

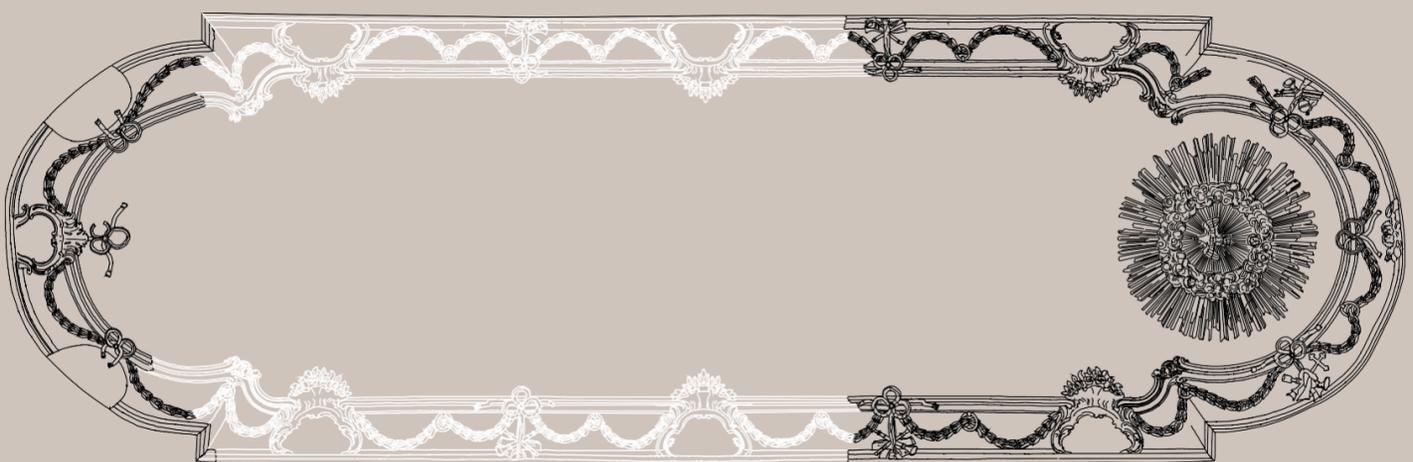
# The Chapelle des Pénitents Bleus



**P**enitents are generally laypeople who have decided to publicly devote their lives to the Catholic faith through prayer and charity. They wear robes of a specific colour to which they owe their name. They are united in brotherhoods and are subordinate to the bishop. In L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue, there used to be four penitent brotherhoods: white, blue, black and green.

Initially based in the Franciscan convent around 1565, L'Isle's blue penitent brotherhood decided to build a new chapel on the corner of Rue Saint-Honoré and Rue de l'Arquet. Constructed between 1765 and 1769 by local architect Jean-Ange Brun, it is a major example of religious architecture of the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The chapel was sold during the French Revolution, and the brotherhood was disbanded. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the chapel housed the Congrégation des Hommes. It was secularised in the 1970s.

Although somewhat disfigured by the distasteful remodelling of the 1970s and 1980s, this chapel still boasts a remarkable canted classical façade, and the majority of its original ceiling is decorated with plasterwork. The latter is representative of the religious decorative arts of the Comtat Venaissin in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century owing to its simplicity and the occasional use of motifs in high relief made from painted plaster (e.g. aureole feature decoration enhanced with cherubs, cartouches, etc.).



The chapel's plasterwork ceiling (circa 1769). In black, the preserved sections. In white, the reconstructed sections.

*Comptes  
des dépenses  
pour la construction  
de la nouvelle chapelle  
des Pénitents-bleus  
1768 - 1769*