

Pleyben : the architectural lay out



Grouped around the church are : imposing Calvary, a Door in Triumphal arch, an Ossuary and a Vestry, formerly this enclosure surrounded the cemetery. This unit called (Parochial enclosure" is surrounded by a low wall which prevented the animals from entering.

The enclosure of Pleyben is one of the most beautiful and complete of Brittany.

The construction of these monuments, between the XVI th. century, period called "**Golden age of Breton art**" was carried out according to three periods :

Cronology of the construction of the enclosure

In XVI th. century:	1555	Calvary
	1564 – 1583	The church and the ossuary.
In XVII th. century:	1633 – 1642	Completion of the porch and the Renaissance tower
	1650	Enrichment of Calvary.
In XVII th. century:	1719	The Sacristy
	1725	The monumental door or « Carries death »
	1738	Displacement of the Calvary.

The church

Many works of restoration have just been completed. It is now possible to admire:

- The repainted panelled vault.
- **Carved cornices** representing a succession of masks, mythological scenes which alternate with episode of the books of saint of the scenes of the everyday life.
- **Rentable**: That of High Altar going back to 1667 draws the attention by its richness. In the center a gate vault on multiple floors surrounded of balustrades, pinnacle, lanterns and pediments decorated with heads of cherubs. Crowning the unit, carried by angels the Resurrected Christ. Behind the high Altar, the **Main Stained Glass Window**, she is made up of four parts witch evoke, the **Passion of Christ** since the washing of the feet of the apostles until **Resurrection**. The stained glass of the left represents the Tree of Jesse. That of the right-hand side is an interpretation of this word of Jesus. "*I am the wine, you are the branches*". The **Rentable** of the Rosary on Northern transept is the oeuvre of **Pleyben's craftsmen**.
- Of many polychrome statues and stained glasses like the two paintings, copies of the XIX th. representing a Deposition and the meal with the companions of Emmaüs.
- **The Font located at the back of the church.**
- The **Organ** ordered in 1688 by the parishioners of Pleyben from the organ builder **Thomas Dalham** was the subject of a recent restoration of its instrumental part and for the dresser. Many concerts take place during the summer period.

Outside of the church

While leaving the church by the porch one can admire the niches of the apostles and join on the right:

- A monumental door called « **Door of death** », a true Triumphal arch.
- On the fronton is Christ in cross surrounded by the Mother and Jean, on the two faces East and West one can discover a **Pieta**.
- Close to this door is the **Ossuary** dating from XVI th. centuring, it most remarkable of the Gothic ossuary of the Low Brittany. The **Calvary**, built in 1555 was moved twice, in 1642 at the time of the construction of the tower and definitively in 1738. Its architecture in a Triumphal arch of four places makes of it most imposing Calvary of Brittany. The sculptures were carried out in granite and schistous sandstone of **Kersanton**. All the life of Jesus is represented there, but the central subject is Passion. Certain statues are dressed in the XVI th. century Breton fashion. It is advised to the begin by visiting the southern face, to continue by the face East, North, West without forgetting the scenes being reproduced on the top which report the crucifixion.

Before leaving the enclosure, one can have an overall picture on the church and admire the two bell-towers, one typically Breton, and the other Renaissance crowned by a dome with skylights. One can also notice the sacristy, built at the beginning of XVIII th. which surmounted by a cupola.

In the medium of the enclosure you will see a cross monolith: it is called into Breton “**Croas an Holen**” the cross of salt. It is said to have been on the steps where salt of Guérande was sold.