



WELCOME KIDS TO NOTRE-DAME-DU-LAC CHURCH!

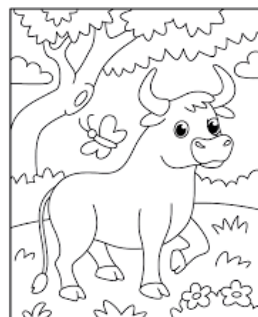


Hello kids! Today we're going to explore the Notre-Dame-du-Lac church, located in the town of Le Thor.

The History of Our Lady of the Lake

Built in 1180, over 900 years ago, in the Middle Ages (12th century), Notre-Dame-du-Lac ("Notre-Dame-Neuve") was built so that the inhabitants of Le Thor would have a place to pray and gather.

Imagine the people who worked hard to build this great church with their hands and simple tools.



Legend says that the name of the church comes from a statue of the Virgin miraculously found in a lake, thanks to a bull who discovered it with its hooves!

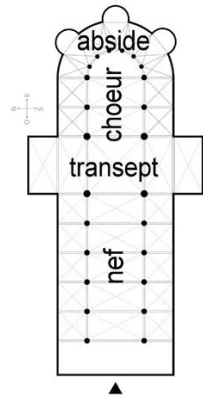
The villagers decided to build a church on this site to honor this fantastic discovery. Moreover, the Thor's motto is: *Taurum Stella Ducit* (**the star leads the bull**).



The Architecture of the Church

This church is a perfect example of Provençal Romanesque art, an ancient style where everything is made of stone and very solid! Its dimensions are surprising for a small town like Le Thor: 35 m long and 10 m wide.

The church has the shape of a cross because it recalls the cross of Jesus.



The bell tower remained unfinished for a long time and received a lantern (a small lantern placed at the top of a dome or cupola to light and ventilate a building from above) in 1834.

The church has been listed as a Historic Monument since 1840.



Inside the church

The interior of the church is very beautiful. There are large windows called stained glass, which are like glass paintings. They let in sunlight and create beautiful colored patterns on the floor. The stained glass windows often tell stories from the Bible and the life of Jesus.



Remarkable elements

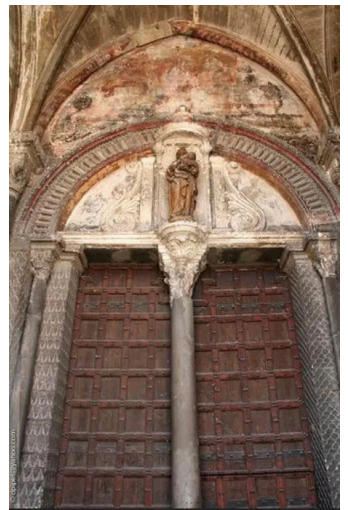
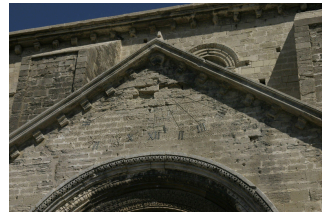
The church housed 11 wooden and gilded plaster statues from the 17th-18th centuries representing saints such as Saint Cecilia, Saint Roch, Saint Mark, Saint Dominic, etc. Now, only 5 statues remain because the others have disappeared.



In the choir, there is an altar in white marble, it is a table in front of which the priest celebrates mass and around which the community is assembled.



In front of the porch, which resembles a triumphal arch, there is a sundial dating from 1641. Inside the porch, a copy of a Virgin (17th century) and Child (17th century) was installed in a niche, restored in 2024. On the walls, to the right and left, we can see motifs (between the interior and exterior of the church, more than 3,500 have been found) engraved in the stone, which represent the letter (the signature) of the taskers (Workers-Companions) who worked on the construction of the church.



And now, let's play a little quiz! After visiting the church, you answer the 10 questions *yes* or *no*.

- | | YES | NO |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) A church is usually in the shape of a cross. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2) Stained glass windows only serve to let in light. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3) The altar occupies the center of the choir; it is a table in front of which the priest celebrates mass. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4) The church has existed for over 900 years. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5) There are 100 signatures of laborers engraved in stone. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6) The church is modern in style. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7) According to legend, it was a donkey who discovered the Virgin in the lake. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8) There are 10 wooden and plaster statues left in the church. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9) The church was also called Notre-Dame-Neuve. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10) The church has no bell. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

