

Church of Saint Sulpice Empowerment



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Sulpitius the Pious was a seventh century bishop of Bourges. According to his *Life*, he was born at Vatan (Diocese of Bourges), of noble parents, before the end of the sixth century. Sulpitius devoted himself from his youth to good works and to the study of Holy Scripture.

Austregisilus, Bishop of Bourges, ordained Sulpitius as Cleric of his church, then Deacon, and finally made him Director of his Episcopal school. Clotaire II, King of the Franks, who had heard of his high reputation, summoned him and made him Chaplain of his armies. But, on the death of Bishop Austregisilus (c. 624 AD), Sulpitius was recalled to Bourges to take his place. In Bourges, he worked to re-establish ecclesiastical discipline and for the relief of the poor.

Towards the end of his life Sulpitius retired to a monastery which he had founded near Bourges. There he died in 646 AD on 17 January, which is his feast day. More is said about this date further down in the manual.

Soon after his death there were reports of miracles at his tomb in the monastery church he had ordered to be built. This church became a place of pilgrimage.

In his honour the great church of Saint Sulpice was built in Paris.

Saint Sulpice is built on the east side of the Place Saint Sulpice, in the Luxembourg Quarter of the Sixth Arrondissement, It is only slightly smaller than the Cathedral of Notre-Dame and thus the second largest church in Paris. During the 18th century, an elaborate gnomon, the Gnomon of Saint Sulpice, was constructed in the church (see further below).

The present church is the second building on the site, erected over a Romanesque church originally constructed during the 13th century. Additions were made over the centuries, up to 1631.

The new building was founded in 1646 by parish priest Jean-Jacques Olier (1608-1657) who had established the Society of Saint Sulpice, a Catholic congregation, and a Seminary attached to the church. Olier had the church designed according to the Golden Mean of Sacred Geometry. There are claims that it was originally built on the foundations of a temple of Isis. There are also claims that, at Olier's direction, it was modelled on Solomon's Temple.

Olier was a forward-thinking priest who directed his teachings and personal wealth towards the poor. He also considerably raised the status of women within the church and is actually named in the strange esoteric work *Le Serpent Rouge* (The Red Serpent) - see further below.

Work on this magnificent building continued for about 140 years: The church was mostly completed by 1732. The overall harmony of the building is, some say, only marred by the two mismatched towers.

There were considerable Nineteenth-century redecorations to the interior, after some Revolutionary damage when Saint Sulpice temporarily became a *Temple of Victory*. These include the murals of Eugène Delacroix that adorn the walls of the side chapel. The most famous of these are *Jacob Wrestling with the Angel* and *Heliodorus Driven from the Temple*. There are claims that certain secrets and symbolism are contained within the murals. (See book by Robert Howells, cited below.)

The Marquis de Sade and Charles Baudelaire were baptized in Saint Sulpice (1740 and 1821, respectively), and the church also saw the marriage of Victor Hugo to Adèle Foucher (1822).

The church contains one of the world's finest and most famous organs, constructed by Aristide Cavallé-Coll in 1862, using many materials from the church's earlier French Classical organ built in 1781. The organ of Saint Sulpice was at the time of its building one of only three "100 stop" organs in all of Europe.

Its organists have also been renowned, including Charles-Marie Widor (organist 1870-1933) and Marcel Dupré (organist 1934-1971), both great organists and composers of organ music.

Thus for over a century (1870-1971), Saint Sulpice employed only two organists, and much credit is due to these two individuals for preserving the instrument and protecting it from the ravages of changes in taste and fashion which resulted in the destruction of many of Cavallé-Coll's other masterpieces

In Saint Sulpice Sunday organ recitals are held on a regular basis following morning High Mass

In 1727 Jean-Baptiste Languet de Gergy, then priest of Saint Sulpice, requested the construction of a gnomon in the church as part of its reconstruction, to help him determine the time of the equinoxes and hence of Easter. A meridian line of brass was inlaid across the floor and ascending a white marble obelisk, nearly eleven metres high, at the top of which is a sphere surmounted by a cross. The obelisk is dated 1743.

In the south transept window a small opening with a lens was set up, so that a ray of sunlight shines onto the brass line. At noon on the winter solstice (21 December), the ray of light touches the brass line on the obelisk. At noon on the equinoxes (21

March and 21 September), the ray touches an oval plate of copper in the floor near the altar.

Constructed by the English clock-maker and astronomer Henry Sully, the gnomon was also used for various scientific measurements. This rational use may have protected Saint Sulpice from being destroyed during the French Revolution. The line running through the Church is also known as the "Rose Line", the line of secrets and runs parallel to the Paris Meridian. The Rose is a symbol of secrets among Rosicrucians.

The library of Saint Sulpice became a repository for rare occult and esoteric books. In the 19th century in particular, this amazing library attracted many students of the esoteric, keen to consult, interpret and translate documents that were unavailable elsewhere.

These students included Eliphas Lévi, the celebrated occultist, author of *Transcendental Magic* and works on the Kaballah and the Tarot, who attended the seminary attached to the church

Saint Sulpice is also one of the locations featured in Dan Brown's novel *The Da Vinci Code* and the movie made from it.

References to the church of Saint Sulpice are found in the so-called *Dossiers Secrets* that were planted in the Bibliothèque Nationale in the 1960s. The documents are alleged to be records of a 900-year-old secret society called the Priory of Sion, closely associated with Saint Sulpice and also with the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene at Rennes-le-Château.

Serious researchers have concluded that the *Dossiers Secrets* were in fact forgeries created for the purpose of a surrealist hoax by Pierre Plantard, a French Pretender to the throne. As part of the story, Plantard alleged that the letters "P" and "S"

in the stained glass windows at one end of the church's transept are a reference to the Priory of Sion. The church authorities maintain that the initials SP refer to Saint Pierre and Saint Sulpice, who are the patron saints of this church.

The *Dossiers Secrets* also include a document titled *Le Serpent Rouge - Notes sur Saint-Germain-des-Prés et de Saint Sulpice de Paris*. This work consists of a series of thirteen prose poems, the meaning of which is obscure in the extreme. Even if the *Dossiers Secrets* are forgeries, the actual contents of *Le Serpent Rouge* should not be lightly dismissed. (Helpful information on *Le Serpent Rouge* can be found in the book by Robert Howells, cited below.)

The publication of Dan Brown's 2003 novel *The Da Vinci Code*, an international bestseller, brought crowds of tourists to Saint Sulpice. Particular attention was paid to the gnomon and the meridian line which some have associated with the Rose Line which passes near to Rennes-le-Château.

The Da Vinci Code alleges that the Church of Saint Sulpice was associated with the Priory of Sion, a shadowy organization guarding some secret, usually taken to be that the line of Merovingian kings survives into modern times. Further embellishment would make the Merovingians the descendants of Jesus and Mary Magdalene. It has also been suggested that the "Holy Blood" flowed in the veins of the Carolingian and the Hapsburg dynasties.

In Brown's novel, a villain comes to the church in search of the "keystone" that reveals the location of the Holy Grail. He locates a hollow space under the floor next to the gnomon and breaks a tile to obtain the keystone, but the stone he finds turns out to be a decoy created by the Priory of Sion.

In the years following the publication of the novel, tourists could sometimes be seen knocking on the floor near the obelisk, searching, in vain, for hollow spaces.

In 2005, the Catholic Church refused Ron Howard permission to film inside Saint Sulpice when he was making *The Da Vinci Code*. The scenes set in the church that appear in the finished movie were not shot on location. A computer-generated virtual set was used instead.

For a fascinating account of the significance of the date January 17, see the thoroughly researched book *Inside the Priory of Sion*, Robert Howells, (London, 2011).

As well as marking the death of Saint Sulpitius, it is also the feast day of Saint Rosaline, who has a connection with the mysterious area around Rennes-le-Château.

On that date, Saint Vincent de Paul, a close friend and associate of Jean-Jacques Olier (and possibly a fellow member of the Priory of Sion) founded the Daughters of Charity.

Father François Bérenger Saunière, who refurbished the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene at Rennes-le-Château in a lavish Freemasonic style and who is a key figure in the history of the Priory of Sion, died on that date in 1917.

Le Serpent Rouge was published on January 17, 1967.

Archduke Rudolph of Hapsburg is believed to have visited the Church in Rennes-le-Château on the same date in 1975.

It is believed that on that date, a mystical effect can be seen both in the Saint Sulpice and Saint Mary Magdalene by light

shining through blue glass in certain windows. The recent years, the blue glass has been removed from Saint Sulpice.

André de Blachefort, the last of the Templar Knights, died on January 17, 1156.

Everyone must make his or her own assessment of the evidence available. There is no doubt that there has been an element of hoaxing in many of the writings concerning the secrets of the Templars, the Holy Grail, the Priory of Sion and all that is associated therewith. However, it is not hard to believe that there are strong spiritual forces at work as well as some secrets which have not yet been divulged - and which may never see the light of day.

Please take from this empowerment what is appropriate for you. You are not required to sign up to any particular belief system or interpretation.

This Empowerment is of a reflective, inspirational and self-empowering nature. It does not constitute medical or psychological treatment and should be used with common sense.

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