

Notre Dame du Spasme Basilica



Sanctuary of Notre-Dame du Spasme, erected in Basilica on June 15th 1959.

Located 600 meters south-east of the village, near the Ognon river, lies a chapel dedicated to Notre Dame du Spasme and named until recently Notre Dame des Palmes. This chapel is a place of pilgrimage during Christmas and the day of The Assumption.

The statue of the Black Virgin is venerated at least since the 14th century.

This Virgin is venerated all over the Minervois region and is only honored in La Livinière and in Jerusalem at the 4th station.

The local tradition talks of the great devotion to the Saint Virgin by the noble La Jugie family who used to live in La Livinière at the end of the 14th century. Nicolas de la Jugie would have built the chapel to host the Black Virgin originally from Jerusalem, and that Pope Clément VI, his uncle, would have given to Jacques de la Jugie, his father, to thank him for his services at the Pope's Court when he was ambassador.

What is certain is that the sanctuary is, after Jerusalem, the only one in France and maybe in the entire Catholic world, that proclaims the Word of Notre-Dame du Spasme.

The origins of the pilgrimage are the statue of a stone Virgin, found sitting on top of boulders, taken 3 times to the village church, and found 3 times back to its original spot where an oratory was finally erected. This primitive oratory has now completely disappeared. The statue represents the failing Virgin. The face shows a naive and touching expression. On the shoulders of the statue, one can see two hands belonging to a second person that seem to support the Virgin during the Assumption.

Children, the sick and the sinners are the favorites of the Virgin.



St-Etienne Church



The current appearance of this church dedicated to Saint-Stephen dates back to the 14th century, perhaps built on the ruins of a 13th century church. Today we can easily decipher the 14th century addition superimposed onto the remains of the previous roman style church.

Inside, you will find 5 chapels, including 4 erected in the 14th century. One of them, first dedicated to St-Blaise, was ordered built in 1352 by Nicolas de la Jugie who was related to the Narbonne archbishop Pierre de La Jugie. The 5th chapel, opened later, sits at the bottom of the bell tower. The bell tower, a massive square tower which bottom half dates back to the middle ages, is located to the north of the beginning of the apse.

The 2 superior stories, opened with arcades and housing the bells, are covered by a dome built in the 17th century and flanked with four marble spheres.

The nave and chapels are covered with flat stones which have acquired a black patina over the years.

The heart of the church, higher, has a modern roof.

