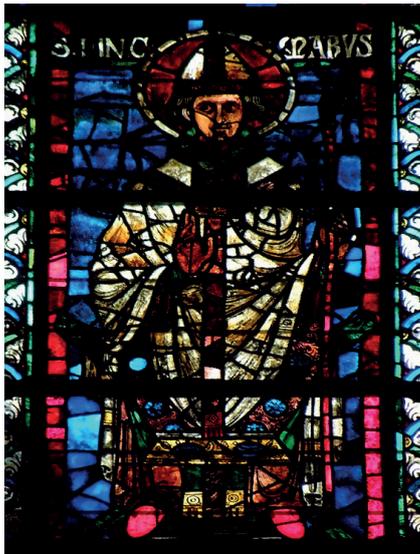


8 IN THE SERVICE OF MEN OF THEIR TIME, FOLLOWING SAINT REMI



Picture 37 – Hincmar (stained glass window) – photo TD



Picture 38 – Sylvester II on the right of Emperor Otto III © The Yorck Project (2002) 10.000 Meisterwerke der Malerei (DVD-ROM), distributed by DIRECTMEDIA

Hincmar (≈806 -882)

Born in a great Carolingian family, Benedictine Abbot Hincmar was called to the Imperial Court by Louis the Pious in 832. In 845, King Charles the Bald entrusted him with the post of Archbishop of Rheims, a post that he kept until his death that came as he was fleeing the Normans with the relics of Saint Remi. The relics were brought back to the cathedral under Bishop Foulques, his successor. It is Archbishop Herve who returned them to the abbey, probably after 911, date of the Saint-Clair- sur-Epte treaty, when the Normans had calmed down.

In the troubled period that followed the division of Charlemagne's empire, Hincmar tried to protect the possessions of the Church. The role he played announced the loyalty of the grand prelates to the monarchy.

Hincmar brought a precise regulation of the wedding and the dignity of young girls, condemning incest and rape which were common practice at the time. He reformed the Church of Rheims, installing the bishops he was responsible for. Imbued with Roman law, he launched an ecclesiastic justice system under his control. As a theologian, a jurist and a pastor, Hincmar had considerable influence on the spreading of new civilising practises inside the Carolingian Church; his legacy is a foundation stone for the Church and for Rheims. He built a second cathedral to replace the Merovingian one. Hincmar provided the coronation site, a ritual inaugurated by Pepin the Short, with a phial of chrisam (consecrated oil) which had supposedly been brought from the sky by a dove for the baptism of Clovis. Hincmar convinced the future kings to receive anointment with chrisam at their coronation, as a pledge of their royal loyalty and a sign of the prominent role of the Archbishop of Rheims.

Gerbert or Sylvester II (945-1003)

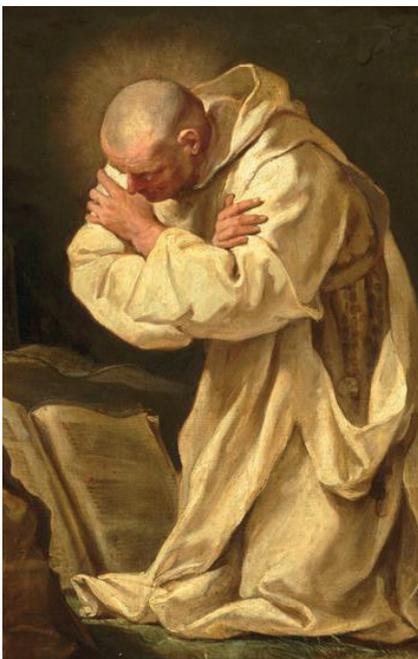
Born in a rural family, Gerbert d'Aurillac was educated at the Saint-Géraud d'Aurillac abbey, in line with the modern Cluny spirit. He became learned in antique texts, translated from Greek – the texts by Ptolemy in particular – or other Persian or Arabic texts. He became the headmaster of the School of Rheims in 972, on the recommendation of Rheims Archbishop Adalberon. He reinforced the traditional education programme with the introduction of a new subject, dialectics. He taught prestigious pupils, among them Louis the Pious (son of Hughes Capet), Fulbert of Chartres, Richer, etc. He later was the focus of philosophical controversies, at the time of the Ravenna "disputatio" (981)



Then Gerbert came back to Rheims and became secretary for the Rheims Archbishop, Adalberon. Gerbert supported Hughes Capet in the conflict against the Carolingians. He played a major diplomatic role when Adalbéron Ascelin, the Laon prelate who wrote *The Theory of Orders*, chose to follow Hughes Capet. As a reward, the new king appointed him to the post of his secretary. One after the other, the Carolingian bastions fell into the hands of the Capetians. Gerbert's influence on the King grew stronger and, when Adalberon of Rheims died in 991, he became Archbishop of Rheims. This nomination decided by King Hughes Capet against the will of Pope John XV, brought him into a conflict with the Pope. In solidarity with him, the Francie bishops joined forces against the position of Rome. Conciliatory, Gerbert left the post of Archbishop and moved to Italy where he became Empress Adelaide's advisor and tutor of future King Otton III. As an eminence grise, the prestige of Gerbert was at its peak.

In 999, Gerbert defeated the other contenders to the papal siege and was elected under the name of Sylvester II (Sylvester I had been the Pope of Constantine the Great). Sylvester II endeavoured to establish a universal Christian empire, by uniting the secular power embodied by Emperor Otton III and the power of the Church. The humanist and enlightened pope was a historic figure in the history of Christianisation in the Western world.

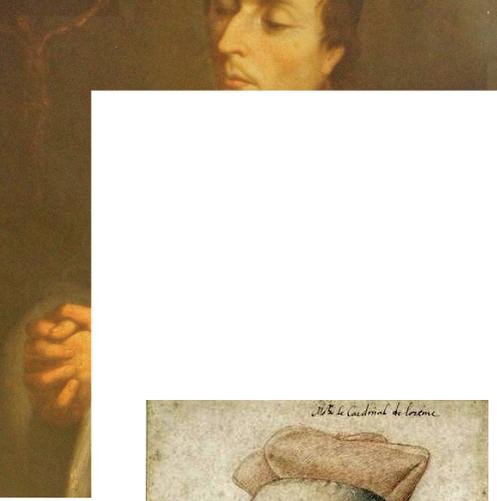
Saint Bruno (1030-1101)



Picture 39 – Saint Bruno at prayer in the desert
– Restout Jean Bernard (1732-1797) Paris,
© Louvre Museum

Bruno was born in a high-ranking family in Cologne. He was educated in Rheims, which was very famous for its cathedral school. The archbishop of Rheims, Gervais of Montreuil-Bellay, took him under his wing, appointed him to the post of canon and, soon, the master of the Rheims School. Gervais died in 1067 and Manasses, his successor, was more interested in wealth and material goods than in his episcopal charge; he appointed Bruno to the post of chancellor of the church of Rheims in charge of the diocesan administration. As a diocesan administration chief, his role was to ratify the decisions and send the acts. Soon, he did not hesitate to denounce the misdeeds of Manasses whose methods and aspirations he disapproved of. Bruno was condemned to exile. When Manasses was deposed, Bruno did not consider becoming the Archbishop of Rheims. Following the enlightened advice of Robert of Molesme whom he had met up with in his abbey, Bruno went into self-imposed exile in a mountain located near Grenoble with six companions. They built a church and a monastery that became the Grande Chartreuse.

His former disciple, Urbain II, who had become pope, called him to Rome for advice regarding reforms to conduct. Bruno continued to found priories in Calabria and Sicilia. He died in the Saint Mary of the Tower hermitage, in Calabria, in 1101.



Picture 40 – Charles, Cardinal of Lorraine (ca. 1555), school of François Clouet, Chantilly, Condé Museum. © National Museums, Mona Lisa catalogue entry 00000106646

Charles (cardinal of Lorraine, archbishop of Rheims, 1524-1574)

Charles of Guise is undoubtedly an important figure of the sixteenth century. He was the heir of a grand traditionalist family, the house of Guise, who held power on many bishoprics or “guisard” abbeys. When his uncle, John, resigned, he was appointed archbishop of Rheims at the age of thirteen. With this noble appointment, he was able to aspire to religious and political distinctions. As a Chancellor of the Saint Michael Order, he became an influential member of King Henry II’s advisors. When his uncle died, he was promoted to the post of cardinal and he founded the University of Rheims, with the authorisation of the Pope in 1548. Then he vehemently opposed Calvinism. He granted his patronage to printers that he invited to Rheims from 1559. Then as a rival of Catherine of Medici, he took part in the accession to the throne of Francis II in 1559 and was charged with the finance management of the kingdom. When his brother Francis was assassinated in 1563, he took the lead of the Guise family. Fearing an escalation of violence, the Queen Mother demanded peace between the Guise clan and Admiral Coligny.

In 1572, the cardinal headed to the Rome conclave for the election of a new pope. While he was away, the Saint Barthelemy massacre (5 September 1572) took place. He died on the 26th of December 1574, at the age of 50. He was buried in the Rheims Cathedral. As a humanist Renaissance prelate, He spent his life trying to combine personal family success, loyalty to the King, the reform of the Church and the reform of “his” church, the Church of Rheims.

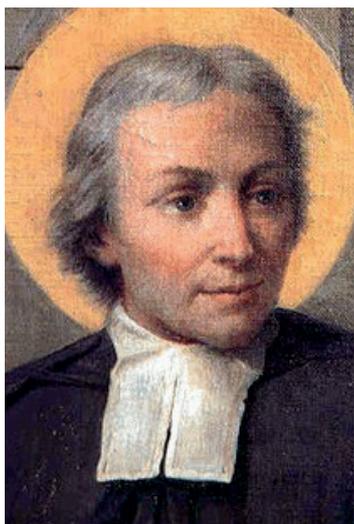
Nicolas Roland (1642-1678)

Educated at the Jesuit College in Rheims, Nicolas Roland decided to become a priest at an early age. He pursued his education in philosophy and theology in Paris, at the time of the Fronde. Then he was taught by Antoine de la Haye in Rouen where he lived in complete poverty. In 1672, he met John-Baptist de la Salle; they became friends and mutually helped each other. They devoted themselves to helping the Sisters of the child-Jesus congregation who served the people in needs. As a preacher, he tirelessly travelled the dioceses to speak to the people. “Speaking with simplicity,” he said, “is speaking to everyone.”



Picture 41 – Nicolas Roland. Source: CC BY-SA 3.0 Garitan

On the 27th of April 1678, he died, exhausted, of cerebral palsy, at the age of 36. He was beatified by John-Paul II in 1994. As a theologian canon, Nicolas Roland was an indefatigable instigator in the Christian education of children and a precursor to John-Baptist de la Salle.



Picture 42 – Saint John-Baptist de la Salle (source: public domain)

Saint John-Baptist de la Salle (1651-1719)

Born in a middle-class family from Bearn, John-Baptist de la Salle felt he was called by God a very young age: he became Canon of the Cathedral at 16. When his parents died, he was not sure he wanted to pursue to the priesthood; yet, this is what he did a few years later, under the direction of Nicolas Roland, his spiritual guide. He was ordained a priest at the age of 27. From 1679, he helped Adrian Nyel setting up free schools for boys. Intending to educate young girls and boys, he founded the Brothers of the Christian Schools congregation.

In order to be able to devote his life to the congregation, he gave up his charge of canon – which assured him resources – and distributed what he had inherited to the poor. John-Baptist de la Salle intended to share the poverty of his brothers. In spite of the trials conducted against him by school masters for illegal competition, and in spite of the disagreements from his own Order, he pursued his undertaking.

Inventing new spiritual educational methods, De la Salle developed the reading skills of children not by making them read Latin but French. After a trial in vain, vile condemnations and awful slander, he was called by the Brothers of Paris in 1714 to take the head of the Brothers' Society. When he died, in 1719, he left many educational and spiritual written works. Pope Pie XII declared him "Patron of all Christian educators." His work came to be known around the world, spread by his disciples.

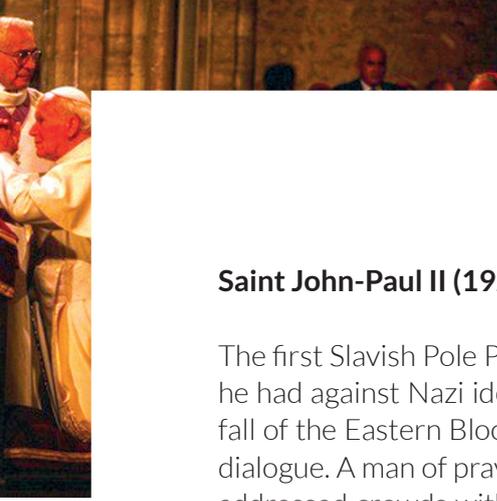


Picture 43 – Statue of the Virgin, Our Lady of the Factory and the Workshop © Saint-Remi Basilica

Cardinal Benoît-Marie Langénieux (1824-1905)

Born in 1824 in Villefranche-sur-Saône, Cardinal Langénieux was ordained to the priesthood in 1850 in Paris; then he was nominated Archbishop of Tarbes in 1873, and Archbishop of Rheims in 1874. He was elevated to the cardinalate with the priestly title of Priest-Cardinal of Saint John of the Latin Gate. He founded the first private district schools, youth clubs, catholic circles, and orphanages in his city. He was close to Albert de Mun, who initiated social Catholicism, to Leon Harmel, who was a partisan of the church's social doctrine, and to Pope Leo XIII. He was the founder of the archconfraternity of Notre-Dame of the Factory and Workshop to whom he dedicated a statue of the Virgin, which is still visible in a chapel of the basilica. He was nicknamed the Cardinal of the workers.

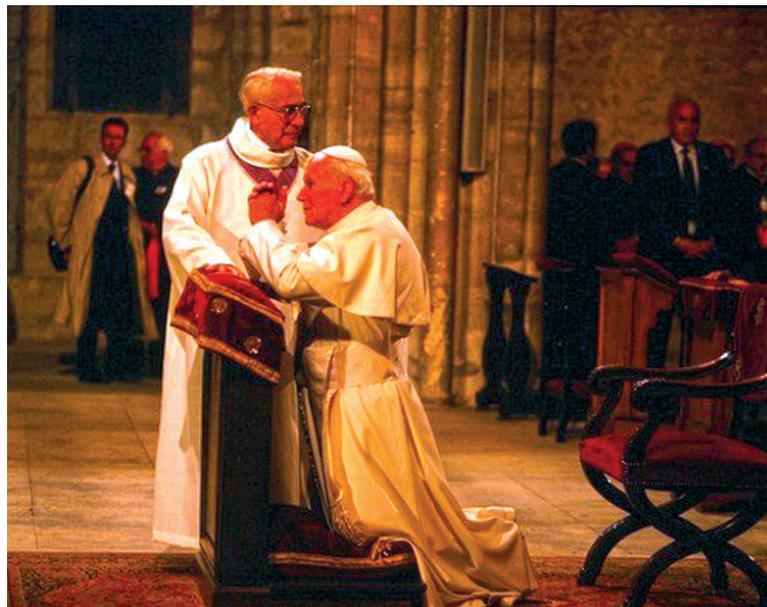
In 1896, he celebrated the fourteenth centenary of the baptism of Clovis. The Saint-Clotilde basilica in Rheims testifies to this centenary. Before that, in 1876, he had worked on a project for a statue of Urbain II, the crusade pope, in Châtillon-sur-Marne. He also facilitated the construction of many churches in his diocese.



Saint John-Paul II (1920-2005)

The first Slavish Pole Pope, Karol Józef Wojtyła strongly opposed communist ideology, just as he had against Nazi ideology when he was young. Through his actions, he contributed to the fall of the Eastern Block and to the promotion of human rights. He encouraged interreligious dialogue. A man of prayer and a man of action, he was considered as the pope of a new era; he addressed crowds with energy, and his life made a big impression on them. John-Paul II was a tireless globe-trotter and a very charismatic personality; he constantly wanted to meet the faithful throughout the world – each time, huge crowds came to meet him.

His spiritual work was marked by the Theory of the Body; he renewed the long tradition of the Church. He promulgated the Catechism of the Catholic Church in the light of Tradition, according to the forceful interpretation of Vatican Council II. He also reformed the Latin and Oriental canonical law Code, he founded new institutions and reorganised the Roman Curia. John-Paul II came to Rheims on pilgrimage in 1996 to celebrate the 1,500th anniversary of the baptism of Clovis. He suffered Parkinson disease and died after a long period of suffering, on the 2nd of April 2005, following 26 years of pontificate (the longest in history). He was beatified in 2011 by Benedict XVI, his successor, canonised by Pope Francis in 2014.



Picture 44 – John-Paul II in Saint-Remi Basilica in 1996.
© Jean-Michel Mazerolle – CIRIC