ENGLISH

INFORMATION BOOKLETS

Basílica Sagrada Família

10

Basílica Sagrada Família

Bell towers, lanterns and sacristies

The eighteen towers the Basilica will have when finished are divided into bell towers and lanterns, the latter taking their shape from the sacristy domes.



On the dome of the sacristy, there are allusions to the blood of Jesus and the victory of Christ and man over martyrdom.

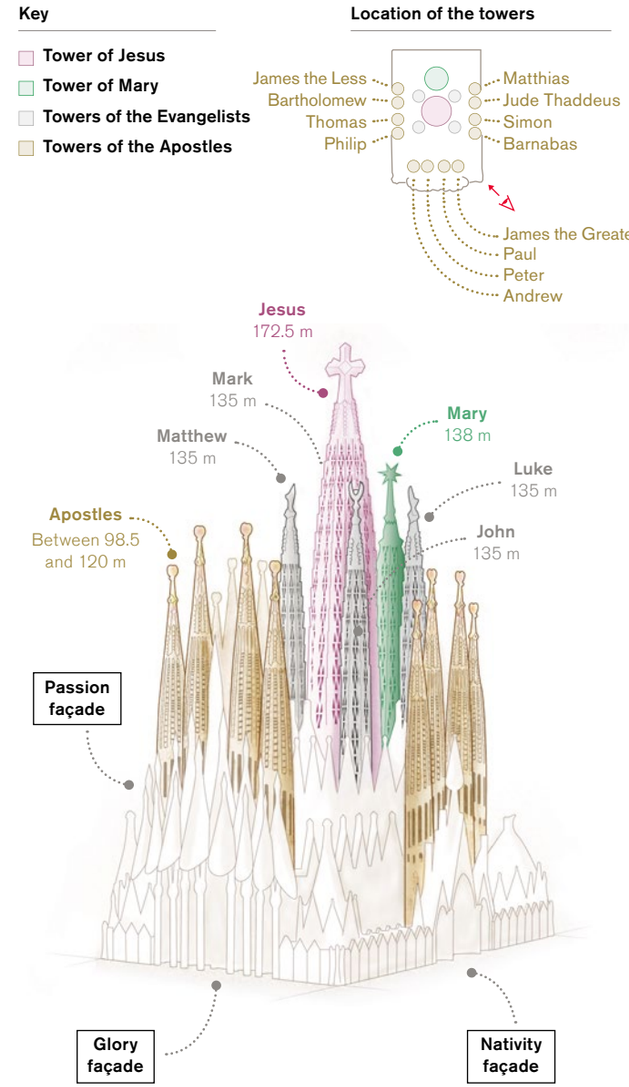


View of the completed Sagrada Família, with all the towers.

Towers

The towers of the Sagrada Família have contributed most to making it so widely identifiable. This was the case when it had four, eight, fourteen, and will continue to be the case, even more so, when all eighteen towers are standing on the finished Temple.

Undoubtedly, the towers are the most characteristic feature of the Sagrada Família. They make up a profile that has become famous around the world. With the tower of Jesus Christ now completed, only the four towers on the main façade remain to be built, of the eighteen Gaudí designed for the Temple.
All of the towers are parabolic in shape, coming to a point at the top to accentuate the sensation of verticality, svelteness and elevation towards God. They will be topped with pinnacles covered in different shiny materials: Venetian glass, ceramic tile, metal and glass. On the inside, they have helicoidal staircases to get to the top.
The eighteen towers the Basilica will have when finished are divided into bell towers and lanterns or central towers. There are four towers each on the Nativity, Passion and Glory façades. They represent the twelve apostles. The lanterns rise up above the crossing and apse of the Temple, symbolising Jesus, Mary and the four Evangelists.



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Bell towers

Of all the towers built today, eight are bell towers on the Nativity and Passion façades, four each. With the four bell towers to be built on the Glory façade, there will be twelve in total. These towers, which stand between 98.5 and 120 metres tall, represent the apostles. So, each one bears the name of an apostle and his image sculpted in a seated position. For the same reason, each one is crowned with a pinnacle that symbolically represents the attributes of the bishops, the successors of the apostles: the mitre with the cross, the crosier and the ring, done in *trencadís* mosaic with coloured Venetian glass.

The bell towers on the Nativity façade are dedicated to the apostles Barnabas, Simon, Jude Thaddeus and Matthias. The first was finished in 1925 and the other three, in 1930. The bell towers on the Passion façade, which were completed in 1977, are dedicated to James the Less, Bartholomew, Thomas and Philip. Those on the Glory façade will be dedicated to Andrew, Peter, Paul and James the Greater. To identify the representation of the bell towers from afar, below the cross that tops each of these towers there is a letter, the first initial of each of the apostles.

The Sagrada Família will have twelve bell towers, standing between 98.5 and 120 metres tall and representing the apostles.





On the left, the pinnacles of the towers of the Virgin Mary, the Evangelists and Jesus Christ, and the spires of the bell towers on the Passion façade.

At the top, the *Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus* that reminds us of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Inscriptions on the bell towers

Below the pinnacle, we also find the words *Hosanna in Excelsis* (hosanna in the heavens) in *trencadís* mosaic and below that, some stars. On the body of the bell towers, we also discover the words *Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus* in *trencadís* mosaic, a direct reference to the hymn praising the Holy Trinity (on the Passion façade these inscriptions are yellow, symbolising God the Father; red, the Son; and orange, the Holy Spirit). As is well known, bell towers in general are used to call people to mass, so the sound of the 84 tubular bells that Gaudí designed for inside the Nativity and Passion towers will flow out through the openings, sounding like a great carillon.

Structure of the bell towers

The structure of the bell towers is based on a series of vertical ribs with a catenary or parabolic shape, between which inclined stone slabs are placed to help spread the sound of the bells (called *abat-sons*) and to prevent water from getting inside the tower. The number of ribs depends on the façade. So, the bell towers on the Nativity façade have twelve ribs; those on the Passion façade, fourteen; and those on the Glory façade, twenty.

The horizontal cross-section of the first metres of the bell towers also differs on each façade. On the Nativity façade, it is square, which makes the tower more stable, and then becomes a circle. Gaudí resolved the issue of moving from one cross-section to another with great skill: the base of the images of the apostles, the images themselves and a balcony on top allow the vertex to disappear and move naturally from a square to a circular cross-section.

On the Passion façade, however, the cross-section of the bell towers is a rhomboid at the base, and an ellipse at the top. On the Glory façade, the cross-section of the towers is a decagon.

Lanterns

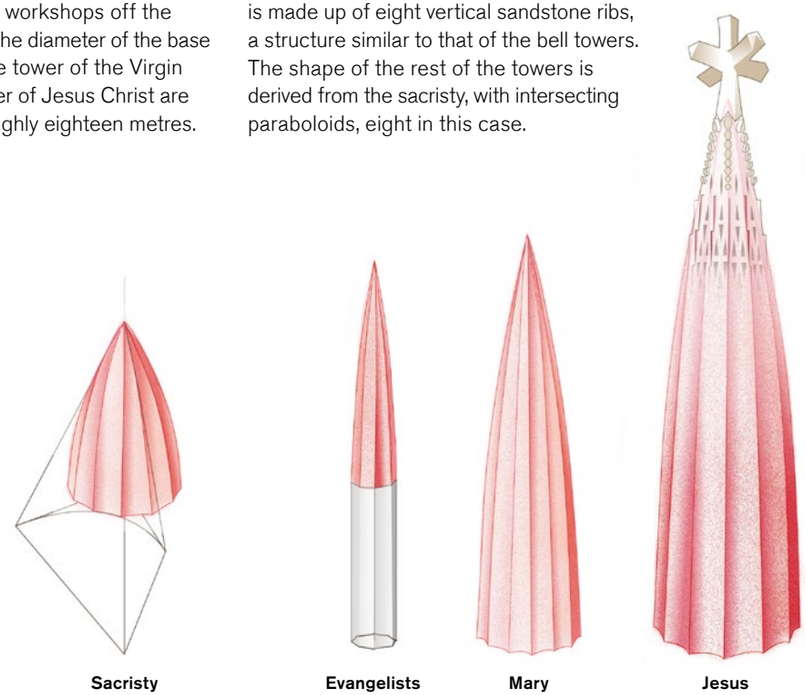
Gaudí designed the architecture of the sacristy so it could be used to build these elements, but also as a model for the lanterns.

To complete all eighteen towers in Gaudí's designs, the four bell towers on the Glory façade must be built. The monumental group of six central lanterns has now been completed and rises up in the middle of the bell towers. The shape of these lanterns, or towers, is the same as that of the sacristies. In fact, Gaudí designed the sacristy in a plaster model and plans to serve as a model for the central lanterns, which only vary in their dimensions. So, the tower of Jesus Christ, like the sacristy, is the result of twelve intersecting paraboloids, while the tower of the Virgin Mary has fourteen intersecting paraboloids and the Evangelists, eight. All of them have been built with tensioned-stone panels pre-assembled at workshops off the Temple grounds. The diameter of the base of the sacristy, the tower of the Virgin Mary and the tower of Jesus Christ are very similar, all roughly eighteen metres.

The tower of the Virgin Mary and the towers of the Evangelists

Above the apse, the tower that symbolises the Virgin Mary has been completed. It stands 138 metres tall and is topped with a twelve-pointed crown and the morning star, symbols of the Mother of God. Also finished are the four towers dedicated to the Evangelists, which are located over the crossing, surrounding the central tower, and stand 135 metres tall. They are each crowned with the symbol of one Evangelist: the ox for **Luke**, the angel for **Matthew**, the lion for **Mark** and the eagle for **John**. At a point 85 metres above the Temple floor, the towers will be joined by bridges connecting them to the tower of Jesus Christ. The first 30 metres of these towers is made up of eight vertical sandstone ribs, a structure similar to that of the bell towers. The shape of the rest of the towers is derived from the sacristy, with intersecting paraboloids, eight in this case.

Like the sacristy, the towers of Jesus, Mary and the Evangelists are created with intersecting paraboloids.



Models of the pinnacles on the towers of Jesus, Mary and the Evangelists.



The tower of Jesus

The central tower, located in the middle of the crossing and with a finished height of 172.5 metres, is dedicated to Jesus Christ. So, it is topped with a huge four-armed cross, very characteristic of Gaudí's architecture, covered in a shiny material. At the centre of the cross, there is a representation of the Lamb and on the sides, lights pointing in each of the four cardinal directions remembering Jesus, who said he was "the light of the world". On the pinnacle that holds up the cross, there is an inscription praising Christ "Tu solus Sanctus, Tu solus Dominus, Tu solus Altissimus" (You alone are the Holy One, you alone the Lord, you alone the Most High) and the words "Amen" and "Al·leluia" (hallelujah).
Inside the tower there are three levels that will be open to the public (at 85 and 143 metres and inside the cross). Just above the Temple crossing and below where the tower of Jesus Christ begins, is the great Crossing Room. This multi-purpose space lets light in from outside, which then passes through the 25 skylights on the crossing and into the Basilica. Additionally, it is where the columns of the crossing branch out to become the base of the tower of Jesus Christ.

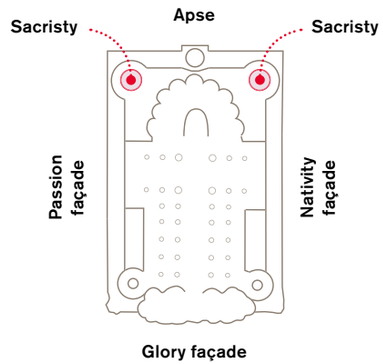
The central tower, dedicated to Jesus Christ, is topped with a huge four-armed cross covered in a shiny material.



The bell towers are topped with a pinnacle that represents the attributes of the bishops, the successors of the apostles: the mitre with the cross, the crosier and the ring, done in* trencadís *mosaic with coloured Venetian glass.

Sacristies

Etymologically, the word sacristy comes from sacred, and it is the place where sacred items are stored. In this case, those needed for liturgical celebrations. It is also where priests prepare for liturgical celebrations. Gaudí put two sacristies at the head of the Temple, and connected them with the cloister that will surround it. From the architect's instructions and the original plaster model found in his workshop, it has been possible to do the studies and measurements necessary to build them.





On top, the location of the sacristies on the Sagrada Família floor plan.

On the left, a view of the apse façade on a model of the Sagrada Família, totally finished, showing the two sacristies.

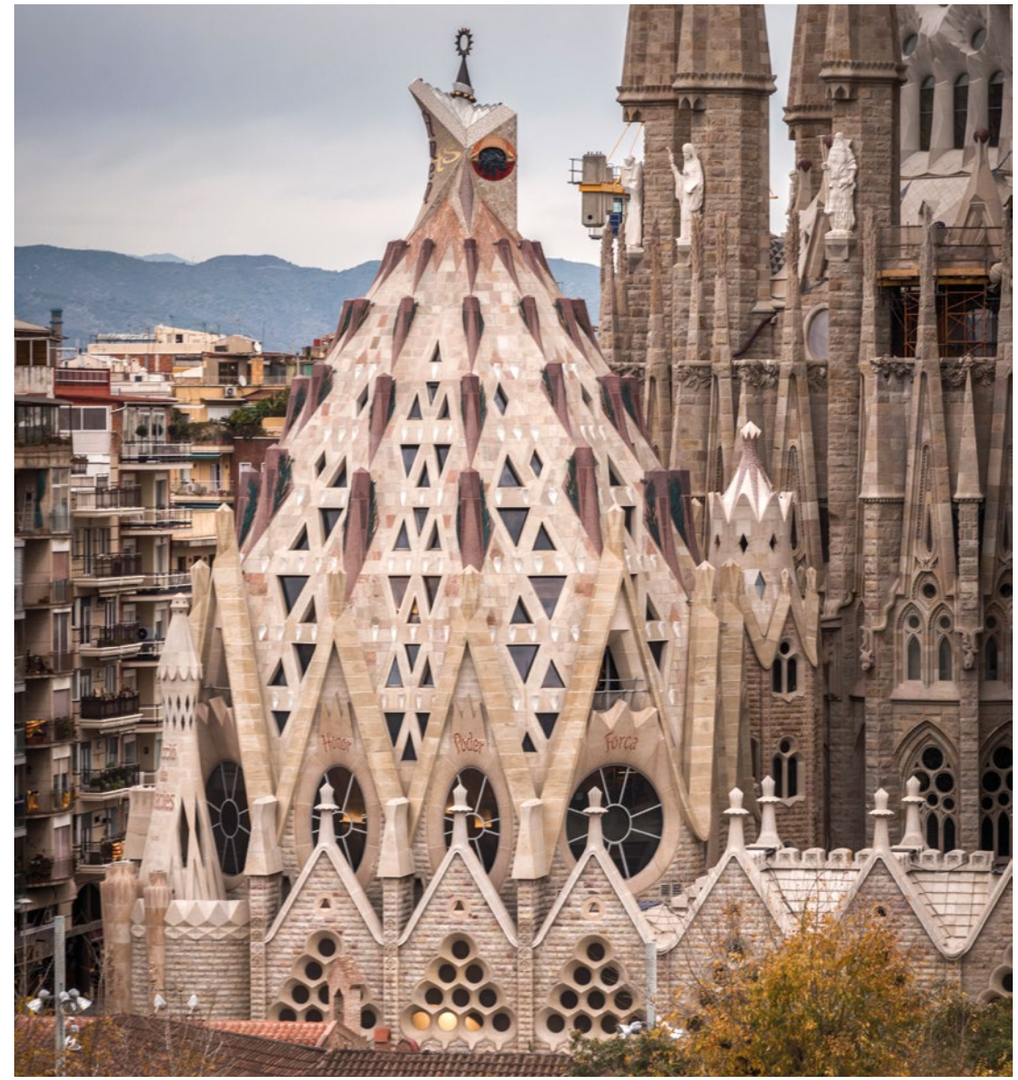
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The sacristy on the Passion façade

Work on the sacristy at the western corner of the Basilica, at the corner of Carrer de Sardenya and Carrer de Provença, was completed in 2017, giving visitors to the Sagrada Família a better understanding of the Basilica's central towers.

This auxiliary building is made up of 12 intersecting paraboloids that come together at a vertex topped with a 2-metre bronze crown. This brings the total height of the sacristy to 40 metres. It has a square base (18.55 metres on each side) and five storeys:

View of the dome of the western sacristy.



one underground, which has an open multi-purpose space for parish use; the main floor, with the sacristy itself; and three additional floors that house services and the offices of the Junta Constructora del Temple Expiatori de la Sagrada Família Foundation.
The main floor, on the same level as the Basilica, has 320 m² of usable space, distributed as follows: 150 m² for the sacristy and 170 m² for the Basilica cloister.
For it to serve its purpose as a sacristy, the area between the central part of the main floor of the sacristy building and the adjacent cloister space have been fitted with an oak and glass structure that, with rhomboidal windows, encloses the space while still letting light in and a view in from the cloister. Here the objects needed for mass are stored and priests can prepare for liturgical celebrations.
On 8 November 2015, on the fifth anniversary of the consecration of the Basilica, Cardinal Lluís Martínez Sistach, then Archbishop of Barcelona, blessed the sacristy, which was then used for the first time for this purpose (see booklet 7).
Plus, the space in the cloister that runs along the ground floor of the sacristy building and the section of the cloister dedicated to Our Lady of Dolours features an exhibition of liturgical furnishings called the Liturgical path (also see booklet 7).

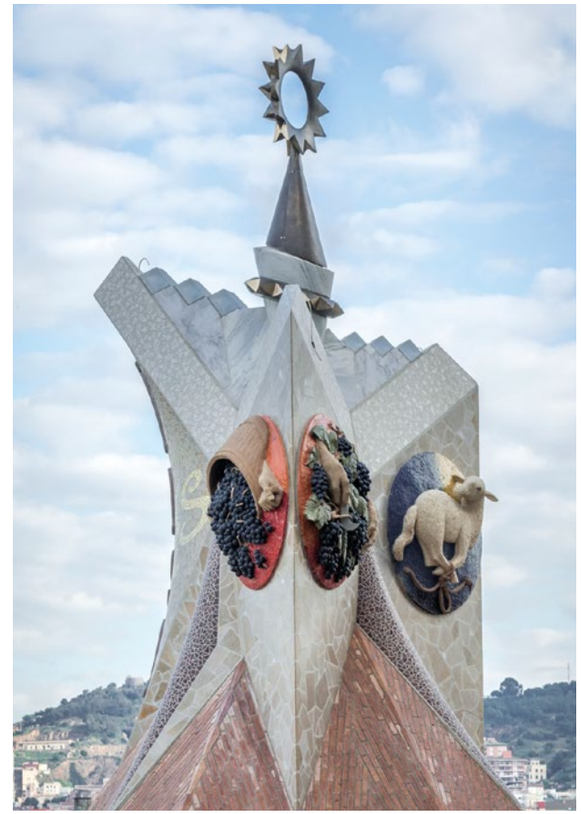


Sacristy of the Sagrada Família blessed by Cardinal Martínez Sistach, with the wardrobes Gaudí designed to store the items used in religious celebrations.

Iconography of the sacristy buildings

The symbolism of the sacristy buildings also follows guidelines left by Gaudí.

The symbolic elements of this building also follow Gaudí's programme published in the *Àlbum del Temple* (Temple album - c. 1929) and compiled by his disciple Isidre Puig Boada in his book *El temple de la Sagrada Família* (1929).
The **Crown of life**, which is mentioned in the Book of Revelation and alludes to eternal life, is represented by the vertical bronze crown at the vertex where the 12 intersecting paraboloids that comprise the building meet.
We find the **Harvester** and the **Lamb** on the four 1.6-metre medallions by Francesc Fajula in glazed polychrome ceramic, on top of the dome. The harvester coloured red by the grapes symbolises the sacrifice and redemption of Jesus Christ and the lamb about to be sacrificed alludes to he who died to save the world.

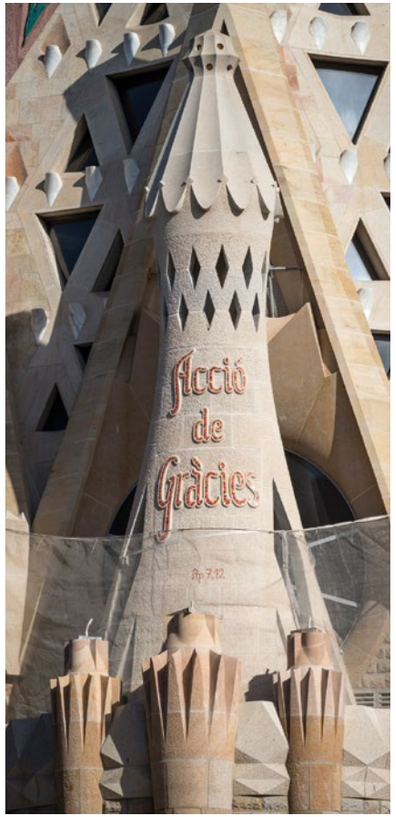


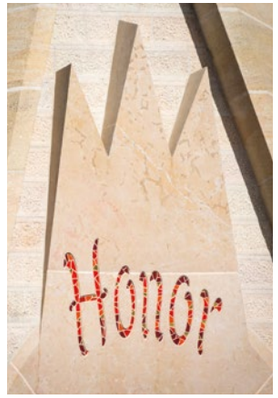
Pinnacle of the sacristy building, with the Crown of life, the Harvester and the Lamb (right) and a close-up of the representations of the Harvester and the Lamb (below).











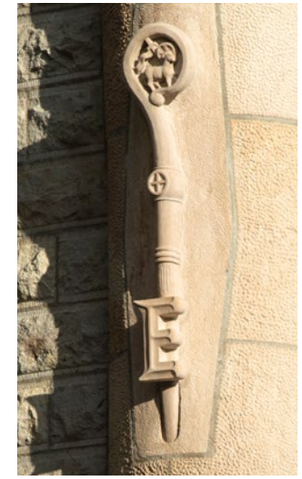






The sacristy building is inscribed with words praising God from the book of Revelation.

The **invocations** or words praising God from the Book of Revelation (Praise, Glory, Wisdom, Thanks, Honour, Power and Strength) can be seen in the windows of the sacristy that look out onto the street and on the cupola that tops the semicircular construction at the corner of Carrer de Provença and Carrer del Rosselló. The porphyry spurs on the arrises of the dome, with their red colouring an allusion to Jesus' blood, hold polychrome bronze palm fronds expressing the victory of Christ and man over martyrdom. According to Gaudí's programme, the chapels he designed for the corners of the Basilica should each represent one of the four cardinal virtues, thanks for the fruits of the seasons of the year, the liturgical ministers and the liturgical seasons. So, the semicircular construction that is the corner of the western sacristy features a lion and the classical shield and helmet, representing the cardinal virtue of strength; thanks for the fruits of autumn, with grape leaves and grapes; and the crosier and first letter of Episcopus, in allusion to the bishops, as seen in the texts done in red Venetian glass *trencadís* mosaic (the colour of the ordinary liturgical season), which are placed below each of the high reliefs done by sculptor Jaume Cases.







The crosier and the letter E are references to the bishops; the lion and the classical shield and helmet, to strength; and the grapes and grape leaves, thanks for the fruits of autumn.

The western sacristy has representations of the cardinal virtue of strength, thanks for the fruits of autumn and the bishops, as the liturgical ministers.

Glossary

Abat-sons Large louvres placed in the windows of some bell towers to direct the sound of the bells downward and keep out rainwater.

Bishop's ring One of the insignias of the bishops, which symbolises their loyalty to the Church, as Brides of Christ.

Cardinal virtues They are the four virtues (prudence, courage, temperance and justice) considered most important in Christianity, as they have the qualities of all other virtues. There are also theological virtues of faith, hope and charity.

Cases, Jaume (Barcelona, 1942–2023) Sculptor and self-taught illustrator and painter who worked with the Sagrada Família from 2001

Cloister Covered passageway, normally square, with one or two storeys, a wall on one side and a portico or colonnade on the other, that runs around the perimeter of a courtyard, garden, etc. and connects the different parts of the building, normally a monastery, cathedral, university or similar.

Crosier Curved staff that expresses the pastoral role of bishops, their dedication as shepherds of the people of God.

Episcopus Bishop in Latin.

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Fajula i Pellicer, Francesc (Sant Joan de les Abadesses, 1945) Architect, sculptor and PhD in Fine Arts and expert in heritage sites. He has worked with the Sagrada Família on several sculpted images.

Hosanna Exclamation originally from Hebrew used by Jews and Christians to praise God or Christ, from which the hymn commonly sung on Palm Sunday takes its name.

Lantern Construction with a polygonal or cylindrical base that rises up from the point where two naves cross on a monumental building in order to bring in light and, generally, to act as a base for the dome. At the Sagrada Família, the central towers are called lanterns, which let light into the Basilica.

Liturgical ministers Individuals who have been delegated to perform a specific service within the Church. Ordained ministers have received their ministry through holy orders (bishop, priest and deacon) and non-ordained ministers are lay people who have not received holy orders (acolyte/reader).

Liturgical path Permanent exhibition in the section of the Basilica cloister dedicated to Our Lady of Dolours. It features a selection of liturgical items designed by Gaudí.

Liturgical seasons The different seasons the Church divides the liturgical year into, according to the mysteries of Christ: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and ordinary time, which is between Christmas and Lent and from Easter to Advent.

Mitre Tall, pointed headdress that bishops, archbishops and other members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy wear during the most important ceremonies.

Paraboloid Double curvature ruled surface made up of straight lines that consists in a straight line that moves over two other non-coplanar lines. Normally it is inside a quadrilateral, with the four sides joined by straight lines.

Puig Boada, Isidre (Barcelona, 1891–1987) Architect. Disciple and collaborator of Gaudí. He wrote several books supporting the legacy of the architect of the Sagrada Família, a project he also directed, along with Lluís Bonet i Garí, between 1966 and 1982.

Revelation, Book of Also known as the Apocalypse of John, it is the final book in the New Testament and, therefore, the Christian Bible. It reveals, through prophecies, the end of the world.

Sacristy At a church, the place, generally off the presbytery, where sacred vessels and vestments are stored, and where the priests change for their liturgical functions.

Sanctus Hymn that is part of the Eucharistic liturgy, also known as the Trisagion, that praises the Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is why it begins with the triple declaration “holy, holy, holy”.

Spur Pointed construction that holds up or anchors a wall, embankment, etc.

Tensioned stone Stones compressed with steel rods. The pieces of stone are held together with these cables, which run through the centre of the blocks and are then tensioned (pulled taut). This makes the rows of stone pieces one single element, making them stronger as a whole.

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