

## THE SAGRADA FAMÍLIA: A WORK IN PROGRESS

Dating back to the 1880s, Antoni Gaudí devoted over a decade of his life to one of Barcelona's most renowned structures, the Sagrada Família. When Gaudí died, less than a quarter of the project was complete. The cathedral has remained under construction for hundreds of years as debates concerning whether or not its current state is too far from the original vision continue to spark controversy.

Today, more than 130 years later, the building of the church follows Gaudí's original plan. It is some time now since the old wagons gave way to powerful cranes, the old manual tools have been replaced by precise electric machines and the materials have been improved to ensure excellent quality in the building process and the final result.

Even after years of construction, however, the Sagrada Família is still years away from completion. This is largely due to the fact that the construction work is mainly funded by tourists' entrance fees.

The architect Jordi Bonet led the construction work

for about 30 years. Bonet, the son of an architect who assisted Gaudí, was introduced to the Sagrada Família as a child at 7 years of age. Bonet is a true believer in the idea that Gaudí left room in his vision for creative liberties to be taken. He told *The Times*, "Almost every cathedral has been the work of many people and over many centuries. Even when Gaudí was in charge, there were 40 different sculptors working for him, and of course he inspired them, intervened and commented on their work – but it remained the work of several different sculptors."

Bonet focused on the altar area, a place where Gaudí has not left strict guidelines (for other parts, Gaudí has outlined instructions in writings, drawings and plaster models).

Although thousands have contributed to the work in progress, there is still no definite end point in sight. In 2012 architect Jordi Fauli replaced Jordi Bonet as chief architect of the works of the Sagrada Família.

(Adapted from *ArchDaily*)



## READING COMPREHENSION

● Answer the following questions.

- ① Why is the Sagrada Família a work in progress?
- ② How long has the cathedral been under construction?
- ③ How has construction work changed over these years?
- ④ Who finances the construction work?
- ⑤ Who is Jordi Bonet?
- ⑥ What is Bonet's view of Gaudí's vision?

## ACTIVITIES



## WRITING AND SPEAKING

● Carol is an architecture student interested in the history of the Sagrada Família. She's interviewing Mrs Fernandez from the Barcelona Tourist Board to find out more about this work in progress. Complete the conversation with information from the text above.

**CAROL:** When did the construction work of the Sagrada Família begin?

**MRS FERNANDEZ:** It started in the ..... ①.

**CAROL:** What were the most common building tools and machines in those times?

**MRS FERNANDEZ:** They used mainly manual ..... ② and wagons were used to transport things. Work was much more exhausting than it is today.

**CAROL:** How much of the original structure was finished when Gaudí died?

**MRS FERNANDEZ:** Less than a ..... ③.

**CAROL:** Who has funded the construction of the church over the years?

**MRS FERNANDEZ:** Mainly the tourists with their ..... ④ fees. That's one of the reasons why the construction has been so slow...

**CAROL:** I see. Who led the construction work after Gaudí's ..... ⑤?

**MRS FERNANDEZ:** Architect Jordi Bonet.

**CAROL:** Had he worked with Gaudí before?

**MRS FERNANDEZ:** His father had. Bonet supervised the building site for ..... ⑥ years.

**CAROL:** How could he carry on Gaudí's original plan?

**MRS FERNANDEZ:** He based on the writings and ..... ⑦ that Gaudí had left but he also took some creative liberties of its own.

**CAROL:** Which parts were completed by Bonet?

**MRS FERNANDEZ:** Especially the ..... ⑧ area.

**CAROL:** Is the cathedral completed today?

**MRS FERNANDEZ:** Not ..... ⑨. In 2012 architect Jodi Fauli replaced Jordi Bonet as ..... ⑩ architect.

**CAROL:** Thank you very much, Mrs Fernandez.

**MRS FERNANDEZ:** You are welcome.

