

The Church of Sainte-Rose-de-Lima de Laval

Bell-towers, religious symbols



Façade
Photo : Germain
Casavant

The church of Sainte-Rose-de-Lima was listed as an historical monument in 1974 and is the third church to be built in this parish in Laval. Following a fire, the first church (1746) had to be replaced in 1788. According to Father Conefroy's description, it was built of stone in the form of a Latin cross. It had three doors on the façade with an oculus above the central door. The interior was begun by Louis-Amable Quévillon and completed by the sculptor François Dugal. Philippe Liébert installed the high altar and tabernacle in 1799.

Towards 1850, it was necessary to build a new church due to the rapidly increasing population. The Montréal architect Victor Bourgeau was invited to submit plans to the church council.

As was his custom, Bourgeau presented one set of plans for a church with a single bell-tower, and another for a church with two bell-towers; he even drew up a plan for one with three bell-towers. Controversy reigned among the members of the church council; they preferred the two bell-tower design but were worried about the reaction of the parishioners if they chose a project which was too costly. In order to gain support for the church with two towers, they set the plans of the single tower church aside. Starting with the other two options, they were then able to persuade the parishioners that, out of the two, the twin tower church would be "the most substantial, the most convenient and the least expensive".

Bourgeau used the traditional Recollet plan but for the façade, he took as his model the Reformed Church of Brooklyn Heights, by the American architect Minard Lafever, modifying the architectural style and adapting the proportions. John Ostell used the same pattern for the church of Notre-Dame-de-Grâces. Moreover, the bell-towers of Sainte-Rose are suggestive of those of the church of la Visitation du Sault-au-Récollet which were designed by Ostell in 1850.



Interior
Photo : Germain Casavant



Nave towards façade
Photo : Germain Casavant



Semi-dome
Photo : Germain Casavant

In the middle of the 19th century, the progress made in printing meant that differing styles of architecture became more accessible. This resulted in something of a revival in the field of architecture because architects had a much wider repertoire at their disposal. A good example of this can be seen in the buildings by Minard Lafever of New York, which helped to spread the neo-classical style, known in the United States as 'Greek Revival'.

The interior was undertaken by Jean-Baptiste Joly, master carpenter and contractor living in Sainte-Rose, in 1858. Bourgeau put his name to the plans for a coffered ceiling accentuated by cross beams and adorned with rose-windows.



Pulpit

Photo : Germain Casavant

The principal style employed for the interior is Corinthian, interrupted by the addition of side galleries in 1875 to accommodate the worshippers. Twin columns allow for a detached entablature which clearly distinguishes the nave, choir and semi-dome apse. The principal style employed for the interior is Corinthian, interrupted by the addition of side galleries in 1875 to accommodate the worshippers. Twin columns allow for a detached entablature which clearly distinguishes the nave, choir and semi-dome apse.

The pulpit was designed by Victor Bourgeau, who also drew up the plans for the two side altars produced by Jean-Baptiste Joly. Liébert's tabernacle was taken from the old church and installed in the new one at the time of the consecration.

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Text translated by Rachel Tunnicliffe

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