born in 1412!

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 outside of the village.

June 24-25, 2015-'Base' St Thierry-Reims-For our last Joan of Arc stop, we come to the climax of her carrier: the anointing and crowning of Charles VII in the *Cathedrale de Reims*. Crowning him would not be enough. Under the French medieval theory of succession, a king had to also be anointed by God before he could truly become King. Finally at Reims, Joan told him, "*Noble King, now is accomplished the will of God who desired...that I should bring you to this city of Reims to receive your holy anointing.*" France is well known for its many inspiring cathedrals, churches and basilicas, but this one is exceptional. At the *Cathedrale de Reims*, beauty abounds through both broad strokes and delicate touches. See some examples below ...














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While at Reims, our place of rest will be the beautiful Benedictine monastery, *Les Benedictines de St-Thierry*. It is located in the countryside, in the middle of Champagne country, just outside the city of *Reims* (Rheims in English). It is a very relaxing environment. Monks or nuns have lived in this peaceful place since the 6th century. The sister's gardens (they grow their own fruit and flowers) overlook the surrounding vineyards and countryside, extending all the way to city of Reims and its famous cathedral, some eight kilometers away. Beautiful!

The Benedictine Sisters are a very hospitable community. They will serve us our meals while in Reims (the food is simple here, healthy and typically French). For those interested, you may attend some of the Sister's prayer services, and/or hear their soothing singing, in their 12th century chapel. Also for those interested, we will be meeting with one of the sisters, who will talk a little about their community life of prayer, hospitality and work, and answer any questions you may have.



From our rooms, overlooking a small part of the St. Thierry monastery grounds..



Overlooking part of the sister's gardens at St. Thierry.

Next page: We're in champagne country now. From St. Thierry's  
Monastery-vineyards for miles and miles ...









A sister speaks to us about their monastic life at St Thierry.

**June 25-26, 2016, Paris-CDG airport:** We'll spend our last night near Paris, in a hotel next to Charles de Gaulle airport. Here we'll have our farewell dinner on June 25, after which the pilgrimage draws officially to a close.

Next morning however, 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. Or 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.

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FYI, on all of 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, not one 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 the pilgrimage.

-Your travel hosts, guides, translators, and fellow pilgrims are Chris Snidow and Catherine Henon-Snidow.

1. Catherine Henon-Snidow: Born in Valenciennes, France. A social worker in France, she met Chris at Taize, France. She later moved to the USA where they married, and became a Registered Nurse. She is currently teaching Nursing Aide students in Dallas. Speaks French and English fluently, and some German. She loves among other things, sharing a good meal with friends, gardening, walking, bicycle rides and reading.

2. Chris Snidow: Born in W. Virginia. Played drums, guitar and piano in bands in Texas, California, France, Holland, and Northern Africa. Composer-producer of several critically acclaimed CDs. One of the more recent CDs (*Jeanne d'Arc, Prophetie et le Dieu de la Bible, i.e. Joan of Arc, Prophecy and the God of the Bible*), comes from the 2007 Sound and Light show performed in the Basilica dedicated to Joan of Arc in Domremy. A DVD slide show (images, text, music and sound) also resulted from this performance. A book entitled: Joan of Arc and the God of the Bible, was released in 2006, then in French in 2009. An updated edition, Joan of Arc and the God of the Bible-Revised and Expanded Edition followed in 2013. In 2015, the most updated version yet was released: The Witch That Wasn't. Currently a Registered Nurse. Speaks English and French fluently, and some Dutch.

They have led nine previous pilgrimages to France: in 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, two in 2012, 2014 and 2015. They are active members of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, TX .

Please feel free to contact us for questions at:

Chris and Catherine Snidow  
[cowrind@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cowrind@sbcglobal.net)  
Telephone: 214-327-4579  
[www.pilgrimwitnesses.com](http://www.pilgrimwitnesses.com)

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FYI, we are glad to announce that for the third year in a row there has been no 'cost of living' price increase for the pilgrimage. The 2016 price remains the same as 2014 and 2015.

## **-Joan of Arc, 'God's Messenger'- French Pilgrimage, June 16-June 26, 2016**

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS:** Price: \$3,749.00

Payment, refunds and cancellation fees: A \$350.00 per person deposit is required for registration. Full payment, including single room supplements if applicable, is due postmarked no later than March 1, 2016. If full payment is made later than March 1, 2016, 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. 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 \$514.00, which provides single room accommodations throughout the pilgrimage. A \$50.00 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 14, 2016. 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, 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 1, 2016-April 3, 2016 then you forfeit 25% of total cost of the trip price.

From April 4, 2016-April 18, 2016 then you forfeit 50% of total cost of the trip price.

From April 19, 2016-May 1, 2016 then you forfeit 75% of total cost of the trip price.

From May 2, 2016-July 1, 2016 then you forfeit 100% of total cost of the trip price.



## **WHAT IS INCLUDED ON THIS TRIP:**

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

a) Air fare or other transportation expenses to or from Paris, France not included.

b) Participants are completely responsible for meeting group at Charles de Gaulle airport on June 16, 2016, between 11-1pm, 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 all 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 and mental alertness, and a capacity for accepting situations as they exist and not, necessarily, as we would 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 any type of 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 do not assume any responsibility for loss or damage to baggage or passengers' belongings.

-Chris Snidow and Catherine Henon reserve the right to decline to accept any person as a member of the tour/pilgrimage, or 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's reasonable accommodations.

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

**CONTRACT AGREEMENT**  
**Joan of Arc, 'God's Messenger'**  
**French Pilgrimage of June 16-June 26, 2016**

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.

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.**

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**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 THERETO.**

**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 11 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, ‘God’s Messenger’: French Pilgrimage of June 16-June 26, 2016. This agreement shall be interpreted in accordance with the law of the State of Texas, and is permanently binding.

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



**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** (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: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**HOLD HARMLESS**

I agree to INDEMNIFY AND HOLD CHRISTIAN C SNIDOW AND CATHERINE M. HENON HARMLESS with respect to any claim made against 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 this 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.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Adult Guest Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Adult Guest 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 is \$38.17 for primary, and \$54.89 for a couple. And so forth, up to \$1,000,000 coverage.

FYI, 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 long distance at: 1-800-880-0414. Her name is Eloise Chapman, of The Chapman Group ([www.chapmangroup.com](http://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 some kind of verification from you in writing once you have purchased your insurance.

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 coverage. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

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

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



MAIL TO:

Chris Snidow and Catherine Henon  
9320 Biscayne Blvd.  
Dallas, Texas 75218