

LA SAGRADA FAMÍLIA

Monumental church dedicated to the Holy Family, Gaudí's most famous work, the finest example of his visionary genius and a worldwide symbol of Barcelona. The architect undertook the task in 1883 on the site of a previous neo-Gothic project begun in 1882 by F. del Villar. He dedicated his life, in his later years, to the exclusion of everything else, to carrying out this ambitious undertaking which he left unfinished.

Gaudí wanted to create a «20th century cathedral», a synthesis of all his architectural knowledge with a complex system of symbolisms and a visual explication of the mysteries of faith. There would be façades representing the birth, death and resurrection of Christ with eighteen towers symbolising the twelve Apostles, the four Evangelists, the Virgin Mary and Christ. This last, the tallest, would stand 170 metres high. The church was based on the plan of a Gothic basilica with five naves, a transept, an apse and ambulatory. Gaudí planned monumental façades on the central nave and the arms of the transept. He wanted to give the edifice a spectacular vertical dimension by way of a profusion of pinnacles and high, spiral-shaped towers which would be covered in abstract patterns of Venetian glass mosaic.

Works personally undertaken by Gaudí are the neo-Gothic crypt, the constructed part of the apse and the magnificent façade of the Nativity (eastern side) with a purely naturalistic exuberance in its decoration (figures directly moulded from nature, animals, plants, clouds, etc.). Of the four towers of this façade, Gaudí only saw that of St. Barnabas completed.

Work was interrupted in 1936 when the crypt and Gaudí's study were burnt. The project was resumed in 1952 using existing drawings and scale models as a base although continuation of the work gave rise to much controversy. From 1954 to 1976, the façade and the four towers of the Passion (western side) were completed. The sculptor Josep M. Subirachs joined the project team (sculptures on the Portal of the Passion) in 1987.

The constructed part is open to visitors as well as the small Museu del Temple Expiatori de la Sagrada Família.

Plaça de la Sagrada Família • 08013 Barcelona
Phone: (+34) 932 080 414
www.sagradafamilia.cat

Metro stations: Sagrada Família (L5) (L2)
Buses: 10, 19, 33, 34, 43, 44, 50, 51

Centre del Modernisme
Phone: (+34) 933 177 652 - 902 076 621
www.rutadelmodernisme.com

