

I suggest you go to the pond. Be careful, don't go near the edge. You can cross the small bridge and on the right, you will discover a **Christian labyrinth**. Go ahead, have fun. You can go through it...

Oh, another red flame! We're getting closer and further to it along the path!

11) What is special about a Christian labyrinth ?

- It has no hedges
- It has no walls
- It has one entrance, only one path, one centre and one exit

Now head over to the back of the park where you'll find boxwood trees shaped like balls.

12) How many of them do you count ?

Take the path back to the abbey along the river « la Berwinne » and stop near the bridge. There you will find a small bed of medicinal plants (plants used for healing) indicated by a sign. The Cistercians live by working the land. Therefore, they have large orchards, vegetable gardens and medicinal plant gardens.

13) Do you know the name of these plants ?

- A) (It's a cure for bronchitis on sale at the store)
- B) (It smells good and it's soothing)
- C) (We make herbal teas of it)



I leave you to carry on without me, the bell calls me for the next prayer!

Maybe you'll go to «Saint Bernard's Spring», the «Inspired Hill», or ...

Before you leave, don't forget to go to the shop to check if you found the right answers.

You will get a little surprise.

Thank you for your visit.



Welcome at Val-Dieu

ABBAYE – ABDIJ – ABTEI – ABBEY



Hello, my name is «Brother Bernard». Would you like me to show you my abbey and its park? Follow me and try to solve the riddles...

Here, you are in the courtyard of the abbey

The abbey was founded in 1216, when monks came to live here, next to the rivers «la Bel» and «la Berwinne». It was the border between two states that were at war.

1) How was the valley called before the monks came here ?

- The valley of the two rivers
- The valley of the devil
- The valley of the beavers

In 2001, the Cistercians entrusted the abbey to a new community of Christians. It is united with **the abbey of Lérins**, in France, near Cannes. The «**Christian Community of Val-Dieu**» lives and prays here. This community organizes activities and takes care of the maintenance of the buildings and gardens with the help of volunteers. Like the monks before them, the Christians here try to live according to the motto of the abbey: «IN VINCULO PACIS» which means «**in the bond of peace**».

2) This motto is represented by a symbol. Where you stand, I'm sure you can see it. Can you draw it ?

For me, these two rings are a sign of communion with God and my brothers. In this courtyard of the abbey, there used to be barns and stables for the animals. The Cistercians have traditionally always cultivated the land to sustain the whole community. Nowadays, you will find the abbey's shop, the restaurant and the brewery here.

The gatehouse

The **gatehouse** is the place where visitors are welcomed. Above the door, you can see four sculptures. In the centre, the Virgin Mary and her child, Jesus. They are surrounded by two saints who are the founders of the Cistercian Order.



3) Who are these two saints ?

A)

B)

The Virgin Mary is considered the mother of the Cistercians and you will often see her sculpture.

The guesthouse (the castle)


At the end of the main courtyard, behind the beautiful gates, you can find the abbey's guesthouse, also known as the castle. The abbots used to welcome their important guests there.

4) When was the guesthouse built ?

.....
All the abbots had their own coat of arms, a sort of sign of recognition of a person or a family.

5) Father Dubois had the guesthouse built. What does his coat of arms represent ?

- Three bears Three eagles Three trees

 Head towards the church through the «tunnel» called «arvô».

The church

The **welcome sign** tells you that you entered in a place of prayer and silence! Step forward to the church choir.

On your left, you will see the oldest treasure of Val-Dieu. It is the **sculpture** of a saint of great importance for the Cistercians.

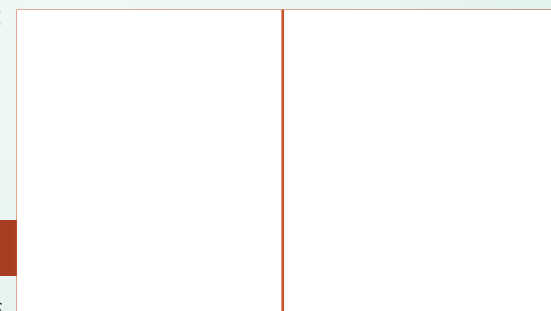


6) This statue represents :


- Saint Martin Saint Bernard Saint Jacques

.....
On August 20, 1946, our church received a distinction from Pope Pius XII, and was «raised to the rank of **basilica**». It is a bit like receiving a medal of recognition because during the Second World War, some monks went into resistance against the enemy and hid people here to protect them. The sunshade and the bell (left and right of the choir) are there to show us that we are in a basilica.

7) Can you draw them ?



At the right of the choir, in front of the gate, there **is a door...that invites us to happiness !** The inhabitants of this house, as of all abbeys and monasteries, **take a lot of joy in going through the bible.** The Word of God “burns their hearts”. This is what **the «red» flame** represents on the altar (behind the eagle). In the park, **there are other flames** like this one (sometimes even in pictures).

 Now, go and discover **the park and the garden of the abbey.**
(Get out, cross the courtyard and walk around the castle).

The park

The first tree, on your left, was planted for the abbey's 800th anniversary.

8) In which year ?

- 2001 2016 2018

9) Is it a :

- Lime tree Oak tree Ash tree

10) How many flames do you count at the good Lord's hut ?