

Crusade

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In 2019, “April in Paris” arrived once again in the City of Light. April 14, 2019, was Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week, the most solemn week of the year for Western Christians, culminating with the celebration of the Resurrection on Easter Sunday. With spring in the air, Paris was a busy place on Monday, April 15, with the usual mix of Parisians and tourists, artists, and buskers from around France and other parts of the world, crowding the city streets, monuments, restaurants, and shops. The large Parvis or square in front of Notre Dame is a natural magnet and meeting place and, as usual, was packed with people.

Inside the Cathedral at 6:18 in the evening, the Reverend Jean-Pierre Caveau was celebrating the last Mass of the day for several hundred worshipers and visitors. At that precise time, a newly hired security employee, who had only been on the job for 3 days, saw a red light flashing on a screen in an office in the Cathedral, indicating a fire in the building attic. He immediately sent a message to a guard who was standing near the altar, asking him to check for fire. The guard looked around and found nothing. He had only gone to the attic of a small sacristy building, adjacent to the Cathedral. It would take nearly 30 minutes to realize his mistake.

The security guard called his manager to report the incident but was unable to reach him. When the manager called back some minutes later, he told the guard to leave the sacristy and run to the main attic of the Cathedral. By the time the guard had climbed the 300 steps to that attic, he found a fire burning out of control inside the gigantic lattice work of ancient timbers making up the Cathedral roof structure, nicknamed “the Forest”. The “Forest” is actually a huge truss system made from a thousand massive 800-year-old oak trees from the Forest of Villefermory, about 50 miles southeast of Paris. The wood rafters supported the lead-tile covered roof that protected the stone building’s arched vaults, walls, windows and floor and activities below. Similar oak wood had also been used to construct the famed spire, designed by 30-year-old architect Viollet-Le-Duc in 1859 to replace the deteriorating original fleche or spire from 1225.

The fire warning system at Notre Dame took dozens of experts six years to design and install, but when it was called on to do what really mattered – to warn of a fire and say where – it produced an indecipherable message. The bottom line is that between when the red warning light began flashing and security staff located the fire, it was 30 minutes before the fire department was called at 6:48pm. By that time flames were already running wild in the “forest” roof structure. There had been recent suggestions to install sprinklers and firewalls within the roof structure, but these were not implemented out of the desire to preserve the historic architectural details of the original roof.

It took half an hour to notify the fire department but then only minutes for social media to notify the whole world that Notre Dame de Paris was burning! Firefighters climbed the 300

steps to the attic where the heat and flames were an unstoppable wall and where firehoses proved useless. At 7:50pm there was a deafening roar as the cathedral's 750-ton spire (or fleche) also made of heavy oak, clad in lead, crushed through the roof, breaking through ancient stone vaults over the cathedral's nave and onto the floor.

The firefighters then decided that since the attic could no longer be saved, all their resources should be focused on the pair of 200-foot towers at the front of the building where flames were threatening massive wooden beams that support the cathedral bells made famous by Victor Hugo's 1831 novel, The Hunchback of Notre Dame. The fear of the firefighters was that if the beams collapsed, the giant falling bells would act like wrecking balls. This, they feared, could bring down both towers and the whole Cathedral with them.

A group of firefighters climbed the towers and after several hours brought the now burning beams under control and by 10pm they were confident that all the fires were under control. Cathedral clergy and staff had been able to remove precious relics and sacred art and special care was given to protect the famous masterpiece rose windows. At 11:30pm President Emmanuel Macron addressed the nation in front of the wounded Cathedral: "She is saved," he declared and pledged "We will rebuild the Cathedral together."

Besides being a place of worship in the heart of Paris since 1345, Notre Dame de Paris is also a symbol of French national identity. Every place in France is still measured by its distance from the Notre Dame Parvis or plaza. A French journalist wrote at the time that "tears were flowing down every cheek in France – even the most manly and even the most secular." It was the night that even nonbelievers wept for Notre Dame.

In his eloquent 1955 book entitled Notre Dame de Paris, Allan Tempko begins his Chapter One, called, "Foundation Stones," about the birth of Paris as follows: "Once before Noah was dreamed of, the sea covered all. The Ile de France was a salt lake, hundreds of fathoms deep, in which even the top of the Eiffel Tower would have been awash. The Atlantic poured over the wide basin of the Seine and flowed to the foothills of the Vosges and the Jura, not far from the Rhine. And since Britain was not yet an island, hunters could cross on foot from Dover to Calais, chasing reindeer whose horns were simple curves.

"The sea ebbed, and men found a fertile and wooded country where water had been. It was an ideal seat for a civilization. The weather was mild. There was grazing land; there was game in the woods and the system of quiet rivers – the Seine, the Marne [and others] made it relatively easy to travel from place to place. Beyond this, the county was lovely.... Beneath the earth, although early men did not know how to cut it, the sea had deposited deep bands of fossil rock – tough granite and heavy limestone, which one day would be carved into Cathedrals.

"And so, the first Parisians settled in the Ile de France, bringing with them their gods, and their arts. On a bend in the Seine, they found an island naturally suited for defense, with a low hill on its eastern point; and since summits of hills were sacred, [the earliest settlers] built a temple at the crest and installed their gods on the Ile de la Cite... In 1711 workmen digging beneath the choir of Notre Dame unearthed four carved altars which came from a vanished temple.... One stone carries the name of Emperor Tiberius, who reigned during the lifetime of Christ. Here then is the earliest date that can be associated with this Cathedral, and it may be

that of the Crucifixion itself! It does show what was going on at the “other end of the world” on the Ile-de-la-Cite while the Christian redeemer was dying in Palestine.”

Christianity obviously grew from the teachings of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, born in a small Jewish village in lower Galilee in northern Israel, then part of the Roman Empire. According to the New Testament, Jesus taught throughout Galilee and Judea and was executed by crucifixion in Jerusalem in approximately AD 33. During his life Jesus confined his teaching almost exclusively to his fellow Jewish countrymen. After his death, his energetic apostles and disciples continued to spread his teachings not only to the Jewish community but also gentiles primarily in the Mediterranean region. This missionary work was greatly facilitated by the modern communication systems of the Roman Empire.

The Apostle Paul was a Jew who hailed from Tarsus in modern day Turkey. He is estimated to have traveled over 10,000 miles over 30 years, preaching Christianity, in some of the Empire’s most important cities like Ephesus, Phillipi, Corinth, Athens and Rome. Although Paul continued to connect with the Jewish diaspora wherever he traveled, he also proactively reached out to the others and is often referred to as the Apostle to the gentiles.

Even before the Edict of Thessalonica in 380, which made Nicene Christianity the state religion of the Roman Empire, the Christian church had already been active in Gaul, by the 2nd Century. Irenaeus, bishop of Lyon described the deaths of 90-year-old Bishop Prothinus and other martyrs in Lyon in the year 177. More well-known is Saint Denis, 3rd Century Catholic bishop and Christian martyr who died in the year 250, in Montmartre in present day Paris.

It was said the Bishop Denis' preaching was so effective that local pagan priests complained to the Roman authorities who arrested Denis. He was ordered to deny his Catholic faith and offer sacrifice to a statue of Mercury. When he refused, after terrible torture, he was beheaded by sword. The local legend claims that as soon as his severed head hit the ground, Denis picked it up and his body marched away, head in hand and the lips chanting psalms in the saint's strong voice. The body walked thus for 5 miles to the village of Catolacum, the saint's chosen final resting place. Catolacum is the modern town of St. Denis, a suburb of Paris and the location of the Basilica of St. Denis, and burial place of 42 French kings and queens including Marie Antoinette. Under the Abbot Suger, the basilica of Saint Denis was extensively remodeled in 1135, and Suger is credited with having first introduced Gothic architecture to France.

The Tribes of Gaul were unified under King Clovis I in 495 after his baptism by the Bishop of Reims. On Christmas day in the year 800 at the Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome, Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, establishing France's long standing historic association with the Roman Catholic Church.

The concept of Europe was born in the Middle Ages. Church and Empire gave nations a sense of connection and unity. People could look around and sense that change for the better was happening. The threat of Viking marauders and Magyar invaders had passed, and pervasive food insecurity had been gradually eliminated. Major climate change known as the Medieval Warm Period began in approximately 955 and lasted until at least 1250. During those 300 years, average temperatures rose and remained consistently warmer, having a long-term positive

impact on food production. Ingenious people were then motivated to develop better methods of farming, including three field crop rotation, better ploughs, and better use of draft animals.

Relative peace in Europe and improvement in food production contributed to and coincided with enormous population growth in Western Europe which is estimated to have grown to about 75 million in the first 3 centuries of the new millennium. With fewer people needed to work the land to produce food, there began an inexorable shift of population from the countryside to the towns and cities. London, for example, is estimated to have grown to 100,000 inhabitants while the population of Paris was estimated to have been 200,000 in the year 1300. Over time this shift led to social, political and economic change that would transform Europe from Medieval to modern.

This relatively rapid urbanization of Europe began to support municipal autonomy, and some cities started to function almost as self-contained and self-reliant mini states. After having been granted royal charters, they set up town councils and elected freemen governed the growing towns and promoted the local economy. Seasonal open-air fairs became common and exposed the population to products from all over Europe and beyond. Over time some of the traveling merchants began to settle down in cities. Local craftsmen, rising to the new competition, organized as guilds to protect their common interests and benefit from mutual aid.

Guilds created tight knit bonds between members that went well beyond economic benefits. Guild members were committed to look after one another in sickness and in health. Guild funds would buy food and clothing for a member when he was sick or needy, pay for his

funeral when he died and then pay his debts and support his widow and young children. It was a dependable form of social security that benefited the community and provided a sense of stability for the middle-class working families.

The other powerful force that continued to have enormous influence on virtually all aspects of life in Europe during the Middle Ages was the Catholic Church. The pagan people who had invaded and wrecked the old order, settled down and then embraced the Church. Within its ranks at that time were virtually the only people qualified to build a civilization again. This was in part a testament to the Church's innate vitality and its gift for organization. It had defined its own diocesan system of government from laity to deacons to priests to bishops to the Pope. Developed separately but in alliance was the monastery system whose members lead a communal life as monks under the leadership of an abbot who also answered ultimately to the Pope.

Monasteries played a critical role in education throughout Europe where for centuries they ran the best schools and were custodians of classical knowledge from Greece and Rome and the Islamic world. Monasteries tended to locate away from cities to avoid the distractions of urban life. On the other hand, the Church's diocesan system under its bishops developed a network of parishes in virtually every town and village in Western Europe with the Bishop usually located in the larger cities. In a world that was basically Catholic, the Bishops usually played an influential leadership role in large cities that were asserting themselves everywhere and notably in France. A national sentiment was burgeoning. With it would come religious fervor, civic pride and competition, and with that would come new Cathedrals throughout

France. The Cathedrals would become exemplars of Gothic architecture. And so began, the Cathedral Crusade.

Jean Gimpel, the French historian and medievalist notes in his book, The Cathedral Builders, “There is no need to emphasize that the true point of departure for the “Cathedral Crusade” is to be found in the religious faith of the Middle Ages. Circumstances were particularly favorable to the flowering of such an architectural manifestation of piety.” Gimpel goes on to say that “if the Middle Ages had not been pre-eminently a pious age, the builders’ genius and the merchants’ money would have been used in other ways, and there would be no [Cathedrals of] Chartres, no Amiens, no Strausbourg.”

The “Cathedral Crusade” began in the very heart of France, in the Ile de France, the region within a 50-mile radius of Paris in the mid twelfth century. This is where the new architectural design, now known as Gothic, originated and quickly displaced the then ubiquitous Romanesque style whose origins dated back to Rome.

What is now called Gothic was originally dubbed Opus Francigenium or “French Work,” but in the mid 16th century, the Italian architect, painter and critic, Georgio Vasari used what he deemed the pejorative adjective “Gothic” to indicate his disdain for a period he believed had abandoned the classical underpinnings of Romanesque architecture. The adjective Gothic stuck, but no one makes the connection any more with the Goth and Vandal barbarians!

Gothic architecture was, in fact, a radical evolution of the Romanesque style. The tall, grand spaces with pointed arches and soaring ribbed vaults seeming to reach to the heavens,

and the large stained-glass windows were in stark contrast to the heavy and dark atmosphere of traditional Romanesque churches.

In 1159, charismatic new Bishop of Paris, Maurice de Sully decided to demolish the existing 300-year-old Romanesque Cathedral on the Ile de Cite and replace it with a new Cathedral in the new Gothic style. It would be dedicated to the Virgin Mary and named Notre Dame. In 1163, Pope Alexander III came to Paris and laid the foundation stone for what would become the largest, Gothic Cathedral in France and arguably one of the most famous Cathedrals in the world.

In this Age of Faith, the building of a new Cathedral was a civic and religious effort. Everybody contributed financially to build Notre Dame from the royal family of Capet to the flourishing bourgeoisie to the various guilds. Allan Tempko in his book Notre Dame of Paris estimates that it took \$100 million of our money to build Notre Dame over a period of almost 175 years. Tempko goes on to say that “Notre Dame was not financed by the sale of indulgences because the Gothic age belongs to a different spiritual world than that of Saint Peter’s in Rome, for whose construction, to the fury of Luther, grace was marketed throughout Central Europe by the German Dominican Johann Tetzel.”

To comprehend the magnitude of the total number of churches constructed during the Cathedral crusade one only must look at the numbers. Jean Gimpel in his book The Cathedral Builders states that over the period of 3 centuries from 1050 to 1350, millions of tons of stone were quarried in France to build 80 Cathedrals, 500 large churches and thousands of smaller

parish churches in France. He also states that more stone was quarried in France during these three centuries than in the whole history of Egypt.

Many of the Cathedrals were truly enormous. The Cathedral of Amiens, completed in 1288, covered a total of 208,000 sq. ft., allowing for the entire population of the town of about 20,000 to attend the same service at the same time. By way of comparison, Saint Patrick Cathedral in New York has an approximate square footage of slightly more than 87,000 sq. ft. and seats about 2400 people. With the soaring heights of medieval Gothic Cathedrals, the sheer volume was impressive. For instance, Notre Dame is calculated to have an interior volume of 7,700,000 cubic feet.

When a layman or even an architect walks through a medieval Gothic Cathedral, he might wonder how it was designed and who did it and how were the construction drawings made. Most of us are familiar with a contemporary standard set of drawings for a new or renovated building. These blueprints would include construction plans and specifications, spelling out in detail all aspects of the building project. The duration of the construction period might generally run from a year or less to several years, depending on the size and complexity of the building project.

Things did not work quite that way during the Gothic Cathedral building boom in the 12th and 13th centuries. For instance, there was no such thing as a set of drawings, and the construction period would usually last several generations with a changing group of principals and contractors in order to build a new Cathedral. Those who began the work could rarely, if ever, hope to see the work completed.

As has almost always been the case, great building projects most often happen with an enlightened and ambitious client whose intent is to create an innovative and more supportive environment to achieve his goals and those of the individuals for whom he has responsibility. That is the client who in many cases is “the big idea guy.” In the case of the Gothic Cathedrals of the 12th and 13th centuries, this was the local bishop with the support of his Cathedral chapter who were to provide continuity as the bishop and others aged out of the work.

The person who led the design and construction of the Cathedrals during this period was not usually titled “architect.” Rather his title was Magister Operis: master of the work. He was a person who, through experience, understood not only the concepts of geometry, symmetry and proportions but also had proven knowledge and experience with structure, materials and function. He was, then, an accomplished builder with many years of practical experience. His initial training and experience would usually have been as a master stone mason or master carpenter. However, he could not automatically advance to the role of master builder, or master of the work by simply being exceptionally mechanically skilled.

He would also need proven administrative skills with the clergy-clients who were eager to have the construction complete with minimal time, cost and inconvenience. He had to negotiate the cost and arrange for shipment of materials, especially the stone – sometimes from great distance. He had to organize a large labor force, sometime in the hundreds, for the long term and keep them employed, sober and paid. The master was also responsible for written contracts, specifying rates of payment for all the different skills and classification of workers. In short, he had complete responsibility for the project and budget.

It is not clear how much control the Masters had over the actual aesthetic design of the Gothic Cathedrals. Based on some knowledge of individual Cathedrals, it seems that the spiritual and intellectual basis for the building design likely came from the presiding bishop of the diocese and his canons and the realization and execution of the big ideas through detail design came from the master builder/architect.

Unbelievably, no original plans or detail design drawings for the Gothic Cathedrals are known to exist. It's not necessarily that they were lost, but they may never have been developed and drafted at all. There is no evidence that scale drawings of the kind, now made by architects, ever existed. If they had existed, the original drawing would have been on parchment. Parchment was very expensive in the 12th and 13th centuries, so the custom at the time, was to scrape the parchment clean after use and then reuse it for another document or drawing. Apparently, there was no concept at the time of any residual or archival value to old and used drawings!

The only project specific design drawings related to completed Cathedrals that have been found are sketches that were scratched into the floors or on wall areas of some Cathedrals in places, not visible to the public. These are thought to have been made by the master stone mason or the master of the works to illustrate the profile or provide a template to guide the cutting of stone blocks or pieces of stone trim.

The construction site included a sizable area adjacent to the Cathedral being built. The site was also used for storage of construction materials, workshops for fabrication of stone and timber as well as space for construction equipment. It also housed various lean-to structures

called lodges for the use of the different trades. It was in the lodge where workers kept their tools, ate their lunch and even took a quick siesta. These lodges became kind of clubs for the different guilds where problems of common interests related to their work could be discussed and hashed out.

In the stone masons' lodges, members shared gossip, told of other projects they had seen or worked on and shared tricks of the trades or gadgets they had seen on other projects in their travels. Unlike many other workers engaged in building a Cathedral who were local, highly skilled masons and sculptors were often part of a floating workforce, migrating from worksite to workshop and even from country to country. Many heard about and wanted to see the great Cathedrals being built elsewhere in the Christian world. In a world before passports, skilled craftsmen could pursue opportunities in other parts of France or east into Germany or west to England.

It was in these medieval worksite lodges of the Cathedral stone masons where the masonic secret societies allegedly originated. The lodges of that period developed regulations aimed at ensuring good professional standards and rules of conduct for its members. They also created statutes that forbade indiscriminate divulging of proprietary techniques of their trade – somewhat analogous to modern non-compete agreements. There seems to have been no esoteric content in the masonic pledges until lodges began to admit non-professional stone masons in the 17th century. Gradually members who did not work with stone came to dominate free-masonic organizations, transitioning them from trade guilds to the social, fraternal organizations they have evolved into.

The Gothic Cathedrals are clearly monumental structures meant to be impressive with large stained-glass windows, the likes of which had never been seen, with their characteristically tall, pointed arches and ribbed vaults reaching for the heavens. This made possible worship spaces of colossal heights only feasible by never-before-seen flying buttresses. Some cities and their bishops could hardly hide their ambitions to have the tallest and most impressive Cathedral. The Cathedral of Cologne, as an example, begun in 1248, ultimately reached a height of 516 feet at its highest point – roughly equivalent to a 50-story building. It is believed to have been the world’s tallest structure until 1884 when the Washington monument in Washington D.C. was completed.

Gigantic stone buildings required gigantic roof structures made of wood. These would then be covered with a weather resistant material, often ceramic tiles or what was believed to be a better and more durable covering of lead tiles. The rafters and purlins that made up the roof structure of a large Cathedral were made of enormous oak logs that had to be lifted, assembled and set in place by a team of carpenters and laborers.

As the world learned in the case of the fire at Notre Dame in 2019, this wood roof was the Achilles heel of that building and probably every other unprotected, historic Gothic Cathedral. The 460 tons of lead roof tiles at Notre Dame created potentially deadly toxic contamination after the fire at the site and in other parts of Paris. In addition, there was a very real fear that the gigantic timbers, falling out of control, would bring down not only the historic canopies of stone making up the ceiling of the Cathedral, but also set in motion a chain reaction that could bring down the very walls of the building.

As I watched the video streaming from Paris on that night 2 ½ years ago, I was shocked at how quickly the fire wreaked havoc on the 800-year-old monumental stone building. It turns out that fire had long been the scourge of medieval Cathedrals. Examples include:

- The Cathedral of Orleans burned to the ground in the year 989;
- The Cathedral of Mainz, Germany was accidentally brought to the ground by fire on the date of its consecration in 1015;
- An inferno at the Cathedral of Veزالay in 1120 allegedly killed almost 1000 people;
- Canterbury Cathedral in England caught fire in 1174 and was seriously damaged; and
- Chartres Cathedral caught fire and was heavily damaged in 1194.

In the Middle Ages it would have been impossible to control a fire after it had started hundreds of feet in the air in the tinder dry attic space. A bucket brigade would have been no match for such a fire. On April 15, 2019, more than 400 Parisian firefighters, using state of the art firehoses able to deliver 300 gallons of water per minute, struggled more than five hours to bring the total fire under control. At 11:30pm that night the Paris fire chief, General Jean-Claude Gallet, was able to tell President Emmanuel Macron that the fire had been successfully brought under control, and that Notre Dame had been saved.

President Macron in an address to the Republic set a goal of having the Cathedral repaired and open for services before France will host the summer Olympics, beginning July 26, 2024. Although that is probably not a realistic goal for complete restoration, it may well be

possible to enter and use the Cathedral for special services and events at that time. Work will surely need to continue to reach full restoration well after that date.

So now, 2 ½ years since the fire, what is the status of the renovation? The first phase was a forensic phase that began in the summer of 2019. The Paris prosecutor's office declared after its investigation that the source of the fire was unknown, but there was no evidence of criminal origin and provided a short list of possible causes including faulty electrical wiring and an improperly disposed cigarette.

This forensic phase was followed by a safety phase during which lead contamination from the roof was cleared from the building and environs. Then a jumble of twisted metal scaffolding that had been erected in the Cathedral nave for previously scheduled maintenance work as well as 300 tons of charred roof structure has been removed.

The next phase has included erecting new exterior scaffolding around the perimeter of the building that has allowed plastic tarps to be installed above the stone vaults to protect the remaining building skeleton from the weather. The 13th century priceless stained-glass windows were not seriously damaged in the fire due to special care from the firefighters, and they are being protected and restored during the building restoration.

The work was paused in the spring of 2020 because of the Covid pandemic but resumed in June last year. New scaffolding has now been erected in the interior of the building nave to facilitate the rebuilding of the Cathedral roof. After some debate it was agreed that the new roof will be rebuilt once again with giant oak trees from local forests and more than 1000 oaks

have been donated from public and private forests from all over France. They were cut down this past spring before they sapped and are in storage for 12 to 18 months to prepare them for the start of the new roof construction in the fall of 2022. Although it has not been officially confirmed, it is rumored that a state-of-the-art fire suppression system will be part of the specifications for the new roof.

There was early speculation based on comments by Macron that the rebuilding of Notre Dame might incorporate some modern touches like a new contemporary glass spire. That will not be the case. The chief architect of the National Monuments Commission presented the recommendation to the National Committee for Heritage and Architecture to “respect the previously existing structure of the Cathedral and to restore the monument to its last complete, coherent and known state.” The National Heritage Commission unanimously approved the Architects’ recommendations. President Macron concurred and signed his official approval.

The final cost for the reconstruction and restoration has not been determined. Early estimates for hard construction alone were at over one billion dollars. By all indications, securing the funds needed for the proper rebuilding and restoration of Notre Dame will not be a problem. Half a billion dollars have been committed by 3 French billionaires, and matching amounts have been received or pledged by donors from throughout France and the rest of the world.

In fact, it is the French government and its Ministry of Culture that have full fiscal responsibility for Notre Dame. Since the 1905 Law of Laicization in France, there is strict separation of Church and State. Since that time, the French government has owned all Church

buildings built before 1905 totaling 87 Cathedrals, 6000 Chapels and 32,000 Churches.

Therefore, France legally owns and is responsible for the structural integrity and restoration of Notre Dame. The Catholic Archdiocese of Paris has rights to free use of the buildings in perpetuity and is responsible for its normal upkeep.

No doubt, Notre Dame will be restored to its original glory. The French people's and especially Parisians' attachment to and pride in their Cathedral seems as powerful today as it was seven centuries ago during the time of the Cathedral Crusade.

A Personal Postscript: My own Crusade of Discovery

Many years ago, just after I graduated with my degree in Architecture, I moved from my hometown, Dayton, to Cincinnati to accept an intern architect position at the firm of Gartner, Burdick and Bauer – Nilsen (now called GBBN). My mentor was firm partner, Jack Burdick. Jack called me into his office one spring afternoon to give me some career advice.

He told me it was certainly necessary to have a good academic education and hands on training in the profession as I was doing. However, he also advised me that before I settled down and married and assumed the related responsibilities, I should take a 2 month leave from work to visit the great Churches and Museums and other monuments of Europe. No better way to learn from and about architecture, he said, than to actually see and experience it.

I was easy. A few months later, I was on a flight to Europe with the classic guidebook, Frommer's "Europe on \$10/day" and some fold out maps of Europe under my arm. On arrival, I bought a used and mostly reliable Volkswagen "Bug" in Bremen, Germany and hit the road. My personally planned itinerary took me to Cologne, Frankfurt and Munich, and then into Austria to Salzburg and Vienna, and then into Italy to Venice, Florence, Rome, back up to Pisa, then across the French Riviera to Spain where I visited Barcelona and then to Madrid. Then it was up

to Paris, back to Germany to sell my VW. From there I flew to London and Dublin and back to Cincinnati.

I had devoured with my eyes the works of Michelangelo and Bernini, Bramante and Brunelleschi and Gaudi and Wren and countless unnamed Masters from the Gothic and Renaissance and Baroque periods. I had climbed the bell towers and domes and walked the roofs of Cathedrals and basilicas that I had only known from books but now saw the sights from on high that were first seen by the now forgotten stone masons and carpenters who built them. And at the end of my journey, I had truly discovered the incalculable reward of being enveloped by magnificent architecture. That has lasted a lifetime.