

Rebuilding Notre Dame: The Next Steps for Paris's Famous Cathedral [Excerpt]

By David K. Li, NBC News

French President Emmanuel Macron vowed Tuesday to rebuild the [fire-ravaged Notre Dame Cathedral](#) in Paris within five years, saying an "even more beautiful" landmark is possible.

The iconic house of worship was almost destroyed by flames Monday, and Macron said in a nationally televised address that France would spare no money or effort to make it whole again.

"And I tell you tonight with force, we are this people of builders," Macron said, according to a translation by NBC News.

"We have so much to reconstruct. So yes, we will rebuild the Cathedral of Notre Dame more beautifully. And I would like it to be achieved in five years from now. We can do it. And we will mobilize." Macron set a five-year target of completion and asked the nation to think deeply about "what we are and what we are to become, to become better than we are today."

He urged the public to unite and turn the national "catastrophe" into a moment of French unity. He said the reconstruction of Notre Dame Cathedral will be a "passionately French" project.

"I believe profoundly that we will turn this tragedy into a moment to come together, to be reflective of what we were and what we have to be. We must be better than we were," Macron said. "It will come back. To find the threads of our national project, that which made us, which unites us, a human project, passionately French."

Macron reminded the nation that all structures, even one as grand as Notre Dame Cathedral, are subject to destruction by human error — and just as easily can be fixed by people working together.

"Throughout our history, we built cities, ports, churches. Many burned, were destroyed by wars, the fault of men," he said. "Every time, every time, we have rebuilt them. The fire of Notre Dame reminds us that our history will never end. Never. And that we will always have challenges to overcome." Macron added: "That which we thought was indestructible can also be harmed. Everything that makes France — material, spiritual and living — is for this same reason fragile. And we must not forget that." Monday night's blaze [collapsed the historic cathedral's roof](#) and toppled its spire and [might have burned priceless art](#).

So far, the fire is being investigated as an accident, possibly connected to a massive renovation project.

Paris prosecutor Rémy Heitz has already launched an investigation into the devastating blaze, which brought everyday Parisians and people around the world to tears. "We are favoring the theory of an accident," Heitz told reporters outside Notre Dame Cathedral on Tuesday, promising a "long" and "complex" probe.

Pope Francis telephoned Macron to express his solidarity with France over the fire at Notre Dame, a Vatican spokesman said Tuesday.

As Rich Lavish Cash on Notre-Dame, Many Ask: What About The Needy? [Excerpt]

By Liz Alderman and Steven Erlanger, *New York Times*

PARIS — The pledges came in quick succession.

François-Henri Pinault, France's second-richest man, put up an eye-popping 100 million euros to rebuild Notre-Dame, just as firefighters were dousing [the last flames at the cathedral](#) early Tuesday morning. Not to be outdone, Bernard Arnault, France's wealthiest scion and a fierce rival to Mr. Pinault and to his father, François Pinault, upped the ante with a 200-million-euro gift a few hours later.

By Wednesday, the government had welcomed some 850 million euros — more than \$960 million — offered in the patriotic name of salvaging the cultural treasure, as money from wealthy French families, French companies and international corporations poured in. But the spectacle of billionaires trying to one-up one another quickly intensified resentments over inequality that have flared during the Yellow Vest movement, just as [President Emmanuel Macron was looking to transform the calamity](#) into a new era of national unity. There were accusations that the wildly rich were trying to wash their reputations during a time of national tragedy. “Can you imagine, 100 million, 200 million in one click!” said Philippe Martinez, the head of the militant CGT labor union. “It really shows the inequalities in this country.”

“If they're able to give dozens of millions to rebuild Notre Dame,” he added, “they should stop telling us that there is no money to pay for social inequalities.”

Olivier Pourriol, a French philosopher and novelist, summed up the sentiment more drolly.

“Victor Hugo thanks all the generous donors ready to save Notre Dame and proposes that they do the same thing with Les Misérables,” he wrote on Twitter, referring to another one of Hugo's famous novels, about the lives of the poor.

Manon Aubry, a senior figure in France Insoumise, the main radical left party, called the funding an “exercise in public relations.” She said the donors' list “looks like the rankings of companies and people located in tax havens.”

She added: “I want to tell them: Start by paying your taxes. That will add to the state culture budget.” The bickering was about as far as possible to imagine from the image of a united France the president painted when he gave a national address on Tuesday. Mr. Macron said “it is up to us to transform this catastrophe” into a moment to become “better than what we are.”

The firestorm began when Jean-Jacques Aillagon, a former culture minister and now adviser to Mr. Pinault's father, went on Twitter after Mr. Pinault announced his gift Tuesday to suggest that corporate contributions to Notre-Dame's restoration be given a 90 percent tax deduction, rather than the 60 percent that corporations normally get for charitable contributions.

“That's when the whole thing exploded,” said Pierre Haski, a commentator for France-Inter, the public radio station. “That produced outrage, that this act of generosity turns into fiscal advantage.” The reaction was so intense that Mr. Aillagon went on the radio Wednesday morning to retract his suggestion. The Pinault family then announced that they would seek no tax deduction at all for the gift.

Name _____

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTION IN AN ANALYSIS PARAGRAPH FORMAT:

What is the importance of rebuilding the Notre Dame?

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