

# LA PORCIÚNCULA (PALMA)

## MONASTERY OF LA PORCIÚNCULA

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La Porciúncula is a monastery that was founded in 1914 by the Third Order Regular (TOR) Franciscans to establish a Franciscan seminary. This community of friars still lives in the monastery and the seminary has been turned into a semi-private school.

The term “Porciúncula” comes from the Italian word “*Porziuncola*”, which means “small portion of land”. This name refers to a little church located within the Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli, in the municipality of Assisi (Umbria, Italy). It is where Franciscanism has its origins and where Saint Francis died, a place that he really loved.



## TOR FRANCISCANS

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The Franciscan order began as a small community in *Porziuncola* of Assisi (Italy) almost eight centuries ago. The order has currently more than two million members from all around the world, both men and women. One of the branches of this order is the Third Order Regular (TOR). In Majorca, TOR Franciscans offer community service, mainly in terms of education, Christian education, parochial pastoral activities and helping the needy. From the island, this branch has founded several monasteries in Spain, Vienna, Rome, South America, Mexico and the United States.



## SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

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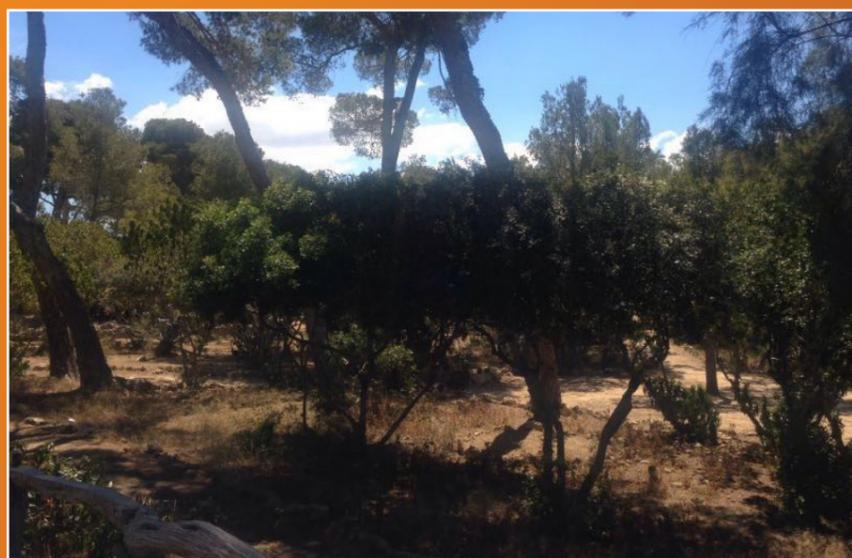
Saint Francis of Assisi (1182-1226) was the founder of the Franciscan Order, which defends austerity, the love for God and the love for the whole Creation. He was son to a rich Italian cloth merchant from the Italian town of Assisi.

However, he decided to live a simple life based on austerity, prayer and devotion to others. He became a follower of Jesus and soon had many followers himself. He was canonised only two years after his death and is regarded as a role model.



## SON SUNYER PINE FOREST

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The Monastery of La Porciúncula is located within the Son Sunyer pine forest. It is the best preserved coastal forest you can find in Palma. Its landscape consists of dunes, Mediterranean greenery and rich undergrowth. In the past, Son Sunyer was a secluded place in which pirates and smugglers used to hide. Today, it is a natural area and a meeting point that promotes contact with nature and sport.



The exhibit was inaugurated in 2014 on the occasion of the first Centenary of the monastery. It shows the transformation of the rural and maritime Majorca of yesterday into the tourist Majorca of today. Along the hall, the visitor can follow the history of tourism while contemplating some old trade tools that tell us of a Majorca that will never come back again.



## THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND ETHNOLOGICAL MUSEUM

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The Museum of La Porciúncula was inaugurated in 1971 after the intense research and cataloguing work carried out by Friar Joan Llabrés Ramis. It houses three different collections (archaeology, ethnology and numismatics) with about 20,000 pieces (some of great value), many of which were found thanks to the excavations promoted by the Franciscans. The most important artefacts are: a bronze helmet from Punic wars, a piece of a pre-Roman sword, an amphora from the 3rd century BC, a bronze statue of the god Mercury and a Roman sounding line... The ethnological collection takes us to Majorca before tourism arrived, an island that is sometimes hard to remember.



## RAMON LLULL'S SQUARE

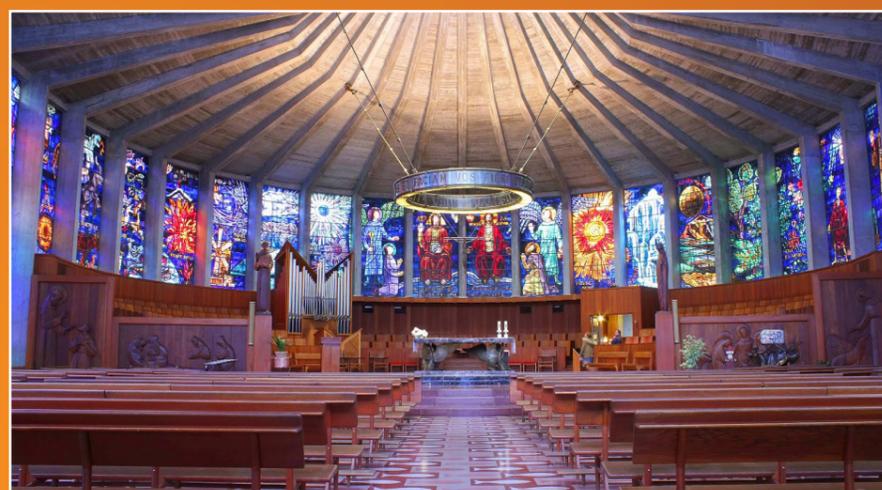
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Behind the church is a small circular square that resembles a threshing floor. In the middle of it is a singular sculpture by architect Josep Ferragut that is dedicated to the great Majorcan wise man Ramon Llull (1232-1315), who was also a follower of Saint Francis. The work is a wrought iron sculpture with a small globe. The sunlight reflects on it when it filters in through a hole located in the middle of the reinforced concrete dome that covers the whole square. The entire ensemble could be construed as an evocation to Llull's divine enlightenment at the mountain Puig de Randa. The column features a passage of the book *Llibre de Contemplació en Déu* (meaning "Book on the Contemplation of God"), written by Ramon Llull between 1271 and 1274.

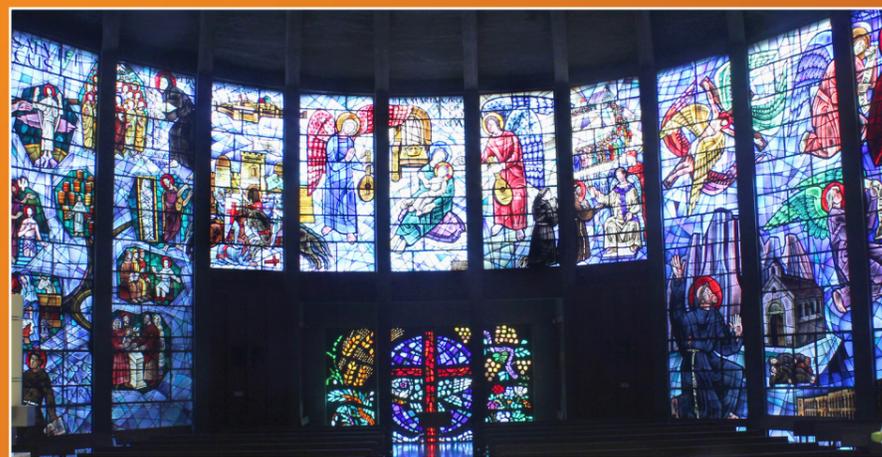
The church "Mare de Déu dels Àngels de la Porciúncula", known as the "glass church", is one of the most spectacular buildings of contemporary religious architecture in Majorca. The building work, which started in 1964 and was completed in 1968, was promoted by Friar Antoni Bauzà Gayà and carried out by the great Majorcan architect Josep Ferragut Pou (1912-1968). The main materials used are: concrete and iron for the ribs, glass and lead for the big windows and wood and bronze for the interior.

The church has an oval floor-plan. Its major axis is 33 metre long, while the minor axis is 23 metre long. The interior of the church is therefore very spacious, bright and cosy. It has great acoustics, too. The Jesus at the altar is a work by Lluís M. Saumells, while the other sculptures in the chancel are a work by Jaume Mir. It is important to highlight the tabernacle and the spectacular roof lantern crowning the altar at a height of 19 metres.



## THE STAINED-GLASS WINDOWS

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The walls of the church are covered by thirty nine big stained-glass windows, which were designed by Joan B. Castro and manufactured by *Vidrierías de Arte* (Bilbao). They surround the interior and let the Mediterranean sunlight come in, which is reflected in countless colours. A surface of 600 square metres depicts different biblical scenes and scenes from Saint Francis' life and thoughts through a medieval technique and a modern aesthetic. The eighteen stained-glass windows at the altar represent the Saint's *Canticle of the Creatures*.

The visitor witnesses a real visual hymn dedicated to nature and to the Franciscan cosmos: the Sun, the water, the Earth, the plants, death, Dante Alighieri, the Moon, the stars, the air, the wind, the fire, Ramon Llull, the Tree of Right and Wrong, the Tree of Jesse, the Tree of Life, the glorification of Saint Francis, Christmas at Greccio, Saint Francis' stigmata, Porziuncula and the four seasons of the year.