University stories

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The abbey celebrates its 1500th anniversary

Saint-Maurice (Switzerland): its glacial lock (passage of the Rhône), its abbey, its bridge, its castle. **Album of 42 photos** .

1. The Abbey of Saint-Maurice d'Agaune is a territorial abbey located in the canton of Valais in Switzerland.

It celebrates its 1500 years . It was founded in **515** by the future Burgundian king Saint Sigismund on the site of an older sanctuary housing the remains of Maurice d'Agaune , a 3rd-century martyr, erected by Théodore d'Octodure , the first known bishop of Valais.

The city of Agaune has also taken its name… The abbey has played a major role in regional history and is today the oldest abbey in Western Europe in activity to have been permanently occupied. The first king of Transjurane Burgundy, Rodolphe , was crowned there.

Originally and until the 9th century, it was the ***laus perennis*** that applied. The monks were then replaced by canons who adopted the rule of Saint Augustine in 1128. Since then, the congregation of regular canons of Saint-Maurice d'Agaune has been in place in the abbey.

Saint-Maurice is one of the stages of the Via Francigena , a pilgrimage route leading to Rome. It is mentioned as such by Sigéric , in 990, with the mention *LI Sce Maurici* (stage number starting from Rome).
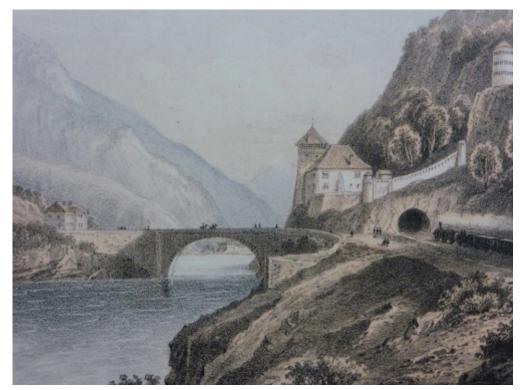
Recently, an old church was discovered in the basement of Saint-Maurice.

2. **Master the passage of the defile: the bridge and the castle** .

In **Roman times** , it was necessary to go as far as Massongex to reach the right bank of the Rhine thanks to a bridge (disappeared). 12th century: it seems that the passage was already fortified.

November 13, 1475 , Battle of La Planta (conquest of Lower Valais at the expense of the House of Savoy). The Valaisans consider the eastern head of the bridge as the limit of their property; there was an old arcade there, ideal for a defense post. **1476** . The bishop of Sion Walter Supersaxo (prince-bishop from 1457 to 1482) and the dizains of Haut-Valais take measures to ensure the defense of the passage, against the bourgeois of Bern.

A new bridge was built by order of Bishop Jodoc of Silinen and completed in 1523 by the most important Valais architect of the 16th century: Ulrich Huffiner . His appearance has not changed since then.

16th century . The construction of the fortress continued during the first half of the century. On the 1st floor of the tower, a chapel dedicated to Saint-Théodule, patron saint of Valais... Mid-16th century, Valère's triptych: vision of the procession, one of the very first representations of the château.

1693 . The castle is burning; it was rebuilt in 1697.

To be continued : The magic of the Western in Franco-Belgian comics , exhibition at the Château de Saint-Maurice.

Comments are closed.