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The Château d'Allex (Today, la Maison St Joseph)

It is a stately mansion with a huge park, right in the center of the village, owned by numerous proprietors over the years. Built in the 18th center on the foundations of a modest residence, its architecture resembles the houses of rich Italian aristocrats.

Here is a partial list of the different owners:

1673 Pierre Perrachon who then sold it to the Tour du Pin family from Montauban;

1868 Mr. and Mrs. Bontoux purchased it from the countess de Sieyes. Mr. Bontoux worked on the construction of the Austro-Hungarian Empire railway. He was president in 1878 of a very major bank "the Union General" which went bankrupt in 1882;

1909 Pierre Girardon, nephew of the widowed Mrs. Bontoux became the heir to the Château.

1920 Paul Lepercq, an industrialist. He rented it out to the Congregation of the Spiritans to set up the Ecole des Missions (Missionary school) on the premises;

1933 The Congregation of the Spiritans becomes the owner of the site and builds the actual sanctuary.

Question: How does a Château become a school?

First step:

1920 The interior of the Château is renovated. A chapel is installed in the large living room. The old stables are converted into refectories and the upper part into dormitories.

Second step:

1921 Start of construction of the temporary chapel which is completed a year later on the site of the winter garden.

1935 The Saint Joseph Sanctuary, the major work of the architect Pierre Isnard, is consecrated in May 1937.

Since 1999, the school no longer exists but the Château, known as "La Maison Saint Joseph", has been converted to a "Reception center for various groups" and remains a place of pilgrimage and prayer.