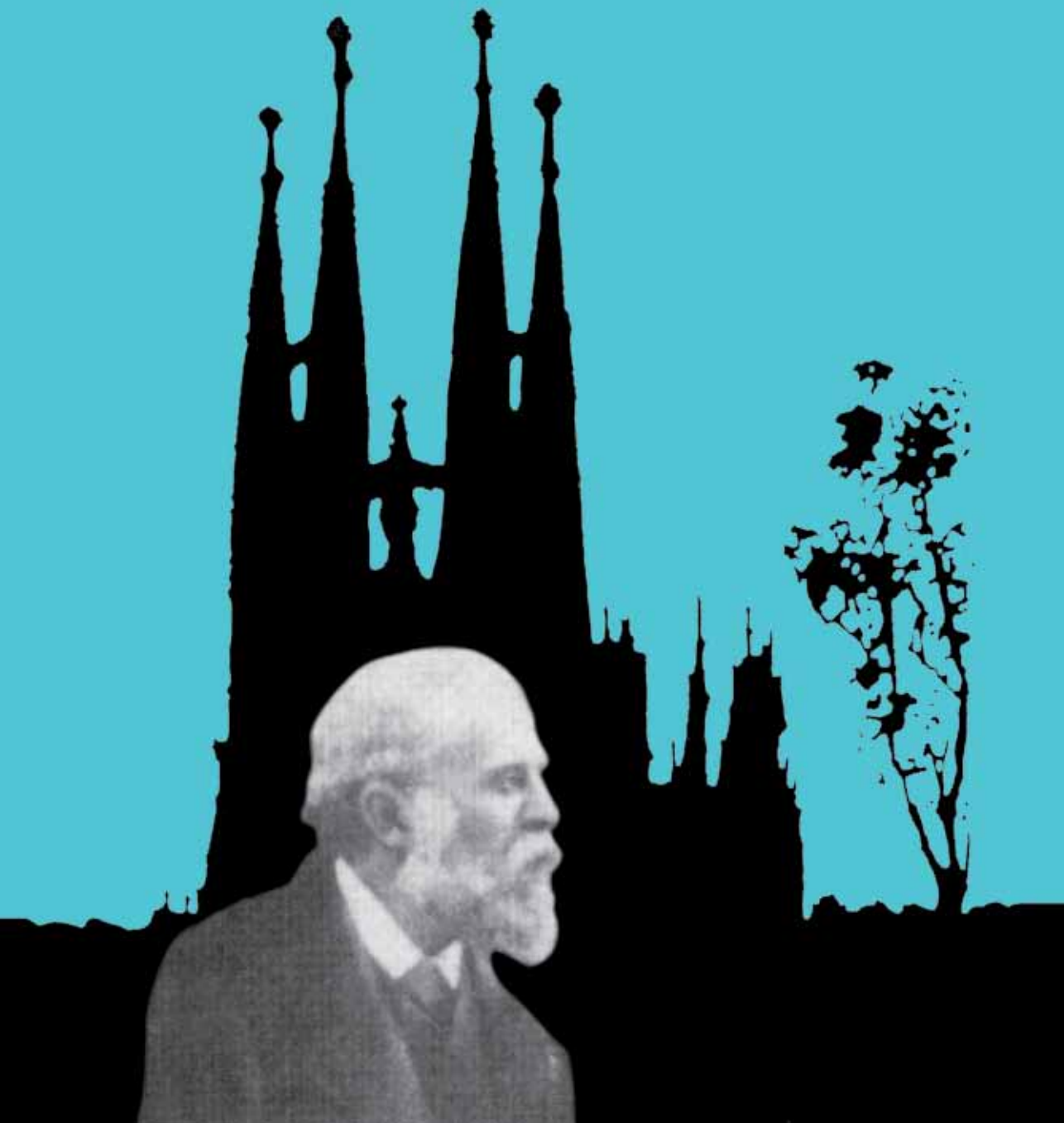


# Towards the Beatification of Antoni Gaudí

Since 1992



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# **Towards the beatification of Antoni Gaudí**

Since 1992

Juan Manuel González-Cremona

Association pro Beatification of Antoni Gaudí

*A*ssociació pro  
beatificació  
d'Antoni Gaudí



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## TO THE READER

With the occasion of celebrating twenty years of the Association of the pro Beatification of Antoni Gaudi, the organization has decided to prepare a new edition of the book of its activities. The first edition of the book appeared in 2007. Since then there have been new events that deserve mentioning in this new publication. I hope this edition helps many people know better the personality and works of Gaudi in his historical, cultural and religious context.

I would like to congratulate the Association for this new initiative, especially the president, the architect José Manuel Almuzara. I hope and ask God that the knowledge of Gaudi's personality and works and the recognition of his sanctity, if this is the final judgement of the Church, becomes evident in the glory of God and in a greater knowledge and a greater love of the Sacred Family of Nazaret, Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

Among the events that have occurred since the publication of the first edition in 2007, it is necessary to make special mention of the act of consecration of Gaudi's temple by the Pope Benedict XVI, in a memorable ceremony, presided by him, that went together with the concession of the category of minor basilica, through a bull beautifully titled: "Temple of God and of the Christian community", a bull that Benedict XVI signed and sealed with the Ring of the Fisher, in our city Barcelona, on November 7, 2010.

There are many memories that the Pope has of that unforgettable day. All of us who were there also keep them. I highly recommend the readers of this new edition to read and meditate the beautiful homily that Benedict XVI read that day which is rightly included in these pages. Truly, the fact that the Pope accepted my invitation to come to Barcelona to dedicate the basilica was a great blessing from God for the Archdiocese of Barcelona and for the *Cap i Casal de Catalunya*.

However, we are not totally satisfied. Gaudi's Christian personality and the meaning of his work inspires us to make an effort to accomplish all of what Benedict XVI said in his memorable visit. Initiatives like the celebration of the "Missió Metròpolis" and the so called "Atri dels Gentils", in Barcelona, indicate to us a path of evangelization that was already present in the purposes of Antoni Gaudi and that we are going to follow. Let us honor his testimony and his spiritual and

cultural legacy. I modestly would like to collaborate with the publication of my book “La Sagrada Família, un diàleg entre fe i cultura”, in which our basilica is presented like an icon for the Church of the 21st century.

Hopefully these pages will also collaborate to make the basilica a symbol of family and of brotherhood and peace among all the people of the world.

Barcelona, June 10th, 2012.

Anniversary of the death of Antoni Gaudí i Cornet and of the foundation of the Association Pro Beatification.

**† Lluís Martínez Sistach**

Archbishop of Barcelona



## PROLOGUE

### AN ARCHITECT ON THE ALTARS

On the death of Antoni Gaudí on 10th June, 1926 a deep feeling about the holiness of this exceptional architect already existed in the city of Barcelona. In the course of the same year, a publisher in Barcelona printed a book entitled *Antoni Gaudí. His life. His work. His Death* with articles by 17 authors all praising the late artist. Mossén Manuel Trens, the director of the Diocesan Museum, entitled his article *The architect of God* and outlined the profile of a professional dedicated to accomplishing his work which was inspired directly by God in the *Sagrada Família*. The architect J. F. Ràfols completed his article, reproduced in 1929 in his book, saying that Gaudí, out of context from his faith, would be always misunderstood. Some aspects of his work can be understood even by sceptics, but the result will only be reserved for believers.

There has always existed a close relationship between the Christian faith and Gaudí's architecture, which in addition he understood without being hypocritical or sanctimonious. His clergymen friends were always those with more advanced ideas, supporters of the new liturgy. Gaudí's bishop friends, José Torras i Bages, from Vic; Pedro Campins Barceló, from Majorca and Juan B. Grau Vallespinós, from Astorga were innovators in their way of understanding society and Christian worship.

As a young man, Gaudí, either when a student or newly graduated, worried about the problems of his time and working conditions. He showed a genuine social concern which he reflected architectonically in the *Cooperativa Mataronense*, the first to be established in Spain. However, the religious convictions that had been acquired in the heart of a Christian artisan family and from the education received in the "Escoles pies" of Reus, where worshipping the Virgin had been of sovereign importance, were always kept strong and firm. In 1883 he planned the *Capilla del Santísimo de san Félix de Alella*. The previous year he had designed a project for a neo-gothic church for his teacher and friend Juan Martorell, a wise man and a saint, as said of Gaudí, for a monastery that was never constructed for the celestine Benedictines in Cuevas de Vera, in Almeria.

The lists of constructions built by Gaudí of religious character constitute most of his work as an architect. Those already mentioned are followed by: the *Colegio Teresiano*, from 1888 for father Henry of Osso, now Saint Henry of Osso, another important priest, founder of a congregation and of schools with modern educational programmes for girls. Between 1887 and 1893 he was responsible for the project and direction of the *Palacio Episcopal de Astorga* for the bis-

hop Juan Grau; from 1898 he began to prepare the project for the church in the *Colonia Güell*, thus continuing with a social type of construction just as in the *Cooperativa Mataronense*. Between 1903 and 1914 he was in charge of the daring and very artistic liturgical-architectonic restoration of the *Cathedral de Mallorca* on the recommendation of the bishop Pedro Campins. Meanwhile the work of the Sagrada Familia continued, to which Gaudí dedicated forty two years of his life, with a love and devotion that, according to the architect and historian José Pijoan, architects do not usually put into stone.

However, Gaudí's religious consciousness; his daily communion; the fasting during Lent; especially in 1894, which nearly resulted in him starving to death; his daily visits to the oratory of Saint Philip Neri to converse with his spiritual leader, Father Agustín Mas; going to work in the cathedral on Sundays, is not only reflected in his sacred architecture but is also present in that of a less holier character. The *Palacio Güell*, completed in 1888, is finished off with a cross and in its interior the paintings of Alejo Clapés recalling the life of Saint Isabel in the great hall that houses a chapel where there was an image of the Immaculate Conception. In 1892, in the "*Casa de los Botines*" in Leon, he situated the image of Saint Jorge in the middle of the façade. In *Bellesguard*, constructed between 1900 and 1909, there is a tower 35 metres high finished off with a large four arm cross, the same one that is raised above the tower of the *Pabellón de Portería del Parque Güell*, from 1903, an enclosure whose highest point is the *Turó de les Tres Creus*, a cross that replaced the chapel that could not be erected for economic reasons. The ceramic bench around the square known as the Greek Theatre contains verses extracted from poems dedicated to the Virgin. The *Casa Batlló*, constructed between 1904 and 1906, has a ceramic four arm cross high on top and underneath the anagrams of Jesus, Joseph and Mary. What can be said about *Casa Milà*, dedicated to the Virgin?

An architect following a perfectly Christian path throughout all his life, with heroic features at times, with a total dedication to his trade; with neither political nor economic ambitions, with no shortcomings other than friendship with other people as religious as himself. It is evident that the path of sanctity can be considered, a category that is reached not *ad digitum*, but rather after a lengthy and very thorough process and only when the existence of a miracle worked by God is demonstrated, by intercession of the candidate to blessed or Saint.

It does not seem such an unrealistic idea therefore to continue a process officially initiated in 2000 with the view to a possible beatification of Antoni Gaudí who would be the first blessed architect in history.

### **Joan Bassegoda Nonell**

Dr. in Architecture. Curator of the Real Cátedra Gaudí

# THE SPAIN THAT GAUDI KNEW

Juan Manuel González-Cremona



## 1. HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

Antoni Gaudí i Cornet was born in Reus, a province of Tarragona, in 1852, in the middle of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, one of the most agitated eras in the history of Spain.

The Napoleonic invasion had taken place between the end of the reign of Charles IV and that of his wicked son, Fernando VII. It had brought about the shameful delivery of Spain to France and the consequent revolt of the Spanish which would end with the substitution of Bonapart, imposed by the Bourbon, who had at first been “desired”, but who together with the rattle of chains, would later turn into the “villain”.

Fernando VII died in 1833 and because he had no sons, was succeeded on the throne by his eldest daughter Isabel.

The Salic law had been abolished and then restored by Fernando VII in unclear circumstances which, together with ambition, enabled his brother Charles to make a claim for the throne. It would be the beginning of the Carlist wars which would powerfully contribute to casting a shadow over the national panorama.

In 1835, under a liberal government, the principal support of the young Queen Isabel II in her confrontation against the Carlists, the Minister Mendizábal, an anticlerical bordering on anti-religious, disentailed - confiscated - religious properties and started a persecution that, with interruptions, hues and rages, would last until the end of the civil war.

The American colonies had been lost in the first decades of the century and around the time of Gaudí's birth, the reign of Isabel II was starting to crumble.

It was logical that this would happen. The Queen, after growing out of initial adolescence that could forgive weaknesses and even mistakes, was now in the prime of her youth, but continued with her flaws and her mistakes multiplied. In reality, she who was known by her liberal teachers as “the first Spanish Queen educated to reign”; “the pupil of freedom”, either failed to take advantage of the lessons taught or these were inadequate or insufficient.

Finally, in 1868 the Navy and Army both rebelled, Isabel II was defeated and so began a –somewhat disastrous– trial period.

Firstly a foreign king was sought –Amadeus I of Savoy– and so the Republic was proclaimed which lasted for one year and during which there were four presidents.

Due to the position taken by the United States, based on the supposed destruction of the battleship *Maine* (in 1898), it can be said that the XIX<sup>th</sup> century ended in a very deplorable way for Spain.

### 2.1. THE CATALAN RENAISSANCE

As a principal part of Spain that it was –and is– Catalonia could not be saved from the general political and social slaughter; nevertheless, its consequences were not as visible as in other parts.

This is due to several reasons whose detailed study does not correspond to this book; but it is worth mentioning some of them.

During the final decades of the century, industry developed with a great force in the Principality of Catalonia. Especially in the textile industry but also in the naval industry, there was a demand for labour that was covered thanks to the immigration of Spaniards from other regions, with the consequent increase of wealth through major consumption and also for other reasons.

Far from the epileptic governments of Madrid and to a certain extent, far also from political obsession, the Catalan leaders; both political and social or even religious, could develop their teachings in a much calmer and therefore more productive climate than those in Madrid.

Ultimately, the intellectuals who were more committed to the cause were in Madrid or its outskirts and not in Catalonia; thus they escaped the disastrous end of century that silenced so much talent in byzantine social and parliamentary discussions.

Due to a lack of confidence in a Madrid that was not then very trustworthy, the Catalans began a process which although inherent was still fruitful and known by historians as the *Renaixença* (Catalan Renaissance)

Catalonia suffered a political decline after the War of Succession at the beginning of the XVIII century. Its adhesion to the Austrian candidate brought about several severe sanctions after the victory of the Bourbons. Suffice to say that Barcelona was even deprived of its secular University which was moved to the city of Cervera for its loyalty to Felipe V.

Although the sanctions were lifted during the reign of Charles III allowing the Catalans to even trade with American colonies, the feeling of humiliation lasted in the most rational consciences.

Therefore it was in the second half of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, when diverse factors coincided in order to promote the appearance of a feeling of nationalistic pride called *Renaixença*.

Although it is easy to point out that this movement coincided at the same time and is due to similar circumstances –the frustration of Spain–, as the Basque natio-

nalism of Sabino Arana, the Andalusian and the Galician, the truth is that Catalan nationalism differs from all of them, if not for its reasons, then for its effects.

Firstly, it does not wish for confrontations with the rest of Spain, but endeavours to re-discover and to affirm its own personality. Created and encouraged by the leaders of thought and culture, it connected very well with the intellectual leaders in Madrid who saw regenerationism as a way of pulling Spain out of the swamp.

Although there are illustrious precedents –the poem “*La Pàtria*” by Aribau, in 1833–, the beginning of the movement can be dated back to 1859, when the medieval “*Jocs Florals*” or Floral Games were retrieved.

This event, obviously cultural, nevertheless had clear sociological and even political implications.

In the first place it honoured King Juan I of Aragon, who had created the games in 1393; that is to say, continuity was somehow established of that golden middle age for the Catalan and Aragon people, whose dominion even reached Athens.

On the other hand, on that time, Catalan as a language was despised by the educated and bourgeois classes, who used Castilian Spanish and considered Catalan to be a dialect only appropriate for peasants and artisans.

The nationalistic acceptance of the “*Jocs Florals*” was clear from the very beginning when one of its promoters, the romantic poet Milà i Fontanals, declared that all the pieces of work to be presented should be written or read in Catalan.

Gaudí was clearly an enthusiastic follower of the “*Jocs Florals*”.

At the beginning of the seventies, a twice weekly literary magazine appeared that immediately took its name from the movement that it was trying to lead: *Renaixença*. Amongst its collaborators were Àngel Guimerà and Pedro Adalvert who, in 1880 and with the determined support of the publication, would be the promoters of the First Catalanist Congress.

Little by little, the movement that began with floral games made its way towards major sociological and political aims that were clearly demonstrated in the eighties when the *Renaixença* was developed into a daily paper and became the standard-bearer of Catalan autonomous ideas. In 1885 the “*Memorial de Greuges*” or “*Memorial de Agravios*” was presented to the king ; in 1889 the first Catalan political party “*Unió Catalanista*” was created and in 1892 the famous Bases de Manresa were redacted, which openly defended a separate regime for Catalonia.

To finalise this brief summary on the *Renaixença*, it should be made clear that the movement was neither separatist in the political field nor leftist in the social field.

There were other Catalan movements which followed –both these ideas– but not the Renaissance who originated from the bourgeoisie, especially from Barcelona, and whose aspirations went no further than to seek a recognition and a fair evaluation of the language and of the historical and cultural Catalan values within the rest of Spain.

## 2.2. MODERNISM

This important artistic movement did not originate in Catalonia and therefore was not a result of the *Renaiixença*; nevertheless, the fact that it took root so well and so successfully in the Principality was mainly due to the introduction of renaissance ethics and beliefs in the most educated and ultramodern levels of the Catalan society. This was especially the case in the society of Barcelona.

Modernism is the term given to the innovative and comprehensive artistic movement in Spain. It has just as many names as countries in which it took root: *Art Nouveau* in France; *Jugendstil* in Germany; *Secessionstil* in Austria; Modernism in England, etc.

It was inspired in the British pre-Raphael sources and in French symbolism. After seeking and achieving acceptance in art and handicrafts, the workshops created by William Morris were recognized as precedents of modernism in England by the eloquent name of Arts and Crafts.

In a brief summary, modernism can be defined as a movement that forsakes classicism by eliminating straight lines wherever possible; it takes elements of the Gothic and of the Romanesque style and is expressed with a neo-baroque style –decorative more than architectural– that reaches Wagnerian limits and nearly always obtains effects of tremendous visual beauty. A perfect example is the wonderful symbiosis between architecture and decoration in the “*Palau de la Música Catalana*”, in Barcelona, work of the genial Catalan architect Lluís Domènech i Muntaner.

El Palau was built in the first years of the XX<sup>th</sup> century but back in 1880 Domènech had demonstrated a sample of his geniality constructing the building for the publishing group Montaner y Simón, known today as the Tàpies Foundation.

Strongly influenced by styles known as “German” and “Neo-mudejar”, the building is composed of elements and symbols appropriate to Modernism such as stone work, wrought iron and serrated cogs.

Although a review of modernist Catalan architecture is not the subject of this book, another of Domènech’s fundamental pieces of work should be mentioned: the *Hospital de San Pablo*, also in Barcelona.



Modernism triumphed in Catalonia more rapidly and with more force than in the rest of Spain, this having a sociological and to a certain extent, political explanation because it connected exactly with the progressive demands of the *Renaixença*.

The new trend that was spreading all over Europe was not in the least nationalist, rather, the opposite. However, as the followers of the *Renaixença* adopted it as their own, they gave it a Catalan nuance. Better said, they incorporated international Modernism into the Catalan *Renaixença*.

Although Gaudí has deliberately not been mentioned in these introductory lines it is, nevertheless, necessary to add that Gaudí was not a modernist in the strict sense of the word. He was inspired by the ideas, of course, but just like every genius he went beyond the movement, shaped it according to his desire, took it to its limits and in short, he surpassed it.

The term Modernism appeared for the first time in 1884 in the *Renaixença* newspaper *L'Avenç* (The Advance), a decade before the *L'Art Nouveau Gallery* opened in Paris, which would give the movement international recognition.

It is clear that at that time and in Catalonia, Modernism meant no more than a desire for change, for breaking the old moulds and definitively for advancing; but, rather too hastily, it became an artistic-literary movement to the outside world; although it remained more sociological and political in its interior.

Although all the initial enthusiasts were from the Catalan *Renaissance*, very soon Modernism drifted away from the *Renaixença*, or probably it should be said it overcame it, leaving behind the nostalgic romanticism, the conservatism and a certain decadent touch from which it suffered in order to enthusiastically join a changing world. A world that was liberal and full of new forms of expression: artistic, literary and decorative, but also political and even linguistic.

With regard to the latter, it is necessary to highlight the work of Pompeu Fabra, who unified, updated and systematised the Catalan language.

In the social and political area, the Catalan modernists, without giving up their bourgeois origins, accepted new ideas in vogue at that time that went from a utopian socialism to a radical anarchism. In the religious area also, the Carlist past, that had been firmly established in Catalonia, was cast aside, making way for new liberal ideas, based on the liturgical reforms established by the Vatican and more so on the social principles of the Catholic letter *Rerum Novarum* from Pope Leon IX.

In a European environment of frenzied change and an incessant search for new forms of expression, a group of creators appeared in Catalonia producing an authentic renaissance and a splendour unknown since the Middle Ages.

In art, the forebearers Casas and Russignol were joined by Mir, Riquer, Brull, Masriera., Junyent and Anglada, among others; in sculpture, the name of Jose Llimona stands out although there are many more; in literature, the well-known name of Maragall, together with companions as illustrious as Mossèn Jacint Verdaguer.

As in the rest of Europe, Catalan Modernism gave a great deal of importance to decoration. It was the glorious Catalan creative era of Gallé and Lalique, in France; and of Tiffany in the United States. In Catalonia, Sagnier with stones and crystals; the stained glass windows of Oleguer Junyent, the necklaces of Teixé and Masriera, the mosaics of Homar, together with many more were achieving great success.

As a marginal commentary, the remarkable Wagnerian inspiration should be mentioned that was almost a constant in modernist creativity.

The Catalan architects who joined the wave of modernism with so much enthusiasm and geniality have been left for the end of this brief summary. Without forgetting, by any means, credit due to painters, sculptors, decorators, writers and musicians, it is possible that modernism reached its highest level and transcendence with Catalan architecture.

The list is incomplete, like most lists and does not include all famous names—remember that Gaudí is not included here. However we, without doubt, would head the list with the name of Lluís Domènech i Montaner, architect, as already said, of the building for the publishers *Montaner Simón*, of the magnificent *Palau de la Música* and the *Hospital de San Pau*; Jose Puig i Cadafalch, architect, among others, of the famous “*Casa de les Punxes, la Casa Amatller, Fàbrica Casarramona*”; Pedro Falqués: architect of the *Hidroeléctrica de Cataluña*, monument to the playwright *Federico Soler*, numerous and beautiful street-lamps; José Vilaseca: designer of the *Arco de Triunfo* of the International Exhibition of 1888, *Casas Pia Batlló* and *Enrique Batlló*; Enrique Sagnier: architect of the building for the Caja de Pensiones, la Caixa on Vía Laietana, *Templo del Sagrado Corazón, Casa Arnús (El Pinar)* in Barcelona (in collaboration with Jose Domènech i Estapà); Juan Rubió i Bellver: architect of *Casa Golferichs, Casa Roviralta*; Juan Martorell y Montells: architect of the Iglesia de las Salesas; Bernardí Martorell: architect of the *Convento de Valdonzella*; Jose Jujol: architect of *Casa Planells* and many more.

In its architectural, plastic and decorative examples, Modernism is a style of tremendous visual wealth but complex in its accomplishments, needing brilliant creators but also meticulous craftsmen, who often used curious elements. In short, modernist creations were expensive; only within reach of the richest.

Thanks to the prosperity of Catalan industry, in constant growth from the second half of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, modernist creators found patrons for their work with relative ease. They were happy years full of hope at the end of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the XX<sup>th</sup>. It was the Belle Époque.

The year 1914 arrived. Hopes and happy moments were swept away by the horrors of the First World War. Toulouse Lautrec was replaced by Munch; Domènech y Montaner by Gropius.

But Gaudí continued soaring day by day closer towards God.

### 3. GAUDÍ'S BIOGRAPHY

#### 3.1 FROM REUS TO BARCELONA

Antoni Gaudí i Cornet was born on 25th June, 1852 in Reus (Tarragona), the son of Francisco Gaudí Serra and Antonia Cornet Bertrán. He was the fifth son in this marriage and with siblings who were ill-fated.

The eldest, Rosa, on becoming an adult, got married and had a daughter, Rosita; but died at the age of thirty five. The second child, Maria, only lived until the age of five. Francisco, the third one, died at the age of two. Finally, a fourth, also called Francisco, died at the age of 21, scarcely having finished a degree in Medicine.

To this unfortunate succession of tragedies was added the pain felt by Antoni on the death of his mother when he only was 21 and to whom he had been very close. It is therefore easy to understand the reasons for his serious nature, a clear exteriorization of deep sadness, which would be a permanent fixture in the behaviour of the genial architect.

On both his parent's sides, Antoni descended from families of metalsmiths, the Gaudis came from Reus, and the Cornets from Riudoms, a small town four kilometres from Reus. Both localities are situated in the region of Camp in Tarragona.

Tarragona has always been –and even more so today– a land where excellent wines are produced. The metalsmiths Gaudí and Cornet worked for the producers of such wines, manufacturing boilers, serpentines and stills.

These facts take on importance since Gaudí himself repeated many a time that the constant memories of cauldrons and serpentines brought out in him a habit of thinking in three dimensions, which explains his very few sketches and multiple models. It is also necessary to add that the spiral and buckled forms of these products had a large influence on his architecture.

Antoni was a delicate child, susceptible to being ill. It is known that he suffered from rheumatic fever and therefore spent long periods of time on a small estate that his parents owned in Riudoms, called "*Mas de la Calderera*".

He was able to enjoy a close contact with Mediterranean nature during these stays and along with the forms and volumes already mentioned, this shaped the aesthetic aspirations of the future genial architect. Together with Mediterranean mythology, the flowers and plants reproduced in his works are those from the Camp of Tarragona.

It cannot be agreed upon where he first started his schooling. For some, it was

a school set up in the Hospital of Reus; for others, a simple attic in the same city.

What it is actually known to be true is that he studied baccalaureate with the charity schools in Reus. He began studying in 1863-64 and it can be said that he was never a brilliant pupil, not even in the university. His school reports, which have been conserved, are a long list of what today would be known as simple passes, together with some distinctions and quite a few failures.

In 1868-69, Gaudí left Reus to move to what would be his definitive residence; the city that formed him and which he transformed: Barcelona.

From Reus and Riudoms –from the Camp of Tarragona– Gaudí took the basic elements that would stay with him for the rest of his life and that his geniality would transform into creations that today are a heritage of humanity: boilers and broom that would be transformed into the Sagrada Família. Gaudí never tired of repeating that he had been chosen by God to do this.

Enrolled as an independent pupil in the Institute of Secondary Education in Barcelona, the young student completed secondary education and prepared to start studying Architecture.

However before being able to do so, the first step was to pass an entrance exam that consisted of three subjects: French (translation), Drawing of figures and Free Drawing, which included copying building façades in watercolours.

As recalled by the person who knows most about the life and work of Gaudí, the eminent doctor in architecture Joan Bassegoda Nonell (*Gaudí, la arquitectura del espíritu*, Ed. Salvat, 2001), the future creator of “*La Pedrera*” failed... in drawing buildings.

### **3.2. THE ADVENTURE OF POBLET**

Eduardo Toda Güell and Jose Ribera Saints were fellow scholars of Gaudí in the “escoles pies” and his best friends in Reus. With them Gaudí took on his first and by no means small architectural project. This was to be nothing less than the reconstruction of the Monastery of Poblet. Ribera was living in L’Espluga del Francolí, a locality very close to the monastery; therefore it was perhaps his idea and one which he would have transmitted to his two friends during long adolescent chats after classes.

In the summer of 1870, with Gaudí now in Barcelona, the three friends began the task, after being able to view *in situ* the ruinous condition of this architectural jewel.

The Cistercian monastery, built in 1152, *Santa Maria de Poblet* consists of different architectural styles: from the Romanesque, through the Cistercian and

the Gothic to posterior elements. The Parliament of the Catalan-Aragonese kingdom was held there and it also housed a pantheon for the monarchs.

In 1835 the inheritance of the monastery was limited by Mendizábal and some time later, during a revolt, uncontrollable rebels destroyed and plundered it, even desecrating the tombs of the kings, whose remains were rescued and taken to the cathedral of Tarragona. In 1940, after the Civil war, the Government entrusted the reconstruction of the Monastery to the Marques of Lozoya, who restored it to all its splendour, as can be seen today and to where the remains of the kings were returned.

But in 1870 the enterprising builders saw nothing more than ruins.

In accordance with their personal interests, they had divided the Herculean task between them. Ribera, the romantic, would write the history of the Monastery highlighting Catalan glories which had evolved there. The idea was to attract people's interest and so increase sales of the book which Toda –a future lawyer and diplomat– would write in order to use the proceeds of its sale to finance the reconstruction. And, as for Gaudí it isn't hard to guess what he was assigned –or what he assigned to himself–, the reconstruction.

Toda did not write a book, but he did write a report that includes the general plan of reconstruction with economic and cultural sections, etc. The archive of the monastery has been preserved and contains a pencil drawing by Gaudí representing the coat of arms of the abbot Cuyás, from the XVIII century.

End of the project.

### **3.3. L'EXCURSIONISME**

This adolescent adventure is emphasized for a reason, since it clearly highlights the three loves in Gaudí's life: God, architecture and nature.

It has been said –and the person who has written this assures it to be true– that a long childhood illness leaves a scar in life.

Due to his rheumatic fever, Gaudí spent long periods of time in Mas de la Calderera, many hours in bed apart from the occasional ride on a donkey, because he was too weak to walk.

But his eyes and mind were wide open and he was able to meditate, admire and love the nature that surrounded him.

Mediterranean nature, olive trees with twisted trunks, fragrant broom, flowers in summer, fog in winter. Curved forms and an absence of right angles. A burning sun and sudden storms. This is the Camp of Tarragona and its people are just the

same: warm-hearted and tough at the same time. “Gent del Camp, gent del llamp” (Country people, people of the lightning flash) as the saying goes, referring to the character of the local people, easily given to an intense but brief flare-up. Gaudí honoured the saying, although he was more concerned with the briefness than the intensity.

Symptoms of his childhood illness accompanied him throughout his life but did not stop him from enjoying a plentiful life, just as these childhood visions never left him either.

This explains how, while studying in Barcelona, he was eager to join rambling groups, abundant then in Catalonia, just as today.

The Renaixença movement that recuperated the historical Catalan memory and which we have already briefly mentioned undoubtedly brought about a transformation on life in Barcelona having special effect amongst university students.

Denying the suggestion that he was not very keen on friendships and was even unsociable, Gaudí spent his youth between groups of friends and multiple cultural and social activities. As an adult, his health forced him to limit his social life but he never gave up the long walks and the meetings with his friends.

During the first years of life in Barcelona, his activities were multiple and intense. A regular member of the Ateneu Barcelonès (a cultural centre), whose headquarters were then and still are in a Gothic palace; he took part actively in literary, philosophical and even scientific gatherings, since his curiosity had no limits. He was not a speaker, therefore he spoke little but his words were always explicit and well-founded and although he was only just over twenty, his opinions were listened to with attention and even with respect by professionals and professors.

The intellectuals who gathered together were divided into two friendly yet incompatible groups: the friends of the statu quo and those who wanted modernization immediately. Gaudí was with the latter group.

In honour of the intellectuals of the Ateneu, it is necessary to mention, as recalled by Joan Matamala, that it was in these lounges where Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo gave his first public speech. A prominent fact in itself, but even greater if taking into account that the great historian was only seventeen years old at the time.

By this time, Gaudí loved music, a love that would stay with him throughout his whole life. At that time, Europe was discovering Wagner and thanks to Jose Anselmo Clavé; a musician and teacher, Barcelona was his greatest admirer. The impressive and even overpowering grandeur of the music of this genius must have had an everlasting effect on the future architect of impressive and overwhelming pieces of work and that was just the way it was.

The Catalan Renaissance tried to be –and to a great extent was– a perfect movement. For a country to be reborn it has to be loved by its inhabitants and it is difficult to love the unknown. So, together with literature, debates and music, the followers of the renaissance wanted to know more about Catalonia.

In 1876 the Catalanist Scientific Rambling Association was founded, followed by the Catalan Association of Ramblers and Gaudí keenly joined both.

These activities were not strange to him since, as already mentioned, he had always been a great contemplator of nature and the creations of man in nature.

Gaudí spent many hours in the gothic church of *San Pedro* in Reus, that of *San Francisco* and of the *Purísima Sangre* as well as the sanctuary of the *Virgen de la Misericordia*. He took part in many pilgrimages from this sanctuary.

He was very familiar with outdoor life and therefore spent a lot of time practising his new-found interest of rambling in Catalonia.

As recalled by Bassegoda Nonell (Op. Cit.), in 1879 Gaudí joined the Catalanist Scientific Rambling Association and later took part in a trip to Granollers, in order to study the restoration of the parish church of San Esteban.

In January 1880, he visited the farmhouse *Torre Rodona* in Les Corts de Sarrià, which had been restored by its owner, Mr. Eusebio Güell.

In 1880 the institution was celebrating its fourth anniversary and Gaudí was assigned the decoration of the assembly rooms. Corinthian capitals emerged from the four columns of the Roman temple on whose ruins the building had been constructed. (Calle de Paradis, 10, Barcelona). The capitals were a source of inspiration to the genius who amazed everybody by placing garlands of flowers and branches of ivy around the top of the capitals with the words: “Past, Homeland and Future”.

A whole declaration of principles. And of purposes.

In 1882 he actively took part in an ambitious excursion.

The principal destination was Santa Maria de Poblet, but with a difference. It was going to be a night visit with lighting *sui generis*. Gaudí and the Valencian painter, Brel, organised it as a surprise and for the enjoyment of those present, amongst whom was Mons. Jacinto Verdaguer, immortal author of *L'Atlàntida* and *Canigó*. Without previous notice, rockets went off together with fireworks into the empty temple in ruins, creating effects of great luminosity and beauty. Later there were torch races along the phantasmagorical corridors. The act ended with the singing of *Salve Regina* that sounded with special grandeur, multiplying the voices a hundredfold, around the tumbledown walls.

There was also an excursion to Roussillon –in the south of France– and in 1889, the last one in which Gaudí took part, to Sant Feliu de Guíxols; visiting monasteries and megalithic monuments.



Monasteries and stones. God and architecture. Both unchanging qualities in Gaudí.

As mentioned earlier, Gaudí came to Barcelona in 1868 to finish the baccalaureate and to begin his university studies. At first he lived in the neighbourhood of the Ribera; then in Saint Pedro with his brother Francisco, a year older than him, who studied medicine and to whom he was very close.

The academic difficulties of the future architectural genius have already been mentioned; but a terrible event that affected his youth also has to be mentioned. In 1872, just after obtaining his degree in medicine, Francisco died.

It wasn't to be the only death. A short while afterwards his mother also died, no doubt overwhelmed by so much suffering.

At the age of only twenty, Antoni had lost three of his brothers and his mother. A few years later, in 1879, Rosa, the eldest sister would also die, leaving a husband and a small daughter, Rosita.

So many deaths in such a short period of time cannot help but affect a person who is still maturing. Gaudí had lived with death since his childhood, but the pain was always moderated by the absolute certainty that death was not the end, but the beginning.

It is no exaggeration to say that his work was an attempt in joining earth and heaven together. It is no exaggeration to say that to a great extent, he achieved this.

## 4. ARCHITECTURE

In 1868, the year of Gaudí's arrival in Barcelona, the city was in full process of transformation. The *Ensanche*, a magnificent project by the engineer Cerdà (1816-1876), had liberated it from the limitations of a city wall –a shame that it was almost totally destroyed– and started an extension inwards, incorporating neighbouring populations and stirring into action the construction of housings and trades.

The Ateneu and the Liceo were the most important cultural centres and Gaudí was a regular visitor in order to discover Aesthetics and Wagner.

From Cerdà to the spirited “renaixentists”, all the inhabitants of Barcelona wanted to bring back the greatness to their beloved city just as it had enjoyed in the middle ages.

On his arrival, Gaudí became immersed in this youthful environment of enthusiasm and innovation and he would have been most surprised if somebody had told him then that he would be the person who would give back to Barcelona the splendour that was so longed for.

In this city he completed the baccalaureate. It is not quite clear why he did not finish his studies in the “escoles pies” of Reus; where he had always enjoyed being just as he always said. The most probable reason is that he wanted to be close to the Escuela de Arquitectura (School of Architecture). On the other hand, his brother Francisco was in Barcelona which made things much easier for him.

It can also be said that a possible cause for such a sudden change, as agreed by the majority of his biographers, was the violence that broke out in Reus during the revolutionary days of 1868.

Whatever the reason, Gaudí arrived in Barcelona in time to register as an independent pupil in the Institute of Secondary Education, set up a few years earlier and there he passed the two subjects that stood between him and the University.

In the same building as the Institute –the convent of Carmen– was the Faculty of Sciences, where the young man had to take exams in several subjects before architectural studies in a strict sense.

Gaudí had to spend five long, hard years before he was able to pass through the much desired doors of architecture studying complements of algebra and analytic geometry, which he passed in the year 1869/70; and applied mechanics, which he would pass in October 1874.

It must be said, in defence of the truth and of Gaudí, that he did not waste time socialising, which would have been understandable at his age, but spent his time reading, studying and most of all, working towards his maintenance, since his

father's income was not sufficient to maintain two sons who studied away from home. Further mention of these jobs will come later on.

The doors of the Superior Technical School of Architecture finally opened for him on completing the stage of Sciences in October 74 and passing French (translation), one of the three subjects that constituted the entrance exam. The study plan was completed with a Preparatory course and four more courses.

As already mentioned, Gaudí's university studies were a long hard struggle, a bittersweet mixture of passes, failures and some "notable progress." On 14th June, 1877 the long road of eight years studying came happily to its end and Gaudí was no longer a student but an architect. This was for the benefit of the university and for the regulations, because as far as he was concerned he had already been an architect for a long time. "Lorenzo, they say that I am now an architect", –he joked with his great friend, the sculptor Lorenzo Matamala–.

However, there was still something that had to be completed before he could really "graduate" in the strict sense of the word: a re-sit examination. He passed the exam on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 1877 and received his degree, again, in April 1878.

He was not even lucky in the final exam. The project that he had to carry out was an auditorium for the University, exactly the same type of construction that the president of the examining board had designed a few years earlier. Seeing that Gaudí designed something quite different from his examiner, he "rewarded" him with a "majority pass". What today, in student slang, might be translated as "scraping through".

## 5. GAUDÍ THE DRAUGHTSMAN

The family situation had made it necessary and so the young student did not hesitate in looking for jobs that allowed him to make ends meet without being a burden to his father. Naturally, he searched for work in what he knew how to do and what he enjoyed doing.

Possibly through friends of the family, he was taken on as a draughtsman in the team of the master builder José Fontseré Mestres, who was at the time in charge of work on the Town Hall, assuring him a job and a good reputation. The new assistant would benefit from both, although on a smaller scale.

Fontseré was in charge of the project and management of the future *Parque de la Ciudadela*, another representation of the modern Barcelona. Gaudí also took part in this important project although obviously going no further than drawing on paper the projects that they entrusted to him.

His collaboration with Fontseré lasted to the end of his career and in this long period of time he was able to collaborate in many important pieces of work that would help him to outline his tastes and artistic limits.

These were times of progress and change. New forms and new materials were being experimented with. Thus, the young man took part in the project of the *Mercado del Borne*, the first metal structure in Barcelona. This was included in the project of the *Parque de la Ciudadela*, in the water tank, the great waterfall and, especially, in the iron railing of more than one kilometre long that surrounds the whole park and is listed as Gaudí's work (Bassegoda Nonell, Op. Cit.).

“Villar three and a half in the small room behind the altar; Serrallach two and a half, pavilion of a holiday retreat. Must work hard to make ends meet”.

This is a literal transcription of a few lines that Gaudí wrote in his diary and that is included in the indispensable work *Antoni Gaudí, Escritos y Documentos*, Laura Mercader Edition (Barcelona: Ed. Quaderns Crema, 2002.).

“Must work hard to make ends meet”. A true statement of the principles that Gaudí strictly adhered to throughout his life. And even more so when “making ends meet” did not mean providing material needs but carrying out the work for which God had chosen him.

Villar, with whom Gaudí spent three and a half hours on that day, was Francisco de Paula del Villar, a diocesan architect and the director of the *Escuela de Arquitectura*, for whom he had also worked as a student. The small room behind the altar to which he refers was that of the monastery of Santa María de Montserrat, for which he designed the project for an apse.

Serrallach –two and a half hours– was his teacher for construction materials

during the course 1875/76 –the notes in the diary correspond to the end of November, 76– and the hours dedicated to him were used to prepare a project of a holiday retreat which Gaudí called “*Villa Arcadia*”.

His collaboration with Juan Martorell Montells was even more important. Martorell was an architect of the first promotion of the Escuela de Barcelona, who only obtained his official degree in 1877, in spite of having finished his studies in 1872.

“Lunch at the Fonda de Cataluña paid for by the recently graduated architects”. This is how Gaudí referred in his diary to the lunch that he and presumably others by the plural form used were invited to by the three first graduates of the Escuela de Arquitectura in Barcelona: Adrià Casademunt Vidal, Emili Sala and his “boss”, Juan Martorell Montells, when they finally obtained the degree.

Gaudí’s links with Martorell were decisive in the career of the young architect, not for the work done with him but for the opportunities that were presented to him. Opportunities from the Marquis of Comillas and later on, nothing less than the Sagrada Familia.

From the beginning Gaudí had a global concept of architecture or more exactly, of artistic creation, being several decades ahead of Gropius and his companions of the *Bauhaus*.

For him the task –the responsibility– of the architect with his client began with the project and the direction of the work and did not end until the building was totally decorated. This explains the amount of objects –chairs, bookshelves, chandeliers, etc.– that Gaudí projected and whose construction he directed personally when he did not make them with his own hands.

As the son and grandson of men who transformed metals into instruments using their own hands, Gaudí took special interest in manual tasks. This explains why, as a student –draughtsman– he spent many hours in the workshop of Eudaldo Puntí, a renowned craftsman whose activities included ironworks and glassware. Among ovens and hammers, the young man observed, learned and also projected and carried out small pieces of works.

Next door to Puntí’s workshop was that of Lorenzo Matamala, the sculptor, who Gaudí also visited. He was a friend to both men and worked closely with them until their deaths when he continued together with their descendants.

Bassegoda Nonell suggests (Op. Cit.) that Puntí’s workshop could have been the place where Gaudí met his future employer, Eusebio Güell for the first time.

He was definitely introduced to Esteban Comella there, the owner of a glove shop located on one of the most sought-after corners of Barcelona at that time, the corner of the streets Avinyó and Fernando.

Comella was a businessman who took care of his clientele, so he assigned

Puntí to make the counters and shelves that would enhance his shop.

Decided not only to upgrade his shop but also to internationalise it, the entrepreneur Comella assigned Puntí the fabrication of a showcase worthy of exhibiting his gloves in the International Exhibition of 1878, in Paris. Showing that he possessed an artistic eye that honours him, the craftsman entrusted the project to Gaudí.

It was a big responsibility since the showcase was destined not just to be seen in “*tout Paris*” but in “*tout Monde*”. However, the young man rose to the occasion, designing an almost revolutionary showcase.

As recalled by Bassegoda (op. cit.) it turned out to be “surprisingly light”, set on a base of elaborately carved wood which supported a protective rail, the body was made of large sheets of glass held together by a thin metal framework with small wrought iron teeth on the top.

The showcase would be the turning point in the professional life of the genius. It was admired by thousands of people and personalities among them don Eusebio Güell y Bacigalupi (1846-1918), the first count of Güell, owner of one of the largest fortunes in Barcelona, aristocrat and patron of the arts. It should be said, at this stage, that he was a son-in-law of the great financier Antoni Lopez del Piélago, Marquis of Comillas.

On returning from the Exhibition, Güell visited the glove shop on Avinyó street and asked the owner the name of the author of the already famous showcase. Comella sent him to Puntí who was responsible for introducing them. It was the beginning of an intimate friendship that lasted up until the aristocrat’s death.

Güell’s solid artistic culture allowed him to discover the genius who stood before him right from their first conversations. Without delay, he entrusted him the design of a series of pieces of furniture for his father-in-law, the Marquis of Comillas.

This modest beginning would snowball from a few commissions: several constructions on the estate that the count owned in *Les Corts*, constructions in Comillas, *Residencia Güell* in Barcelona, to an avalanche with the creation of Park Güell.

## 6. SENTIMENTAL INTERLUDE

Gaudí was a very discrete man as far as his private life was concerned. He never spoke about his sentimental relationships except, perhaps, on one occasion that will be mentioned later and that none of his friends and contemporaries have ever spoken about.

However, his biographers have found at least one love with a name and a surname.

Through friends in common, Gaudí was associated from a young age with Salvador Pagés, a manufacturer from Mataró (in the province of Barcelona), who believed in a Utopian socialism that was typical at that time. Just like Morris, in England, he wanted housing and employment conditions appropriate for his workers and therefore he conceived the idea of a cooperative society, the first of its kind in nineteenth-century Spain and which indeed honours him.

Thus the *Cooperativa obrera de Mataró* was founded, better known as the *Mataronense*. In 1878, Salvador Pagés assigned the brilliant architect Gaudí the project of an admirable piece of work that sadly, did not develop very far just like so many other good projects. A few houses for workers were built, a factory and a casino that was never finished.

*La Mataronense* was designed to be a real city with houses, cultural and leisure centres, a school and all the essential services. This did not happen, but it had a teacher whose name was Pepita Moreu, and with whom the young architect fell in love.

There were long conversations, there were walks through streets that hardly existed and above all, there were “Gaudinian” doubts. When after finally conquering his inhibitions and fears the young man decided to speak to her, Pepita answered him by saying that she was honoured, but that she already was engaged.

It must have been a hard blow for someone as sensitive as Gaudí; as for Pepita, she lost her opportunity to make a name in history.

Matamala, in *Antoni Gaudí, Escritos y Documentos*, that has already been mentioned, cites another possible love, based on a story by the poet and friend of the architect, Joan Maragall.

Towards the end of his university studies, Antoni met a French girl in the house of some friends and with whom he fell in love. It was another disappointment since she was also engaged in France.

In a footnote, the publisher of Matamala’s book quotes Maragall’s reference to the episode as such:

The writing by Joan Maragall (1860-1911) about Gaudí's sentimental life forms part of the "Lirique stories", included in Volume 19 (*Elogi de la paraula - In praise of literature*) p. 115/-123 of the edition of the *Obras Completas - Complete Works* compiled by the poet's children, entitled "madcap adventure". The author quotes a confession made by Gaudí in a conversation with three friends: a painter, a poet (obviously Maragall himself) and an architect, none of whose names are mentioned. "You've been a hermit ...! Don't expect him to tell us about madcap adventures that he never had! I don't know how he can even listen to us", says the painter in a determined moment addressing the architect. Thus, in all confidence, the mature architect tells his friends about the "madcap adventure" of his platonic juvenile love.

The publisher finishes the note by saying: "This version seems to be purely poetical, because, in fact, Pepita Moreu of Mataró was the only possible girlfriend."

Let's complete the love story by saying that those who do believe it are assured of a very romantic ending; because years after having met her and during a trip to France, Gaudí wanted to visit the city where the girl he loved had lived and possibly was still living.

*"Se non é vero e ben trovato".*



## 7. GAUDÍ'S NOTES

The suggestion that Gaudí was one of the best writers in history is a cliché, but true, only that he did not write on paper but on stone.

Clichés aside, it is also true that he did not write very much either about his work or about certain aspects of architecture and decoration. Not one line of poetry, so popular amongst young people of his time. "Poetry gives him a headache", joked his friend Toda.

Nevertheless, Laura Mercader, in her *Antoni Gaudí, Escritos y Documentos*, already mentioned several times, presents us with a wide sample of his work on paper. All in prose, of course.

There are descriptive memories, documentation of projects, technical reports and studies of architecture, construction and ornamentation. There is also an interesting yet superficial diary.

His most extensive work is that dedicated to ornamentation, written in 1878; in it he explains concepts that will guide him all through his life, for which reason it is worth transcribing some:

"Ornamentation, in order to be interesting, has to represent objects that remind us of poetical ideas that constitute motives."

"Motives are historical, legendary, of action, emblematic, fables with regard to man and life, actions and passion. With regard to nature, they can represent the vegetable, animal, topographic or mineral kingdom. They can also be geometric in the forms of bodies, surfaces, lines and combinations of all these and whose contrast can be used for proportion, which is one of the principal qualities of beauty."

"In order for an object to be highly beautiful it is necessary that its form has nothing superfluous, only the material conditions that make it useful..."

"Character can be said to be the criterion of ornamentation."

"Nowadays, character depends on nationality and on the uses and brilliance of the one who uses it. A public object must have a strict character, which is in opposition to a usual object of the family or individual..."

"Ornamentation has been, is and will be coloured. Nature does not present us with any object monotonously uniform neither in vegetation, nor in the geology, nor topography, nor in the animal kingdom. The contrast of colour is always more or less vivacious, and hence we are obliged to colour an architectural member partly or completely..."

"Usage: it can be said that usage is the motive for the creation of the object. Character is the definition of the aesthetic-moral circumstances and the physical

conditions are those that tend to the materials of permanence, conservation, etc....”

“Religious character is the one that has a tendency always towards the most impressive, from the moment that its aim is a mystery....”

“The principal nave of a church has something to do with the unit of the Divinity and likewise the central dome would always indicate the same unity.”

“A church without a dome, interiorly and exteriorly, does not have the great importance of the cross and its intersection....”

“The portal (must be) of great size, not for the individual man, but for the entire humanity who fits in the bosom of its Creator.”

On 20th March, 1879 he wrote: “It is necessary, in order to form a clientele and a name, in my belief, to be paid what the work costs...”

We transcribe these lines because they turn out to be amusing if we bear in mind that his fees during the years dedicated exclusively to the Sagrada Familia were two hundred pesetas monthly (1,20 Euros monthly).

## 8. GAUDI'S SPIRITUAL LIFE

From a Christian point of view, Gaudí's life was a living testimony and example.

"Life is a battle; force is needed to fight and force is a virtue which only sustains and increases with spiritual culture; that is, with religious practices", he said to his friend and architect Joan Bergós, as quoted by the doctor in architecture Gustavo García Gabarró, in his magnificent book *Antoni Gaudí, architect and Servant of God*.

The title is the perfect description of Gaudí's life. His aspiration, his "justification" was to serve God, and he always knew that the best way of serving him was through his architecture. The Sagrada Familia demonstrates this. And immortalises it. But his devotion to God, as we can see, is not only through his magnificent creation.

Gaudí dedicated his life to God. Just like Saint Augustine in other aspects, in his professional youth he too was tempted by earthly success, very justified on the other hand in such a genial architect, but the temptation did not prevail for very long.

An illness –an authentic initial trip– illuminated his life showing him the real way and for this reason he carried on without hesitations or delays

He no longer had doubts as to who his real, his only "client" was. "My Client is not in a hurry", he answered whoever was trying to impose on him. However, his employer was not a certain gentleman or any association, but God.

Even though Gaudí has been known as "The architect of God" for many years; nevertheless, it has never occurred to anybody during all this time to put in an official request to the archbishopric of Barcelona to begin the process of his beatification.

Antoni Gaudí, a man who has dedicated his life to God, who has honoured him by prayers but also by masterpieces, so that both his life and his work –and this is the extraordinary thing– give testimony and intensify the faith to whoever contemplates them and there has even been the case, more than once, of atheists or followers of other religions who have discovered God through them. Nevertheless, we repeat, nobody thought that this man deserved to be given the possibility of having his possible beatification studied by the Church.

## 9. GAUDÍ'S BEATIFICATION

### 9.1 THE PROCESS OF BEATIFICATION AND CANONIZATION

Before referring to the person who had the distinguished honour of thinking about Gaudí's possible beatification and entering into the beatification of Gaudí in the strict sense, we would like to take a brief look at the procedure taken by the Church in the course that takes a human being to the Altars.

Canonization is the act when the Holy Father declares that a faithful has reached sainthood. The act of canonization is preceded by one of the most rigorous judicial procedures that exist in the world, a process of long duration, in which several courts intervene.

The act of canonization is a solemn act, which consists of a Mass presided by the Pope in the Basílica de San Pedro or in Saint Peter's Square (if there are a large quantity of people congregated). Juan Pablo II celebrated canonizations on his apostolic trips or in the place where the procedure had been initiated and carried out.

In order to obtain canonization it is necessary to first go through the process of beatification, this being what the Association pro Beatification of Antoni Gaudí proposes as its objective.

The beatification that, as mentioned, comes before canonization, requires the existence of a proven miracle. In order to then proceed to canonization, it must be justified that a second miracle has taken place after beatification.

### 9.2. STAGES IN THE PROCESS OF BEATIFICATION

#### 9.2.1. Initial stage in the process of beatification

At present, the Church demands a space of five years between the death of the faithful and the initiation of his process of beatification. The period of more than fifty years that was previously established has been shortened because of problems that could arise with the possible disappearance of evidence, which could be essential in order to obtain the ultimate aim, which is the beatification of the deceased faithful.

The promoters for the cause of beatification will receive the name of the claimant party and it is they who assume the responsibility of promoting the cause until the final aim is achieved, the beatification of the faithful.

In order to spread his reputation of holiness, the promoters can proceed to

print and distribute prayer cards for private worship, as well as informative sheets and other leaflets. It should be made clear that this is only for private worship, seeing that public worship to the faithful is not allowed.

At the same time, the promoters collect testimonies of people who knew the deceased faithful in life and can testify his reputation of holiness.

### **9.2.2. The Process in the diocese**

Beatification can begin if existing heroic virtues are known (as in the case of Gaudí), or through a process of martyrdom (as in the case of the martyrs of Valencia, recently beatified).

In the event of initiating the process of beatification through the existence of heroic virtues, the doubt exists initially as to whether the faithful carried out the catholic virtues to heroic degree. Where the process is initiated through martyrdom, the doubt will be as to whether the faithful became a martyr because of his faith.

The claimant party proceeds to the appointment of the postulator of the cause, who represents the claimant and promotes the cause. This can be a priest or layman, an expert in history or theology. At the same time, vice-postulators can be appointed who are delegates of the postulator.

It is necessary to add that the postulator is entrusted with the difficult task of presenting a complete biography of the faithful, with all the writings and existing documents (published and unpublished) and a list of witnesses. Likewise, he must give the reasons for which he understands that the faithful should be beatified. It is a question of proving the existence of a reputation of holiness in the faithful who endeavours to be beatified.

An initial consultation of the ecclesiastic province to the Holy See is carried out.

Acceptance and appointment of the Court (delegated judge, promoter of justice and public notary) by the bishop. The relevant court corresponds to the place of death of the faithful (who receives the name of Servant of God).

Theologian censors are appointed for the review of the writings of the faithful, who must take care that in the above mentioned writings there is no doctrine opposing the faith or accepted behaviour.

A historical commission is also appointed to gather documents relating to the life, activity and death of the Servant of God.

Opening session: swearing in of the Court.

Ordinary sessions of the Court: interrogation of the witnesses, who can be those chosen by the postulator (interim witnesses) or occupational. It is preferable that the witnesses are people who knew the faithful in life; but if eye witnesses do not exist, ear witnesses will be proposed.

Visit to the tomb of the Servant of God.

Receipt of the report of the Historical Commission and of the theologian censors.

Closing session: the official documents of the process are closed and sealed.

The official documents of the process are delivered to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

### 9.2.3. The Process in the Vatican

The solemn initiation of the process takes place in the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in the Vatican, on receipt of the sealed official documents, which are opened for examination of the validity of the diocesan process. This is to assure that the legal requirements have been observed.

A Cardinal Relator is then appointed under whose guidance the *positio* will be elaborated.

**Positio:** *positio* is the name given to the printed volume containing: a) declarations of the witnesses and other documents; b) the report on the writings of the Servant of God; c) a display of the history of the cause or process, convincing evidence, the life and the virtues of the Servant of God and his reputation of holiness, exactly as implied by the official documents of the process.

At any time, if the Cardinal Relator deems it necessary for historical reasons, the *positio* may be submitted to study by six specialist consultants of history who, presided over by the Cardinal Relator will give their opinion as to whether the work has been carried out with historical accuracy and is sufficient for the purpose in question. On the contrary, the Congress will decide how to proceed.

Immediately afterwards, if the response of the consultants is affirmative, or the *positio* has not been submitted to the history consultants, the cause will be examined by the Theological Congress, made up of the Promoter of the faith and eight theology experts.

If at least two thirds of the voters have given their reply as affirmative, the *positio* is submitted to the Ordinary Congregation of the Cardinals and Bishops belonging to the Congregation, in which, besides the Prefect Cardinal, the secretary of the Dicastery also takes part with the right to vote.

The Holy Father, on being informed of the results of the studies that have just been described, orders the decree to be proclaimed and so it is declared that the Servant of God practised the virtues in a heroic way and from this moment on he will also be known as **venerable** (he cannot receive liturgical worship.) This is a personal decision by the Holy Father who has the last word on the beatification.

**For the beatification:** Recognition of a miracle attributed to the intercession of the Servant of God is required. A process similar to the one described below is carried out to prove its authenticity:

Court in the diocese where the healing was produced.

Elaboration of the *positio* and its examination by Medical Consultants (5 doctors of the same Roman Congregation), the Congress of Theologists (at least 7), the Ordinary Congregation of the Cardinals and Bishops and the decree of the Holy Father that declares him **blessed** (he can receive liturgical worship limited to a congregation, one or more diocese, etc.).

**For canonization:** The recognition of another miracle is needed, after the beatification and proved in the same way as in the previous procedure. The blessed person is declared a **saint** and can be registered in the universal calendar of the Church.

### 9.3. THE PROCESS OF BEATIFICATION OF GAUDÍ

The one person who had the honour of considering Gaudí's possible beatification was a pious and learned priest who received the necessary inspiration and strength to start along a path that, if the Church thus determines it, will take Gaudí to the altars.

Father Ignasi Segarra Bañeres, a doctor in Canon Law and industrial engineering, a priest who left a deep impression on anyone who met him during the long years of work and apostleship, was preaching in Riudoms –a town closely linked to Gaudí, as we know– during the Holy Week of 1992 and, in his moments of rest, he was reading a biography of God's architect, written by Josep M<sup>a</sup> Tarragona.

It was while reading these pages that he had the inspiration. Nobody better than him to relate this:

“During the Holy Week of 1992 I was preaching in Riudoms. In my free time, I was reading the book on Gaudí that my friend Josep M. Tarragona wrote under the pseudonym of Rafael Álvarez. Reading it in that Gaudinian environment – Riudoms contradicts Reus as to being the birthplace of the famous architect– I formulated this question: how can it be possible that no one has ever tried to initiate the process of beatification of Gaudí, this Christian Catalan who lived human and Christian virtues to a heroic degree? On returning to Barcelona I met Jose Manuel Almuzara, a young architect, an admirer of the person and work of Antoni Gaudí. Almuzara, in turn, communicated our mutual enthusiasm to three friends of his and all together, we created before a notary the Association pro Beatification of Antoni Gaudí (Post Office Box 24094, 08080 Barcelona), with the aim of promoting his possible canonization. Mr. Almuzara, who accepted the presidency of the association, was just like the other members, overwhelmed by the emotional response provoked by our proposal. All the media in our country

and abroad echoed our opinion. In general, the reaction was positive in favour of the beatification. This showed that the reputation of “a good person” that Gaudí had enjoyed in life was still present among people”.

(ABC, 4.04.2002, p.40. Sec.Cataluña)

There were only two or three critical, ironic voices, coming from people who had the honesty of confessing to be agnostic or non-believers. Their refusal, therefore, was not directly due to the famous architect, but rather against the practice of the Church in beatifying any of its faithfuls.

That same summer of 1992 the Association pro Beatification published a prayer card in Catalan, Spanish, and English –with the help of a non-catholic American– and in Japanese, with the collaboration of the sculptor Etsuro Sotoo, also a member of the Association pro Beatification.

In November the first issue of the newsletter entitled “The Architect of God” was printed. For five years there were no important advances in the process, but on 18th April, 1998 the cardinal archbishop of Barcelona, thanks to the personal interest of the general secretary at the time, the Jesuit Father Enric Puig, approved the appointment of vice-postulator of the Cause in the person of Mons. Lluís Bonet i Armengol, brother of the head architect of the building of the temple and son of one of the collaborating architects of Gaudí.

Since then, Mons. Bonet has taken on the leadership that corresponds to him in promoting the cause and has done so with admirable enthusiasm. To initiate the process, the acceptance of the Episcopal Conference of Tarragona was required together with the *nihil obstat* of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome. Both were granted unanimously and much faster than normal.

On 12th April, 2000 the initiation of the process of beatification took place in the Episcopal Palace of Barcelona. Cardinal Ricard Maria Carles presided the opening session of the Court.

All the witnesses declared *ex-auditu*. The first ones, *visu*, had already done so before a court *ad casum*. This was done to avoid losing the direct testimony, due to the advanced age, of those who had known the “Servant of God”

On 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2003 the solemn closure of the diocesan process of Gaudí’s beatification was held in the Episcopal Palace of Barcelona and only a few days later, on 23<sup>rd</sup> May, Mons. Ignasi Segarra died victim of a cancer which prevented him from being present at the ceremony.



# THE WAY TOWARDS THE ALTARS

Association pro Beatification of Antoni Gaudí



## CHRONOLOGY OF THE BEATIFICATION OF GAUDÍ

**10<sup>th</sup> June, 1992**

The Association pro Beatification of Antoni Gaudí is formed and will be the claimant party in the juridical process of beatification. The main objective of the association is to achieve the beatification of the architect Antoni Gaudí by projecting both the spiritual and artistic aspects through the organization of lectures, exhibitions and publications; and to collect testimonies of favours granted by his intercession, etc.

The financial resources estimated by the Association for the development of its object and purpose, are conducted through voluntary contributions, donations from members and supporters, through a collecting tin next to Gaudí's tomb, in the chapel of El Carmen in the crypt of the temple, or through deposits into a checking account. These are the donations of many people that help defray the costs of the beatification process. Donations, many anonymous, others by name, have made it possible, so far, to carry out the inspiration of Mossèn Ignasi Segarra.

The five members of the Association, the architect Javier Fransitorra, the sculptor Etsuro Sotoo, the engineer - biographer of Gaudí - Josep M<sup>a</sup> Tarragona, the priest Mossèn Ignasi Segarra (deceased in 2003 and replaced by José Luis Lázaro, retired) and the architect José Manuel Almuzara, have been dedicated, from the first moment, to bring Antoni Gaudí to the threshold as a coherent Christian and to extend the private devotion of the architect Antoni Gaudí to every corner of the world.

Antoni Gaudí “worked brilliantly to the building of human consciousness rooted in the world, open to God, illuminated and sanctified by Christ.” “And he did something that is one of the most important tasks today: overcome the division between human consciousness and Christian conscience, between existence in this temporal world and openness to an eternal life, between God as beauty and the beauty of things” (Homily of Pope Benedict XVI at the consecration of the Expiatory Temple of the Sagrada Família, 11/07/2010).

Our mission was, and is, to bring into light the architect that with his life and his work “shows us that God is the true measure of man”. We undertake this complete knowledge of Gaudí, through the dissemination of pictures for private devotion (published in 18 languages), newsletters (in 4 languages), brochures (in 7 languages), and the 5 books published with the collaboration of the Real Càtedra Gaudi, the Arxiu Diocesà of Barcelona and the publishing company Claret. In addition,

there have been exhibitions - highlighting the one held at the Museu Diocesà of Barcelona in the Gaudí year 2002, with the publication of a catalogue in three languages “Gaudí, the man and his work” – and lectures in many parts of the world.

### **10<sup>th</sup> July, 1992**

The Association pro Beatification of Antoni Gaudí asks the Archbishopric of Barcelona for permission to spread the private worship of Gaudí and to present the process for the first time (that is to say, for the Archbishopric of Barcelona to form a court to examine the evidence presented by the Association and to decide whether or not Gaudí can be beatified).

The first bishop in favour of beatification is Mons. Joan Carrera, auxiliary bishop of Barcelona, and the first donation made to the association is by Mons. Joan Mart Alanis, archbishop of the Seu d’Urgell.

### **28<sup>th</sup> December, 1992**

The Association pro Beatification of Antoni Gaudí is registered with the number 13.842 in the Register of Associations of the Generalitat of Catalonia.

### **13<sup>th</sup> May, 1994**

The Association pro Beatification of Antoni Gaudí officially asks the Archbishopric of Barcelona for the initiation of the process.

### **6<sup>th</sup> February, 1998**

The Association pro Beatification of Antoni Gaudí insists once again that the Archbishopric should initiate the process.

### **19<sup>th</sup> March, 1998**

The Association pro Beatification of Antoni Gaudí restores the tombstone of the Architect of God and places a collection box beside it, work of the Japanese sculptor Etsuro Sotoo that represents three hearts (Jesus, Maria and Joseph), following the pattern of the *Escuelas Provisionales* designed by Gaudí.

On 19th March, 1998 the Association receives a letter from Jun Young Joo, the director of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Busan, South Korea, in which he declares his conversion to Catholicism after preparing an exhibition on the life and work of Gaudí and having visited his work in Barcelona, especially the Temple of the *Sagrada Família*.

**26<sup>th</sup> March, 1998**

The Association receives a letter signed by the Secretary General and Chancellor, P. Enric Puig i Jofra, S.J. of the Archbishopric of Barcelona informing of the need to create a claimant party and the appointment of a postulator to start the legal proceedings for the beatification of Gaudí.

**15<sup>th</sup> April, 1998**

The Association pro Beatification of Antoni Gaudí, as claimant party in the process, appoints Mons. Lluís Bonet i Armengol, priest and rector of the Parish of the *Sagrada Família*, as vice-postulator of the process.

**18<sup>th</sup> April, 1998**

The Cardinal-Archbishop of Barcelona Monsignor Ricard M. Carles approves the appointment by the Association pro Beatification of the priest D. Lluís Bonet i Armengol as vice-postulator of the process (the person committed to carrying out all the legal transactions, equivalent to a solicitor in a civil court).

**5<sup>th</sup> May, 1998**

The bishops of the Episcopal Conference of Tarragona (that groups the dioceses with seat in Catalonia) grant their consent to the introduction of the process of beatification of Antoni Gaudí in the Archbishopric of Barcelona.

**23<sup>rd</sup> August, 1998**

The dominical letter entitled “*Towards the Beatification of Gaudí*” written by

Cardinal Mons. Ricard M Carles is published in the media and obtains favourable reviews.

### **Towards the beatification of Gaudi**

The press announced a few weeks ago the decision to start the beatification process of the Catalan and universal architect Antoni Gaudi. This initiative is on behalf of the archbishopric of Barcelona and supported by the bishops of Catalunya.

There are dozens of opinions about our genius, about his personality and dedication, about his ingenuity and intentions, about his present success and fame and about his apparent failure in his life.

There are, however, some aspects that are unknown, forgotten or intentionally omitted. One of these aspects is the intimate and spiritual life of Gaudi. Very few biographies or tourist guides allude to this. Here I will recall some facts.

In the Artistic Circle of Sant Lluc, when the priest Torras i Bages was the head Counsellor, a friendship was established among the artists. Among them were Gaudi and the Llimona brothers. The fathers of the Oratory of San Felipe de Neri commissioned Joan Llimona to paint two canvases about the patron saint of Rome. One, celebrating the Mass in ecstasy and, the other, living with the “fanciulli” in the Janiculum of Rome.

Both can be seen today, magnificently restored, on each side of the transept of the church of the Oratory. Llimona had the idea of making a “portrait” of the known face of Gaudi in the person of Felipe Neri of the Italian “cinquecento”.

About Gaudi’s spirituality – If you know his amazing works at all, it is impossible to consider that their grandiosity, and the profound details, could be elaborated only by a cold thought that seeks a spectacular work or that has focused only in what could cause admiration for his work. These were neither the criteria nor the aspirations of Gaudi. Without a profound and continuous contemplation of the mysteries of faith, the façade of neither the Nativity nor any other could have been conceived as he wanted them to be, in such a moving way.

A biography of Gaudi should start with his death. When he died, run over by a tram, nobody recognized him. He lived secluded in his “laboratory” of the Sagrada Familia! But what we did know is that he would walk every afternoon at the same time to visit the Oratory of San Felipe Neri and, maybe also to see his spiritual director and confessor, father Mas.

He lived a long period of mystical experiences that, until his death, lead him through elevated mystical paths comparable –architecturally speaking- to the verses of the mystic of the XVI century Juan de la Cruz in his “Spiritual Canticle”, or to the verses of the “Cant espiritual” of Joan Maragall, friend and fellow

member of the Circle of Artists of Sant Lluç. Who could forget that the Casa de la Pedrera was conceived by Gaudí as a base for a monument to the Immaculate Conception of Maria? This is shown in the “Ave, gratia plena”, with a rose in the center, still inscribed in the highest part of the façade.

Antoni Gaudí, universal architect, Catalan, mystic, also deserves to be studied from the point of view of his possible sanctity.

Cardenal Ricard M. Carles

### **17<sup>th</sup> September, 1998**

The members of the Historical and Theological Commission are appointed who have the task of analysing the life of Gaudí, collecting unpublished writings, historical documents, handwritten or published, to determine if they contain any elements contrary to the faith and accepted behaviour.

### **23<sup>rd</sup> October, 1998**

Taking into account the advanced age of the people who knew Antoni Gaudí personally, the Cardinal-Archbishop of Barcelona Mons. Ricard Maria Carles appoints a court *ad casum* to listen to their testimonies.

### **22<sup>nd</sup> December, 1999**

The Archbishopric of Barcelona sends all documentation to the Holy See and asks permission for the official initiation of the process.

### **22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2000**

The Holy See authorizes the introduction of the process of beatification of Antoni Gaudí in the Archbishopric of Barcelona by way of the *nihil obstat* (nothing stands in the way) of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

### **12<sup>th</sup> April, 2000**

The Cardinal-Archbishop of Barcelona Mons. Ricard Maria Carles creates the

diocesan court for the process, formed by father Josep Maria Blanquet (from the congregation of the Hijos de la Sagrada Family) as delegated judge, Dr. Jaume Riera as the justice promoter (equivalent to the public prosecutor in civil proceedings), and the priests Jesus Díaz Alonso and Manuel Sánchez (also from the congregation of the Hijos de la Sagrada Familia) as actuary and substitute notary, respectively.

### **From April 2000 to May 2003**

The diocesan court examines the evidence and listens to the testimonies about the possible sanctity of Gaudí, from people who knew Gaudí firsthand or had heard of him, as well as experts and students of his life and work.

### **25<sup>th</sup> March, 2003**

The Council of the Association pro Beatification of Antoni Gaudí appoints Dr. Silvia Correale, a doctor in Canon law, as postulator of the process before the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

### **13<sup>th</sup> May, 2003**

Cardinal Mons. Ricard Maria Carles presides the solemn closing ceremony of the diocesan process for the beatification of Antoni Gaudí, in the Episcopal Palace of Barcelona.

### **23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2003**

The pioneer for the beatification of Antoni Gaudí, Mons. Ignasi Segarra Bañeres, Doctor in Industrial Engineering in Barcelona and Doctor in Theology in Rome dies in Barcelona. He was born on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 1929 in Albesa, the diocese of Urgell (a province of Lleida) and was ordained as a priest in 1956. He was the author of numerous publications and books, editor of the magazine *Ave Maria y Aura*, the latter being written for the deaf and for which he received the Bravo Prize of the Spanish Episcopal Conference.



**28<sup>th</sup> May, 2003**

The Association pro Beatification delivers the official documents of the process that have been drawn up in Barcelona (1.024 pages) to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, the organism of the Holy See in charge of these matters.

**9<sup>th</sup> July, 2003**

The process of beatification of Antoni Gaudí is officially initiated in the Vatican, in the presence of the undersecretary of the Commission of Studies, Mons. Michele Di Ruberto who is ordered to break the seal of the boxes that contain documentation; the cardinal-archbishop of Barcelona, Mons. Ricard Maria Carles; the president of the Association pro Beatification, the architect Jose Manuel Almuzara Pérez and other members of the association.

**20<sup>th</sup> February, 2004**

The decree of validity is granted by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

**23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2004**

Mons. José Luis Gutiérrez, under whose guide the *positio* will be prepared, is appointed relator of the process of beatification of Antoni Gaudí on the feast day of Sant Jordi.

**July 2006**

Preparation of the summary begins.

**22<sup>th</sup> June 2009**

The Congregation for the Causes of Saints trusted the Most Reverend General Reporter D. Vincenzo Criscuolo O.F.M., for the Cause of the servant of the Lord, Antoni Gaudi Cornet.

**June 2009**

We are working on *la positio super vita, virtutibus et fama sanctitatis*, printed volume which includes:

1. An exposition about the history of the cause or process, the structural evidence
2. The declaration of the witnesses, the documents about his life, the works and fame of sanctity of the intercession of the Lord's servant.
3. The report about his writings.
4. The documented biography of the Lord's servant, and
5. The *Informatio* about the virtues carried out in a heroic way by him.

The historical and theological consultants and the ordinary congress of cardinals and bishops of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints study the *positio super vita, virtutibus et fama sanctitatis*, if their opinions agree favorably on the heroic acts of the virtues by the Lord's servant, the Prefect of the mentioned roman dicastery will present to the Saintly Father the respective decree of the heroic virtues so he can authorize its publication. From that moment on Antoni Gaudi can be called **venerable** (cannot receive public worship).

When Gaudi was asked about when the construction of the expiatory Temple of the Sagrada Familia would be finished, he would respond: "*Mi client is not in a rush*". In the same manner, only God knows when the beatification process of Antoni Gaudi will conclude. As Gaudi, we want to work without rushing, studying deeply the biographic content, the testimonies, the writings, etc. that will serve to elaborate the *positio*. We do not propose a set date. Who can calculate and set a date before a miracle?

If it only depended upon man, we could predict that in a few years the postulation would conclude its work in elaborating the *positio super vita, virtutibus et fama sanctitatis* with the approval of the reporter, designated by the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints.

To recognize the probable miracle, we propose in hands of the divine Providence "only God knows the day and the hour" (Mt. 24, 36), so we will stay vigilant (Mt. 25, 13), and we will always remember that "Our client is not in a rush".

**José Manuel Almuzara Pérez**

Architect. President of the Association pro beatification of Antoni Gaudí

## TESTIMONIES

“I can understand why the man who has spent most of his life on the construction of that temple does not want to see it finished, and humbly bequeaths the continuation of the work and its termination to those who come after him. Beneath that humbleness and self-denial lies the dream of a mystic and the refined delight of a poet. Because, is there anything with such deep feeling and such a beautiful ending than to sacrifice ones whole life to a creation that has to last much longer, to a creation that has to be devoured by generations who have yet to come? What serenity a job of this nature must give to a man, what contempt for time and death, what anticipation of eternity”.

**Joan Maragall. “El temple que neix”, *Diari de Barcelona*. 20.12.1900.**

\* \* \* \*

“The temple that is being built is a great work of art and of architecture, it is brilliant, unique. Its architect has created it solely with the help of God and when a man with his ideas only looks at God, it is always personal. And when God speaks through the humble one it is not strange that it is personal; and that the genius is humble, when he believes in God and he knows that everything he has comes from him. This consideration that would depress a sceptic, would exalt the humble man. –What am I, a poor thing, for such a powerful God to show himself through me?– Gaudí is one of the chosen few, because he is a good Christian”.

**Joan Llimona. “Manifestacions divines”, *La Veu de Catalunya*. 20.11.1906.**

\* \* \* \*

“The miraculous architect has put his soul and intelligence into his work; clearly knowing what his role was as a man. He has found the right place of dominion over natural elements, because he knows that by creating something, the will of man, submitted to God and with God’s help, is superior to everything in the world and that everything else takes second place”.

**Joaquim Folch i Torres. “L’ordre”, *La Veu de Catalunya*. 31.03.1910.**

\* \* \* \*

**An interesting visit: The Temple of the Sagrada Familia. Speaking to Antoni Gaudí. By Marià Manent, February 1916.**

Marià Manent (Barcelona 1898-1988). Author who belonged to the poetic Noucentista generation, along with Carner. Works: *La rama*, 1918; *La sombra y otros poemas*, 1931; *La ciudad del tiempo*, 1961; *El vel de Maia*, 1975. He has interpreted Chinese lyrics and has translated English authors (Keats, Kipling, Chesterton...). Prize of Honour of the Catalan Letters, 1985.

“For me on this clear morning the visit to the Temple of the Catalans was unforgettable and the meeting with the prophet who is building this temple of the Catalans.

I arrive at the enclosure shortly before mass begins and contemplate that imposing factory “a stonework connection yearning for the heavens”, as our Joan Maragall said. The mass begins at 8. The crypt is full to overflowing. The Association of the Daughters of Maria are present and us, the congregation of the Colegio Condal with the brothers Adolph, Alonso, Leon, Carlos and others. My friend Civera points out to me the revered figure of Gaudí, it’s the first time I’ve seen him. He has clear, transparent, misty eyes and a white beard, truly venerable. He is of medium height and takes no care in the way he dresses; he is a totally spiritual man who leads an ascetic life and speaks with captivating uncton. On arriving at the crypt he offers me the blessed water, humbly and pleasantly. I follow the Holy Sacrifice during which the lively and eloquent Mons. Balcells gives a wonderful sermon, glossing the meaning of that expiatory Communion “that is something like a filial kiss that we give to the Lord, offering God the Father the conciliating victim of the Divine Lamb making amends for the sins of men, of the prodigal sons who have left the paternal home”. He then speaks about the meaning of the Christian family in the life of this huge tree that we call society and that is formed by numerous branches, which are the families, who being true Christians will give a life of Christian restoration. During the Communion, in which many took part, our songs rang out in that secluded devout crypt like an enclosure of the old catacombs. As mass ended we went to look for Mr. Gaudí (who I have also seen taking communion very devoutly) and we surrounded him to listen to his words that one never tires of hearing. He seems like an old patriarch, speaking softly about dignified and sacred things.

“The liturgy –he tells us– is always the same, but it’s always new and offers us new enchantments. Every liturgical year is a unit that can be added, not only to the life of the Church, but also to the life of men. Now for example, in the seventieth year, the liturgy suggests prayers for us to alleviate the calamities of

war and indeed, at this very time, men are engaged in war. And if there are many men who are separated from the Church, it is they who do not accept the fullness of life. He who is separated from the Church is a cripple. He is like the ancient eunuchs who were also crippled”.

One man says: “What a pity that we can’t come back in some years time to contemplate the work of the finished Temple...”, “Oh no, –Gaudí replies– because there are much greater and more beautiful things in Heaven. Later on from up above we’ll say: that Temple was only small”.

Then we go into the area where the door of the Rosary is, an example of the very rich decoration of the cloisters that will surround the Temple: “These roses that are seen around the Virgin –says Gaudí– have to be polychromatic, because roses without colour are not roses. Once coloured and with natural colours they will almost give off perfume”. Somebody points out: “So much time is needed for decorating and finishing the Temple”. “Yes –the great architect says– but we can count on a very powerful element, the centuries. The temple has to be work of centuries. It is not necessary to be in a hurry. Things that are to live for a long time must have a prolonged growth. In this same way the oak tree grows very slowly but resists all storms, while the canes, that grow quickly, are brought down by the first autumn winds. Pieces of work that are to be used by men must be finished during the lifetime of those who have begun them, because they have a material aim, but there is no rush to finish the Temple. If somebody asks me if we would finish the Temple if we had sufficient donations to do so, I would answer: no, we would not finish it because we do not have the right to finish it. Each generation, each century must add its own contribution”. We go outside and stand in front of the splendid façade of the Nativity. The brilliant man speaks: “This façade also has to be polychromatic, because colour is life. I prefer to talk about what has to be done because it’s more interesting than talking about what has already been done.” And immediately after; he speaks to us about the seven days of the creation that will be represented in the Temple: “On the first day, there was light, from which everything receives life, by which we can see objects and is the informer of everything”. And thus he explains the other days to us, all with their corresponding symbolisms:

“On the last day –he says– God made Adam and Eve, through whose fault Saint Joseph and Jesus had to work and to suffer. Our good father Adam was distracted –and here Gaudí laughs in a patriarchal way– and we all paid for the consequences. The Final Judgment will also be represented here, as in all great churches. Man’s work should be judged when his life ends and at the same time his work ends too. But the benefit or curse caused by such work to fellow men cannot be judged, while these are still living and therefore there must be a Final

Judgment Day. In the centre of the Temple there will also be a long balcony where all the saints in Heaven will appear triumphant and in the middle the Virgin Mary. The tombs of the benefactors who will have contributed to the work of the temple in a very notable way will be in a great porch”.

We then leave the genius, who was somewhat tired after speaking for so long and climb the bell tower (nearly 300 steps) right to the top of the building that is 70 metres high. There is a splendid view of Barcelona and its wonderful surrounding area, the sparkle of the sea, Montseny in the distance covered in snow. We go back down and carry on speaking a little longer with Gaudí. From this second conversation I can only remember that he admitted to being a great enemy of improvisations: “With this, young men, –he said– you never want to improvise”.

\* \* \* \*

Article by **Josep M. Dalmases i Bocabella** (1884- 1934) published in the “El Correo Catalán” on June 20th, 1926. Dalmases was grandson of the founder Josep M. Bocabella and was director of the magazine “*El Propagador*”.

#### TESTIMONY

“Begging with Gaudi” God marks with tribulation the works that he agrees upon. The tribulation that the expiatory Temple of the Sagrada Familia has most suffered is the danger in having to stop the magna construction because of lack of funds, and the days came where this happened. First there was a trial period. The charity from Barcelona was diminishing. The ones from outside of the city did not make up for this. The canon Dr. Mas, later bishop of Girona, was head of the Board of Construction. Who knows, he told A. Gaudi, maybe if we made a brief call to the people of Barcelona, Cataluña, Spain and America, the words of the prophets in desolation could still move their hearts?

A few days later they started a campaign. Unfortunately, it was not an immediate success. It doesn’t matter, Antoni said. We will work and work with faith, and the work will pay off.

The days passed and the Divine Providence was deaf to our pleas. Large bills were owed and lots of money. The clamor of going out to beg came up. We would each work day of that week, if this worked then we would continue to beg.

It was good for Gaudi to pass by our house. Without sitting down, he would ask, Where are we going today? Once I put the work aside I would tell him the name and address. We would go to different places in the city; we were received by citizens of all categories. On the way he would ask about the people we were

going to see, what they did and what I knew about them. This helped to start the conversation.

If the person visited felt moved by the Divine Providence to be generous, Antoni with enthusiasm would talk about the Temple, of the honor of the city where it is being built, what a temple is. There was always the heartfelt complaint of not being able to see it finished. And he always answered that one generation, and two and three generations are nothing before God, whose measure is eternity. That the efforts of one man alone is so small that only adding on generations would not be dignified enough before God, but yes the maximum tribute of men. This way the finished cathedrals were built with centuries, or still unfinished, and the ones that have collapsed for being built hastily.

If the visit was perceived as being a bit cold, Antoni talked with great charm. He would communicate to the person's soul what the temple was like, in that ambience of coolness reminded me of the humble person of Josep M. Bocabella that had launched the idea of a great Temple, but that later he himself would have preferred much bigger, to arrive to the splendid definitive project.

He wouldn't always be able to penetrate the closed heart. If the will and generosity were absent because of a greed for money he would act with irony and disarm the person we visited as if he were a toy in his conversation. I do not ask for myself, I ask for the house of God, the house of the Sagrada Familia. I am the doorman. In my mid-life I have completely dedicated myself to the temple. I don't have any other work but this one. I do not have a family. I am not paid rights. You see how easy it is to be generous. I remember the case of Zaccheus and our Lord: with only one look and few words the rich publican was convinced. And all of the great monuments are located in the cities of the great tradesmen. This case is so true that it is the gospel about dedication of all churches.

One day we had a meeting with a big store, both partners were very rich, we knew for sure that one of them was waiting for us and that we would leave with empty hands. We were received first by this one y what we thought would happen occurred, he came in with a good will, he thanked us for our visit, he felt bad that Gaudi himself came to visit him, since he was older now and the businessman young. Gaudi said happy words and as always his eyes were shining. But, it was a disillusionment, every reason that Gaudi gave, the young man repeated the same phrase: I love the Temple very much and you Mr. Gaudi; I will not forget, but today I cannot do what I would like to, when I can I will do it.

Months passed, even a year. One day, Antoni arrives touched, his eyes full of emotion: Remember that visit? Early this morning a worker from the store came. He asked, "Mr. Antoni Gaudi?" "At your service", Gaudi responded. "I was asked to give you this envelope in hand". It had a check from a bank with the most

generous alms the Temple had ever received. But we cannot share who signed the check, because this was the will of the donor.

With his heart full of joy, Gaudí returned to the Temple, blessing the Divine Providence and the donor. His hands were together with all of the grace of Heaven that I had seen and heard ask for charity for the Temple for a love of God.

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**Conference by the architect Caesar Martinell, in the Orfeó of Vilanova i la Geltrú, addressing students of the Escuela Industrial, 7th May, 1927.**

Martinell was born in Valls in 1888 and died in Barcelona in 1973. He was amongst the young architects who knew Gaudí (Bergós, Bonet i Garí, Puig Boada, Ràfols...) and he is the author of several books: *Gaudí, vida, su teoría, su obra*, Barcelona 1967; *Gaudí y la Sagrada Familia*; comentada por ell mateix, Barcelona 1951; etc.). In his architectural work the wine cooperatives of Pinell de Brai and Gandesa stand out amongst others...

“Gaudí had never been committed to education as a university professor; but his work, his entire life and his conversation with those who were lucky enough to meet him, was a continual lesson not only of Architecture, but also of how things in life should be appreciated.

For many, Gaudí had a reputation of being unapproachable. Privately, he was very outspoken and talkative. He saw things clearly and with precision and therefore seemed immoderate to those who, without having the same accurate criterion, did not share his opinion.

A conversation with Gaudí, for anyone who wanted to take advantage of it, was a profound lesson in the subject being talked about. He had a totality vision of life and in each case, depending on who the listener was, he adapted his words so that they could be easily understood. In this way he tried to imitate, as in everything, the Divine Master, when he explained evangelical truths to the humble ones through parables.

Around 1915, the Expiatory Temple of the Sagrada Familia was visited by students of almost all the Faculties of Barcelona. Gaudí used to receive the visits of such groups. He explained to all of them the construction, the art and the symbolism of the Temple, explaining it to them in their own language, whether they were students of Medicine or Architecture, Engineering or Commerce. The listeners came out convinced that the Temple and the Architecture were totally related to their hobbies and their own life.

For this reason, conversation with Gaudí was not only instructive but



also constructive. His words were able to awaken dormant energies and to define uncertain opinions, reinforce useful ones while eliminating pointless ones.

The example of his life was also constructive. A fervent believer as he was, he took part in all the acts with the practice of Christian virtues convinced that without them righteousness was impossible.

He lived the final years of his life totally dedicated to his greatest creation the Temple of the Sagrada Familia, this being his greatest pleasure in the world and which allowed him to reflect his genius and architectural knowledge and to communicate this to all those who were interested in his work.

This demonstrates once again the falseness of his reputation for being unso- ciable. Young architects frequently visited his offices in the Temple, anxious to speak to him. Gaudí was always there for them. He explained the stage of construction of the Temple with enthusiasm and he explained it in a warm friendly manner, like lesson and advice. He didn't omit anything that could arouse the enthusiasm of the young students who surrounded him. Everything was explained by him in the most natural and lively way. He pointed out constructive details that experience had advised him to change and it didn't bother him admitting to small oversights that nobody had noticed. It was as if in this way, coming down a level, he wanted to demonstrate that nobody is perfect and yet everyone is capable of perfection. Gaudí said that he had learned from working on the Temple that a lack of speed in that work could be translated into an increasing perfection of detail, which could be studied and rehearsed more conscientiously.

Another aspect of Gaudi's teaching education was the verification of qualities and defects in those who knew him intimately. He was a fine psychologist and rapidly got to know everyone. When the opportunity arose, he displayed these characteristics to the interested party, who were often surprised. He gave praise and criticism equally, with the intention that both were to be taken advantage of, always trying to take greater advantage of the aptitudes while avoiding any defects".

\* \* \* \*

The following is a transcription of Gaudi's childhood friend, the writer and diplo- mat **Eduard Toda y Güell** (Reus 1855 - Poblet 1941), restorer of the Monastery of Poblet. This is an article published in the newspaper "*El Matí*" in an offprint from June 21st, 1936, in celebration of the 10th anniversary of the death of the Lord's servant.

## TESTIMONY

“Memories of Antoni Gaudi in Reus, until 1870”, by Eduard Toda.

Antoni Gaudi is probably one of the oldest friends that walk through the paths of these worlds. From primary school with the teacher Francesc Berenguer, in a house on Monterols St., where we learned our first letters in the 1860's, until we finished secondary school 10 years later, in the Institute Padres Escolapios of the convent S. Francisco, Gaudí and I were always together. In 1868 in secondary school a new companion joined us, Josep Ribera y Sans from Espluga de Francolí, his father, who was the school teacher in that town, passed away, we soon became intimate friends with him.

Our life together in school was quite different. I must say, in the first case, that the three young men were good students, in the teacher's opinion; we knew the lessons, and we were united by a certain emulation to report them from memory. But in our personal interests we frequently varied. If Ribera and I loved to write verses and prose we thought were literary, we never saw Gaudi write one line. When we wanted to walk through the beautiful gullies and shortcuts on the outskirts of Reus, in search of evocative places in our romantic sentiments, Gaudi preferred to arrive at ruins of the Romanic ovens of the path of Monterols, the aqueduct of “deis Capellans” (of the priests), in places, where art dominated nature.

But in our frequent gatherings the conversation about the ruins of Poblet always came up, and Ribera always talked about its details very enthusiastically, because he had been there and ran around there since he was a child from his home in Espluga. This topic was what most brought us and our thoughts together, since we all agreed that we wanted to visit the monastery as soon as possible.

We made the visit in the summer of 1869, invited by Ribera's sister, married and resident of Espluga. Our first impression when we saw those imposing ruins, destroyed in a way that presently is unimaginable, full in its most noble parts, like mountains of demolitions and of a dense forest, growing on the destroyed vaults of the main church, the chapter house, of the cloisters and of the palace of the King Marti. Full of pain, we swore there to unite our efforts, not from that moment, but from our whole existence, to give life back to and resuscitate this great colossus fallen in abandonment and misery.

We split up the work. Gaudi had the responsibility to raise the walls, re-make the roofs, reconstruct the vaults, and cover the mines and holes made by the seekers of the fantastic treasure of Poblet hidden by the monks. Ribera would explain the facts and heroic deeds of Poblet to move the sentiments of the Catalans in favor of its resurrection. I would gather the Archives and Library, as well

as, write a book that printed and sold at 30 cents a copy; we could have the first resources to start the construction.

We sealed the pact and started working those very days of July 1869, reuniting the remainder of the funeral epitaphs of the Abad Elferic, dispersed throughout the chapter house and returning them to its place in the row of images as can be seen today. The only evidence that exists today in Poblet of our common efforts.

Because in September of that same year the inevitable separation came. The University of Barcelona closed because of the yellow fever epidemic, so Ribera left for Almeria to his uncle's house, and soon after went to Granada to start his studies in medical school. Gaudi stayed in Reus that year, because his older brother was in Barcelona, and the economic modesty of the family did not permit having both students outside of the house. I had to go to Madrid to start studying law, obligated by my mother, but I decided to secretly study in the Faculty of Arts, since I was convinced that I wanted to be the head of a secondary school. This way, the three students, separated by destiny, would never meet up again.

The course of life was altered for the three friends from Reus. Gaudi, who in later years I only saw once again in Barcelona, died the day that this newspaper today celebrates, having been a genius for his works, a saint for his conduct and a martyr because of his death. Ribera conquered Madrid, in the University where he became an eminent professor of surgery, as well as the director of the Hospital de Niños. And the one who writes these lines, took an unforeseen turn in his adolescence, spent fifty years outside of Catalunya, travelled through the continents and ended up retiring in the quiet, secluded place of Escornalbou, but with eighty years of age he is committed to the restoration of Poblet, in the realization of that idea conceived in the last third of the past century by the friends that caressed the ideals of his first youth.

\* \* \* \*

Testimony of the sculptor **Joan Matamala**. When he was young he met the servant of the Lord. The relationship had come from his father, the sculptor Llorenç Matamala, with whom Gaudi had a great friendship. He was born in 1893 and died in 1977 in Barcelona. Both father and son are the authors of almost all of the sculptures of the façade of the Nativity, which Gaudi inspired. Of Joan Matamala we emphasize these: the four apostles, the coronation of the Virgin, the betrothal of Joseph and Mary, the presentation of Jesus in the Temple... The text we transcribe is of the book "*Mi itinerario con el Arquitecto*", published by our Association, text by Matamala, but revised by J. Casan and J. Piquer. The original are two volumes which are taken care of by the "Catedra Gaudi".

## TESTIMONY

### “Family and Friends”

Gaudi defended his intimacy towards those who were curious. When asked about his life, he usually answered that the important thing about a man are the facts and not the circumstances. But he had a great sense of family. In this respect, which this chapter is dedicated to, he always chose his obligation and knew how to stay close to his father, assisting in his long life, after having provided for his family in his early years. Family and friends make up the private life of Gaudi.

The housing development of the Parque Guell had already begun when one of the first hotels was built, and Gaudi decided to move there with his father and niece. He acquired the first one that was finished, projected by his helper Berenguer and built by the same contractors of the ones from the park. He paid 50,000 pesetas (300 euros) for the new house.

The move was good for his father's health, having in mind the humid climate of Barcelona, a sea port. From their new house –situated one hundred meters above sea level– they could contemplate the dense fog that settled, even then, over the city.

Before moving in, he did some construction, he modified some partition walls to suit his small family. The reformations were not done with the esthetical luxury that one would expect from an architect like Gaudi.

In various places you could see the plastering where he made the modifications. And there was no wall paper, which back then was considered essential. Only the dining room was finished, since it was the most used. With the furniture, only in a few small pieces one could notice Gaudi's involvement and taste.

Every morning Gaudi would go to the construction sites that he directed and to his studio in the temple. Sometimes, if he had to do a number of errands in Barcelona, his father and niece would meet him at the Sagrada Familia. On occasions like these he would ask my father if they could improvise a simple meal at his house, because he never went to restaurants. My mother would usually prepare the traditional Catalan dish (carn d'olla) and a homemade starter, always without spices.

She would prepare the table on a long desk we had in the house, located, actually a few meters from the temple- and that my father would use to consult voluminous books or to draw. It was so long it could have accommodated Jesus with his Twelve Apostles; we only used it for celebrations like baptisms, communions or weddings. It was the dining room for special occasions.

Gaudi, besides doing his work, would go “down” to Barcelona to visit friends, among these we should mention the family of Dr. Santaló- to see an exhibition, to assist a function at the Lyceum or to a concert, and also to go to religious ceremonies.

On days that were holidays the Gaudi family would stay in Parque Güell. If the architect didn't go to the Cultural Center in Barcelona, he would receive visits with his father and niece. Sometimes it was the family of José Gaudí, his first cousin, who was a metallurgic, established in Barcelona and with whom he always had a great relationship. He lived in "Pueblo Seco" and had his workshop in "Puerta Nueva", located diametrically on the opposite side. Gaudi always used his metallurgy.

The Dalmases Bocabella family and the sculptor Federico Laboria's family would also go to see Gaudi, they were good friends of the Bocabella family, also from Reus. Laboria's sister was received with special friendliness, because she had been the model for representing the Virgen in the Nativity façade, and even rode gracefully a donkey for "The Flight from Egypt" scene, so that Gaudi could see the figures with total realism.

These visits, in which my family also participated, used to be organized for the festivities that were held in the Park, in which multitudes of people invaded the mountain.

Rosa, Gaudí's niece, was a lively and talkative woman. She did the honors of the house and prepared syrups and tiger nut milk in the hot summer days, and in other seasons of the year she served liquors. Meanwhile, Gaudí's father assisted the gentlemen.

When we were leaving, Rosa used to give us fragrant bunches of thyme and rosemary, taken from the herbs "harvested" by Gaudi's father during his fieldtrips in the mountains. In spring, she used to give us a beautiful bunch of roses from the garden. With this kindness she wanted to return the hospitality that my family offered her. By the way, when Gaudi asked my father for the "bill" for the meals at our home, having to charge something, he would reduce the costs to the last cent.

Doctor Pedro Santalo, from Reus, was close to Gaudi his whole life, both in his best times as well as in his difficult ones. He assisted the father of the architect in the short illness from which he passed away in 1906.

From that moment, Doctor Pedro Santalo became a very good friend of Gaudi. With few and concise words –as is common in Campo de Tarragona– they understood each other well. They always went together and had the same habits and manners. Both were dressed in mourning and seemed a double of each other. Doctor Santalo lived in front of the Palacio Güell.

Gaudi chose his best friend, who he understood perfectly. Santalo would give him advice about how to keep himself healthy and advised him about the structures of the human body (which Gaudi studied more and more to include them in his works, as well as the structures that he found in nature). On the other hand,

Gaudi imbued Santalo with his esthetic ideology, which distracted him from his regular activities.

Gaudi was single. When his friends asked him about this, which to them seemed inconvenient especially as he got older, Gaudi would respond that he felt good completely dedicated to art, since “art is another family, that brings with it sacred obligations, that should be fulfilled if one decides to enter in this state”.

The celibate Gaudi frequently recommended matrimony and accepted with pleasure to be the best man at his friend’s weddings. In his young age he had talked to my father about it various times, until my father was married; he was also a matchmaker, with some help from his friends. One of the ones “lectured” in this respect was the sculptor Mani, who effectively, ended up getting married, who was later followed by Pujol. He always told everyone: “to have an organized life, the necessary complement for the man is a wife and children”.

We can say about Gaudi, the same as Francisco de Asis. If the “Poverello” married poverty, Gaudi did the same with art. This is why, after his niece died, the temple would be, as each day passed, his real family, as we will see in the next chapter.

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The following is a transcription of fragments of the book by the architect **Isidre Puig Boada** “El pensamiento de Gaudi”. It is words-explanations of the servant of the Lord to young architects that visited him. Puig Boada (Barcelona 1891-1987) met Gaudi in 1914.

He worked on the Sagrada Familia with Gaudi’s successor, Domenec Sugranyes, and was director of construction in 1950. He was colleague of the architect Francesc de P. Quintana, Gaudi and Sugranyes’ collaborator (died in 1938) and of Lluís Bonet i Garí, who resumed the restoration of the crypt in 1939 and the reconstruction of the workshop, destroyed by the fires in 1936. Puig Boada is author of the first book on the Temple, published in 1929, corrected and expanded in various editions until the sixth one in 1986. He is author of various churches (Palau de Plegamans, Mollerussa, Artesa de Segre... ).

#### TESTIMONY

“The great book, always open and which we have to make an effort to read, is the book of Nature; the rest of books are taken from this one and the errors and interpretations are human. Two revelations exist: the doctrinaire of Moral and of Religion; the other, the one of the facts, corresponds to the great book of Nature” (words recorded by the architect Joan Bergos)

“The creation continues and the Creator makes use of its creatures. Those

who research the laws of nature to shape new works collaborate with the Creator". (Bergos)

"Each one makes useful the gift God has given them. Their achievement is the maximum social perfection. One who builds and has to do things should not criticize the works of others, nor defend their own, but make and direct criticisms against their own works to purify and improve them". (Bergos)

"On the altar there should only be authentic wax candles and natural flowers. In the great festivities the temple should be decorated with fragrant plants". (Bergos).

"God did not make any sterile law, this means that all have their application; the observation of these laws and from these applications is the physical revelation of Divinity. Inventions are the imperfect imitations of those applications (the airplane, imitation of an insect; the submarine, of a fish)." (Bergos).

"The fortune of an invention consists in seeing what God has put before the eyes of humanity. Look at this eucalyptus. It grows. Notice the trunk, how it resolves into branches and twigs, and ends in the leaves. In this position and in these lines there is a geometric shape.

In the whole garden there are trees that are lifted and sustained with grace by all of the elements. There is no need for exterior materials or counterweights. This is the millenary model that God gives us. And men are always building backwards". (J.F. Ràfols).

"The interior of the Temple will be like a forest. The decoration of the vaults will be leaves, among which the birds of our land will be seen. The columns of the principal nave will be palm trees; they are tress of glory, of sacrifice and of martyrdom". (Bonet i Garí)

"All things deserve attention. To penetrate them it is necessary to patiently pursue them. With patience all is achieved (St. Theresa), and patience is the constant in the inevitable painfulness; one has to try and repeat, because reason is an internal force, and it must be applied from within and not from outside. To do things well, first you have to love them; then follow the technique". (Bergós)

"In order to avoid falling into a false humbleness, the Lord has left us the little worm of irascible self love. I am by temperament a man who fights. I have incessantly fought and I have achieved everything except to dominate my bad temper. But I do not cease and put all of my wit to lower myself before my own eyes: this is very valuable in the failures, to blame oneself even though it is not our fault, because this way the truth shines through, even though it doesn't seem so". (Bergós).

"It is necessary to eat, sleep and clothe oneself just enough and when we feel it is a necessity. As the physical strength diminishes, the spirit becomes more agile". (Bergós).

## CORRESPONDENCE

We have selected some paragraphs from some of the many letters received in which it is easy to see the admiration and devotion shown towards the architect Antoni Gaudí from all the corners of the earth.

“I have faith in that what I have asked of Gaudí, if granted by the grace of God, will benefit millions of ill people in my country and other parts of the world”.

**Cecilia Maria Pereira (pediatrician), 25.06.1998. Brazil.**

“I am the son of the architect Doménech Sugranyes, Gaudí’s assistant during his work on the Sagrada Família. As a child, I met Mr. Gaudí in person which I remember very well. I suppose that my testimony could be of great interest to the promoters of this cause”.

**Ramon Sugranyes de Fran, 28.08.1998. Fribourg, Switzerland.**

“The project of building a chapel to Nuestra Señora de Los Angeles in Rancagua (Chile) is still on going... In the Corporación Gaudí, we have heard the news about the process of beatification of Antoni Gaudí. We are very pleased about this... We are studying the life of Father Burns, the Franciscan priest who pioneered the chapel in Rancagua; we think that there could be spiritual similarities between him and Gaudí”.

**Elisabet Juanola, 22.02.1999. Providencia, Santiago de Chile, Chile.**

“With my son-in-law being unemployed, I prayed at Antoni Gaudí’s grave and asked him to tell God to find him a job soon. He heard my prayer and after a few days my son-in-law found a job... Thus, a grateful “mother-in-law” would like you to consider this as further proof of Antoni Gaudí’s holiness”.

**Ana Martínez Ruiz, 24.05.1999. Parish of S. Francisco de Sales, Barcelona.**

“I am from Chile, married with three children... My husband became unemployed at the age of 53, after working for thirty years in an international company... only because he was “old”. After going to all the imaginable sources of faith, I saw an article on Antoni Gaudí in my newspaper. I read it without much enthusiasm, but something caught my attention. I don’t know what. I cut his picture out, hung it in my room and I began to ask him to help my husband... Eduardo found a temporary job... I commented my experiences to a friend who then



asked me to give her a picture of Gaudí. Her husband was also unemployed and she had a nephew at death's door with a brain tumour. In one week, my friend told me amazed that her husband had found a job and that her nephew had been discharged. He had been operated on and the tumour that had been removed, according to the doctor –inexplicably– had not left any consequences”.

**Mónica Appel, 12.06.1999. Las Condes, Santiago de Chile, Chile.**

“I have been a priest for almost five years. Before entering the seminary I studied architecture for two years. There in the faculty I heard about Gaudí. From that moment on I dreamed about one day travelling to Barcelona. This year I was lucky enough to go to Spain. We reserved one week for the city of Barcelona. It's difficult to explain what I felt. But God had reserved an even greater surprise for me: the beginning of the process of beatification of Gaudí. Hopefully the Lord will grant me the grace of seeing his Architect on the altars”.

**P. Javier Aquino, 04.08.1999. Buenos Aires, Argentina.**

“Here in Santiago de Cuba I am a member of the administration of the cultural centre “Emilio Bacardi”, known as the Cuban Association of Natives and Descendants of Catalonia, made up of 550 members, 15 of them natives and 85 descendants including myself. For this reason I would like more information to share with our members. I deeply regret not being able to help you economically, because I don't have any foreign money but I will help you in something more important: prayer”.

**Jordi R. Segura, 13.10.1999. Santiago de Cuba, Cuba.**

“I would like to publicly thank Mr. Antoni Gaudí, as I asked him for help so that a niece of mine could find a job. At this moment she has already signed a contract. I also asked for his help so that my sister's possible breast tumour would be benign and this has been confirmed. I write this note with gratitude and am enclosing a donation for the expenses in the process of his beatification”.

**Carmen Teixidor, 21.01.2000. Barcelona.**

“Last month, after many years of wanting to return to Barcelona –I had studied there in 1965– I was lucky enough to enjoy and contemplate the work of Mr. Antoni Gaudí. The visit to the Sagrada Família was very emotional and my family and I were able to pray by his tomb in the crypt, watched over by a beautiful Virgin of Carmen. I am very pleased that the Church has initiated the beatification process since it is obvious that with his architecture having so much value, the virtues that were present in his life should also shine before men. On returning to Madrid I used the private worship prayer to pray for a brother-in-law to who

had been operated on for a second time because of intestinal haemorrhages. At this moment he is about to be sent home completely cured”.

**Leonardo Jiménez, 05.08.2000, Madrid.**

“I too would like to publicly thank Mr. Antoni Gaudí for his influence on my life, when I asked him for help in finding a house. In less than 2 years I got a flat. Also my son Pedro could get to know his papa after 13 years. He intervened before God for my son’s studies and my fibroid operation...”

**Sara Barboza, 08.08.2000. Salta, Argentina.**

“In December 1999, the members of the parish of Santa Maria del Journal visited the Sagrada Familia. The parish priest explained all about the work to us. For me that day was like a miracle. I have been receiving heart treatment for 13 years and the doctors have prescribed medication for me. The tablets that I was taking produced very irritating side effects. After that visit, on arriving home, I picked up one of the tablets and realized that they could be split in half and this, I think, was thanks to the inspiration that I received on that visit hearing about Gaudí. I am much better and the doctors have also seen an improvement in me”.

**Ines Torrens, 10.08.2000. L’ Hospitalet de Llobregat, Barcelona.**

“Thank you for sending me the leaflet. I have handed it round in the church where I am the chaplain”.

**Jesús Hernández, 22.11.2000. Valladolid, Spain.**

“I have already written several times, without obtaining any reply... I have received your leaflet and always read the letters there carefully. I am not in very good health at all and so I would be pleased to see myself in the leaflet. I am an admirer and a follower of the work and person of Antoni Gaudí”.

**Francisco Pulido, 24.11.2000. L’Hospitalet de Llobregat, Barcelona.**

“I visited the temple of the Sagrada Familia for the first time when I was 17. I have never been able to forget the fascination that I felt on seeing so much creativity the first time I saw the façade of the Nativity and that was 35 years ago. This Christmas I have been given the book “*Gaudí, arquitecto de Dios*” by Rafael Álvarez. It is the exemplary story of a very humble man. I have enjoyed the book very much, since I have learnt about important aspects in Gaudí’s life. The beatification and the sanctification are something within the Catholic Church that I don’t understand very well. What does sanctity mean?... If the beatification of Antoni Gaudí helps to educate future generations of the XXI century, then I am all for it”.

**Ramona Targa, 03.02.2001. Lleida, Spain.**

“Some years ago I had the opportunity of visiting Barcelona and getting to know something about the creative work of Gaudí, especially the majestic and imposing building of the Sagrada Família. Recently, the day of the artist was celebrated in the metropolitan cathedral of Mexico, in the presence of Cardinal Archbishop Norberto Rivera Carrera, members of the chapter of canons and the diocesan commission of sacred art and civilian authorities of art. The occasion was the anniversary of friar Angélico. Considering that the majority of those present were architects, I suggested that we adopt the Servant of God Antoni Gaudí as our patron. The idea was very well received and they asked me for more details about him...”

**Architect Roberto Vallín Rodríguez, 22.02.2001. Coyoacán, Mexico.**

“I am a Spanish priest, resident in Milan and carry out part of my pastoral activity among artists and intellectuals. I would like to spread the knowledge and the devotion towards Gaudí amongst these people”.

**Michele Dolz, 15.01.2002. Milano, Italy.**

“On 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2002, I climbed on to the crane in the central nave. In spite of strong winds, I began to take the photos that I’d been asked to do. The strong wind was “providential” since it guaranteed a clean atmosphere. I was more than 90 metres high when a fierce gust of wind made me lose my balance and immediately afterwards I realised that the glass that had been in the lens was no longer there. Realising that somebody could get hurt, I prayed “Antoni Gaudí, protect us from my error”. The glass lens was nowhere around me; neither did I find it on my way back down or on the roof of the nave. Later on, Saint Joseph’s day was the date decided by the technical teams to take the photos. On that day our Temple was 120 years old, the same day that my father, Francesc de P. Català Roca, would have been 80. Imagine my surprise when at mid-day, on climbing onto the crane again; I found the lost lens, on the lowest platform of the interior step. The lens was perfect even though water had got in and there were only two marks on it that showed the impact of the fall. Then I thought that an angel had smiled down on us. Antoni Gaudí should be the patron of all of those who like a job well done, not only of the architects”.

**Andreu Català i Pedersen, 13.05.2002. Barcelona.**

“I am writing to tell you about a favour granted through the intervention of Antoni Gaudí. It is not exactly a miracle that can be considered as such for the beatification, but I believe that it will contribute to his reputation of holiness, along with my sincere gratefulness. At the beginning of July the courtyard of the building where I live was being renovated. The workers found a crack and scaffolding had

to be installed. The president of the proprietors' community wanted nothing to do with it. I asked Gaudí for help and the president agreed to the repair”.

**Fidel Manso, 03.09.2002. Granada, Spain.**

“On 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2001 and after being separated from my family for many years, I was feeling really down. Thinking about the process of beatification of the holy architect, I asked him if he could grant me my wish to see my two young nieces. Less than 24 hours later the telephone rang to let me know that they both wanted to see me. We happily met on 2<sup>nd</sup> January, 2002 and in January 2003, after 7 years of silence from other members of the family there is peace and happiness amongst us. A few months after re-starting this relationship, I had doubts as to whether it had been by grace or by chance. I asked Antoni Gaudí to clear my doubts and grant me another wish; to be able to see my niece and 18 year old grandson. The following Tuesday I heard a message on the answering machine. There are no more doubts and from my heart I thank Antoni Gaudí once again for his help. For me he is already a Saint”.

**Maria Montserrat Barenys i Busquets, 07.01.2003. Reus, Spain.**

“I am a retired architect and I would like to know about the beatification process of the architect Antoni Gaudí. I know what I was taught at university, that is to say, about Gaudí as an architect, but I know nothing about his personal life and I was surprised when I heard about the beatification cause on the international catholic radio (Mother Angelica).

**Esdra Teresa Bonne, 12.01.2003. Santiago de Cuba, Cuba.**

“I am writing to you again from Argentina to explain about new favours granted through the intervention of Antoni Gaudí. This time it is about my mother's health. She is 84 and in December was operated on a serious respiratory problem that at her age would usually be fatal. The treatment wasn't having the desired effects until I put her in the hands of the architect. Her health improved and she began to respond to the treatment. At the same time, the serious economic situation in our country makes it difficult to find a job. My daughters finished their university degrees and I hoped that they would find jobs relating to their profession. Two months later, one of them was able to enter an important company. Finally, less than a month ago, I was fired from work and at my age it is almost impossible to find another job but up to now I have been called for temporary work. I also prayed to the architect for this reason”.

**Jorge A. Anselmo, 26.03.2003. Merlo, Argentina.**

“I would like to use these letters as a way of sharing my joy. I had been on a dialy-

sis machine for six and a half months when on 29th September I went to mass in the Sagrada Familia. I approached the tomb of Antoni Gaudí and I prayed to him with all my heart for a kidney transplant. On the 30th, at 8 o'clock in the evening they called me from the Puigvert (clinic) to tell me that a kidney had been found. If this isn't a miracle, I don't know what is. With all my gratitude I send you a small donation that I hope to repeat again soon".

**Maria Gil Jiménez, October 2003. Barcelona.**

"I have been a great admirer of Antoni Gaudí for many years and through him I asked God for my husband to die as peacefully as possible since he had suffered terribly from Alzheimer's disease for a long time. As his life ebbed away, he fell asleep and thus his soul flew to heaven. I think that Antoni Gaudí deserves to be beatified by the Church. Thank you".

**Maria Calvé Ramírez, 02.10.2003. Barcelona.**

"My encounter with Gaudí. Some days ago I found out by chance that there was an International Meeting in Lima exhibiting the work of Antoni Gaudí "the architect of God". This subtitle attracted my attention although my first reaction was to ignore it because I thought that the \$20 would be used to pay for other things. I didn't even finish reading it.

Up until that moment I only knew that his work was "very strange" yet interesting. That he had developed an organic architecture that I was quite fond of although I didn't quite understand it.

Now I can see that Gaudí did not just serve his fellow men, taking care and looking after them. His love for God (and his fellow men) was demonstrated in his work adhering to the laws of nature as the divine work of God and putting much love into what he did.

The testimony of Faith and dedication of this dear architect is an inspiration, a departure point and is another opportunity to begin again, as a person and an architect. This Meeting has meant so much to me, more than I could ever have imagined. It has been an invitation to search for myself and discover God (again)

**Lorena Nolte, architect, 11.10.2003. Lima, Peru.**

"With so many divisions in today's world, it is very important to highlight the testimony of a man who lived solely for his one vocation: to be faithful to God's will and to create a gift for God and humanity through his life and work. Gaudí transformed his architecture into prayer and his prayer into art in order to glorify God. Thus the immortal work of this genius will be represented throughout history".

**Sister Inés María Carmona, O. Carmelita, Carmelo San José, 20.11.2003. Trujillo Alto, Puerto Rico.**

“I was pleased to receive the February edition of the newsletter and would like it to be sent to my spiritual director”.

**Professor Ángelo dell’ Acqua, 18.02.2004. S. Vittore Olona, Italy.**

“I would like information about the beatification of Antoni Gaudí.”

**Ulrico Nessinger, 24.03.2004. St. Pönnen, Austria.**

“I am a doctor. I have a patient originally from Barcelona who would like a memento of Gaudí”.

**Marc Côté, May 2004. Cornwell, Canada.**

“I would be pleased to be able to rely on your material in order to spread the holiness and beauty of spirit of this great genius”.

**Pablo Stratta, 01.06.2004. Barros Blancos, Uruguay.**

“I visited the ophthalmologist because of the beginning of cataracts... To my surprise on my last visit I was told that I would have to be operated on between six months and a year or so later. He made it sound so bad... Thanks to God this was more than a year ago. I have still not returned to the ophthalmologist and I still have the same vision. This is the grace of A. Gaudí: I asked him with all my heart to stop the cataracts and to be able to see just like when he visited me”.

**Carne Grau, 21.06.2004. Barcelona.**

“On 30<sup>th</sup> June I had the pleasure of taking part in the mass in the crypt of the Sagrada Família and prayed before the tomb of Antoni Gaudí. I share your wish for the beatification of Gaudí and pray that it goes ahead”.

**Giani Marchesi (rector of Saint Agnese), 02.07.2004. Torino, Italy.**

“This summer we visited the Sagrada Família and the tomb of Gaudí. There were many pamphlets and booklets on Gaudí. My sister asked me if they also wanted to beatify this man. The truth is that I knew of the existence of Gaudí as an architect but I did not know that he had been such a great man. We took two booklets without giving the two euros. On leaving the Church, my mother fell and it was a miracle that she did not break her leg. We had taken photos of Barcelona and the tomb of Gaudí but it seemed as if they were not going to come out. On reading the book and seeing what was written, I promised to send a donation explaining everything and thus I am doing so”.

**Torre Don Gideon, 06.08.2004.**

“I ask the Lord to be able to worship as a saint this mystical architect who knew how to shape and live the mystery of the Trinity, as experienced by the family of Nazareth”.

**H. Mariano Santamaría (Marist vicepostulator), 21.09.2004. Mataró, Barcelona.**

“I am writing to tell you of a favour that we have been granted through the intervention of Antoni Gaudí. At the end of August we were in Barcelona trying out a corset for my daughter. She had been diagnosed as having lumbar scoliosis, which required the use of a special corset from Boston. Making the most of the day, my husband and my three children visited the Sagrada Familia and that was when I began to learn about A. Gaudí.

I prayed before the shrine of the chapel where he was buried and requested his intervention as the architect of Gemma and for him to intervene so that the corset was the right one. I prayed.

On 14<sup>th</sup> September she had an x-ray taken in the hospital of Santa Cruz. The curvature of the spine had improved dramatically, from 27° it had gone to 15°, when the doctors had anticipated that even with the corset we could only hope that it would not get any worse, thinking that it would be very difficult for her to improve, Gemma is 15 years old and is still growing. The doctors did not expect this at all..., one from Barcelona and another one from Gerona have agreed on the spectacular improvement. I asked Gaudí to be the architect of my daughter's spine. His intervention is vital in orientating the doctors. I really think that A. Gaudí is the architect of God because the wisdom, the harmony, the precision with which the Sagrada Familia has been designed can only have been inspired by the Lord.

I hope he continues to intervene for Gemma, who is a very good girl... and that we can see him on the altars very soon. I like the prayer for private worship very much. I am a believer in the family. I will continue to pray every day, since for me he is clearly intervening for Gemma”.

**Maria del Collell Plana, 01.10.2004. Olot (Girona), Spain.**

“I have listened to the story of the architect Antoni Gaudí on “Radio Maria”. I was in Barcelona in 1966 and was amazed by the work of the Sagrada Familia. I would like to have the beatification prayer ... I would like to return to Barcelona...”

**Silvana, 7.12.2004. Vicenza, Italy.**

“I'm very pleased to be writing to thank God and Mary, for the intervention of Antoni Gaudí in my son's architectural studies in Córdoba-Argentina... asking for a job well done...”

**Sara de las Nieves, 12.07.2005. Córdoba, Argentina.**

“On the 14<sup>th</sup>, I was in Barcelona with my husband and some friends. We visited the Temple of the Sagrada Familia and kneeling before the tomb of its creator, I

asked Gaudí for my son-in-law who has been unemployed for 20 days to return to work. There were two conditions: that this be granted as soon as possible and for him to go back to work in the same company as before. On the 16th he was called back to work in the same company. I promised him a mass in order to speed up the beatification. I consider Antoni Gaudí to be a saint whose virtues deserve to be recognized...”

**Mercedes Izquierdo, 19.09.2005. Jaén.**

“A year ago, Barcelona was shocked by a train accident on its underground line. I had been taking part in a mass in the crypt and praying before Gaudí’s tomb... I was concentrating on reading the pamphlet about Gaudí when the aforementioned crash took place. I was thrown out of my seat and found myself lying in the aisle... Various aches and pains didn’t stop me from reaching Martí Codollar (the residence). This accident could have had serious consequences for me (I am 69 years old). I wasn’t even left with a bruise. A year later, I would like to thank the Catalan Servant of God for his protection. I am from Chile. Here we are enjoying the canonization of P. Hurtado. As a response I’m sending this simple testimony and my desire for everything to go well in the process of beatification of A. Gaudí”.

**P. José Lino Yáñez, sdb, 27.10.2005. Santiago de Chile.**

“A few words explaining the truth about saint Antoni Gaudí’s favours, in my opinion and to promote his beatification even more... I had to have my teeth fixed and, according to the dentist, it was going to be very complicated. I was very scared and asked for his intervention. Everything went very well; even the dentist was surprised. I also prayed for my brother who was very ill with pancreatic cancer... He got worse and so I asked that if he had to live with pain, then God should take him. That is what happened, he died on the Saturday”.

**Carmen, 08.11.2005. Barcelona.**

“I’ve been to Barcelona to see Gaudí’s work. I was very impressed but especially so by his spirituality and the declaration of his holiness. I work for the English magazine “*The Catholic Truth Society*” and I would like to prepare an article about his life...”

**Luca Finaldi, 15.11.2005 London**

“I would like to thank A.Gaudi and his patron saint San Antonio Abad for their help. On 3rd November, the day that he had been commissioned to direct the work on the Temple of the Sagrada Familia, I passed an important exam to improve my work.”

**Paola, 02.12.2005. Milan**



“A prayer to Gaudi in order to start a “new” New Orleans with the simple beauty of God and with the inspiration of life of the Sagrada Familia.”

**María del Carmen, 07.12.2005 New Orleans, USA**

“Antoni Gaudí, God’s architect as he is known nowadays, is one of those people who I have held close to my heart for a long time. I love his numerous pieces of architecture, most of all the Sagrada Familia where his tomb can be found (in the crypt). I was able to admire some of them personally (at least a little) during my stay in Barcelona with S.S. Thank you for the prayer card and Gaudi’s curriculum vitae (in Polish!). I admit to being deeply moved when reading about his life: holy, dedicated to fine arts, to man and to the Lord. Antoni Gaudi: pious, austere, happy, hard-working, poor etc.

Given that I am so interested in his prompt beatification I guarantee you my personal prayer. If I’m not wrong, the procedure was started in 1992, on the sixty-sixth anniversary of the architect’s death and is still going on.

I myself encourage you to pray for the prompt beatification of another Servant of God, that’s to say John Paul II.

I also ask you to pray for me, so that I can carry out my new job successfully in Krakow.”

**Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz (metropolitan archbishop of Krakow), 01.06.2006. Krakow, Poland**

“I would like to testify and show my gratitude towards God’s architect, Antoni Gaudí. My husband and I visited Barcelona in 2004 and were able to admire Gaudí’s work, visiting his tomb with the prayer cards. On returning home, I read about his life and prayer. I had been wanting a house for some time and asked Gaudi if he would grant this favour, thinking that this was something good instead of people who ask for their conversion and salvation. I thought that as he was an architect he could help me. I have been granted this favour because the house that I wanted has been put up for sale, something that seemed impossible. My husband and I were able to buy it. I promised Antoni Gaudí that I would testify and give a donation for the completion of the Sagrada Familia, his lifetime dream. May the Lord glorify his servant Antoni.”

**Patricia Campi, 12.09.2006. Pegli (Genova) Italy**

“I am a lady from Ibiza who spends a lot of time in Barcelona. Whilst clearing out my house in Ibiza, my son-in-law threw a bag into the bin without realising that it contained a box of jewels. When we realised, we sorted through the rubbish 3 or 4 times but couldn’t find anything. The next day I asked Antoni Gaudí and the Mare de deu for help. I promised to donate some money that I had hidden

away some years before. I went to look in the rubbish bin again but still didn't find anything. My son-in-law –it was now dark– found it with the help of a torch. Today I have come to carry out that promise and thank him with all my heart.”

**Catalina Marí, 26.09.2006 (500 euros were left with the letter in Gaudi's collection box)**

“Thank you very much for the information about the process of Antoni Gaudí's beatification. We hope to be able to see this much loved son of our land on the altars soon.”

**Miquel Barbarà (vicar-general of Tarragona) 5.10.2006 Tarragona, Spain**

“I am writing to ask if you could tell me where I can obtain any prayer cards, books or prayers in Spanish about the future saint Antoni Gaudí”.

**Juan Carlos Folgar Laya, 30.10.2006. Moraña, Pontevedra**

“The 5 euros are to pay for the information sheet about the beatification of Antoni Gaudí”

**Ramon Serra. Martorell, Barcelona**

“I would like to thank you very much for your letter of 27.10 with the newsletter and two prayer cards. Thank you very much. I continue to pray for the prompt elevation of the first saintly architect to the altars.”

**Cardenal Stanislaw Dziwysz, 10.11.2006. Krakow, Poland**

“Thank you for the booklet in Italian in remembrance of our dear future saint”

**Paolo Rossi, 3.12.2006 Vilapotenza, Italy**

“Through my admiration of Antoni Gaudí, I dedicate this short poem to those marvellous people, creators of mountains surrounded by a spiritual environment that points to Heaven: “You Gaudí, prophet of love/ of monumental beauty/ Full of dreams and more dreams/ surrounding your state of mind/ with strength, with glory/ and total dedication/ with endless strength, yes/ you turned dreams into reality/ full of glory and spiritual dedication/ for all eternity”

**Gainza Napal, 03.12.2006 Gerona**

“We ask Antoni Gaudí daily for interventions in illness and problems that take us back to the time of Jesus Christ who was approached by so many sick people. With the help of faith, the Lord through Gaudí does not take away the storm but shelters us from it. May the work of building the temple continue to grow

in 2007 while so many souls imitating the Sagrada Familia find comfort on their way towards the Lord. As always may I ask for some prayer cards. I am sending a small donation of 20 euros.”

**Leonardo y Fina, 31.12.2006 Madrid**

“My acknowledgement and gratitude for your welcome on celebrating the Eucharist, the discovery of the “basilica” of the Sagrada Familia. It has amazed me that a tropical forest has been built so beautifully out of stone.”

**P. Ernest Manga, 21.03.2007 Ziguichor (Casamance), Senegal.**

“I wish I could have a biography of the servant of the Lord Antonio Gaudí. It would be very useful for the hagiographic studies I am carrying out and also to obtain a deeper knowledge about the life of this distinguished son of the Church”.

**Dennos Mifsud, 07.05.2007. Gozo, Malta.**

“Today I received the newsletter # 15. I am very happy to receive this news. I was baptized in the Sagrada Familia (April 16th, 1934); confirmed and went to school at the social Patronato of Mn. Ramon Balcells, martyr of love for Jesus and social works... My great grandfather, Vincent Nebot, worked in the Sagrada Familia with Mr. Antonio Gaudi. At home he was talked about like another member of the family...”

**Mercè Nebot, Barcelona 10.05.2007**

“I beg you to please send me religious cards of the Lord’s servant Antoni Gaudi, for my collection of religious cards of saints (I have close to fifteen thousand)...”

**Giancardo Merati, 13.05.2007. Muggio (Itàlia).**

“In newsletter #15 I was surprised to see the texts about my admiration for Gaudi, as well as a short poem... I have thought of various ideas... one is to announce to artists of all styles everywhere in Cataluña, Spain and Europe, inviting them to participate in an art auction with a donation of one art piece for the Sagrada Familia Temple...”

**Gainza Napal, Girona 14.05.2007**

“In this Church of San Pedro of Vienna, in the center of the city, we need Gaudi religious cards in German; in Japanese also (there are many oriental tourists). I am sending a humble alms. I am happy to state that our Gaudí is so loved and hope he will be beatified very soon.”

**Joan Bta. Torelló, Priest, Viena 15.05.2007**

“I sincerely appreciate the newsletter # 15. On my behalf, I commend your

intentions every day in the Sacred Mass and in the rosary, asking the Lord by intercession of the servants of the Lord, Antoni Gaudi and Juan Pablo II, to grant all those graces that are most needed. I also keep praying for the beatification of our loved Saintly Architect”

**Stanislaw Cardo Dziwisz, Cracovia 24.05.2007**

“I found Marià Manent’s testimony to be beautiful...”

**Cassia Just, Montserrat 05.2007**

“I would appreciate it if you sent me two religious cards of Antoni Gaudi with the prayer... waiting for his beatification...”

**Claudio Pascual, Canet de Mar 19.06.2007**

“We came from Italy to ask for the intercession of Antoni Gaudi to cure our friend Sandro, who is an architect and loves and greatly admires Gaudi as a genius and as a man of God.”

**Anna e Máximo Piciotti, Milano 22.07.2007**

“We thank you for the gift of the book about the 15th anniversary of the Association pro beatification of Antoni Gaudi. We would like to take this opportunity to put us at your service from the “Arxiu Históric Arxidiocesà”, “Arxiu Capitular” y “Biblioteca del Seminari de Tarragona”.

**Mn. Manuel Fuentes i Gasó, Tarragona 25.07.2007**

“I send you a warm greeting from Rome. Barcelona does not have as much history, but it has Gaudi, and this is worth a lot. I wish you a merry Christmas and a prosperous 2008, hoping that the beatification process of Gaudi moves ahead. Today is the 100th birthday of the great architect Oscar Nyemeyer, the designer of Brasilia. Another who follows Gaudi’s style, both of them are beautiful”.

**M. Concepció Carmen Martínez, Roma-Barcelona, 15.12.2007**

“I wish to testify my gratefulness to the Lord’s architect A. Gaudi. Five years ago I designed a very interesting and risky work. I asked for a good solution and it was given to me”.

**Antoni Pera i Pilar Bonet, Badalona, 19.12.2007**

“I sincerely appreciate the beautiful book about Gaudi that was sent to me. I congratulate the Association pro beatification of A. Gaudi. I make your cause heard in my dioceses”.

**Ricardo, Bishop of Bilbao, 01.2008**

“I am very grateful for this warm Christmas card and the gift of this book on Gaudi... hopefully one day this work will be honored with the beatification of Antoni Gaudi”.

**Carlos, obispo de Salamanca, 04.01.2008**

“Many thanks for your warm delivery of the publication of the 15th anniversary of the Association pro beatification of Antoni Gaudi”.

**Ramón, Bishop of Jaén 07.01.2008**

“I thank you so much for the information about the servant of the Lord Antoni Gaudi, a personality to whom I feel an affinity because I am from Astorga. I really appreciate the book you have sent me. I commend the process of Gaudi’s beatification in my prayer.

**Julián, Arzobispo de Santiago de Compostela, 07.01.2008**

“Many thanks for your book on Gaudi. I commend his cause to the Lord”.

**Jesús, Bishop of Ávila, 08.01.2008**

“I am very grateful for your warmth in sending me a copy of your book, which includes a biography of Antoni Gaudi and some testimonies about him”.

**Vicente Juan Segura, Bishop of Ibiza 13.01.2008**

“I received the copy of the book edited by the Antoni Gaudi Association in celebration of their 15th anniversary, where they bring together very carefully the life of this distinguished person. I congratulate you for all the work you are doing. I pray to the Lord for all who are compiling the information, recording the testimonies of faith and dedicating their time to such a famous architect”.

**Alfonso Milián, obispo de Barbastro-Monzón, 14.01.2008**

“I have just received the Newsletter #15. Thank you very much. I am more and more convinced about the unquestionable sanctity of our beloved Architect”.

**Stanislaw, Cardenal Oziwicz, Cracovia, 17.01.2008**

“After some difficult weeks, as Marta was depressed, she is now beginning to feel better. Thank you very much for the prayer.”

**Antonio Lázaro, 28.01.2008**

“We would like to pray at Gaudi’s grave and ask him for a miracle. I am sending you a photo of Marta.”

**Marc and Miriam, 05.02.2008**

“I want to thank you for your prayers for the healing of my niece Marta”.

**Antonio Lázaro, 07.02.2008**

“From your reality a dream! In the middle of the city! Gaudi was universal! Simple, great and small! A great man and genius! Of a great sensibility! He was a root of the earth! He was wind, ivy, water, coral! Sea gull, rock and sea! Gaudi was universal! I dreamed with Gaudi and he showed me a world of colors that he built.”

**Araceli Conde, Esparraguera**

“I pray daily for the glorification of Antoni Gaudi, who I commend many things and send alms to once in a while, he helps out my family very much and when I can I spread his devotion in my circle of retirees and church”.

**Leonardo Jiménez, Madrid, 17.02.2008**

“Some months ago, I read “Gaudí, Arquitecto de Dios”, by Rafael Álvarez Izquierdo. I was very surprised by the way in which the architect worked. I am also an architect. I also liked the way in which he materialized the spiritual world. I would like to have some religious cards in order to share them with my colleagues.”

**Eduardo Cárdenas, México 10.03.2008**

“I write these lines to you in order to thank you for sending me the book “Gaudi”. Both the biography of the architect, written by D. José Manuel González-Cremona, as well as the different testimonies collected in this work are a good example of the significance that Gaudi’s life and works have had both in Art and Spirituality throughout the years. God bless the Association pro-beatification and I hope it reaches a happy ending.”

**Bernardo, Obispo de S. Cristóbal de la Laguna, Canarias, 31.03.2008**

“In my opinion the architect from Reus Antoni Gaudi is a saint. I have already explained some of the graces received for the promotion of his beatification. Now I have two more, friends of mine were very worried about the future of their son. Although he had a good education and was older he did not have a steady job. His parents asked me to pray to Gaudi. Result: he soon after found a wonderful job... The more important event relates to me. In the fall of 2002 I noticed something strange with my vision. In Reus they diagnosed cataracts..., I didn’t think it was true. I decided to visit the Institut Catalá de la Retina in Barcelona. They diagnosed a perforation in my retina which could have caused me to become blind. I asked Gaudi to intercede to God on my behalf. With great surprise to the doctors – Dr. Jürgens – the perforation was reduced and it is totally cured

without any surgical interventions. To the great glory of the saintly architect which I hope soon we will be able to see in our Catalan calendar of saint's days".

**Montserrat Barenys, Reus 06.05.2008**

"Please send me information about the canonization of Gaudi".

**Joseph Masheck, New York 04.08.2008**

"I beg you to please send some religious cards to hand them out. I was granted a favor and now I am asking for another for a problem that has not been resolved. Even though, the day after I prayed to the religious card, the problem that we have with the construction in the neighborhood that affects my parents began to resolve itself".

**Fidel Manso, Granada, 20.08.2008**

The bishops of Madrid, Valencia, Alcalá and Almeria, have thanked the President of the Association pro beatification for sending the book of their 15th anniversary.

"Please send me ten or twelve religious cards with the prayer of the servant of the Lord Antoni Gaudi..."

**Joseph Masheck, New Cork, 31.12.2008.**

"I am writing to you to keep the promise I made about publishing the favor I asked to Antoni Gaudi, beloved son of our town Riudoms. Some years ago, my husband was diagnosed with a hematological problem at the Hospital Juan XXIII in Tarragona. During the next years, the treatments have had negative effects; until they recommended us to order a medicine that had to be imported. Seeing that the time passed by, I turned to Antoni Gaudi. Thanks to him, I finally have got it, and now my husband is feeling much better..."

**Montserrat Vidal, Riudoms, 12.2008.**

"My job is to restore images, but I got sick... Now, every time I am going to work from my apartment, I pray for Antoni Gaudi in front of his image... I am sincerely thankful to him..."

**Sabine Heilbrunn, Wien, 01.2009.**

"I thank you, dear Jose Manuel, the time you devoted to the Bishop George Snack and to me during our visit to the Sagrada Familia... Every day I pray to Gaudi for the project of making mosaics in the Westminster Cathedral..."

**John Hughes, architect, 09.01.2009.**

“A week ago I did a heart test and I was told that I had to stay in the hospital due to an angina pectoris... I observed that, in front of me, there was a poster of the Palacio Episcopal de Astorga and I thought that our pious Architect was there with me. They did a catheter test on me... and everything went so well...”

**Leonardo Jiménez, Madrid, 13.05.2009**

“The incoherence of the AVE (High Speed Train) and the Sagrada Familia has to be solved definitively. Please, be reasonable and do not rush. We cannot leave to chance a possible disgrace that can affect this cathedral that our beloved Antoni Gaudi built devoting all his soul and body...”

**Mercè Nebot, Barcelona, 15.02.2009.**

“I have received the books and religious cards of Gaudi...”

**John Hughes, architect, Dublin, 16.02.2009.**

“I just received the “Hoja” of “El Arquitecto de Dios”. From the beginning I was very satisfied to know that his cause was opened. I lived and studied in Barcelona when I was young, (Hospital San Juan de Dios), on Diagonal, and of course I enjoyed visiting frequently the Sagrada Familia, going up the stairs. After receiving the “Hoja”, I thought that I should clarify that it is sent to “Postulatore Generale. Hno. Eustaquio Kugler”. It is one of the causes of the Order Hospitalaria de S. Juan de Dios. I have been its postulator for the past 20 years. Precisely on October 4th, 2009 Brother Kugler will be beatified in Regensburg. I pray that Gaudi’s cause finds the best paths to his full success and glorification.”

**Félix Lizaso Berruete, oh. Roma 04.07.2009**

“I am grateful that you have sent me the Newsletter and I am sending you a small donation. I would prefer that you sent the newsletter in Italian or French, which I understand.”

**Paolo Rossi, Villapotenza (Italia) 06.07.2009**

“I would like to ask you if you have relics of Antoni Gaudi. I would like to give them to friends and members of the community.”

**Joseph Vincent, Antipolo City, Rizal (Filipinas) 15.07.2009**

“I would like to ask for religious cards of Antoni Gaudi and information to know better the present state of the process. I am a seminarian of the first year in Theology at the Seminary of San Pedro Apostol in the diocese of San Bernardo of Chile. Since my years at the university I saw the profound piety and the “artistic love” that Gaudi had for God and for his fellow men. In this “finis terra” we have



very little information, except for some knowledgeable people that have published articles in a Christian Anthropological magazine. Their private devotion will promote their knowledge and exemplariness of life in the path of becoming another Christ. I imagine that you have a card with relic...”

**Cristián Águila Jorquera, S. Bernardo (Chile), 01.08.2009**

“I would like to receive the Newsletter you publish. Our father was a great worshipper (I am already 85 years old) and he inculcated it in us. He knew him personally. It would be a great joy to see him beatified”.

**M. Antonia Bonet Punsoda, Barcelona, 03.09.2009**

“I am Montserrat Bladé’s first cousin. A little before went to the Hospital of the Sacred Heart of Barcelona we put her into God’s hands, my whole family, about eight people. And we began to pray through the venerable Gaudí. The operation was a success, but a few days later she fell into a coma. We were all devastated. I made offerings to God, that if by intercession of A. Gaudi he could manage to take her out of that coma. Thanks to God she recuperated. Later she went to the Instituto Gutman. At the end of September she returned home. Now she travels by bus, taxi and airplane. She leads a very normal life with her sister Josefina”.

**Teresa Bladé, Sta. Cruz de Tenerife, 14.09.2009**

“In March 22, 29 2nd grade elementary school students and 5 teachers visited the exhibition “El realisme de Gaudi i l’esperança d’Europa”. With the help of the guide we became very enthusiastic with Gaudi’s work. The visit finished with the wish to collaborate in the construction of the Sagrada Familia Cathedral. We wrote our name on the pinnacle where the chalice and grapes are. On our way home, Filippo falls to the ground and the teacher sees that a taxi runs him over. An ambulance comes to help Filippo. The boy says the taxi passed over him. The teacher shouts: it is a miracle! Filippo’s mother announced that the boy had no broken bones. With this experience one of the boys proposes this title: “Gaudi’s curse”. The teacher corrects him: “the blessing” because he has protected Filippo. A boy adds: “Yes, because Gaudi died run over by a tram”. In the afternoon we thought that everything can work towards the cause for Gaudi’s beatification.”

**M. Veacchi, Ferrara-Italia 02.03.2010**

“As director of the “Centro della Voce” of the University of Bologna, I am following with interest the cause for beatifying Antoni Gaudi. I ask that you send me information about the process”.

**Lino Britto, Bologna, 09.03.2010**

“Pascual Egea, a theology student in Murcia, would like to receive cards, newsletters and pamphlets about the Lord’s servant Antoni Gaudi, for spreading and devotion”

**P. Egea, Murcia 07.04.2010**

“Abortion or more poetically the interruption of a pregnancy is a modern topic in which Gaudi wants to participate. I am an immigrant and upon my arrival to Spain, seven years ago, I was a parishioner of the Sagrada Familia. My life lead by the efforts of immigrating changed its path so many times that it would be difficult to list all of them. As a Christian I wanted to help a friend of mine, abused by her father when she was 7-11 years old... My friend became pregnant by me and a plan for an abortion was ensuing. I, like Saint Thomas, doubted in renouncing an exemplary family, as shown in the joyful face of the nativity scene in the Church. The changes in the Spanish legislation during Zapatero’s term allowed one to act... I went to pray and asked for forgiveness in facilitating an abortion. I wandered around Barcelona to some churches, and I went to the Sagrada Familia. The access to the Crypt was closed. Some arrows indicated a new route to the covered area of the Sagrada Familia. It was more construction work. The Temple is similar to the amazon forest. Surprising... since then, mi job was to protect the heart the beat in the womb. Thanks to a mediation, a give thanks to Gaudi and his splendid modern work. I give thanks to God for Diego, and boy eager to learn and play.”

**Anonymous, 11.04.2010**

“A grace granted by Mr. Gaudi. On March 27, 2007 I was operated on an artificial hip. The intervention was a success. I did not have much pain, I felt good and my wound was healing well. But everything was “apparent”. The cures were daily but the wound would not close. My wound was healed numerous times but it would not close. On April 27th I returned to the hospital. I was about to go through really bad days. I had a positive outlook but the pain in my leg was terrible and my wound continued to suppurate. Why did I have to suffer so much? Why did I have to spend so much time in the hospital? But my faith did not allow be to become so overwhelmed. The devotion to the Virgen de la Misericordia de Canet de Mar where we live was helping us but we needed more. Since we knew about the architect Gaudi we manifested our situation to him. I continued in the hospital. In my heart there was a fight and one of the two “sides” would win: “the hospital warrior” and the “believer warrior”. Thanks to our faith and to everyone’s prayers to A. Gaudi, the day before the third operation, Monday, May 27th the wound was closed. Nobody from the medical staff could give an explanation to what had happened. The medical record on Friday, May 25th said that I was suffering from a serious infection and intense suppu-

ration. On May 31st I was cured and at home. We obtained a “grace” thanks to the intercession of Mr. Gaudi”.

**Ramon Amargant, Canet de Mar 12.05.2010**

“I would like to receive the issue about the visit of Pope Benedict to Barcelona”

**Esdra Bonne, S. de Cuba, 04.10.2010**

“B. Antonio, on the day of the dedication of your church, I ask you to care for me in my work. Protect my endeavors and the people who are with me. Like Saint Joseph, for the Glory of the Lord.”

**Anne, Italia.**

“In one month, the Pope will be in Barcelona. This is a wonderful great grace, a fruit of the inspiration of our beloved Antoni Gaudi. Our heart will be there and we will join our prayers to yours and to all the members of the Association...”

**L. Jiménez, Madrid 07.10.2010**

“I am very happy that the Pope Benedict will be close to you, an extraordinary man for the Catholic world. I ask you to send me a “guide” in Italian about this extraordinary moment, a path to Paradise. “

**M. Pierimarchi, Armataggia (Italia) 07.11.2010**

“The Consecration of the Temple will be remembered for our whole life. The Liturgy was splendid with the historic presence of Pope Benedict. The building is amazing. Everything was memorable”

**M. Carme Comas, Barcelona**

“Some days ago, in our Catholic Polish press I found a short history about Gaudi. I have to say that soon he became my best friend. Every day I ask him to help me. He is not well known in Poland... I would really appreciate to know much more about Gaudi...”

**Marek Tomaszewki, Jedlec, 14.11.2010**

“My husband was paralyzed due to a car accident on September 19th, 2007. When we came back home after being hospitalized in Vall Hebron and Instituto Gultman, we didn't have any hope that he would be able to walk anymore. I prayed the novena to Gaudi and, three years later, he is walking again and his hands have improved a lot; he can even eat by himself. I thank Gaudi and give you a donation for the cause of his beatification.”

**Montserrat Massaguer, Gurb**

“I wish that during this year the success and miracles of the popularity of the Basilica of the Sagrada Familia continue, as well as the devotion to its great architect and the great saint that he is. I pray to him as a friend, and he always helps me with my little and big struggles. Many friends of mine saw the consecration ceremony on TV and they called me deeply moved...”

**M. Barenys, Reus, 11.01.2011**

“I ask you to send me religious cards of Antoni Gaudi. I have a special devotion and admiration for him, and some years ago I received a favor from him. There is much interest in Granada about Gaudi.”

**Fidel Manso, Granada 18.01.2011**

“The Blessed Manuel Gonzales, our founder, greatly esteemed Antoni Gaudi. We hope that soon his heroic virtues will be declared. In his book “Arte y Liturgia” he published some pages of the magazine “El Propagador” about Gaudi, whose brilliant art is the most loyal and faithful servant of the liturgy.”

**Ana M. Palacios, Palencia 22.01.2011**

“Poem to Antoni Gaudi:

Pyramids are launched / wonderful spears / skim the sky!  
The creative mind / the mystic of Gaudi! Dimensional/ Basilica. Columns /  
Moving forest. / Vertical spaces. / Prelude of the heavens / Flying Art /.  
O Gaudi’s dreams, / Angels flight.”

**Isabel Pons, Pedreguer, 08.02.2011**

“Pray for my family (below are the names)... I ask you to send me the newsletter in English after the consecration of the Sagrada Familia by the Pope”.

**Chaman Lal Sandhu, Phul/anwal, India, 24.04.2011**

“I write to you for the healing of Nicole, she has a tumor. Pray for Gaudi and for his glorification”.

**Marcel Morin, Gatineu-Quebec 25.04.2011**

“I am a seminarist of the priestly brotherhood “Opus Mariae Matris Ecclesiae”. I work for the causes of the devout people. I ask you to send me a religious card of the servant of the Lord Antoni Gaudi.”

**Fabio Arduino, Villafranca un Lunigiana, 03.05.2011**

“Since the attack to the sacristy of the crypt we feel deeply sorry for these loud actions... We always ask Gaudi for help with our problems. The next June 10th

we will join with our grateful prayers for the 85th anniversary of the death and new life of Gaudi”.

**L. Jiménez, Madrid, 24.05.2011**

“Many thanks for the newsletters. I work on this web page: [www.youtube.com/gaudibeatificatio](http://www.youtube.com/gaudibeatificatio). The goal is to post all of the news and steps related to the beatification of Gaudi”.

**Mario Hernández 28.08.2011**

“I wanted to congratulate you for the beautiful page for the cause of the master Gaudi, great servant of the Lord, admirable example of sanctity and devotion; he is a faithful intercessor... I have a deep desire in my heart to have, if possible, a relic that is certified as authentic to help me see in his tender life, the sanctity and the path to reach it...”

**Gerardo Vega, Chimbass, Argentina 07.09.2011**

“I received the newsletter n. 21. I appreciate it. I am interested in the news about the dedication of the Sagrada Familia Temple. It is impossible for me to send a donation, but I am happy to see that others can...”

**Esdra Bonne, Santiago de Cuba, 20.10.2011.**

“I would like to participate in what seems to be an intercession by Gaudi. My girlfriend and I asked the Lord to clarify my vocation, in my dedication to poetry. We both made a trip -pilgrimage to see the Sagrada Familia as an artistic expression of the catholic religious message of Gaudi. We both prayed novenas, including the prayer that appeared in the pamphlet and card they gave us. The fact is that since June 13th I lived an interior experience that made my vocation clear. Yes, I gradually perceive my personal vocation towards sanctity...”

**Rafael Santos, Madrid, 06.12.2011.**

“My devotion and admiration for the Lord’s servant Antoni Gaudi, has inspired me to ask the Association for a card and relic of Gaudi”.

**Dennos Mifsud, Gozo Malta, 02.01.2012.**

“That the family made of Jesus, Mary and Joseph be considered a school of love, prayer and work. Many and good years”.

**Joaquim Renom, Badalona, 2012.**

“As a journalist and writer I have made a video about Gaudi, titled “La última

catedral”, as a token of gratefulness to the architect. I would also like to express as a personal testimony, the small “miracle” he made in my favor”.

**Joaquin de Saint Aymour, 02.01.2012.**

“I am an architect and since I was a student I have been very interested in Gaudi’s architecture and genius personality, and I join you in supporting his beatification”.

**Cristian Samayoa, Ciudad de Guatemala, 04.01.2012.**

“Many, many thanks for the newsletter in Italian”.

**Paolo Rossi, Villapotenza, Italia, 12.01.2012.**

“My daughter was fired from her job... I commended Mr. Antoni Gaudi and in September she began to work, and two months later her boss congratulated her”.

**Concepción Barroso, 24.01.2012.**

“I am a university professor and investigate in the area of “Economics and culture”. I have been preparing a proposal for the 7th program in the European Union. During these months I have turned to Gaudi’s intercession. When there was only one week left the most important partner of the project told me to stop working. I intensified my petitions to Gaudi and finally I was able to present the proposal. I am writing this note to give thanks”.

**Beatriz Plaza, Bilbao, 02.02.2012.**

“I came to Barcelona this summer with the art association “11 Baglio” and I was very impressed with the Sagrada Familia, and to know Gaudi and your Association. I am sending a donation for the beatification”.

**Giovanna Gobbi, Savignano sul Rubicone, Italia.**

## PRESS

From the very beginning both the national and international media: press, radio and television have reproduced the news relating to the beatification of Antoni Gaudí. These are some of the articles published in the last fifteen years.

“Catalonia can feel very proud of a man who has reached the highest temple of Christianity: the Sagrada Familia, the Temple of the Catalan Renaixença, as it has been rightly called recently.

The Temple of the Sagrada Familia was the great masterpiece of Gaudí. He spent more than forty years of his life dedicated to its study and work. According to him, it is a temple that will never be finished, because it is being built from charity and charity neither ends nor is it interrupted.”

**Transcription of the original version by Celestí Torres I Guiu. *Diari de Reus* - Nº 147 (26<sup>th</sup> June, 1936)**

“A building by Gaudí is like a transcendent vehicle. For Gaudí, transcendence was beauty that he considered like Hegel the splendour of the truth; truth is based on life and life on movement; therefore in the master’s work curves predominate especially the parabola, the mathematic curve beautiful and dynamic that replaces the oval shaped arch; the natural parabola on the way to strength. Antoni Gaudí, an architectural genius.”

**Asturi, Elisa Martha (architect). “Entre la luz y las tinieblas”. *Caldenia* (weekly magazine from La Arena). P. 1-3 (13<sup>th</sup> December 1992)**

“Creations that speak of God and a life dedicated to the Creator. Antonio Gaudí lived with the austerity of a hermit and died in an aroma of holiness. The chronicles of the time –Gaudí died on 10th June, 1926, three days after being run over by a tram– wrote that his funeral cortege was followed by a multitude of people who thronged the streets of the city”.

**Vidal, José Manuel. “El arquitecto de Dios rumbo a los altares”. *Época*. Nº 708 (21<sup>st</sup> September, 1998). P 36-39**

“Rosa Parés Sallent has also contributed information about Gaudí’s religiousness. Born in Terrassa in 1910, Rosa Parés was the niece of mossèn Gil Parés i Vilsau, chaplain of the expiatory Temple of the Sagrada Familia, someone who therefore spent much time with Gaudí. Rosa Parés recalls anecdotes of time

spent in the rectory of the Sagrada Família when she was between 10 and 14 years old.”

**Vicente, Albert. “Testimonios de santidad”. *Diari de Tarragona*. P. 22 (6<sup>th</sup> April, 1999).**

“The process of beatification of Gaudí is a novelty, but not a surprise. The Sagrada Família is the perfect image because it is the best work of his life. To a lesser or greater degree, his testament; the testament of an artist for whom “a man without religion is a man wasted spiritually, a man mutilated”.

**Faulí, Josep. “Gaudí, teòlog de la pedra”. *Avui*. P. 25 (30.05.1999).**

“Why has the process of beatification for Gaudí never been started before, since he lived a life of human and Christian virtues in heroic degree? Surely I was not the first person in suggesting this, many of Gaudí’s contemporaries, following his demise, had declared that they were convinced that one day they would see him on the altars, as an example of a genius, strong in his work while living in harmony and austerity.

**Segarra, Ignasi. “El proceso de beatification”. *Dossier 2002, Any Internacional*. N° 12 (July 2001). *Proyección exterior Generalitat de Catalunya*.**

“This temple of the Sagrada Família is a piece of work that is not finished but is solid from the very beginning; it resembles and epitomizes another construction... Another construction made with live stonework: the Christian family where faith and love are born and grow without ending”. These words were said by John Paul II from the masterpiece of Gaudí during his visit to Barcelona in autumn 1982. This expiatory temple, whose very original architectural forms synthesize symbols extracted from nature and from Christian faith, has become the most emblematic building in Barcelona. Through its stonework the spirit of a deeply Christian architect can be clearly seen.”

**Codina, Miguel Ángel. “Gaudí, el arquitecto de Dios”. *Catalunya Cristiana*. N° 1145 (30<sup>th</sup> August, 2001). P.2, 3-5**

“Gaudí took part enthusiastically in the Lliga d’Espiritualitat de la Mare de Déu de Montserrat. However, a point of reflex ion in his life was the period of Lent following the acceptance of the project for the Sagrada Família. He wanted to prepare himself in such a way that he undertook a very strict form of fasting. Drained of all strength, he lay bedridden in his home on Diputació Street. Only the intervention of Torres i Bages brought him out of his trance. Later he confessed to only having wanted to follow the advice of friar Angélico: “He who wants to paint Christ can only follow one road: live with Christ”



**Amaritriain, Alfonso Carlos (profesor del Centro Universitario Abat Oliba CEU). Revista Abat Oliba CEU N° 2 (June 2002).**

“A man who overstepped his time was the architect Antoni Gaudí. His work pays tribute to the perfection of nature. His capacity of detachment and observation, his reflexive attitude and his constant search took him to this reunion with the principles of nature. The force of gravity, for example, was Gaudí’s accomplice in the structure of his genial works of art and light was his guest of honour.

We architects must build efficient architecture. We are part of the creation, of that great system that has been functioning perfectly for millions of years. Understanding nature, admiring it without fighting against it nor challenging it, arming ourselves with humbleness just as Gaudí did, will not only take us to rediscover what surrounds us, but also to reconcile ourselves with nature. The architect then becomes an intelligent host and is sufficiently creative to satisfy the demand of the client and of the planet”.

**Nolte, Lorena (architect). “El ejemplo de la obra del gran Antoni Gaudí”. *El Comercio*. Perú (09.11.2005).**

“The work of Gaudí has certainly led to religious conversions, especially among Japanese tourists from the Far East who visit the Sagrada Familia daily”.

***The Times*: “Noticias del Mundo”, by Giles Tremlett.**

“Whether Gaudí is a saint or not, there is no doubt about the power of his architecture to stimulate astonishment and respect. As Joaquín Torres-García, an architect who worked at the time of Gaudí said, “It is impossible to deny that he was an extraordinary man, a creative genius...He belonged to a race of men from another time and whose conscience of the highest order was located above material life”.

***Smithsonian*: “El regalo de Gaudí”, by Stanley Meisler.**

“The life of Antoni Gaudí, especially since he started work on the Temple, was an act of worship to the Holy Trinity. The so-called small or earthly trinity: Jesus, Mary and Joseph was for Gaudí, precisely, the way to get closer to the Trinity of the sky”.

***L’Eco de Sitges*: “Gaudí y la Santísima Trinitat”, by Dr. Ignasi Segarra (presbyter).**

“Gaudí experienced like nobody else the idea that work sanctifies a person. This genial architect considered his work as God’s work. He was a famous architect, who could have become very rich but however led an austere and humble life”.

Catalunya Cristiana: “Interview with Charles Teetor (member of the Association)”.

## EPILOGUE

“The true history of humanity –pointed out Pope John Paul II– is identified with the history of holiness (...): the Saints and the Blessed appear before us like witnesses, that is to say, like people who, on acknowledging Christ, his person and his doctrine, have progressed to a solid display, concrete and credible of one of the essential characteristics of the Church, which is precisely sanctity.

Without that continual testimony, the religious and moral doctrine preached by the Church is in danger of being confused with a merely human ideology, being as it is the doctrine of life, that is to say, applicable and translatable to life: doctrine that has to be lived, according to the example of Jesus Christ, who proclaims “I am the life” (John 14.8) and affirms that he has come to give that life and to give it in abundance (cfr. *ibid*, 10, 10).

Sanctity, not as a theoretical ideal, but as a road that has to be followed in faithful pursuit of Christ, is a particularly urgent requirement of our time (...).”

John Paul II, “speech of 15-II-1992”. In: *Insegnamenti*, 1992. p. 304-305.

“At the beginning of the third millennium, –says the priest Manuel J. Cociña y Abella–, humanity makes its way expectantly between the threatening mists of international terrorism, the overabundance of corruption, the growth of marginalization and other multiple dangers threatening human life and dignity.

At the same time, there is a strong reappearance of feelings of solidarity, a yearning for peace and a firm commitment, that nestles in many hearts, to genuinely search for justice.

In order for the light to shine through the dark clouds, as we would wish, we need examples of conduct that have the sufficient attraction to lead us to that genuine human progress that by really being true, takes us closer to God”.

From a Christian perspective, the examples that we are looking for are the saints.

Saints are those who have understood the idea of freedom in a more radical way.

The general reaction to the news of the process of beatification of Gaudí could be summed up in the question of surprise that a stranger asked the president of the Association Pro Beatification, when coming out of a religious service: “Why didn’t anybody think of this before?”

In fact, a man who dedicated his life and work to the exaltation of the faith,

whose day to day life was an example and who left an everlasting impression in his work, deserves to be exposed to the faithful as an example and to the non-faithful as a subject for reflexion.

Gaudí was in love with his work, with an increasing personal exigency that he transmitted to his collaborators, a search for perfection, beauty, collaboration with the Creator, in short: the glory of God.

He personally directed all the **work** himself, even the work of his labourers. His methods of organization awoke curiosity and his colleagues in the city began to criticize him, saying that he was “anxious to become famous”. Some of these colleagues sent their foremen to the Sagrada Familia to work anonymously for Gaudí and they usually decided to remain with him-others left their construction companies and asked to work with Gaudí in order to learn more, eager to perfect their work.

“Work –he said– is the result of collaboration, and this can only be based on love. The architect must know how to take advantage of what the workers know how to do and what they can do. It’s necessary to take advantage of the outstanding qualities of each man. This means integrating, combining all the efforts together and lending them a hand when they run aground. That way they work with pleasure and with the assurance that the leader has total confidence in them. Moreover, it’s necessary to remember that nobody is useless, everybody is useful (although not all with the same capacity); the question is recognising the capabilities of each person.”

Gaudí looked after his workers, both in the professional aspect as in their personal life:

“He begged Raimundo: Take care! Pay attention. You are still in time. You should do a little more exercise: walk. And stop eating so much, diet a little bit. Think that if you aren’t careful, you’ll explode!”

His habit of participating personally on a job put him in contact with all the personnel.

“This could be done by José, who has more experience” –he said.

“Let Andrés do it, he’s taller and it will be easier for him.”

Gaudí practiced and defended sacrifice:

“Life is love and love is sacrifice. Sacrifice is the only real success. The reason for spiritual and material development of religious orders, of homes, is because all their members sacrifice themselves for the good of the group”.

“Corporal exercise, sobriety in eating, drinking and sleeping, are disciplines of the body that effectively fight against lust, laziness and drunkenness....”

Gaudí practiced the virtues and a life of **godliness**:

“Life is a battle, strength is needed to fight it and strength is a virtue that is

only maintained and increased with spiritual culture, that is to say, with religious practices". Therefore, one who knows this reality follows a spiritual path, recites the rosary, reads the gospel, visits those who are ill, gives donations and carries out strict penitence.

The result of this outer growth (a greater professional experience, a greater knowledge of techniques and materials) and of the inner growth (a greater personal relationship with God) marks a special characteristic in his work, dazzling, that has attracted and continues to attract the attention of many and unites **Love** and **Architecture**.

The architect Joan Bergós Massó, a collaborator of Gaudí, comments in his book *Gaudí, el hombre y la obra*:

"Gaudí spent the last ten years of his life exclusively dedicated to the Temple of the Sagrada Familia. His life is totally ascetic, his godliness is on the brink of mysticism and his production crosses the limits of the most elevated architecture, carried by a growing lyrical exaltation. He is pleased with the polychromatic finish of the first bell tower and shows me saying: "Look at how it's finished off....! Don't you think that the Earth seems to join Heaven? The shine of the mosaics is the first thing that sailors will see when they are arriving at Barcelona: it will be a brilliant welcome!"

Later on he writes:

"In his plenitude he encounters that childlike quality requested by the Gospel: one night he came to me and said: "I'm going to the church of the "Merced", to say a few things to the Virgin."

### **Reputation of Sanctity**

Sister Antonia Claus i Tut recalls that on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1973, as published in the magazine *Temple* in its July-August edition, Gaudí went to Mother Rosa, the mother superior of the order of the Hermanas Carmelitas de San José, to ask for help in looking after his father and niece in his residence of the Park Güell. I have chosen these sentences from the article:

"Learn from the religious virtues of Gaudí; these cannot be improvised without having carried them out from an early age, because a tree is recognised by its fruits..."

Mother Rosa considered Antoni Gaudí to be a saint: "he is a true man of God and in time the Church will canonize him, because he is already a saint."

On 11<sup>th</sup> June, 1926 the priest Mons. Manel Trens i Ribas (1892-1976), a historian of art, wrote an article in *La Publicitat* entitled "El Arquitecto de Dios."

In the church of Saint Philip Neri, the painter Joan Llimona, a friend and companion of Gaudí in the Artistic Circle of Saint Lucas, used him, while still alive,

as a model for two paintings in which he was represented as the saint, patron of Rome.

The priest Francisco Baldelló wrote in April 1971: “I sincerely hope that my possible intervention in a new act in honour of Gaudí will be on occasion of the initiation of the process of his Beatification.

The testimony of the sculptor Joan Matamala, collaborator of Gaudí in the temple of the Sagrada Família, wrote in his book *Mi itinerario con el arquitecto*:

“Gaudí is a true reward in the history of architecture. He resembles a strange being who, when running through space and putting his foot in the world, leaves shining meteors in his stride. For some reason he, in a metaphysical form, was elevated from matter to intelligence and from the mechanics of the universe rose to the Supreme Maker.

More recently, **Yun Young-Joo** a manager of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Busan, Korea, wrote on 19th March, 1998:

“The architecture of Gaudí is well-known for its artistic beauty. It combines classic and gothic elements and it is shown through fantastic spaces. I think that even more importance should be given to his harmonic fondness of nature and the environment, which proves the existence of God by means of his work.

Gaudí, in his constant search for the truth, built works of art that enabled people to discover the divine breath that palpitates in them. His architecture deserves people’s praise since he wrote poetry with his architecture.

I cannot forget the religious impact that the visit to Barcelona to prepare an exhibition of Gaudí had on me. I was in the Temple of the Sagrada Família, as part of my route seeing the work of Gaudí around Barcelona. It is impossible to describe the impression left on my heart. I couldn’t help but bow my head before the solemnity, the sanctity and the greatness of the building. A deep feeling overpowered my heart. Through the works of Gaudí and the divine touch that they have, I was convinced of the existence of God.

Although I have previously been a devoted Buddhist, I converted to Catholicism on returning to Busan, because of the deep impression caused by the works of Gaudí.

I believe that the Gaudínian exhibition that has taken place in Busan under my supervision was a work preordained by God. After this, I converted to Catholicism and I frequently attend church.

I believe that Gaudí is an evangelist for the work of God in the world, as well as being a great architect. By means of exhibitions about Gaudí, that will be organized all over the world, people are able to admire not only his works of art but also his dedication to God throughout his life, when this is known.

Gaudí is preaching the Catholic faith throughout the entire world with his architecture. He also encourages artists to continue their search for God.

There are many people who, after studying his life, works and thoughts, have embraced the Catholic faith or have started to take it seriously again. There are many who ask God for his intervention and quite a number of prayers have been answered, as shown in the newsletter that the Association Pro Beatification of Gaudí publishes regularly.

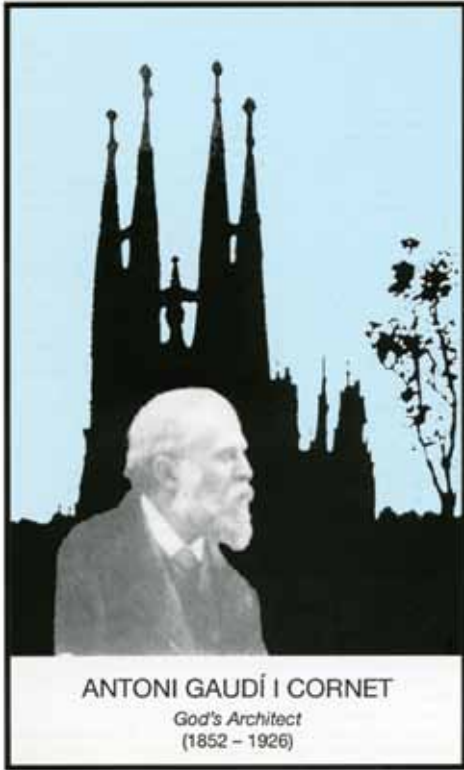
The initiation of the beatification process in the Vatican signifies an important advance. The congregation has studied the formal documents presented, has declared their validity and has appointed a relator to prepare the *positio*, which will be examined by a group of theologians of the Holy See together with the cardinals chosen to study the cause of Gaudí. If the vote is favourable, then there will only need to be proof of a miracle.

We are often asked how long the process of beatification may take. We would like to repeat the words of Gaudí when he was asked about the finalization of the Sagrada Familia: “My client is not in a hurry.”

## **GRAPHICAL AGENDA**







ANTONI GAUDÍ I CORNET was born on June 25, 1852. Early in his life he became familiar with volumes and shapes at his father's boiler-making shop in Reus. At the family farm in Riudoms, in the midst of the Tarragona country side, his blue eyes caught the purest images of Nature, his great teacher.

After he finished his high school at the Piarist Fathers of Reus, he attended the University of Barcelona where he earned his degree in architecture, the great passion of his life. On 1883 he was given the job of building the Sagrada Família Temple, started shortly before. Although he worked on this project for forty-three years, it was during the last ten years of his life that he exclusively dedicated his art and all his energies to it in a full service to God's glory. Gaudi identified himself with the religious and expiatory aim of the Temple, founded by a pious man, the bookseller Josep M.ª Bocabella and his Association of Devouts of St. Joseph.

Gaudi was a man of a rather strong temperament, but cheerful and a friend of the people. Since he was convinced that nothing of value can be achieved without sacrifice, he dedicated himself to an austere life of prayer and detachment. He loved the Catholic liturgy and was devoted to the Mother of God and her spouse St. Joseph: he conceived "La Pedrera" as a monument to Our Lady of the Rosary. On occasion he had expressed a desire to die in a hospital among the poor people. This came to pass when he was run down by a street car. The city police didn't recognize him and, seeing him as a poor man, they took him to the Holy Cross Hospital, where he died on June 10, 1926. The last words he uttered were: "Amen. My God, my God!" His body rests in the Crypt of the Holy Family Temple.

#### PRAYER FOR PRIVATE DEVOTION

God our Father, you instilled in your servant Antoni Gaudi, architect, a great love for your Creation and a burning desire to imitate the childhood and passion mysteries of your Son. Grant, by the power of the Holy Spirit that I also may learn to dedicate myself to a well-done work and glorify your servant Antoni, granting me, through his intercession the favour I request (here make your petition). Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, grant us peace and preserve the family. (Three times).

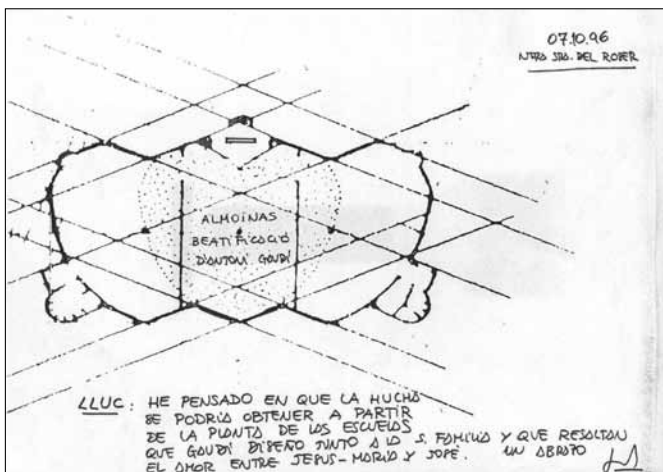
Those who obtain favours and want to help with donations, or wish to have additional cards, write to: Association pro Beatification of Antoni Gaudi: P.O. Box 24094 - 08080 Barcelona (Spain)

This Association is distinct and independent from other Gaudi organizations and from the Board of Works of the Temple.

With ecclesiastical approval.

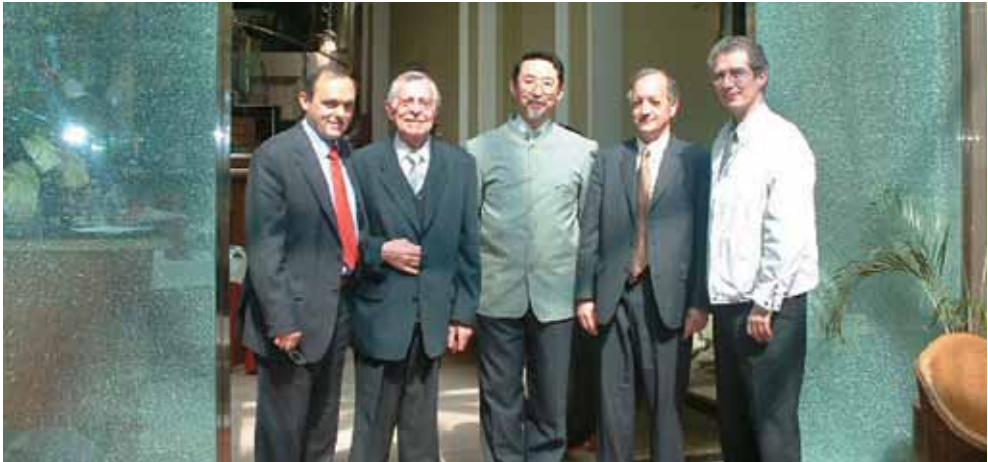
In conformity with the decrees of Pope Urban VIII, we declare that there is no intention of participating in any way the judgement of the church, and that this prayer is not intended for public use.

Reproduction of the prayer card for private worship to Antoni Gaudí.



Sketch copied from the Christmas card in 1984 from the architect Francesc de P. Cardoner i Blanch, for the collection box of the crypt next to Gaudí's tomb.

Pattern of the *Escuelas Provisionales* from the temple of la Sagrada Família formed by the intercession of three hearts that symbolize the holy family of Nazareth: Jesus, Mary and Joseph.



**The members of the Association. From left to right: Jose Manuel Almuzara, Jose Luis Lázaro, Etsuro Sotoo, Josep M<sup>a</sup> Tarragona and Javier Fransitorra (April 2007).**



**Initiation of the process of beatification in the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, in front of the Basilica de San Pedro in Rome, from left to right: the sculptor Etsuro Sotoo, the diocese judge of Barcelona father J. M<sup>a</sup> Blanquet, cardinal Ricard M<sup>a</sup> Carles, the architect Jose Manuel Almuzara, the lawyer Gabriela Gonzalez-Cremona and the historian and engineer Josep M<sup>a</sup> Tarragona, biographer of Gaudí (9th July, 2003).**



**Sculptural group of nine angels singing the Gloria at the birth of Jesus in the façade of the Nativity, work carried out by the sculptor, Etsuro Sotoo.**



**Baptism of the sculptor, Etsuro Sotoo – Lucas Miguel Ángel Sotoo– carried out by the auxiliary bishop of Barcelona Mons. Joan Carrera (03.11.1991)**



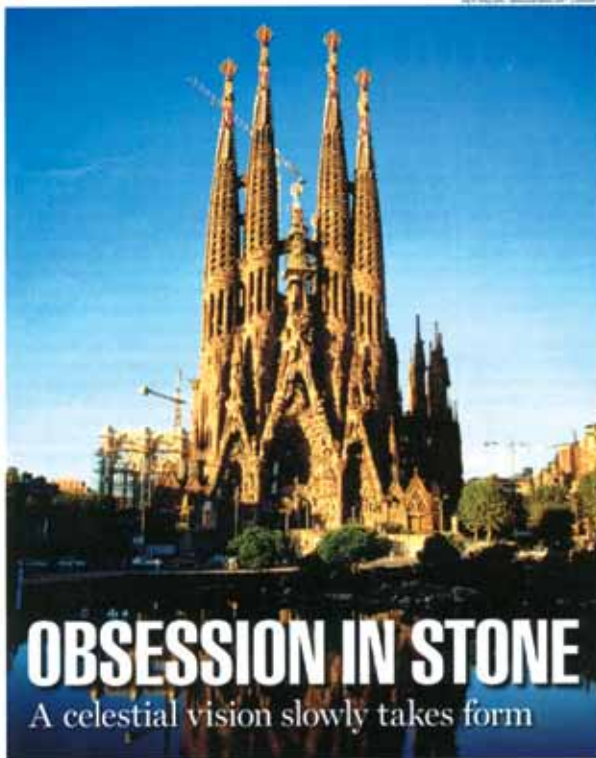
**Mr. Ignasi Segarra, inspiration and founder of the pro Beatification Association, died on 23rd May, 2003.**



**Chapel of the Virgen del Carmen, with the tomb of Gaudí, in the crypt of the temple of the Sagrada Familia.**



**Gaudí's room in the house museum of the Parc Güell, where he lived with his father and niece.**



## OBSSESSION IN STONE

A celestial vision slowly takes form

BY DANA HAWKINS SIMONS

**M**ore than mere structures, the works of Catalan architect Antonio Gaudí delight the senses and ignite the imagination. His constructions—such as the tile-encrusted, undulating benches of Parc Güell and the otherworldly, wavy facade of the La Pedrera apartment building—are alive with movement. Sprinkled around Barcelona, they have come to symbolize the creative spirit of the city.

None has more mystique than his masterpiece, the quirky cathedral called Sagrada Família. A fantasy world of spires and stone stalagmites, it is still unfinished after more than 100 years, slowed mostly by money shortages but also by political turmoil and the challenge of turning

Gaudí's vision into stone. The structure and its epic story have fascinated art historians, drawn wayward souls back to God, and spurred admirers to call for Gaudí's elevation to sainthood.

The architect was inseparable from his creation. The gloomy, eccentric genius spent his last years living in the crypt of the Sagrada Família. "He worked, ate, slept, and, in the end, was buried inside of her," says historian and Gaudí expert Daniel Giralt-Miracle. "He never had a family; he was married to the Sagrada Família. The relationship was, in his case, a very obsessive passion."

Gaudí took over the project in 1882 and turned a plan for a conventional Gothic church into a unique illustration of ardor. Art historians have described his style as a mix of art nouveau, surre-



**INSPIRATION.** The Sagrada Família rises over Barcelona, still unfinished more than a century after it was conceived by Antonio Gaudí (portrayed below on a coin).

alism, cubism, and neo-Gothic—"a wild stylistic kleptomania," says Gijs van Hensbergen in his book *Gaudí*. More than anything else, he was inspired by nature. Twisting columns of basalt, granite, and porphyry rise in the church's interior. Branching at the top, they create the illusion of a stone forest, with light filtering from above as through leaves.

Gaudí illustrated his ideas with models more often than on paper. "Nature was Gaudí's model, and nature doesn't make projects on paper," explains Joan Bassegoda, curator of the Sagrada Família. He was known to experiment with weights and string to calculate the stress on arches, and his structures, improbable as they appear, have held up well.

Even so, "it's not so simple to build a Gaudí structure," says Jordi Bonet, 78, the architect in charge of the Sagrada Família project for the past 17 years. "Skyscrapers are easier, with their straight lines and vertical columns." Thankfully, advanced computer programs, which allow Gaudí's complex geometric forms to be analyzed and turned into construction plans, are doubling the rate of progress, says Bonet.

**Patience.** The temple is now 60 percent complete. Eight of 18 spiraling towers are built; the tallest, 170 meters high and capped with a gigantic cross, is scheduled to be finished in 20 years. But it could take 40 years or more to complete the project. The pace of work depends largely on the generosity of the public, whose donations—about \$10 million last year—fund the construction.

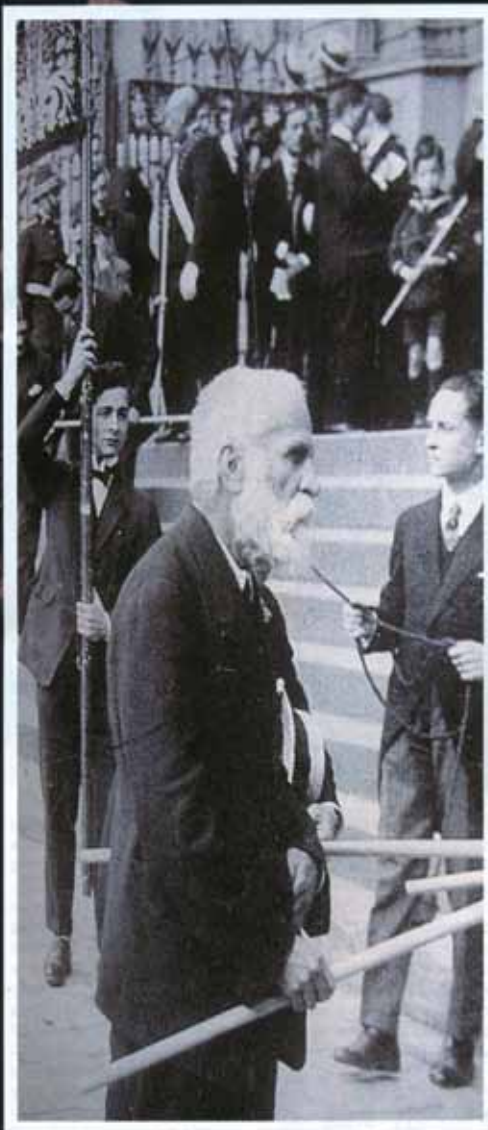
A smaller campaign is afoot to turn Gaudí into a saint. Over 500 devotees worldwide claim their prayers were answered after they appealed to the monkish, austere architect. There are letters from a man in Chile who says he was cured of cancer, a girl in Switzerland whose lost architecture school project magically reappeared, and—perhaps as a nod to the rock-carved appearance of the Sagrada Família—testimonials from dozens of believers who passed kidney stones.

When might the faithful begin to pray, officially, to St. Gaudí for cures or advice on building a sturdy outdoor deck? Chuckles Josep Manuel Almuzara, the architect leading the beatification process: "That's even more difficult to answer than the question of when will the Sagrada Família be completed." ●

PHOTO: J. GARCIA

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT, JUNE 30 / JULY 7, 2003 61

El artista tuvo una vida pia y ejemplar



Antonio Gaudí en la procesión de Corpus Christi de 1924 a la salida de la Catedral de Barcelona. Gaudí fue profundamente católico y transmitió su fe a su obra más emblemática, la Sagrada Familia

# Gaudí A LOS ALTARES

**El proceso de beatificación del arquitecto de la Sagrada Familia puede iniciarse el próximo mes.**

SEBASTIÁN VIVAS / Fotos: JORDI PARRA

**D**on Antonio se comportaba como un pobre, tanto en la frugalidad de la comida como en la ropa de su uso, y si vestía pobremente, no creo que fuese debido a ser pobre sino por su espíritu sobrenatural pues en todo se manifestaba ser un gran imitador de Jesucristo, se le veía muy desprendido de las cosas humanas y muy concentrado en las cosas eternas... Sus palabras eran pocas, pero llenas de unción; se veía claro que meditaba mucho las Verdades eternas y ponía sus miras y su tesoro en las cosas del Cielo...". Este es el testimonio de la hermana Antonia Claus i Tutó, religiosa de las Hermanas Carmelitas de San José y sobrina del cardenal Vives i Tutó, sobre el arquitecto Antonio Gaudí. La monja había sido encargada por la madre Rosa, la superiora del >

*Tiempo*. April 1998.



Algunos expertos ven en Gaudí una espiritualización de la materia similar a la que se da en la cultura japonesa. Esta idea se percibe en sus diseños -izquierda- o en la imagen final de la Sagrada Familia -abajo-.



## ¿Un hombre con madera de santo?

Cuanto más elevado sea el asunto que se trate, más poderosos han de ser los medios que exigirá. Los asuntos religiosos requieren el uso de todos los medios en su grado más alto." Así justificaba Gaudí los importantes recursos que se

desgranaban a sus obras religiosas. Y es que, según algunos, la vida y obras de este arquitecto lo avalan para que sea reconocido por la Iglesia como beato.

José Manuel Almazara, presidente de la Comisión Pro Beatificación de Gaudí, dice que "para la gran mayoría de los seguidores de su obra, sean o no católicos, Gaudí era un hombre santo". Alma de él que era sencillo y despreocupado, que entregaba su sueldo al templo y vivía pobremente, sin permitir que nadie le ayudase.

Otras opiniones, por supuesto, son de distinto tipo. El escultor Subirachs dice que "beatificado sería como rebajarlo de categoría, pasarlo de figura universal a local".

En 1998, los obispos catalanes concedieron autorización para la apertura de la causa, aunque ya habían pasado 72 años desde la muerte de Gaudí. El reconocimiento, pues, debe hacerse a partir de documentos. Este, desde luego, sólo es el primer paso. Un grupo de teólogos revisarán su biografía

y deberán comprobar si practicó en grado heroico las virtudes teológicas y las cardinales, a la vez que ejerció como sirviente de Dios a través de la humildad, la pobreza, la solidaridad hacia el prójimo y la trascendencia espiritual. En el caso de Gaudí, el peor argumento en su contra radica en su propio carácter, ya que hay testimonios escritos que lo cuestionan.

Tras la autorización de la Santa Sede se creará un tribunal diocesano integrado por un juez, un notario y un fiscal -en este caso Jaume Riera, fiscal de la diócesis de Barcelona-, que analizarán los documentos. El Proceso suele durar 4 años y costar 2 millones para ponerlo en marcha. Luego está el requisito del milagro. Las maravillas morales no sirven, sino que debe tratarse de una curación inexplicable o algo en la misma medida. Eso sí. Ya hay quien atribuye la sanación milagrosa de algunas dolencias tras encomendarse a Gaudí.

mente, el estilo de las estancias que el maestro constructor había ideado. Pero, como Subirachs mismo confiesa, su único miedo no es el de la crítica, sino "encontrarme alguna noche con Gaudí... ¡dícen que tenía un carácter tremendo!".

En la actualidad, se construye sobre los datos que se conservan, en especial a partir de las maquetas originales que han podido ser recuperadas tras la guerra Civil, y se utilizan las nuevas tecnologías.

### ● Una obra diseñada por ordenador, piedra a piedra

Desde hace una década se utiliza el diseño por ordenador en las obras. El profesor de Construcción de la Universidad neozelandesa de Wellington Mark Barry afirma que "fue difícil encontrar los programas informáticos que se adecuara a las obras, ya que para las formas tan complicadas proyectadas por

Gaudí no servían los usuales". En realidad, la informática se utiliza para trabajar cada piedra por separado, de forma que luego puedan encajar perfectamente.

Cuando las obras estén terminadas, el templo estará coronado

por un enorme cimborrio de 170 metros de altura, otros cinco más pequeños, doce campanarios de 100 metros y varias cúpulas menores, un conjunto de tal magnitud que por sí solo convierte a Gaudí en una de las figuras más rele-

vantes de la arquitectura mundial. Aun así, el maestro constructor siempre se mostró categórico: "a los artistas no se les debe hacer monumentos. Ya los tienen hechos con sus obras".

Abraham Alonso

## Al final de su vida iba tan mal vestido que le llegaron a dar limosna



### Despedida digna

de un héroe  
Una multitud de más de 3.000 personas acudió a la Sagrada Familia para celebrar las horas fúnebres de Gaudí. El cuerpo del arquitecto fue depositado en la cripta que él mismo construyera.

### PARA SABER MÁS

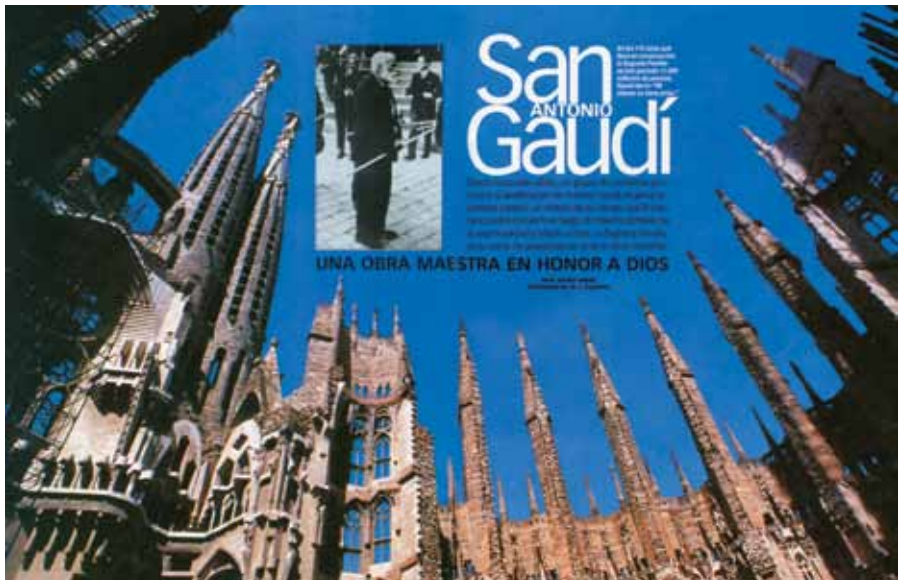
#### En Internet

[www.gaudí.cat](http://www.gaudí.cat) web del arquitecto Gaudí.  
[www.gaudí2002.com](http://www.gaudí2002.com) es página con información sobre los actos que se celebrarán en Barcelona con motivo del año de Gaudí.



**Gaudí, de piedra y fuego y Gaudí, la huella del genio** constituyen una original biografía del arquitecto catalán fruto de 15 años de investigaciones. La autora, Arja SP Films, ha estructurado la obra en diez ideas políticas y religiosas y en el legado de su obra. Publica Jaravameca Editores a un precio de 4.900 pts. (29,45 €) y 3.900 pts. (23,44 €) respectivamente.

Muy Interesante. January 2002.



Paris Match. October 1998.



La Nación, January 2007. In this edition the possibility that Buenos Aires could hold the II International Congress of the Saints of the Fine Arts was announced. The first one would take place in Valencia at the end of 2007.

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JOSÉ MANUEL ALMUZARA ■ PRESIDENTE DE LA ASOCIACIÓ PRO-BEATIFICACIÓ D'ANTONI GAUDI

# 'Gaudí hizo visible a Dios'

**PERFIL** El arquitecto José Manuel Almuzara nació en 1952 «donde después de Gaudí» en Bladern, aunque desde hace muchos años reside en El Montseny. Su fascinación por dicho arquitecto le vino en 6.º de carrera, cuando José su trabajo en este catalán universal. Preside la Associació pro-Beatificació d'Antoni Gaudí.

por **ANSEL PUJANERA**

«¿Hay algún precedente de un arquitecto beatificado? No hay ninguno, ni siquiera en el mundo. De la paternidad de los arquitectos y padre de los artistas».

En la documentación aporta da se dice de Gaudí que con templa de una manera apasionada e ingenua la naturaleza. ¿Cómo se materializa en su obra?

«El estilo lo naturaliza, creado por Dios, de la cual él se vio influenciado. Ante esto es muy interesante lo que hay en ella y las plantas en su arquitectura».

**Ponga un ejemplo.** El interior del templo de la Sagrada Familia es como un bosque. La naturaleza tiene fuerza de árbol».

¿Qué debe ser de la fase diocesana del proceso de beatificación?

Las personas saben que Gaudí era un gran cristiano, participó en un gran número de Muestras eucarísticas, eran los mismos, acompañaron al Obispo durante el Hospital de la Santa Cruz hasta la Sagrada Família.



El arquitecto Almuzara es uno de los impulsores de la beatificación del arquitecto universal. FOTO: LUIS GIL/EL NUEVO DIARIO

la. Durante el recorrido había miles de personas en los cafés».

El hecho de que la causa de beatificación haya sido promovida por laicos, ¿es un hecho?

«Estaría bien que la beatificación fuese en vida, cuando se cumplen 90 años de su muerte».

¿Será o dificultará el proceso? Antoni Gaudí era laico. ¿Qué mejor que dos sumos pontífices, un ingeniero biógrafo de Gaudí, un sacerdote y el que tuvo la idea -mucho tiempo atrás- para promoverlo?

«Por qué creen que Gaudí es un buen cristiano? Porque se casó en serio con la. Como decía Benedicto XVI, fue comprometido con su fe. En toda su obra manifiesta ese amor por Dios».

La presencia del Papa en noviembre pasado en la consagración de la Sagrada Família, ¿puede suponer un impulso al proyecto?

«Será un impulso para todos. Primero para que percibamos que alguien el Papa dentro de la Iglesia católica. Después significa un reconocimiento a la belleza, esa belleza que dejó el mismo Papa, lo increíble se ha hecho visible. La invisibilidad de Dios se ha hecho visible a través de la creación de Gaudí. Y en tercer lugar, muchos se preguntan cuánto es capaz de hacer esto».

¿Cuándo se podrá materializar la beatificación? El hombre se propone y Dios dispone. En esta línea que fue en el año -se cumplirá en 20 años de la muerte del arquitecto-. Pero si no es así, ¿no pasa a otra

Lo importante es que Antoni Gaudí nos sirva para acercarnos a Dios».

«La abogada que lleva la causa le ha dado alguna pista, sobre la fecha?»

No, nada más. El proceso sigue su curso. Ahora se está trabajando en el material que se tiene que presentar a los señores e historiadores que la Santa Sede designa. Hay unos años de trabajo, de estudio, por lo que no se puede poner fecha. Siempre que Gaudí, entre sus, se podrá materializar, porque él lo hizo con los imperios mundiales se encuentra que salen por ferias».

www.diaridetarragona.com

## De conferencia

El arquitecto José Manuel Almuzara estuvo en Tarragona junto con el arquitecto de la Sagrada Família Eusebio Rubio para presentar una conferencia sobre Antoni Gaudí. En ella se habló de la figura del genial arquitecto, así como también del proceso de beatificación, invitando a los fieles de aquí, desde parte actualizada, a colaborar con el proceso de beatificación de este catalán universal. La conferencia se celebró en el templo de la Sagrada Família, donde se participó en una oración y una presentación.

Article published in the *Diari de Tarragona* on February 20, 2011.

Next page: photograph of the interior of the Basilica of the Sagrada Família, the day of its Consecration by the Sainly Father Benedict XVI on November 7, 2012.







**Photographs from November 7, 2010 at the Consecration of the Expiatory Temple of the Sagrada Familia by the Saintly Father Benedict XVI.**



## HOMILY OF THE SAINTLY FATHER BENEDICT XVI AT THE CONSECRATION OF THE EXPIATORY TEMPLE OF THE SAGRADA FAMILIA

Barcelona, Sunday, 7 November 2010

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:

“This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep. ... The joy of the Lord is your strength” (Neh 8:9-11). With these words from the first reading that we have proclaimed, I wish to greet all of you taking part in this celebration. I extend an affectionate greeting to their Majesties the King and Queen of Spain who have graciously wished to be with us. I extend a thankful greeting to Cardinal Lluís Martínez Sistach, Archbishop of Barcelona, for his words of welcome and for his invitation to me to dedicate this Church of the Sagrada Familia, a magnificent achievement of engineering, art and faith. I also greet Cardinal Ricardo María Carles Gordó, Archbishop Emeritus of Barcelona, the other Cardinals present and my brother bishops, especially the auxiliary bishop of this local church, and the many priests, deacons, seminarians, religious men and women, and lay faithful taking part in this solemn ceremony. I also extend a respectful greeting to the national, regional and local authorities present, as well as to the members of other Christian communities, who share in our joy and our grateful praise of God.

Today marks an important step in a long history of hope, work and generosity that has gone on for more than a century. At this time I would like to mention each and every one of those who have made possible the joy that fills us today, from the promoters to the executors of this work, the architects and the workers, all who in one way or another have given their priceless contribution to the building of this edifice. We remember of course the man who was the soul and the artisan of this project, Antoni Gaudí, a creative architect and a practising Christian who kept the torch of his faith alight to the end of his life, a life lived in dignity and absolute austerity. This event is also in a certain sense the high point of the history of this land of Catalonia which, especially since the end of the nineteenth century, has given an abundance of saints and founders, martyrs and Christian poets. It is a history of holiness, artistic and poetic creation, born from the faith, which we gather and present to God today as an offering in this Eucharist.

The joy which I feel at presiding at this ceremony became all the greater when I learned that this shrine, since its beginnings, has had a special relationship with Saint Joseph. I have been moved above all by Gaudí’s confidence when, in the face of many difficulties, filled with trust in divine Providence, he would exclaim,

“Saint Joseph will finish this church”. So it is significant that it is also being dedicated by a Pope whose baptismal name is Joseph.

What do we do when we dedicate this church? In the heart of the world, placed before God and mankind, with a humble and joyful act of faith, we raise up this massive material structure, fruit of nature and an immense achievement of human intelligence which gave birth to this work of art. It stands as a visible sign of the invisible God, to whose glory these spires rise like arrows pointing towards absolute light and to the One who is Light, Height and Beauty itself.

In this place, Gaudí desired to unify that inspiration which came to him from the three books which nourished him as a man, as a believer and as an architect: the book of nature, the book of sacred Scripture and the book of the liturgy. In this way he brought together the reality of the world and the history of salvation, as recounted in the Bible and made present in the liturgy. He made stones, trees and human life part of the church so that all creation might come together in praise of God, but at the same time he brought the sacred images outside so as to place before people the mystery of God revealed in the birth, passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In this way, he brilliantly helped to build our human consciousness, anchored in the world yet open to God, enlightened and sanctified by Christ. In this he accomplished one of the most important tasks of our times: overcoming the division between human consciousness and Christian consciousness, between living in this temporal world and being open to eternal life, between the beauty of things and God as beauty. Antoni Gaudí did this not with words but with stones, lines, planes, and points. Indeed, beauty is one of mankind's greatest needs; it is the root from which the branches of our peace and the fruits of our hope come forth. Beauty also reveals God because, like him, a work of beauty is pure gratuity; it calls us to freedom and draws us away from selfishness.

We have dedicated this sacred space to God, who revealed and gave himself to us in Christ so as to be definitively God among men. The revealed Word, the humanity of Christ and his Church are the three supreme expressions of his self-manifestation and self-giving to mankind. As says Saint Paul in the second reading: “Let each man take care how he builds. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 3:10-11). The Lord Jesus is the stone which supports the weight of the world, which maintains the cohesion of the Church and brings together in ultimate unity all the achievements of mankind. In him, we have God's word and presence and from him the Church receives her life, her teaching and her mission. The Church of herself is nothing; she is called to be the sign and instrument of Christ, in pure docility to his authority and in total service to his mandate. The one Christ is the foundation of the

one Church. He is the rock on which our faith is built. Building on this faith, let us strive together to show the world the face of God who is love and the only one who can respond to our yearning for fulfilment. This is the great task before us: to show everyone that God is a God of peace not of violence, of freedom not of coercion, of harmony not of discord. In this sense, I consider that the dedication of this church of the Sagrada Familia is an event of great importance, at a time in which man claims to be able to build his life without God, as if God had nothing to say to him. In this masterpiece, Gaudí shows us that God is the true measure of man; that the secret of authentic originality consists, as he himself said, in returning to one's origin which is God. Gaudí, by opening his spirit to God, was capable of creating in this city a space of beauty, faith and hope which leads man to an encounter with him who is truth and beauty itself. The architect expressed his sentiments in the following words: "A church [is] the only thing worthy of representing the soul of a people, for religion is the most elevated reality in man".

This affirmation of God brings with it the supreme affirmation and protection of the dignity of each and every man and woman: "Do you not know that you are God's temple? ... God's temple is holy, and you are that temple" (1 Cor 3:16-17). Here we find joined together the truth and dignity of God and the truth and dignity of man. As we consecrate the altar of this church, which has Christ as its foundation, we are presenting to the world a God who is the friend of man and we invite men and women to become friends of God. This is what we are taught in the case of Zacchaeus, of whom today's gospel speaks (Lk 19:1-10), if we allow God into our hearts and into our world, if we allow Christ to live in our hearts, we will not regret it: we will experience the joy of sharing his very life, as the object of his infinite love.

This church began as an initiative of the Association of the Friends of Saint Joseph, who wanted to dedicate it to the Holy Family of Nazareth. The home formed by Jesus, Mary and Joseph has always been regarded as a school of love, prayer and work. The promoters of this church wanted to set before the world love, work and service lived in the presence of God, as the Holy Family lived them. Life has changed greatly and with it enormous progress has been made in the technical, social and cultural spheres. We cannot simply remain content with these advances. Alongside them, there also need to be moral advances, such as in care, protection and assistance to families, inasmuch as the generous and indissoluble love of a man and a woman is the effective context and foundation of human life in its gestation, birth, growth and natural end. Only where love and faithfulness are present can true freedom come to birth and endure. For this reason the Church advocates adequate economic and social means so that women may find in the home and at work their full development, that men and women

who contract marriage and form a family receive decisive support from the state, that life of children may be defended as sacred and inviolable from the moment of their conception, that the reality of birth be given due respect and receive juridical, social and legislative support. For this reason the Church resists every form of denial of human life and gives its support to everything that would promote the natural order in the sphere of the institution of the family.

As I contemplate with admiration this sacred space of marvellous beauty, of so much faith-filled history, I ask God that in the land of Catalonia new witnesses of holiness may rise up and flourish, and present to the world the great service that the Church can and must offer to humanity: to be an icon of divine beauty, a burning flame of charity, a path so that the world may believe in the One whom God has sent (cf. Jn 6:29).

Dear brothers and sisters, as I dedicate this splendid church, I implore the Lord of our lives that, from this altar, which will now be anointed with holy oil and upon which the sacrifice of the love of Christ will be consumed, there may be a flood of grace and charity upon the city of Barcelona and its people, and upon the whole world. May these fruitful waters fill with faith and apostolic vitality this archdiocesan Church, its pastors and its faithful.

Finally, I wish to commend to the loving protection of the Mother of God, Mary Most Holy, April Rose, Mother of Mercy, all who enter here and all who in word or deed, in silence and prayer, have made this possible this marvel of architecture. May Our Lady present to her divine Son the joys and tribulations of all who come in the future to this sacred place so that here, as the Church prays when dedicating religious buildings, the poor may find mercy, the oppressed true freedom and all men may take on the dignity of the children of God. Amen.

## BENEDICT XVI - ANGELUS

Façade of the Nativity of the Sagrada Familia  
Sunday, 7 November 2010

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in our Lord Jesus Christ,

Yesterday, in Porto Alegre, Brazil, there took place the celebration of the Beati-  
fication of the Servant of God, Maria Barbara of the Most Holy Trinity, foundress  
of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. May the deep  
faith and fervent charity with which she followed Christ awaken in many the desi-  
re to devote their lives completely to the greater glory of God and the generous  
service of their brothers and sisters, especially the poorest and the most needy.

Today I had the great joy of dedicating this church to him who, being the Son  
of the Most High, emptied himself and became man, and who, under the wat-  
chful care of Joseph and Mary, in the silence of the home of Nazareth, taught us  
without words of the dignity and the primordial value of marriage and the family,  
the hope of humanity, in which life finds its welcome from conception to natural  
death. He has taught us also that the entire Church, by hearing and putting his  
word into practice, becomes his family. And he has exhorted us to be a seed of  
fraternity which, sown in every heart, nourishes hope.

Filled with devotion to the Holy Family of Nazareth, a devotion spread among  
the Catalan people by Saint Joseph Manyanet, the genius of Antoni Gaudí, ins-  
pired by the ardour of his Christian faith, succeeded in raising this sanctuary  
as a hymn of praise to God carved in stone. A praise of God which, as with the  
birth of Christ, has had as its protagonists the most humble and simple of people.  
In effect, Gaudí, through his work, sought to bring the Gospel to everyone. For  
this reason, he conceived of the three porticos of the exterior of the church as  
a catechesis on the life of Jesus Christ, as a great Rosary, which is the prayer of  
ordinary people, a prayer in which are contemplated the joyful, sorrowful and  
glorious mysteries of our Lord. In collaboration with the parish priest Gil Parés,  
he also designed and financed from his own savings the creation of a school for  
the children of the workers and of the poorest families of the neighbourhood,  
which was at that time a outlying suburb of Barcelona. He brought concrete reali-  
ty to the conviction, saying: "The poor must always find a welcome in the Church,  
which is an expression of Christian charity."

This morning I also had the satisfaction of declaring this church a minor basi-  
lica. In it, men and women of every continent can contemplate the façade of the  
Nativity. In prayer, let us now consider the mystery of the Incarnation and lift up  
our prayer to the Mother of God with the words of the Angel, as we entrust our  
lives and the life of the entire Church to her, while imploring the gift of peace for  
each and every person of good will.



Please would you be kind enough to let us know of any graces obtained through the intervention of Antoni Gaudí at the following address:

**Association pro Beatification d'Antoni Gaudí**

Apartado de correos 24094

08080 Barcelona (Spain)

gaudibeatificatio@gmail.com

www.gaudibeatificatio.com

Likewise, prayer cards for private worship, newsletters, leaflets and published books can be requested from the same address.

Donations are necessary to cover the expenses of the cause of beatification. They can either be sent to the above address, left in the collection box in the crypt of the temple of the Sagrada Familia, or by bank transfer to the current account in the Savings bank (Caja de Ahorros y Pensiones de Barcelona, "la Caixa", account number: 2100.0810.29.0200674014.



## **www.e-cristians.net/gaudi**

Web started on the occasion of 150th Anniversary of Antoni Gaudí's birth and the celebration of the International Year, between e - christians and the Association pro Beatification of Antoni Gaudí, with texts by the biographer and co-founder of the Association, Josep M<sup>a</sup> Tarragona, allowing us to know more about the architect and his work through games: every word reveals a piece of the puzzle ...

### Bibliography

The books published up to to the present day by the Association pro Beatification of Antoni Gaudí in collaboration with the Real C tedra de Gaud , the Arxiu Dioces  de Barcelona and the publishing group Claret are the following:

1. R fols, Josep F. *Gaud  1852-1926*. Barcelona: Publishing group Claret, 1999. Facsimile of the 1952 edition.
2. Matamala, Joan. *Mi itinerario con el arquitecto*. Barcelona: Publishing group Claret, 1999.
3. Bonet i Armengol, Llu s. *La mort de Gaud  i el seu ress  en els diaris i revistes de l' poca*. Barcelona: Publishing group Claret, 2000.
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