

17TH- 18TH CENTURY

PEAK - DECLINE OF PILGRIMAGE

The beginning of the century saw a record number of pilgrims and the most illustrious personalities

The pilgrim movement continued to grow.

All of them left traces of their generosity , and Sainte Baume was to experience one of its most glorious periods.

« Mary Magdalene had never been so popular. Never before had she been so widely depicted by artists. Images of the penitent at Sainte-Baume abound. »O.Dolenda extract from « *Mary Magdalene in the mysticism of arts and letters* »

Never before had there been such an influx of visitors. So many pilgrims from all over : Saints such as François de Sales, Vincent de Paul, Jeanne de Chantal, Kings such as Louis XIII (1622) Christine of Sweden (1658) And the most illustrious Louis XIV (1660).

The Duchess of La Tour d'Auvergne had the Saint-Pilon Chapel restored and decorated. It was built in 1630 by Esprit Blanc, Comptroller General of Provence.

But...

« The weakening of piety in France under the reign of Louis XV diminished the devotion to Mary Magdalene. She became increasingly rare among the nobility, although she never ceased to be venerated by the common people. Abbé Fayon extract from « *Unique monument to the apostolate of Mary Magdalene in Provence* ».

The revolution was brewing...The Saint-Baume was desecrated.

1789. The National Assembly orders the liquidation of religious houses. The Grotto was completely ransacked.

1793. To crush the counter-revolutionary movement in the South, Barras and Fréron decide to completely destroy the Sainte-Baume. It is now nothing more than a pile of ruins.

It is renamed « Thermopyles »

- 1 The Penance of Mary Magdalene by Guido Reni, 1635
- 2 Entrance of the Cave, engraving 17th century
- 3 Portrait of Prior Miachaelis originally from Saint-Zacharie National Library of France
- 4 Louis XIII
- 5 Louis XIV
- 6 Chapel of the Parisians
- 7 Inside the grotto. Lithography by M.Poize
- 8 Decapitated statues during the revolutionary period
- 9 Benoit Labre, « The beggar Pilgrim »
- 10 Sant John Baptis de la Salle Founder of the Christian Schools, who came in 1713.
Portrait by P. Léger
- 11 Saint Francis de la Salle, Founder of the Visitation Order