

PORTIC

*"Barchinon laeto Cucufate vernans,
corporis sancti tumulum honorans,
et locum sacri venerans sepulchri,
sparge ligustris"*

*Barcino, bursts into the vernal joy
of Sant Cugat, honouring his remains
and spreads olivella branches on the burial
mound and on the tomb.*



Ligustrum vulgare

The very ancient hymn "Barchinon laeto" dedicated to St. Cugat invites us to honour the saint's remains in a poetic way: "El locum sacri venerans sepulchri, sparge locustris". The Latinist, Joan Bellés, translated it as follows "And "olivella" branches are scattered on the burial mound and on the tomb".

The "olivella" (ligustrum) is a bush which must have been quite common in former times in the western Mediterranean. Today, both the "ligustrum vulgare" and the "cneorum tricocon" that the hymn might refer to are in decline. The former flowers and has fruit in the form of panicles. The latter, as it ripens, brings forth little suggestively red drupaceous fruit, at the end of July, i.e. for the day of St. Cugat



Cneorum tricocon

PERSECUTION OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS

Christians in the first three centuries A.D. were repeatedly beaten and put to the test in persecutions. They lived with great intensity the warning of the Master: "If they persecuted me, they will persecute you" (John, 15, 20). The first persecutions took place in Jesus's own country beginning with: St. Stephen, deacon, the first martyr of the Christian faith, St. James, the first apostle martyr, Saul, who before being converted was an ardent persecutor of the Christians. Many Christians became dispersed because of the repression to which they were subjected.

Persecutions, however, also contributed to spreading the gospel from the East right into the heart of the Roman Empire.



Stoning of Saint Stephen
Sant Joan de Boi - 1100

CHRISTIANS WITHIN THE CULTURE AND THE POWER OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

Within the framework of a polytheist, pagan culture, consolidated and supported by the grandiose force of the empire and its legions, it is understandable that the religious minority that Christians represented was inconvenient for the authorities and converted them into an object of political vigilance.



Paleo-Christian oil-lamp with Chrism

In fact, “Christians are not different from other men, neither their land, nor their speech, nor customs. They do not inhabit cities which are just for them, nor speak a strange language nor lead an isolated form of life They live in Greek or Barbarian cities, depending on each person's lot and adapt to the way of dressing, eating, habits and customs of each country, but they have a special way of behaving that is admirable, and as everybody agrees, surprising

They observe the promulgated laws, but their lifestyle goes beyond laws. Everybody persecutes them, but they love everybody. People do not know them but they condemn them ... the same people who abhor them do not know the reason for their hatred”.

This missive, from the 2nd century A.D. (letter to Diognetius) helps us to see that the confrontation between Christians and the power of Rome did not come so much from their plan of evangelical life as the fact of being convinced monotheists and having, therefore, conscientious objections to the emperor's claim to divinity.

The simple formality of burning a few grains of incense to the emperor's statue dispelled the suspicion of disaffection to the Empire. Many of the weaker Christians agreed to do this. Those who firmly believed in one God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, did not want to serve two masters, and refused. They were considered rebels, with all the consequences.

The Roman authorities, depending on the period, responded with different tactics, from tolerance to the most cruel of persecutions.

THE PERSECUTIONS OF DIOCLETIAN

One of the most notable persecutions by the Roman Empire that Christians had to endure was that of Diocletian between 303 and 304 A.D.

The brutality of the punishments imposed on Christians who would not abjure their faith corresponded to the treatment given to the enemies of Rome, to traitors and to those defeated in the endless wars that the vast extension of the borders of the Roman Empire and their frenzy to expand brought about.

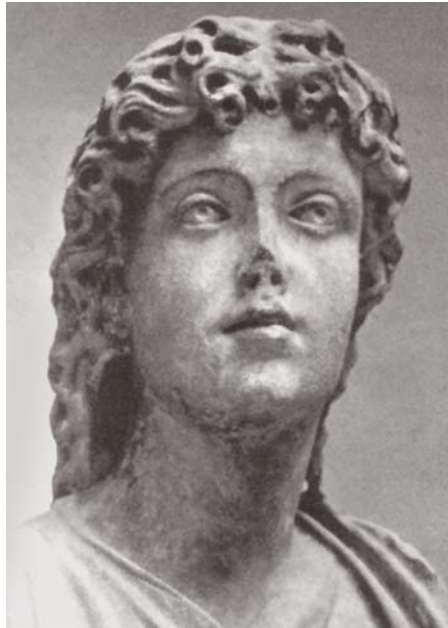
Punishments were often given to teach a lesson and were therefore public and in certain periods of history they became spectacles in the stadiums or circuses.

Beheading was reserved for the most noble. For others there was public humiliation, whipping, crucifixion, burning at the stake or being thrown to the wild beasts and also the prohibition of giving burial to their dead.

These practices – which today remind us of the fundamentalist rigour that is a characteristic of totalitarian powers, are known to us through the chroniclers of this time, which had such an inhuman side to it.



Emperor Diocletian
Museum of Archaeology – Istanbul



The adolescent Christ
4th century

RECOGNITION OF THE RIGHTS OF CHRISTIANS

With the reign of the Emperor Constantine, in the year 313 A.D. to be precise, came the end of the official persecution of Christians by the Roman Empire and the recognition of – among other rights – that of practising and demonstrating their faith.

The memory of most of the victims of these three centuries of waves of repression has been lost over time. They are “the souls of the righteous who are in the hand of God” (Wisdom, 3, 1). These are “they who come out of the great tribulation and have washed their garments in the blood of the Lamb” (Rev. 7, 14) and their names are “written in heaven” (Luke 10.20). Their honour and their victory is that they “follow the Lamb wherever he goes” (Rev. 14, 4).

The memory of some of them has been kept, however, whether by chance or because they played a more important role in the early Church. To remember them is both encouraging and edifying for the following generations of Christians.

(We should remember, for example, the saints mentioned in the Eucharistic prayer, called the Roman canon).

The bodies of martyrs who were able to receive a proper burial – once the period of freedom had arrived – were the object of special veneration. Their tombs in cemeteries, churches or crypts are called “Martyrium”, i.e. a witness.

Another very old custom is that of depositing them at the base of altars where the Holy Sacrifice of Mass is held.

“Dextera Domini” Hand of
Our Lord Jesus, the master,
Who, from the cross gives
Strength to the martyrs.

In Sant Cugat Monastery



THE “MARTYRS” OF CHRIST

Everyday speech applies this term to one who is tormented by something or someone. And especially to one who goes through undeserved ordeals or suffers persecution or death because of their faithfulness to a cause.

Etymologically the word “martyr” comes from the Latin “martyris” and the Greek term μαρτυς. Its translation is “witness”.

This noun appears 35 times in New Testament writings. The first accepted meaning is the common one: a witness is one who has direct knowledge of an event of legal transcendence and bears witness to it.

Luke’s gospel, the Acts of the Apostles and Revelations give the term a sense which is specifically Christian. The first to be sent to bear witness to everything they have seen and felt are the Apostles (Lk 24, 48 Act. 1,8). This first witness is centred on Christ’s resurrection and then spreads to everything the Lord did from the baptism in the river Jordan to the Ascension.

Stephen and Paul, who were not eye witnesses of the Lord’s resurrection, are considered witnesses of Salvation that comes from the death and resurrection of Christ. In the same way Antipas from the far off city of Pergamon, who died for his faith, is called “faithful witness” (Revelations 2, 13)

This specifically Christian meaning is the one this leaflet will give to the word martyr. That is to say: He who bears witness to his faith in the risen Christ even when he is persecuted, tormented and deprived of life.

The characteristic of the true martyrs of Christ is their serene dignity. They are not wretched fanatics. The Spirit of Jesus fashions their reactions and their feelings. They have set out to be like Christ. In Him “God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us” as the Apostle wrote to the Christians in Rome (Rom, 5, 8).

THE FIRST WRITTEN NEWS OF THE MARTYR SANT CUGAT

Aurelius Prudence, the poet, was born in 348 A.D. in the Roman province of Tarraco. Contemporaries, who were 35 years of age when he was born, had lived through the persecutions, and as witnesses to the deeds of the martyrs, had to explain them to their children. This is how Prudence was probably educated.

In his poetical work "Peristephanon" (Book of Crowns), he honours the martyrs of the fourth century or says that when Judgement Day arrives "every city will raise its head and hasten to go out and meet Christ bearing their precious offerings".

These offerings are the martyrs' "relics". The poet describes a procession of cities : Carthage presenting the martyr Cebrian, Tarragona, the martyr Fruitos, Girona, the martyr Feliu and continues in verse 35: "Barcelona will rise, confident in its illustrious Cugat."

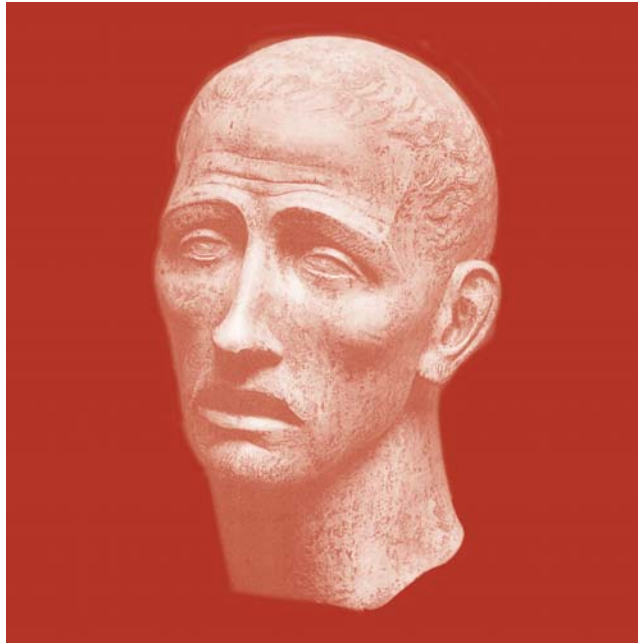
This is the oldest recorded reference that has come down to us of our Martyr.

The "Jeronimian Martyrology" which names the saints following the days of the year mentions the martyr St. Cugat. This document is from the 5th century



The Martyr Sant Cugat has his throat cut.
He appears smiling in a keystone..

Monastery of Sant Cugat



Study of Sant Cugat
Enric Monjo 1941

MORE “NEWS OF SANT CUGAT”

The earliest written news on the martyr St. Cugat is really first hand and therefore is of great value for all us Christians on this blood-stained earth. The red garments of the liturgy of Sant Cugat should edify us as we contemplate how the Spirit of Jesus has strengthened the martyr's weakness. The principal witness of his martyrdom justifies the praise and is both a denouncement of mediocrity and an encouragement to prayer.

To want to know more things about the life of the saint is a sign of appreciation, but it should not be an indispensable condition for holding him as a reference for our Christian life.

Without wishing to fall into a “rose-coloured” piety, it is a good idea to know the secondary details of the saint's life which come from other sources. For example the “Passions” of the martyrs written by Christians. These are a literary genre which praises the martyr and emphasizes his strength in the face of torment. The historical reliability of these documents depends to a great extent on how close the writing of them is to the events.

Many of the documents mentioned as follows describe some of these details of the Saint's life. Although the date of these documents is known, it is important to remember that they are not the author's documents but transcriptions of much older documents, which increases their credibility.

Jeronian Martyrology (Auxerre version, towards the end of the 6th century A.D.): includes Sant Cugat.

“Prayer Book of Verona” (the origin is from Tarragona, from the end of the 7th century A.D.).

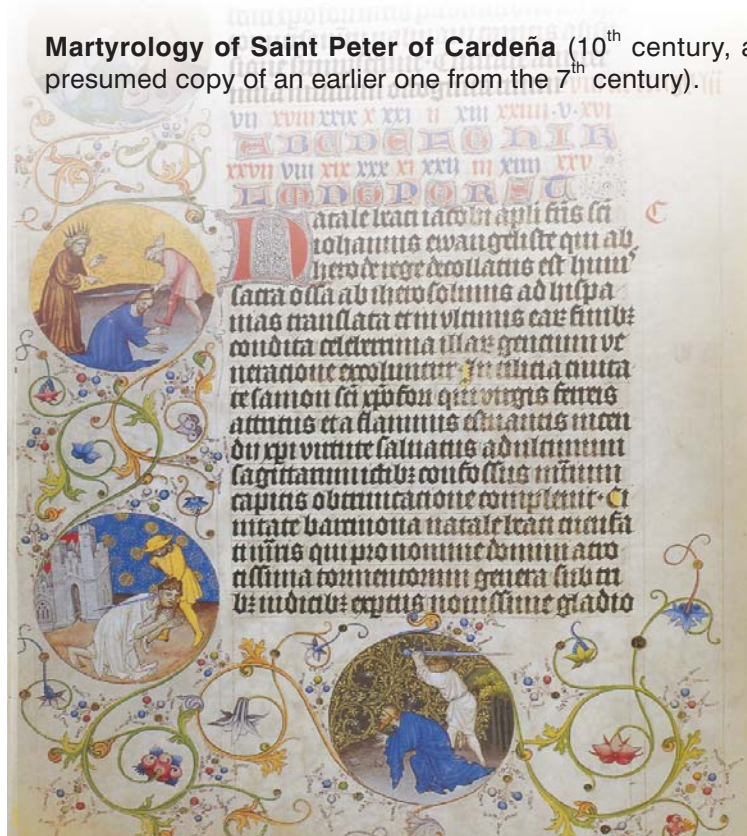
Hymn “Barcino leto Cucufate vermans” (7th century recorded in manuscripts in Toledo and Silos, 10th – 11th centuries.)

Liber Sacramentorum (Toledo, 9th century) A compilation of the Hispano-Visigoth tradition. A mass dedicated to the martyr.

Martyrology of Adó (about the year 850).

Martyrology of Usuard (Abbey of Saint Germain des Pres, about 865). The monk Usuard had visited Cordoba and Barcelona looking for relics for his monastery.

Martyrology of Saint Peter of Cardena (10th century, a presumed copy of an earlier one from the 7th century).



BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE OF TRADITION

Going through the sequence of narrations – among reliable ones and pious ones – there are a few traits that have popularized the life of our martyr. They are mentioned as follows – without attributing any specific value to them.

- It is stated that he was born in North Africa, in the city of Scillium, near Carthage. Historically it is true that there was a great Christian movement there before the 4th century A.D.
- That at the end of the 3rd century he came together with St. Feliu, his companion and friend, who set off for Girona – where he was also martyred.
- That he was a merchant, generous with the poor and a preacher of the Gospel, both in word and by working many wonders.
- That he was persecuted by the Roman Governor at the time of Diocletian because of his faith.
- That he suffered all kinds of torments and bore them all.
- That he was a prisoner somewhere near Barcelona : 8 Roman miles along the road from Barcino to Egara (Terrassa)
- That this place (Octavianus) corresponds to the present day Monastery of Sant Cugat
- That there he was finally murdered (had his throat cut) in the year 304 A.D.
- That two Christian women from Illuro (Mataró), Juliana and Semproniana, buried his body and for this reason also died as martyrs.



Sant Cugat with Saints Juliana and Semproniana.
Joaquim Ros – Façade of Santa Maria de Mataró

ON THE PLACE OF THE MARTYRDOM AND BURIAL OF SANT CUGAT

The traditional belief that St. Cugat was murdered at the Roman settlement called Octavianus and that he was also buried here goes back a long time. Various teams of archaeologists have studied this place, some seeing substantial evidence to confirm the story and some being less favourable.

The following are the available data:

- In the centre of the present cloisters are the foundations of a Paleo-Christian church with a funeral monument attached dating from the 4th century A.D.
- Later the Visigoth Apse (4th century) was added and the part of the “cancellum” that was found in the excavations is from this construction.
- When the first Benedictine community gathered here (9th century), the monastery was dedicated to St. Cugat carrying on with the pre-existing worship.
- Successive enlargements or re-constructions have always been under his patronage.
- As from the 8th century it is said that the martyr’s remains are kept here.
- In the 7th century, St. Fulrad took a relic of St. Cugat from here for his Monastery in Paris dedicated to Saint Denis. When that immense gothic church was built –which today is a cathedral – the relics of St. Cugat occupied a place of honour in the apse to the right of St. Denis and are still resplendent today.
- As from the 14th century the monastery kept the martyr’s remains in a small chest of great beauty. On the relief work the life of St. Cugat is explained according to Mozarabic tradition.
- After the monasteries were freed from mortmain, the chest with the relics was taken to the parish of St. Cugat del Rec (or “del Forn”) in Barcelona to guarantee its safety.
- In the year 1950 the town of St. Cugat held a solemn reception of a small relic proceeding from the chest which had been in the custody of the parish of St. Cugat del Rec. Today the relics are in the crypt of the Basilica at Sta. Maria del Mar. Our parish keeps a faithful copy of the original chest.



Small chest with relics of St. Cugat
from the 14th century

THE “MARTYROLOGIUM ROMANUM” HAS ALWAYS MENTIONED ST. CUGAT ON JULY 25TH

The 2001 edition of the Roman Martyrology says the following:

Die 25 julii

Octavo Kalendas augusti

FESTUM SANCTI Jacobi, Apostolo que filius Sebedaei et...

2-In Lycia, sancti Christophori, martyris.

3-Barcinone in Hipania Tarraconense, sancti Cucuphatis, martyris, qui, in persecutione Diocletiani imperatoris gladio persussus, victor migravit in caelum.

That is:

3- In Barcelona, in the Hispania of Tarraco, feast of St. Cugat, martyr, who, under the persecution of the emperor Diocletian, struck by the sword, emigrated victoriously to heaven.

The text wanted to keep the feast day as the 25th July, as indicated by the tradition of the saint's decease. However, in order to celebrate the solemn memory of St. James, the apostle, the celebration was transferred to the 27th.

Also in Mataro the feast of Saint Juliana and Saint Semproniana is held on the 27th. According to traditional belief they also died because they showed solidarity with the faith of St. Cugat.

THE LITURGY OF ST. CUGAT

The Service to St. Cugat from the missal which comes from the Monastery. (Archives of the Crown of Aragon) 15th century.

The popularity of the worship of Saint Cugat throughout the Catalan dioceses attains its fullest expression in the liturgy which goes beyond the borders of Tarragona.

The name of the martyr is always included in any liturgical medieval repertory in Catalan territory, at least in the litanies of the saints. If we just keep to the codices which contain the texts for holding mass, the variety of forms for mass dedicated to the saint, show how widespread his worship was.



Service to St. Cugat in the missal, which comes from the Monastery. (Archives of the Crown of Aragon).

WHERE THE NAME “CUGAT” COMES FROM

Cugat, (Cucufate in Spanish, Cucao en Galego, (Galician) Cucuphat in French...)

The names come from the Latin Cucuphas. All traditional belief agrees that it comes from North Africa, as the saint himself was from the flourishing Christian communities that were there in early times.

Dr. J. Millàs I Vallicrosa, an illustrious Hebrew scholar from Barcelona noted the morphological coincidence of the name Cucuphas with the Semitic roots Cucab, Coqueba, Cúcuba, (= star) a possible root of the Latin name Cucuphas, taking into account the Africanization, or aspiration, of the “B” between vowels into “V” or “F”. (Dr. Angel Fàbrega: “El pasionario hispánico en el siglo X”, page 140).

THE NAME OF SANT CUGAT IN TOPONOMY

Àrea Catalana

Monastery of Sant Cugat del Vallès	Vallès Occidental	
<i>Pqarishes and chapels</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Region</i>
Sant Cugat de Salt	882	Gironès
Sant Cugat de Fornells de la Selva	882	Gironès
Sant Cugat de Ravós de Terri	s. X	Pla de l'Estany
Sant Cugat Salou o del Arco	927	Bages
Sant Cugat de Gavadons	968	Osona
Sant Cugat d'Albons	980	Baix Empordà
Sant Cugat d'Escaró	981	Conflent
Sant Cugat de Traià	996	Maresme
Sant Cugat de Servo Baboso	1010	Pallars Sobirà
Saint Cucuphat de Prats de Sornian	1334	Fenolledes
Sant Cugat de Queixàs	1021	Rosselló
Sant Cugat del Rec, del Forn o del Camí	1023	Barcelonès
Sant Cugat d'Alboquers	½ s.XI	Osona
Sant Cugat d'Ivorra	1055	Segarra
Sant Cugat de Sessarrigues	1075	Penedès
Sant Cugat de Rifà	1098	Vallès Oriental
Sant Cugat de Moja	1098	Penedès
Sant Cugat d'Almussarra	1143	Penedès
Sant Cugat de Queixans	1271	Cerdanya
Sant Cugat Desfar o de Vall Venera	1489	Baix Empordà
Saint Cucufat de Flexus	814	Aude
Saint Couat d'Aude	1118	Aude
Saint Cucufat de Lauza	1118	Aude
Saint Couat d'Alet	s. XI	Razès
Saint Couat du Razès	s. XIII	Razès
Saint Cucuphat de Prats de Sornian	1334	Fenolledes
Saint Cophan		Gascunya

Churches with relics

Monastery of Sant Miquel de Cuixà	11 th century	Conflent
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North-West Iberian Peninsula

Dedicated churches		region
Sancti Cucufati	10 th century	Portugal
Sancti Cucuvadi	10 th century	Portugal
São Covade		Portugal
Monastery of Sant Cugat d'Evora		Portugal
San Cucufate de Astorga		León
Sancobad de Formigueiro		Lugo
Sancobad de Villalba		Lugo
Sant Cucufate de la Llanera		Astúries
San Cucao		Astúries

Churches with relics

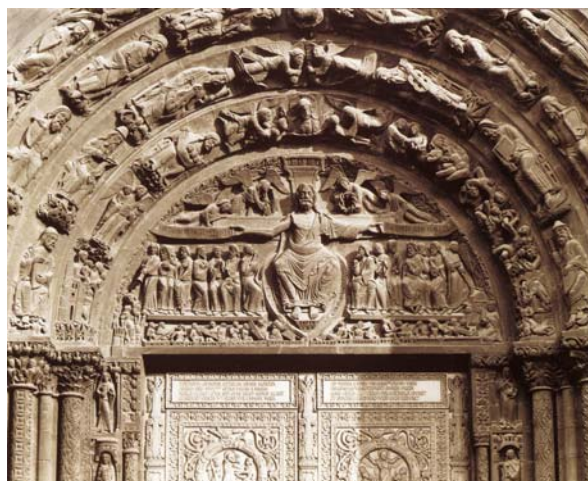
	region
Braga Cathedral	Portugal
Santiago Cathedral	Galícia
Oviedo Cathedral	Asturias
Santó Tomé	Zamora

France and Germany

Chapels and monasteries with relics	region
Murbach	Vosges
Liepvre	Alsàcia
Herbrechtingen	Württemberg
Riechenau	Württemberg
Saint Denis	París
Saint Cucuphat or Quiquenfath de Malmaison	París

Evolution of the original Latin name "Cucuphas"

Bable	Cucao
Catalan	Cugat (popular variation – Culgat)
Spanish	Cucufate
French	Cucuphat
Galician	Covade o Cobad
Gascon	Cophan
Occitaine	Couat



Central gateway of Saint Denis Cathedral – Paris

AS A CONCLUSION

The **historical data** we have on Sant Cugat is **not much**, but they are **of great quality**. There was a man in the early part of the 4th century who, under the persecution of the Emperor Diocletian, washed our land with his blood in order to witness to his faith in Christ.

In order to render him due honour and give thanks to the Lord for the spiritual benefit of his witnessing,

We celebrate his feast day in a Christian manner.

And to let all people know who visit the Monastery of Sant Cugat from all over the world, among all of us we have had written in the centre of the cloisters the following:

A ST. CUGAT
MÀRTIR DE CRIST
CCCIV
•
AQUEST INDRET HONORÀ EL SEU MARTIRI
I LES SEVES DESPULLES
•
LA SEVA MEMÒRIA BASTÍ L'ESGLÉSIA
I EL MONESTIR
•
I AVUI CONGREGA CONFIAT
EL POBLE CRISTIÀ

*To St. Cugat
Martyr in Christ
CCCIV*

*This place honours his martyrdom and his remains
His memory has built the church and the monastery
And today Christian people gather here
trusting in him*

1st edition
Parish of St. Pere d'Octavia
Feast of St. Cugat in the year 2002
On the millennium of the papal bull from
Pope Sylvester II that consolidated the Monastery.

2nd revised edition
Feast of St. Cugat in the year 2004
On the 17th centenary of the martyrdom of St. Cugat.