

Religious Architecture and Urbanism in Vigo During José Delicado Baeza's Episcopate (1969-1975)

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Sacred Architecture, Urbanism, Vigo, Spanish Architecture, José Delicado Baeza

/Abstract

During the 1950s and 1960s, there was a significant urban expansion across much of Europe. Following the end of World War II, the migration of people from rural areas to cities became widespread. New job opportunities arising from industrialization and service sectors, coupled with the pursuit of a higher standard of living, were among the driving forces behind this mass exodus. Cities had to quickly adapt, multiplying infrastructures, generating residential areas, and giving rise to spaces for social interaction and leisure for the new workforce – known as facilities or amenities – which risked being relocated after leaving their places of origin.

Religious facilities were among the first to emerge. Within the Catholic Church sphere, the efforts of various European ecclesiastical leaders, in countries such as France, Germany, and Italy, are well-known in this regard. This article highlights the work of Bishop José Delicado Baeza, who during his brief tenure in the Spanish diocese of Tui-Vigo (1969-75) undertook a profound territorial reform that multiplied parish jurisdictions in a city undergoing rapid urban expansion. To this end, previously unpublished documentation from diocesan and municipal archives, as well as from the professional archives of the main architects who collaborated in the construction of churches, has been utilized.

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Introduction

The parochial division of European dioceses in the second half of the twentieth century and the consequent construction of new churches can be considered a classic theme in the historiography of contemporary religious architecture. The various initiatives taken in this sense by Cardinals Lercaro in Bologna, Pellegrino in Turin or Montini himself in Milan are well known; in Spain, Morcillo in Madrid, Modrego in Barcelona or Bishop Peralta in Vitoria, but also in Portugal and in various European countries. There are, of course, many other interesting cases that are gradually becoming known.

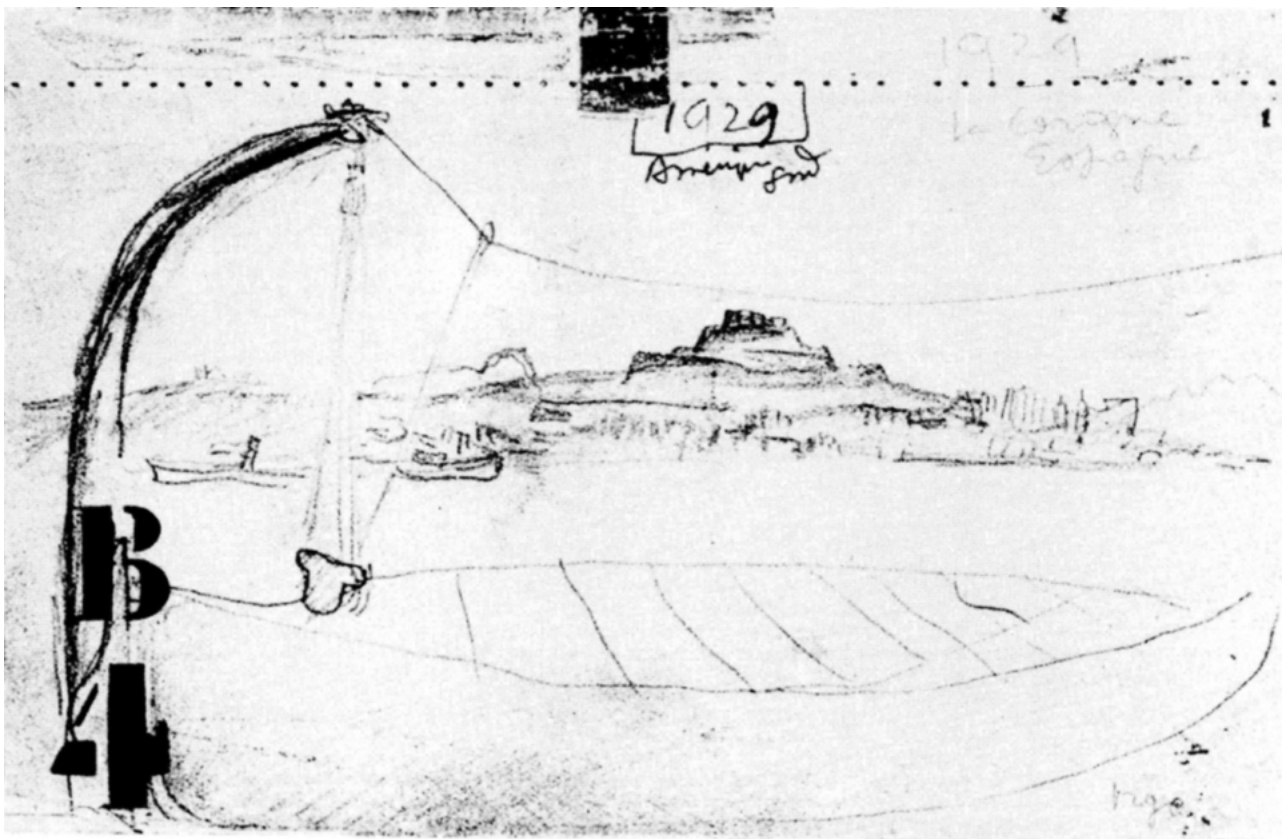
The purpose of this article is to document the work carried out by José Delicado Baeza during the little more than five years that he presided over the Spanish diocese of Tui-Vigo (1969-1975), a small ecclesiastical territory in the north-west of the Iberian Peninsula. In the city of Vigo alone, which at that time had just reached 200,000 inhabitants, fourteen new parishes were created, in response both to the growth of the city as a result of the establishment of one of the poles of industrial development promoted during General Franco's government – which would give rise to the so-called *Spanish economic miracle* – and to the new social sensitivity of the Catholic Church following the celebration of the Second Vatican Council.

The Territorial Structure of Vigo: The Municipality and the Parish

The urban development of the city of Vigo is closely linked to its magnificent port, whose deep draught made it the main point of departure for Spanish emigration to America at the beginning of the 20th century. It was here that the great transoceanic ships arrived, such as the one that took Le Corbusier to Argentina at the end of 1929 [Fig. 1].

The current municipal area was created in the first half of the 20th century, when the municipalities of Bouzas (1904) and Lavadores (1941) were added to Vigo. It has a unique structure, made up of three very different areas: a rural area that has hardly been transformed by the urban phenomenon, where the old parish structure has survived; a large peri-urban area, where development has been based on filling in the basic parish structure; and an urban area, characterised by the aggregation of neighbourhoods and parishes. From an urban and administrative point of view, Vigo still preserves the division of its territory into eighteen parishes, a vestige of the old ecclesiastical division. This parish structure has undergone various changes over the last century, some aspects of which have survived, while others have been profoundly altered.

The Land Law of 1956 unified all of Spain's urban planning legislation, which was very disparate, systematising planning and establishing an order to solve the problems of Spanish urban planning. It represented a conceptual change in the urban planning criteria applied in Spain until then, as it allowed the growth of new residential and industrial areas through land reserves and directed the development of planned growth through Partial Plans. Between 1964 and 1975,



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the General Urban Development Plans (PGOU) of the main Galician cities were approved, which, in conjunction with the Partial Plans already in progress, led to modifications of the latter, particularly with regard to the provision of facilities, also known as complementary services.

In 1953, Spain had signed a new Concordat with the Holy See, which ratified the confessional nature of the State and the full recognition of the Catholic Church.¹ In this context,

places of worship emerged as one of the types of complementary buildings envisaged by the INV. Decree 736/1962 of 5 April 1962 on the construction of religious buildings developed the provisions of the Second National Housing Plan 1961-1976 with regard to this type of service. The purpose of the Decree was to provide religious services in urban centres where at least fifty per cent of the population lived in dwellings under some form of State protection (art. 1). Places of worship could be chapels or parish centres (Fernández-Cobián and Vilas 2012, 62).²

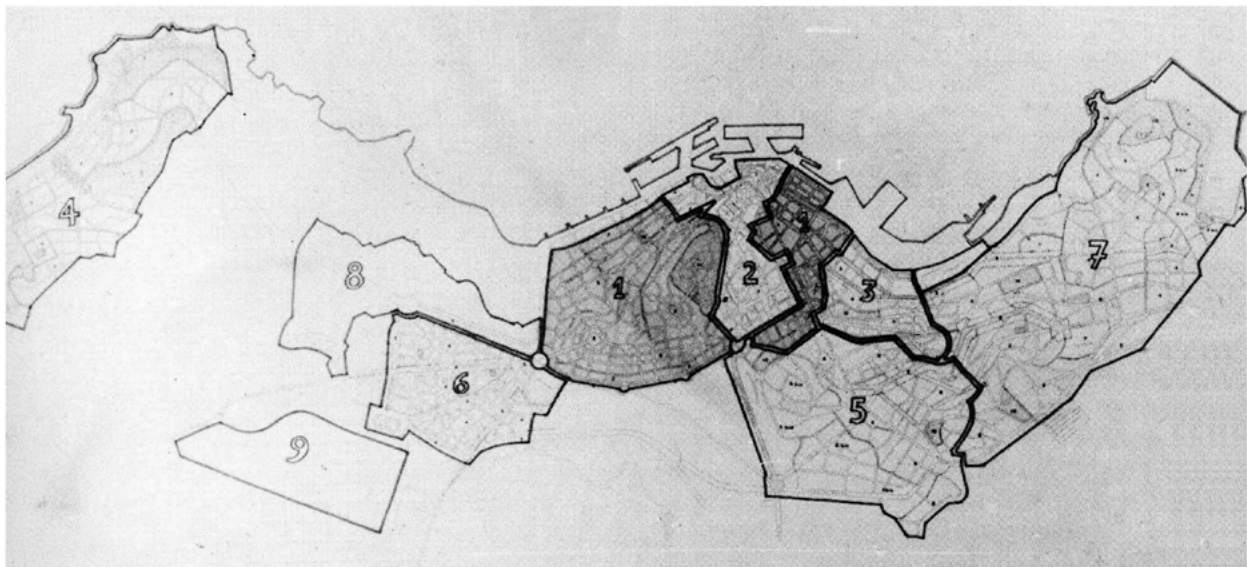
When Bishop Delicado Baeza arrived in Vigo, the city still had no general plan, only a series of sectoral planning instruments that allowed it to continue growing.³

1 Stanley G. Payne, *El Franquismo, 2ª parte 1950-1959. Apertura exterior y planes de estabilización* (Madrid: Arlanza, 2005); Rafael Gómez Pérez, *El franquismo y la Iglesia* (Madrid: Rialp, 1986).

2 Esteban Fernández-Cobián and Marta Vilas Rodríguez, "Los equipamientos religiosos como configuradores del espacio urbano. El caso del polígono de Coya en Vigo (España)," *Dearq 11* (2012): 58-75. <https://doi.org/10.18389/dearq11.2012.07> (last accessed October 2024).

3 Until 1969, the following plans were in force: the Plan de Alineaciones y Rasantes by Manuel Cominges (1944); the plans for the sectors between Gran Vía and Conde de Torrecideira street and between Alfonso XIII street and

Fig. 1
View of Vigo. Le Corbusier, 1929 (source: María Asunción Leboreiro Amaro, *Vigo, puerto y destino. Atlas urbanístico de Vigo*. Vigo: COAG/Fundación Provigo, 2000).



Planes de ordenación de la postguerra, realizados entre 1943 y 1963 que fueron incorporados por el Plan General de 1971 dentro del suelo urbano

1. Proyecto de reforma interior, Ensanche y Extensión de Manuel Cominges (1944)
2. Plan de Alineaciones de la zona comprendida entre la Gran Vía del Generalísimo y la calle Conde de Torrecedeira redactado por Pedro Bidagor y Paz Maroto (1948)
3. Plan de Alineaciones de la zona comprendida entre las calles de Alfonso XIII y la nueva estación de ferrocarril redactado por Pedro Bidagor y Paz Maroto (1948)
4. Proyecto de Ordenación Urbana de la playa de Samil, de Pedro Bidagor y Paz Maroto (1948)
5. Plan parcial del sector de Lavadores, redactado asimismo por Pedro Bidagor y Paz Maroto (1958)
6. Plan Parcial del sector de la Florida, redactado por José García Saenz-Díez (1959)
7. Plan Parcial de Teis, redactado por José García Saenz-Díez (1960)
8. Plan Parcial de Coya (1963)
9. Zona Franca

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With these weak instruments, the city faced the most important decade of its growth – the sixties – and began the next one with a similar perspective, since it was not possible to adopt a general plan to organise the growing interests involved in its development [Fig. 2].

Antonio Ramilo took office as Mayor of Vigo in March 1970. From the outset, he promoted the elaboration of the PGOU, which had been prepared since 1961 by the team led by Gaspar Blein. The plan was presented to the public in the summer of 1970. Subsequently, seven civic organisations requested an external technical report, which was carried out by a team led by Manuel Ribas Piera. The report emphasised that the repeated changes to the plan during its development and the disagreements between the different actors on its content had resulted in a hybrid document without an overall vision. Despite its clarity, the report was not taken into account by the City Council, and on 7 January 1971 Vigo finally had a new PGOU, which for many was “an unfortunate document” [Fig. 3a, 3b].⁴

Once the PGOU had been approved, fifteen action polygons were demarcated

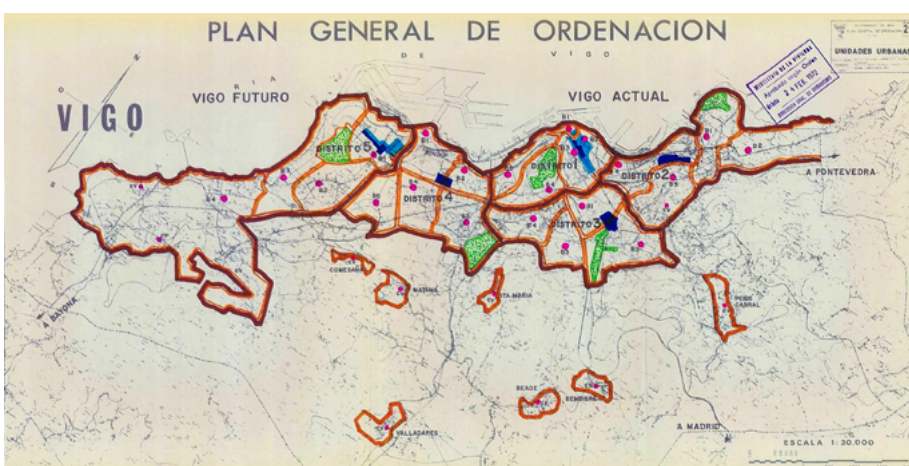
the new railway station, the Partial Plan of Samil beach and the Partial Plan of Lavadores, all four drawn up by Pedro Bidagor Lasarte and José Paz Maroto (1948); the Partial Plans of Florida and Teis, drawn up by the engineer Sáez Díez (1959-1960); the Partial Plan of Coya, drawn up by the INUR of the Ministry of Housing (1963); and, finally, some general building regulations approved by the Ministry of the Interior in 1956 on the proposal of the General Directorate of Architecture and Town Planning (Pereiro 1981).

4 José Luis Pereiro Alonso, *Desarrollo y deterioro urbano de la ciudad de Vigo* (Vigo: Colexio Oficial de Arquitectos de Galicia, 1981), 166.

Fig. 2
Planning in Vigo before the General Development Plan of 1971 (source: José Luis Pereiro Alonso, *Desarrollo y deterioro urbano de la ciudad de Vigo*. Vigo: Colexio Oficial de Arquitectos de Galicia, 1981).



3a



3b

in the urban reserve for the development of Partial Plans. This meant that a large part of the municipal territory was left unstructured and the historical parish network, which was subject to a barely regulated process of completion, was gradually disintegrated.⁵

Bishop José Delicado Baeza and the Challenge of the Urban Parish

At the same time, Pope Paul VI was working on the same issues. In the Apostolic Letter in the form of a Motu Proprio *Ecclesiae Sanctae* (1966),⁶ he recommended the division or distribution of the territory of parishes in which “apostolic activity is difficult or inadequate because of the excessive number of the faithful, the excessive extent of the territory or for other reasons”. Shortly afterwards, he returned to the same theme in the Apostolic Letter *Octogesima Adveniens* (1971),⁷ in which he spoke of the urgent need to rebuild the social fabric of cities, creating centres of cultural interest capable of promoting not

5 Xosé Manuel Souto González, *Vigo cen anos de historia urbana (1880-1980)* (Vigo: Xerais, 1990); María Asunción Leboreiro Amaro, *Vigo, puerto y destino. Atlas urbanístico de Vigo* (Vigo: COAG/Fundación Provigo, 2000); Jesús Manuel González Pérez and Alejandro López González. “La dinámica demográfica y el planeamiento urbano en Vigo desde 1960. Impacto del proceso de industrialización desarrollista”, *Anales de Geografía de la Universidad Complutense*, no. 23 (2003): 163-185.

6 Paul VI. *Motu proprio Ecclesiae Sanctae. Normas para la aplicación del Decretos Conciliares*, 1966 <https://bit.ly/302ulax> (last accessed October 2024).

7 Paul VI. *Carta Apostólica Octogesima Adveniens*, 1971 <https://bit.ly/48rfRyG> (last accessed October 2024).

Fig. 3a, 3b
General Urban Development
Plan of Vigo, 1971 (source:
María Asunción Leboreiro
Amaro, *Vigo, puerto y destino*.
Atlas urbanístico de Vigo. Vigo:
COAG/Fundación Provigo,
2000).

only religious life, but also human promotion and simple human relations: "It is urgent to rebuild, on the scale of the street, the neighbourhood or the large complex, the social fabric within which men and women can satisfy the just demands of their personality".

In Spain, the Catholic Hierarchy undertook to draw up guidelines for action throughout the national territory to meet the demand for religious facilities generated by the new urban planning, in order to satisfy the needs of the growing urban society. The Church was faced with a huge task and a broad internal debate that had already been launched on several fronts.⁸ In this sense, Josef Comblin's book *Teología de la ciudad* (1968) became popular as a working tool for those diocesan leaders who sought to systematise and approach the new urban reality, understood as a sign of the times that the Church was called to discern.⁹

The *Instrucciones para la construcción de los complejos parroquiales* (Instructions for the Construction of Parish Complexes), published by the Archbishopric of Madrid-Alcalá in 1965,¹⁰ approached the construction of parish churches from different angles. The Technical Office of the Archbishopric, directed by Jacinto Rodríguez Osuna, had carried out a complex parish restructuring of the diocese, which attempted to carry out the construction or realisation of more than three hundred new temples.¹¹ Faced with this enormous task, Archbishop Casimiro Morcillo had asked for the involvement of religious orders in parochial action, an initiative that Delicado Baeza would also implement during the parochial restructuring of the diocese of Tui-Vigo in 1970.

At the same time as increasing the number of parishes, the Church had to provide them with new buildings to house their functions. The Second Vatican Council had ratified the innovative currents of the Liturgical Movement, which postulated the progressive involvement of the faithful in the rites and the various apostolic responsibilities, beyond their mere attendance at Sunday worship. This led to a Copernican shift in the way the physical form of churches was designed, opening the way to a series of typological innovations that sometimes bordered on anarchy. Parish centres evolved from free-standing temples to multifunctional complexes in which the Church rethought its relationship -from power to service, we could say in a very schematic way- with an increasingly pluralistic

8 Gabriel Alomar Esteve, "La depuración religiosa y estética de nuestro arte sagrado", *Revista Nacional de Arquitectura*, no. 201 (1958): 31-34; Patronat Municipal de l'Habitatge, Barcelona, *Conversaciones de Arquitectura Religiosa* (Barcelona: Patronato Municipal de la Vivienda, 1965); José María Fernández Catón, ed., *Arte Sacro y Concilio Vaticano II* (León: Junta Nacional Asesora de Arte Sacro/Centro de Estudios e Investigación San Isidoro, 1965); Rodolfo García-Pablos González-Quijano, "Necesidad de establecer órdenes parroquiales integradas en los planeamientos urbanísticos", *Arquitectura*, no. 73 (1965): 33-36. <http://bit.ly/3vAt6i4> (last accessed October 2024).

9 Joseph Comblin and Francisco Javier Calvo, *Teología de la ciudad* (Estella: Verbo Divino, 1972) <https://bit.ly/3tP6mdv> (last accessed October 2024).

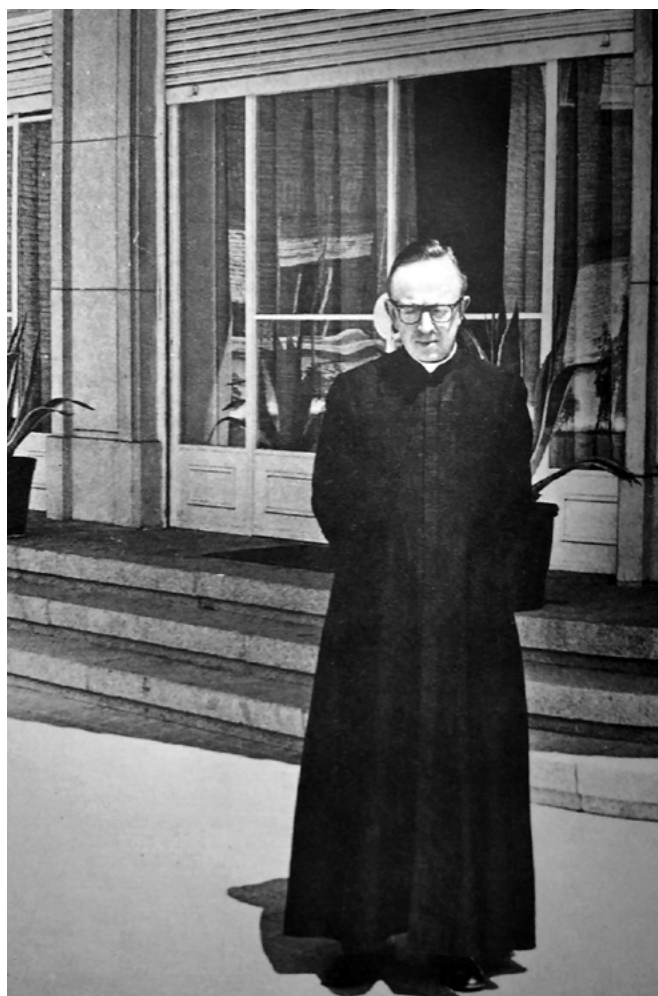
10 Archbishopric of Madrid-Alcalá. *Instrucciones para la construcción de complejos parroquiales* (Madrid: Oficina Diocesana de Sociología Religiosa, 1965).

11 Rafael Ramón Saiz, ed., *Madrid-Alcalá, una diócesis en construcción. Exposición sobre las parroquias creadas en la diócesis de Madrid desde 1961 a 1982* (Madrid: Servicio Editorial, 1982); Jesús García Herrero, "El Plan Pastoral de Madrid de 1965. 'La revolución silenciosa' y las iglesias en locales comerciales", *Actas de Arquitectura Religiosa Contemporánea*, no. 3 (2013): 186-193 <https://doi.org/10.17979/aarc.2013.3.0.5101> (last accessed October 2024); Jesús García Herrero, "Iglesias posconciliares de Luis Cubillo en Madrid. La búsqueda del complejo parroquial estandarizado", *ACE: Architecture, City and Environment*, no. 50 (2022): 11545 <https://dx.doi.org/10.5821/ace.17.50.11545> (last accessed October 2024).

society. In fact, during the last years of Franco's dictatorship, these parish buildings became true spaces of freedom.

José Delicado Baeza was appointed Bishop of Tui-Vigo in 1969. Born in Almansa (Albacete) in 1927, after attending the Civic High School, he studied philosophy at the Seminary of Málaga and theology at the Pontifical University of Salamanca. Ordained a priest in 1951, he became a high school teacher, coadjutor of the parish of the Immaculate Conception in Albacete, and diocesan advisor to the workers' movement. In 1952 he was appointed Canon of the Cathedral, Spiritual Director and Professor at the Seminary. As a scholar of the Spanish National Church of Santiago and Montserrat in Rome, he wrote several publications on pastoral and priestly spirituality. Before his appointment as Bishop of Tui-Vigo, he served as Vicar General of the Diocese of Albacete (1964-1969) and, after a brief stay in Galicia, was appointed Metropolitan Archbishop of Valladolid in 1975, where he remained until his retirement in 2002. During his years in Valladolid, he continued his work of construction: new parishes were built, and the archbishopric, the seminary, the diocesan archives, the priests' home and the spirituality center, among others, were renovated or rebuilt. He was also one of the main promoters of *Las Edades del Hombre*, a religious foundation dedicated to the diffusion and promotion of sacred art in the Autonomous Community of Castilla y León. In the Spanish Episcopal Conference, he was Vice-President (1981-1987) and President of the Episcopal Commissions for the Clergy (1978-1981), for Education and Catechesis (1987-1993) and for Universities (1993-1996). He died in 2014 [Fig. 4].¹²

In the book of interviews that Mérida published in 1982, the one with Delicado Baeza is by far the most extensive, although not the easiest to understand, and it allows the reader to trace the role that the prelate from La Mancha played in the Spanish hierarchy of the time. For the journalist, the archbishop "is very far from the traditional and conventional image that Spaniards have of a bishop".¹³ And she portrays him as a moderate and serious man, attentive to current events, with a presence that combines a young maturity with an approachable and accessible personal style.



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12 Archdiocese of Valladolid. "Don José Delicado Baeza, 1927-2014. Vida y obra", *RIV-Revista Iglesia en Valladolid*, no. 207 (2014): monographic issue.

13 María Mérida, *Entrevista con la Iglesia* (Barcelona: Planeta, 1982), 152.

Fig. 4
Bishop José Delicado Baeza,
1981 (source: María Mérida,
Entrevista con la Iglesia.
Barcelona: Planeta, 1982).

Delicado Baeza was 42 years old when he arrived in Galicia. His first challenge was to achieve the acceptance and consolidation of the dual episcopate, which in 1959 had been split between the historic town of Tui and the populous city of Vigo. But the young bishop was a born animator, a person accustomed to teamwork, who tried to give a new rhythm to the pastoral activity of the priests, new and attractive.¹⁴ For him, pastoral activity had to occupy a primordial place, above the preservation of traditions in the Church. Thus, with the aim of applying the spirit of the Second Vatican Council to the unique reality of Galicia, he organized the *Concilio Pastoral de Galicia* (1974-79). Although his move to Valladolid in 1975 prevented him from participating in the completion of the work, the third of the documents of the Pastoral Council would bear the significant title *The Renewed Liturgy in the Pastoral of the Church* (González Gougil 1995).¹⁵

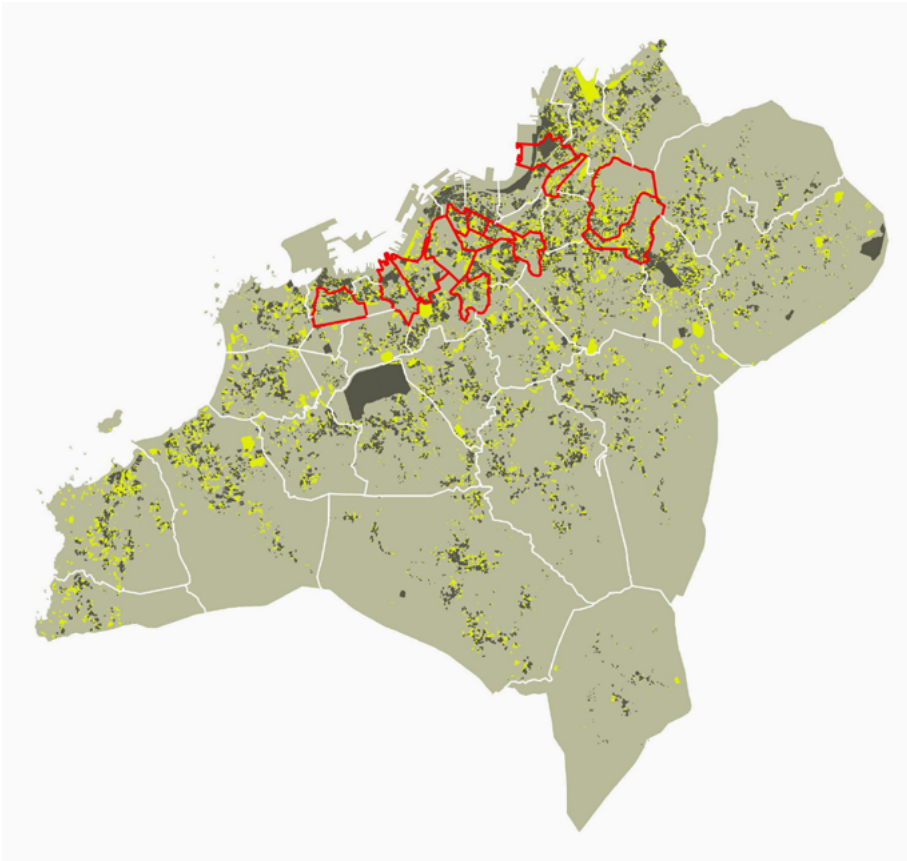
Parish Restructuring in 1970

The new ecclesiastical attitude towards society and the primacy of pastoral activity led Delicado Baeza, in 1970, following the conciliar impulse, to decree the construction of fourteen new parishes in the municipality of Vigo. In explaining his decision, he cited the excessive territorial expansion of the existing parishes and the growing number of parishioners as the reasons for modifying the parish network.

On October 31, 1970, Delicado Baeza signed three decrees: the modification of the archpriestly organization of the Diocese of Tui-Vigo, the correction of the boundaries of the parishes of the city, and the creation of fourteen new parishes in Vigo. The first of these aimed to achieve a more effective apostolic work by dividing the diocese into twenty-two archpriesthoods, seven of which corresponded to the territorial scope of the municipality of Vigo. The decree modifying the parochial boundaries affected nineteen parishes in Vigo: of the historical ones, the two in the city center – Santa María and Santiago el Mayor – and the suburban ones of Santa Cristina de Lavadores, San Martín de Coya, San Miguel de Bouzas, Santo Tomé de Freixeiro, San Pedro de Sárdoma, San Salvador de Teis, and San Cristóbal de Candeán. And it affected all those that were built in the 20th century: Sagrado Corazón de Jesús (1902); San Francisco (1904); Inmaculada Concepción, Nuestra Señora de Fátima, and San José Obrero y Santa Rita (1947); San Ignacio de Loyola, Nuestra Señora de las Nieves, San Antonio de la Florida, San Juan Bautista, and Santísimo Cristo de la Victoria (1958). The third decree created fourteen new parishes: San Juan de Avila, San Francisco Javier, Santo Cura de Ars, San Paio, Santa Teresa de Jesús, María Madre del Buen Pastor (la Divina Pastora), Santa Lucía, Inmaculado Corazón de María, María Auxiliadora, Nuestra Señora de la Soledad, Perpetuo Socorro, Nuestra Señora del Rocío, Virgen del Carmen, and San Pablo [Fig. 5].

14 José García Oro, *Historia de las diócesis españolas*. Vol. 14. *Iglesias de Santiago de Compostela y Tui-Vigo* (Madrid: BAC, 2002).

15 Ramiro González Gougil, "A liturxia renovada na pastoral da Igrexa", *Lumieira: revista galega de pastoral*, no. 29-30 (1995): 311-354 <http://www.hogarsantamargarita.com/numeros.html> (last accessed October 2024).



The prelate's vigorous action attracted the attention of not only the local press, but also the national press. The newspaper *ABC* (11/25/1970) carried the headline: "The new pastoral calls for a reorganization of the parishes. It is necessary to think about the construction of temples that form a body with the buildings". The article included various reflections of the bishop on the new urban pastoral and its implications for religious life. The new urban life appeared here – in the line of Paul VI – as a challenge to Christianity, because "it configures a special type of citizen who can be marginalized from the pastoral action of the Church", since the general or almost generalized urbanization is "one of the factors that most influences the life of men in all aspects" [Fig. 6].

On the same day, in a statement to the newspaper *La Vanguardia* (25 November 1970), he stated:

Urban parishes must have a human dimension; when the conventional limits are exceeded, religious vitality is inversely proportional to the volume of the population. In the cities there is a need for a pastoral that presupposes knowledge, proximity and dialogue. The multiplication of coadjutors in a parish of larger than normal dimensions is not an effective solution: they end up knowing the same circle of more or less zealous people. The yield is multiplied by dividing the centers of different communities. The ideal capacity of a parish church is 600 seats, and it should be located in the normal meeting places.

Fig. 5
Plan of the parish reorganization of 1970 in relation to the growth of the city. The existing parishes are shown in white, and those where new parishes were created are shown in blue (source: Own elaboration based on the decrees of creation of the new parishes published in the *Boletín Oficial del Obispado de Tui-Vigo*).

Delicado Baeza summarized the problem of new parishes and churches in two concepts: their ideal size and their location in the city. For pastoral action to be effective, he established the ideal size of a parish in a range of four to six thousand inhabitants, and the capacity of a church in six hundred seats. With regard to the relationship with the city, he stated that the Church should anticipate its situation in accordance with the development of the city, and that the possibility of building temples in the basements of buildings should be considered in order to facilitate financing, which he effectively applied to solve the headquarters of several of the newly created parishes, as we will see below.

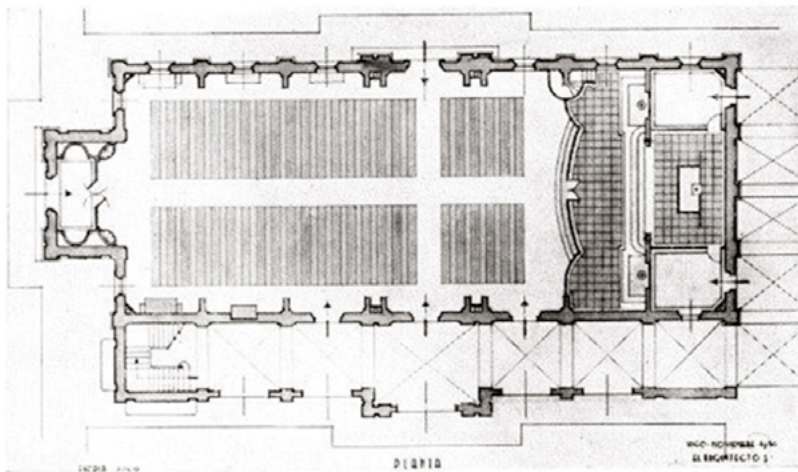
The Bishop entrusted seven parishes to religious congregations, which offered their churches and the priests they had: San Francisco Javier to the Jesuits, La Divina Pastora to the Capuchins, the Inmaculado Corazón de María to the Claretian Missionaries, María Auxiliadora to the Salesians, Perpétuo Socorro to the Redemptorists, and Virgen del Carmen to the Carmelites. Some of these congregations had recently renovated their churches. In addition, the chapel of the School of the Company of Mary was erected as the seat of the new parish of San Juan de Avila y Santa Juana de Lestonnac, although in this case attended by diocesan priests. The Bishop also opened for public worship the temple that Bishop Eijo y Garay had built on the hillside of the Castro, destining it to the new parish of Nuestra Señora de la Soledad.

It should be noted that although the relationship between urban development and the parish structure had been pointed out by Delicado as a necessary condition for a real link between the structure of the Church and the needs of the citizens, the handing over of the parishes to the religious congregations meant taking advantage of their locations, so that the parish structure had to adapt to the location of the temples and not the other way around. On the other hand, this solution responded to the densification of the urban center, since these buildings were located in the already consolidated city, although their initial locations would have been more peripheral. This was the case of the Jesuit School of Teis, which was integrated into the urban fabric with the growth of Sanjurjo Badía St.; of La Divina Pastora and the Inmaculado Corazón de María, near Plaza de España; of María Auxiliadora and Santa Juana de Lestonnac, near the expansion area of Camélias and Venezuela St.s; and of the Carmelite School in López Mora St., very close to the flourishing center of Las Traviesas.

Of the fourteen new parishes, six needed new parish centers: Santo Cura de Ars, San Paio, Santa Teresa de Jesús, Santa Lucía, Nuestra Señora del Rocío, and San Pablo, in addition to the unfinished temples. In fact, in March 1980, the diocese had to ask the Ministry of Housing for an extension of the aid that had been granted to complete the work on four of them. In some cases, the development of planning facilitated the location of these new buildings, as in the case



Fig. 6
Article published in the newspaper *El Pueblo Gallego* (12/11/1970) explaining the reorganization of the parishes carried out by Bishop Delicado Baeza (source: Archive of the author).



of Nuestra Señora del Rocío in the Coya neighborhood, Santa Lucía in the Salgueira -within the framework of the Sárdoma Partial Plan-, or the Santo Cura de Ars, which was finally made possible by the PEPRI of the Bailén Action Unit. The parish center of San Paio was built with the authorization of the Ministry to build on land classified in the General Plan as «rustic agricultural land», an authorization granted under exception b) limitation 2^a of Article 69 of the Land Law (BOE 20, January 23, 1973). The parishes of Santa Teresa de Jesús and San Pablo were located on the first commercial floors, thus putting into practice Delicado's statement that it was necessary to consider this possibility. In the case of Santa Teresa, it was feared that there would be a delay in the development of the Lavadores Partial Plan, so a more immediate solution was chosen by purchasing a lot with an unfinished building.

Among this last group of parishes, three -San Paio, San Pablo and Santa Teresa- were separated from the parish of Santa Cristina de Lavadores, which had already lost land to Nuestra Señora de Fátima and San José Obrero in 1947, and to San Juan Bautista and Santa Clara in 1958. The parish of Santo Cura de Ars was separated from that of San Juan Bautista. The territory of the parish of San Martín de Coya had already (1958) generated four new parishes: Perpetuo Socorro, Nuestra Señora del Rocío, Santísimo Cristo de la Vitoria and San Antonio de la Florida. Finally, Santa Lucía de la Salgueira took land from the parishes of Freixeiro, Sárdoma and San José Obrero.

Fig. 7
San Ignacio de Loyola (Church of the School of the Jesuit Fathers, later the seat of the parish of San Francisco Javier). Antonio Cominges, 1951 (source: Archivo Histórico Municipal de Vigo – AHMV, 78/51).

Peculiarities of the New Parish Demarcations

The Jesuits began their work in Vigo in 1916, with a first school in La Molinera building, located in the central street of García Barbón. In 1928 they moved to the outskirts of the city and built a new school in the Bellavista estate, designed by José Franco Montes in 1926. But between 1932 and 1940, after the dissolution of the Society of Jesus during the Republic, the school was requisitioned, and during the Civil War its facilities were used by the national side as a school and military hospital. In 1941, Antonio Cominges designed the extension of the central pavilion of the College, to which a new floor was added, and in 1951, he designed the chapel dedicated to St. Ignatius of Loyola; the first stone was laid on May 6, 1952, and it was inaugurated three years later. This chapel served as the site for the creation of the new parish of San Francisco Javier, while the old school chapel, located parallel to Sanjurjo Badía St., was demolished in 1975 when the entrance to the school was remodeled [Fig. 7].¹⁶

The Capuchin Fathers settled in Vigo in 1901, in an apartment in Arenal St.. They worshipped in the disappeared convent of Los Remedios, on the same street, using both the chapel of the convent and the parish of Santiago el Mayor, which was under construction. In 1902, they acquired a plot of land in what would become a thriving axis of the city, formed by the streets Urzaiz-Plaza de España-Pizarro, and began to build a new temple themselves. A few days before its inauguration, the Society of Architects of Galicia presented a letter to the City Council asking that it not be opened to the public for safety reasons, since the work had been carried out without plans or technical direction and there had been some collapses. The mayor asked the diocesan architect, Manuel Felipe Quintana, who was also the town's architect, to inspect the work, and when he found no safety problems, the church was inaugurated in 1907. In 1964, the main altar of the temple was modified to face the people and a global restoration was carried out. The good urban location of the church grounds led the Capuchin Fathers to promote a mixed building in 1975, consisting of housing, a parish center and a priest's residence, a project carried out by Jaime Garrido, which meant the demolition of the old church and the filling in of the urban block [Fig. 8a, 8b].

The community of Claretian missionaries arrived in Vigo in 1947. They immediately planned to build a sanctuary dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, with a large tower that would serve as a beacon in the city, and for this purpose they bought a plot of land on Pizarro St.. In 1953, Cominges carried out the project, which was approved by Bishop José López Ortiz. The work began with the excavation of a crypt, which was opened for worship (1954-1958), but the construction of the rest of the temple slowed down until it came to a complete halt. In 1970, Delicado Baeza transformed the crypt into a parish church and the facilities were gradually completed. In 1978, the community approved a project

16 Marta Vilas Rodríguez, "Antonio Cominges Tapias. Obra religiosa en Vigo", *Boletín Académico. Revista de investigación y arquitectura contemporánea*, no. 5 (2015): 27-38. <https://doi.org/10.17979/bac.2015.5.0.1036> (last accessed October 2024)..



8a

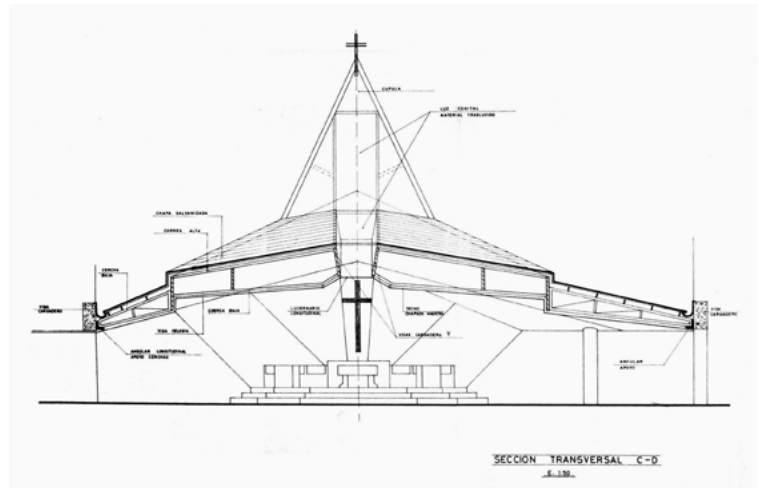
8b

for the entire property, which consisted of the construction of a residence, a priest's house and a parish center, with the church occupying the inner part of the block. The project was designed by Carlos Fernández-Moráis, while the parish operated provisionally in premises located on Caracas St.. The complex was inaugurated in 1982 [Fig. 9a, 9b].

Initially (1894), the Salesian School of Vigo was located in the Arenal neighborhood. Then, thanks to the donation of land by the businessman Leopoldo Gómez Moure, founder of the *Círculo Católico Obrero de Vigo*, the Salesians moved to the Don Bosco neighborhood, on the northern slope of the Castro hill, and concentrated their work in the new San Matías School, dedicated to professional training. In 1906, the idea of building a new church was entrusted to Joaquín Saldaña. The work progressed slowly and the project was reduced due to budgetary constraints, but it was finally inaugurated in 1943 under the patronage of María Auxiliadora. In 1947, the Salesians left Arenal St. and rented their facilities to the Jesuits, who later (1962) gave them to the Diocese. In 1970 the church of María Auxiliadora became the seat of the parish of the same name, and in 1983 it was erected as a Marian sanctuary [Fig. 10].

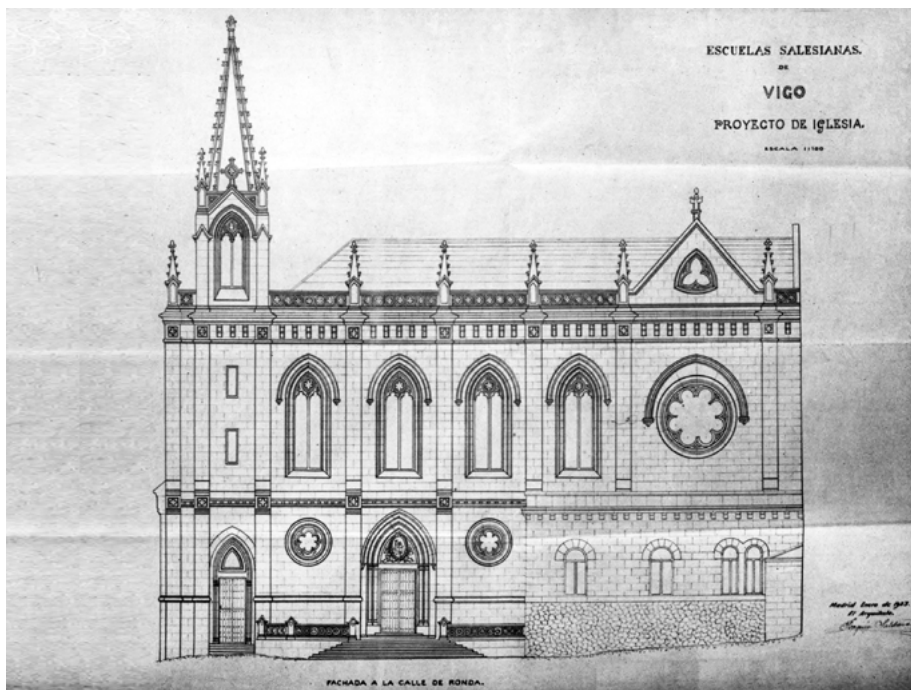
The land on which the Carmelite church, the rectory and the priests' house are located was donated by Mrs. Paula Gómez Curieses between 1936 and 1939. In 1935, Antonio Cominges drew up a project for a convent on the land, and in the following years he drew up several versions of the project, until in 1951 he signed the final project with the name "Iglesia de Nuestra Señora del Carmen en Las Traviesas". Once the church was finished, work began in 1962 on the tower that houses the image of the Virgen del Carmen. The transformation of the surroundings of the Carmelite church was the result of a series of agreements signed in 1986 between the City Council and the Lagos Silva family, which rearranged the volumes to create a landscaped square with an exit to López Mora St. These agreements were reflected in the PGOU of 1988 through a detailed study, by means of which the urban development use was obtained for the con-

Fig. 8a, 8b
María Madre del Buen Pastor (Divina Pastora) and Capuchin convent. Original building (1907) and current building (Xaime Garrido, 1975) (source: Archivo del Colexio Oficial de Arquitectos de Galicia, Subdelegación de Vigo – COAG Vigo, 122/75).



9a

9b



10

struction of a building attached to the southern party wall of the temple, destined to the community endowment in the form of a parish center and convent of the community. The parish center, designed by Francisco Castro and Pedro Alonso, was inaugurated in 1992 [Fig. 11].

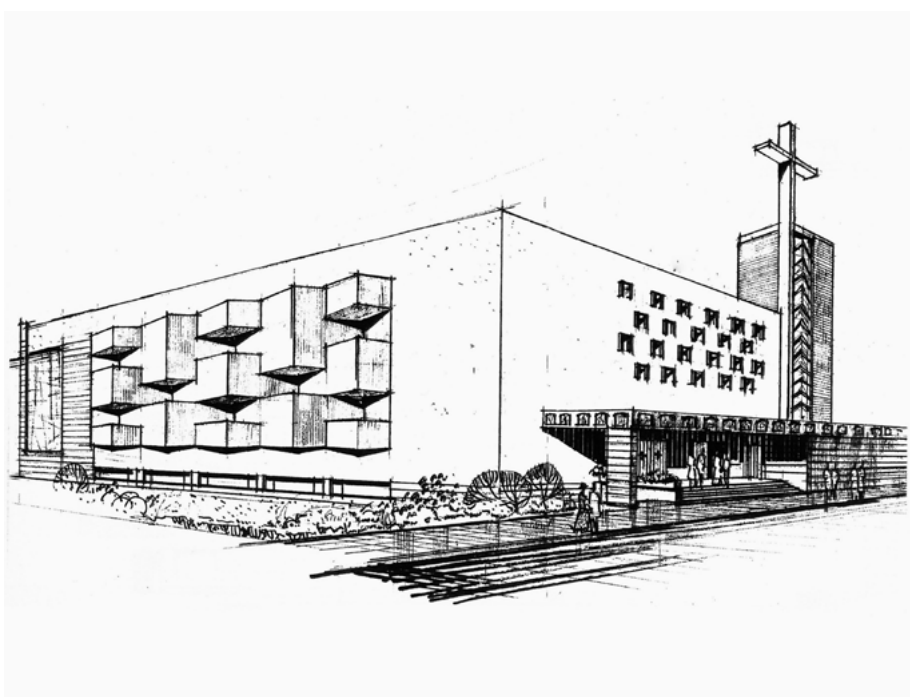
The church and the residence of the Redemptorist missionaries (Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer) were initially located in a building at 34-36 Pi i Margall St., possibly in the same place where the chapel dedicated to St. Clement Mary Hofbauer is currently located, administered by the same community

Fig. 9a, 9b
Inmaculado Corazón de María. Original project (Antonio Cominges, 1953) and present building (Carlos Julio Fernández-Moráis, 1978) (source: Archivo Histórico Municipal de Vigo – AHMV, 938/53 and Archivo del Colexio Oficial de Arquitectos de Galicia, Subdelegación de Vigo – COAG, 1/79, respectively).

Fig. 10
María Auxiliadora. Joaquín Saldaña, 1923 (source: Archivo Histórico Municipal de Vigo – AHMV, Obras particulares, Box URB-181).



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Fig. 11
Nuestra Señora del Carmen
and the new Carmelite convent.
Antonio Cominges, 1951
(source: Archivo Histórico
Municipal de Vigo – AHMV,
723/51).

Fig. 12
Nuestra Señora del Perpetuo
Socorro. Francisco Yáñez and
Tomás Pérez-Lorente, 1967
(source: Archivo del Colexio
Oficial de Arquitectos de
Galicia, Subdelegación de Vigo
– COAG, 69/67).

Fig. 13
San Juan de Avila and
Santa Juana de Lestonnac
(Colegio de la Enseñanza).
Domingo Rodríguez Sesmero
(attributed), 1891 (source:
Marta García Filgueira,
*Eclecticismo, arquitectura y
ciudad en Galicia. La obra de los
Sesmero en Vigo*. Vigo: Instituto
de Estudios Vigueses, 2014).

in the basement of a residential building designed by Desiderio Pernas. The new parish complex -church, residence and social services- was built on a plot of land in the new Coya estate, which was designated for religious institutions. The project was carried out by Francisco Yáñez and Tomás Pérez-Lorente in 1967 [Fig. 12].¹⁷

The School of the Company of Mary (known as La Enseñanza) was inaugurated in 1891 in the María Berdiales St., and its chapel was blessed in the same year. Although it is not confirmed, it is very possible that the author of the project was the architect Domingo Rodríguez Sesmero.¹⁸ In 1941, the building was modified with the addition of a floor in the left wing and the total modification of the right wing. The school chapel was designated as the seat of the new parish, which was placed under the invocation of San Juan de Avila y Santa Juana de Lestonnac, foundress of the Order. The diocese took charge of it [Fig. 13]. A special case was the temple that Leopoldo Eijo y Garay, Bishop of Tui and later Archbishop of Madrid, had built in the Atalaya del Castro. The bishop, who was born in Vigo, commissioned Antonio Cominges to design a project inspired by the church of the Madeleine in Paris. Cominges signed the plans in 1954, although the project was not completed until 1963. Eijo y Garay died that same year, and on October 9, 1964, his heirs donated the church to the Bishopric of Tui-Vigo. In 1970 the temple became the seat of the new parish of Nuestra Señora de la Soledad, for which the large semi-basement of the building was used as a parish hall [Fig. 14].¹⁹

For the new parish of San Paio, the chapel of the nursery of the Lavadores neighborhood was temporarily used as a place of worship. In 1972, Desiderio Pernas drew up a project for a new parish center on land that had been declared a rural agricultural area by the PGOU in 1971, so that it could be considered an exception to the restriction on construction established in Article 69 of the Land Act of 1956. The Ministry of Housing approved the project in December 1972, and in February 1973 it received a municipal license. The church was blessed and inaugurated on June 2, 1974, but the glazing of the presbytery was immediately blinded, completely changing the character of the space. In 2007, the architect María Estévez made another substantial modification, reversing the



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17 Marta Vilas Rodríguez and Esteban Fernández-Cobián, "Génesis y desarrollo de los cuatro centros parroquiales del polígono de Coya (Vigo, 1953-1981)", *Boletín Académico. Revista de investigación y arquitectura contemporánea*, no. 3 (2015): 15-28 <https://doi.org/10.17979/bac.2013.3.0.993> (last accessed October 2024).; Vilas Rodríguez, Marta. "Arquitectura parroquial y desarrollo urbano. Vigo siglo XX". PhD Thesis, Universidade da Coruña, 2018 <http://hdl.handle.net/2183/20223> (last accessed October 2024).

18 Marta García Filgueira, *Eclecticismo, arquitectura y ciudad en Galicia. La obra de los Sesmero en Vigo* (Vigo: Instituto de Estudios Vigueses, 2014).

19 Vilas Rodríguez, "Antonio Cominges Tapias. Obra religiosa en Vigo".

Fig. 14
Our Lady of Solitude. Antonio
Cominges, 1954 (source:
Archivo Histórico Municipal de
Vigo – AHMV, 571/58).

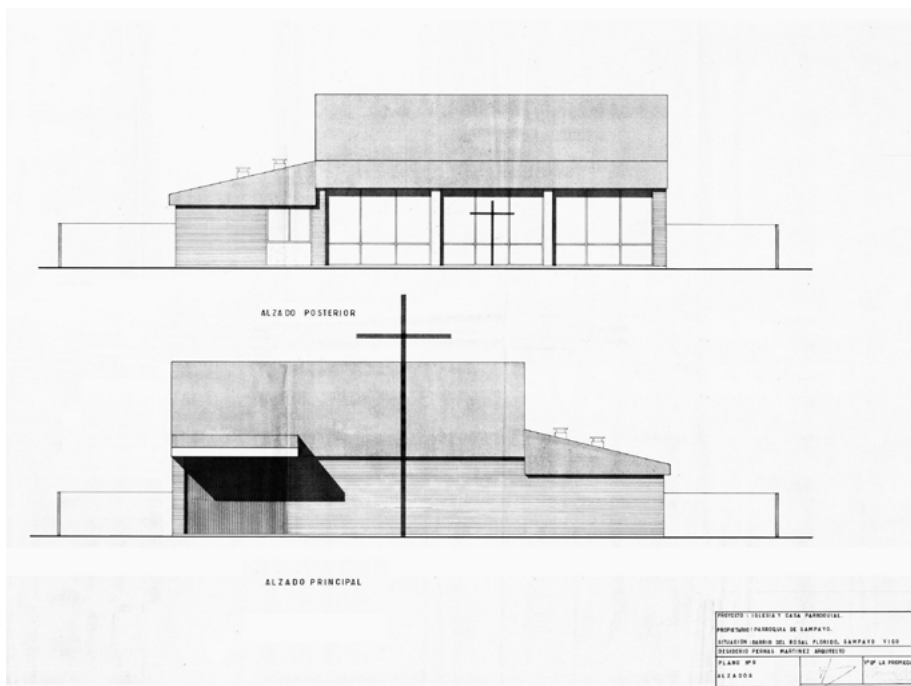
position of the entrance to the church, turning its orientation 180°. In addition, in order to define the new entrance, a body was added over the façade that was previously at the back, a triangular opening was opened over the presbytery, and a new altarpiece created by the painter Fernanda Fernández Suárez was installed [Fig. 15].

Nuestra Señora del Rocío was the second of the parishes created in the area of the Coya estate during the parish reform of 1970. For the time being, the parish seat was located in a place in the same neighborhood of Coya. In 1973, Desiderio Pernas carried out a project of maximums, of which only the church was built.²⁰ In 2013, the parish abandoned the construction of the rest of the program and ceded the vacant lot to the San Rosendo Foundation to build a residence for elderly dependents. The project designed by Francisco Castro and Pedro Alonso did not retain any traces of Desiderio Pernas [Fig. 16].

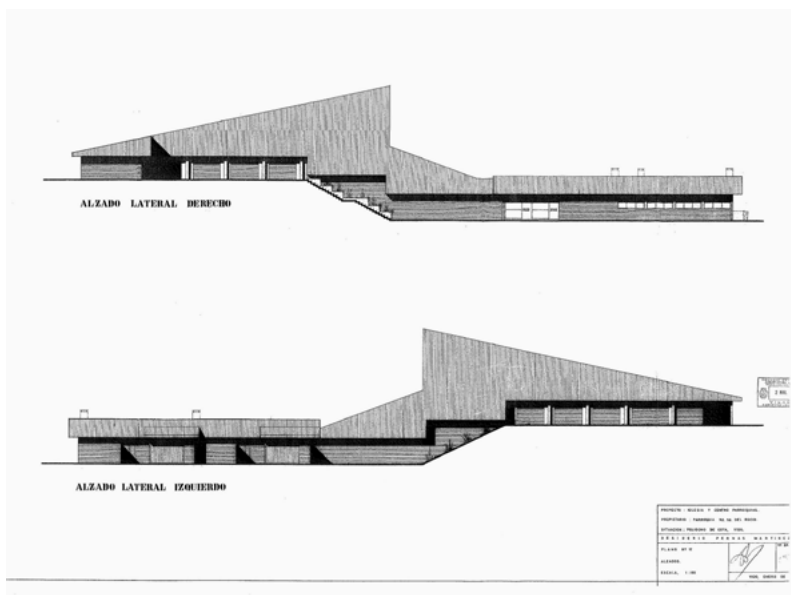
The parish church of Santa Lucía was initially located in a provisional site in A Salgueira, a suburban neighborhood that had begun to urbanize after the construction of a group of union housing. In 1978, the parish priest, Carlos Areán, commissioned Desiderio Pernas and José Manuel Quinteiro to design the church on a plot of land designated for urban development in the Sárdoma Partial Plan. Due to lack of funds, the construction of the parish complex was not completed until 1984 [Fig. 17]. The new parish of Santo Cura de Ars (St. John Mary Vianney) was provisionally assigned the church of San Juan del Monte, a small parish church with a capacity of two hundred people, as its place of worship. The parish owned land at Aragón St., where Desiderio Pernas designed a house (1972) and the parish center the following year. The municipal license was denied because the location of the church did not fit exactly in the land reserve of the Alignment Plan of the Teis sector, incorporated in the General Plan. An exception to the urban development standards was requested in accordance with Art. 46 of the Land Law, and the City Council even provisionally approved the file, but the Ministry returned it, demanding that the complete planning of the block be carried out. The parish had to wait for the final approval of the PERI of the Bailén Action Unit in 1990, while worship took place in the Travesía de Vigo. The architect José María Catalán, who had carried out the design, joined the team of Desiderio Pernas, at that time made up of Quinteiro and López-Ruipérez, as co-author of the new church. Pernas died during this second project, so his participation was limited. The first stone of the parish center was laid in 1996, and the work was not completed until December 1997 [Fig. 18a, 18b].

While looking for a place to build a church, the new parish of Santa Teresa de Jesús celebrated its services in the church of Santa Cristina. The land of the parish was included in the Partial Plan of Lavadores, so two options were considered: to rent another temporary headquarters until the Partial Plan reserve was determined, or to look for a buildable plot of land that was not affected by the Partial Plan. The diocese asked the parish priest, Jesús Cordeiro, to ensure

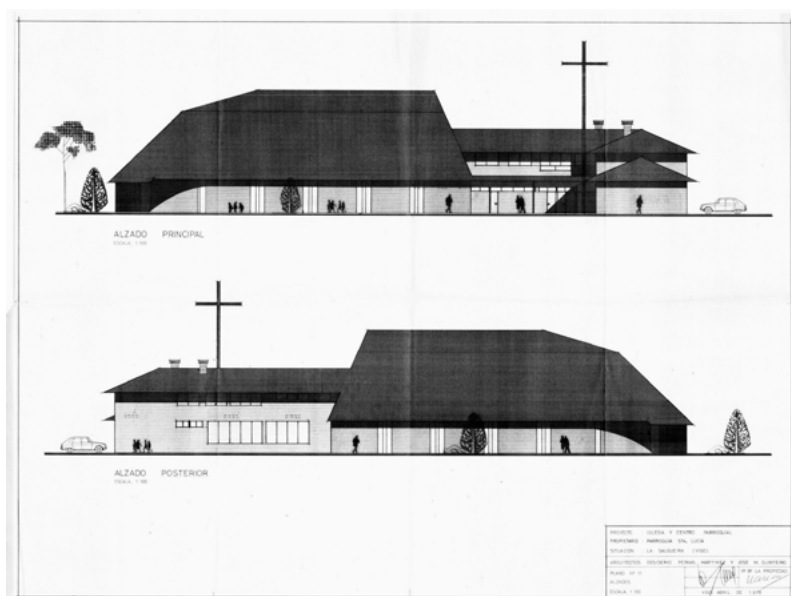
20 Vilas Rodríguez and Fernández-Cobián "Génesis y desarrollo de los cuatro centros parroquiales del polígono de Coya (Vigo, 1953-1981)".



15



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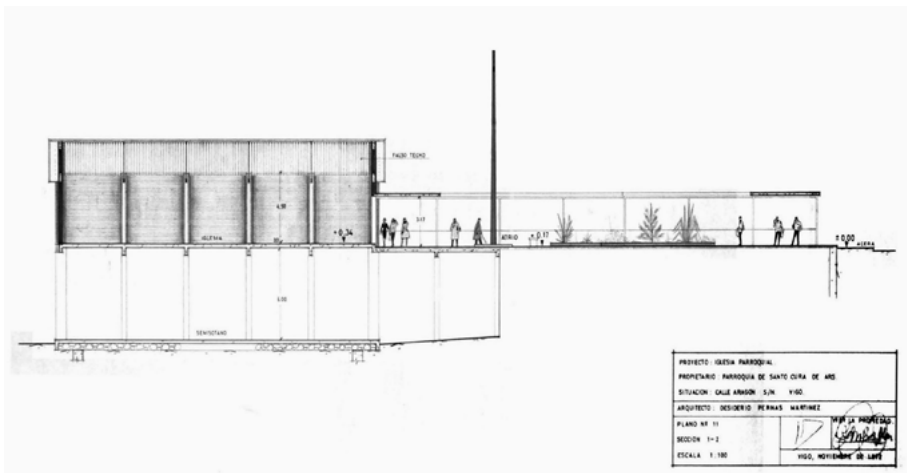


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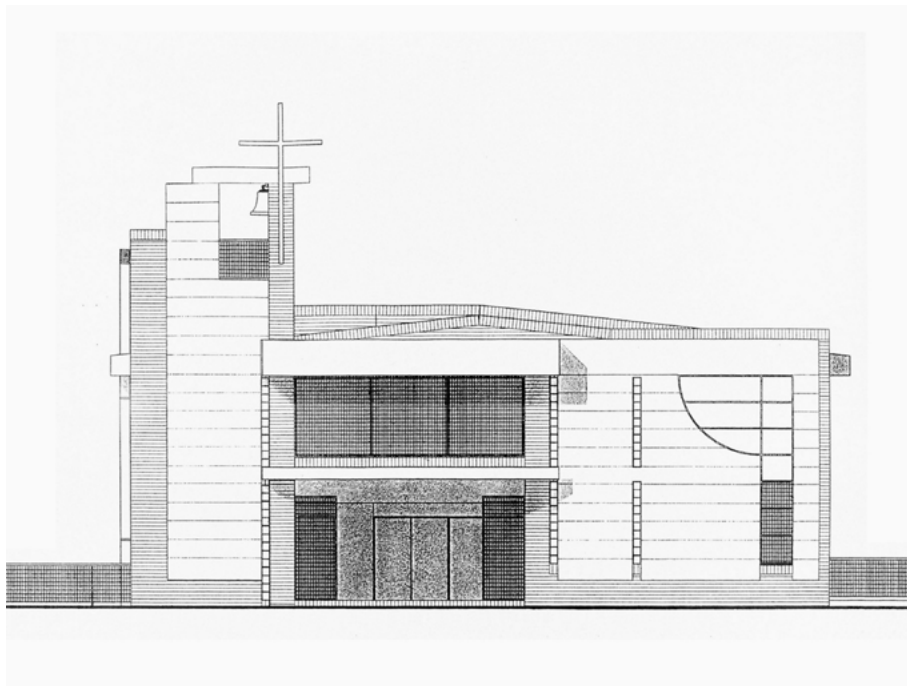
Fig. 15
San Paio de Lavadores.
Desiderio Pernas, 1972
(source: Archivo del Colexio
Oficial de Arquitectos de
Galicia, Subdelegación de Vigo
– COAG, 88/72).

Fig. 16
Nuestra Señora del Rocío.
Desiderio Pernas, 1973
(source: Archivo del Colexio
Oficial de Arquitectos de
Galicia, Subdelegación de Vigo
– COAG, 33/73).

Fig. 17
Santa Lucia. Desiderio Pernas
and José Manuel Quinteiro,
1978 (source: Archivo del
Colexio Oficial de Arquitectos
de Galicia, Subdelegación de
Vigo – COAG, 20/78).



18a

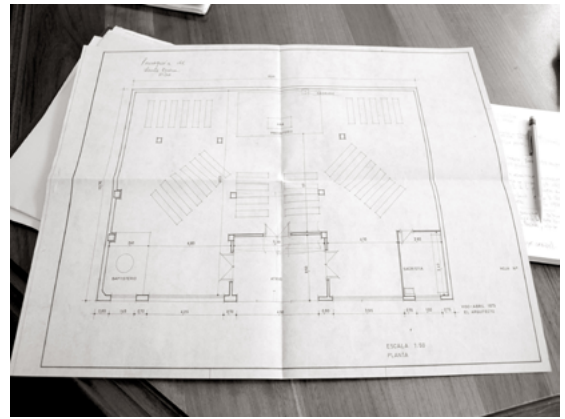


18b

the urban viability of the possible sites, recalling the cases of the parishes of Santo Tomé de Freixeiro – where the Xosé Bar Bóo project was located – and San Martín de Coya, whose work had been paralyzed by the construction of the industrial park of the same name (Fernández-Cobián and Vilas 2012). In 1971, it was decided to purchase a building under construction at 271 Ramón Nieto Avenue. Alberto Cominges drew up the project to complete the building according to its purpose, and it was inaugurated in 1973. Subsequently, in 1991, a complete (and risky) remodeling of the interior of the building was carried out without the intervention of technicians, in order to eliminate the pillars of the liturgical space and change its orientation [Fig. 19a, 19b].

Finally, the parish of San Pablo had the opportunity to acquire the first floor of a residential building, with the corresponding patio and half of the mezzanine, located at 130 Andalucía St. Until then, it had been using the chapel of the Franciscan Mothers of the Divine Shepherdess as a place of worship. In 1974, the architect Alberto Cameselle gave a positive report on the purchase, and the parish priest at the time, Daniel Bermúdez, asked the bishop to authorize the pur-

Fig. 18a, 18b
Santo Cura de Ars. Original project (Desiderio Pernas, 1972) and current building (Desiderio Pernas, José Manuel Quinteiro, Pedro L. López and José María Catalán, 1995) (source: Archivo del Colexio Oficial de Arquitectos de Galicia, Subdelegación de Vigo – COAG, 69/73 and VI952027, respectively).



19a

19b

chase. Between 1974 and 1979, it was necessary to raise extraordinary funds to complete the work. Thus, in 1974, the Bishopric signed a first loan to carry out the work of furnishing the premises; later, it requested a subsidy from the Ministry of Housing, which was granted in June 1976. In January 1977, the parish received a new subsidy from the diocese, and in 1979, the entire debt was cancelled. The case of this parish is a good example of the economic difficulties of building a new church for the humble parishes of the barrios. There is no record in the diocesan archives of any other project related to this intervention (author, date, etc.), although in 1987 the parish acquired a single-family house in Couto de Arriba, in the neighborhood of San Roque (next to the church of San Pablo), to be used for charitable and apostolic services [Fig. 20].

Religious Architecture between 1969 and 1975: A Change of Cycle

At the end of the sixties, Spanish architecture was experiencing the effects of the disorientation caused by the crisis of modern architecture and the period of immediate reaction. All this at a time when Spanish society's access to knowledge of what was being produced outside our borders was almost complete.²¹ The same happened in religious architecture, which, once freed from its corsets and with the mentality of openness that came from the Second Vatican Council, was at an optimal moment of its development. In Spain, however, signs of its relative loss of importance as an innovative typology could already be seen, at the same time as a larger group of architects, some of them linked to development companies, began to take charge of projects, a process that had already begun in the previous period.

In 1971, Miguel Angel Baldellóu made a general approach to the architecture being done in Galicia at that time, in which he stated:

Fig. 19a, 19b
Santa Teresa (no author, 1973)
(source: Archive of the Diocese
of Tui-Vigo).

21 Antón González-Capitel Martínez, *Arquitectura española años 50-años 80* (Madrid: MOPU, 1986).



The number of Galician architects has practically doubled since 1965. The newcomers have managed to form a coherent front in the face of common problems (...) Arriving in Galicia, they were confronted with a reality that was far from euphoric, and they accepted the situation and tried to improve it. (...) Making architecture in Galicia is a conscious alternative. The tendency to stay close to the training center, which had been very strong until then, began to change and a common programmatic spirit appeared, giving coherence to architecture from explicit and obvious approaches.²²

Despite the general decline in the construction of parish buildings in Spain – and Europe – in the early 1970s, the Diocese of Tui-Vigo had to commission several churches in Vigo, since, as we have seen, six of the fourteen newly created parishes were not to be located in temples already built. It is possible to speculate about the singular accumulation of commissions to Desiderio Pernas – San Paio de Lavadores in 1972, and the Santo Cura de Ars and Nuestra Señora del Rocío in 1973 – but what seems clear is that, in addition to being the architect who built the most in the city at that time, his office was able to combine economy of means and speed in the construction of his buildings, which perfectly suited the urgency and lack of means of the diocese [Fig. 21].

Undoubtedly, the economic precariousness of a Church in need and with no financial resources took its toll on the projects of the architects who worked for it at the time. In the case of Pernas, the parish center of Nigrán was not built and the parish complex of Nuestra Señora del Rocío was only partially built; later, misguided interventions mutilated other projects, such as the church of San

22 Miguel Angel Baldellóu Santolaria, "Panorama de la arquitectura actual en Galicia", *Hogar y Arquitectura*, no. 96 (1971): 17-53.

Fig. 20
San Pablo (no author, 1974)
(source: Archive of the author).



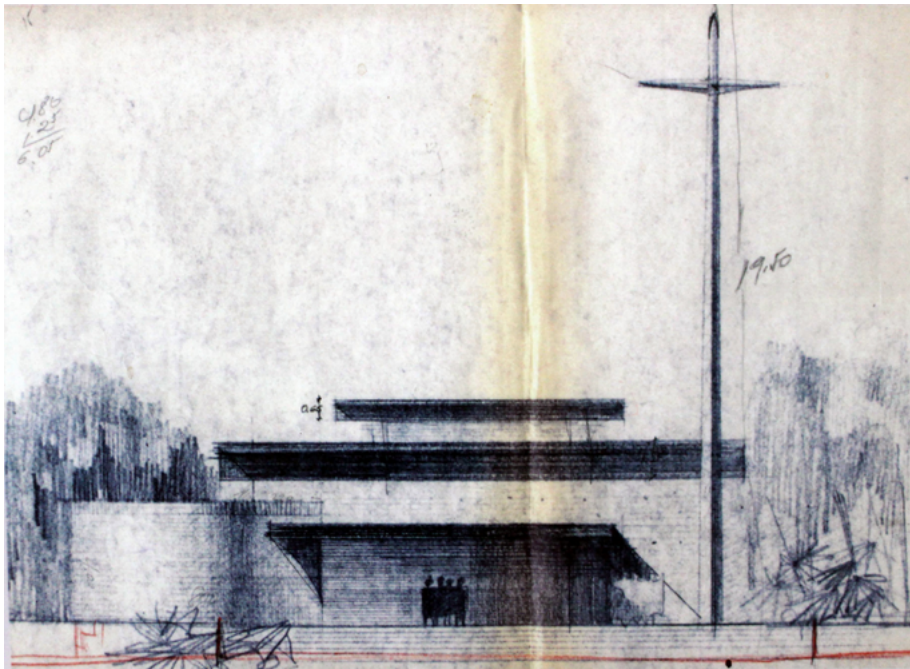
Many of the new parishes were located in buildings that had been constructed in previous years. It is true that Bishop Delicado Baeza requested the collaboration of the religious orders to take charge of some of them, but in general the construction of parish buildings was slow and suffered from the growing problems of financing. Many of these parishes began in temporary spaces, and although the legal consideration of parish buildings as institutions had facilitated the acquisition of land, this issue eventually led to a change in the architectural model (Fernández-Cobián 2005).²³

On the part of the Diocese of Tui-Vigo, the creation of new parishes was a difficult process, closely linked to the urban development of the city, in which the parish, that defined physical territories, was gradually replaced by the ecclesiastical parish, capable of creating communities that were increasingly independent of territoriality.

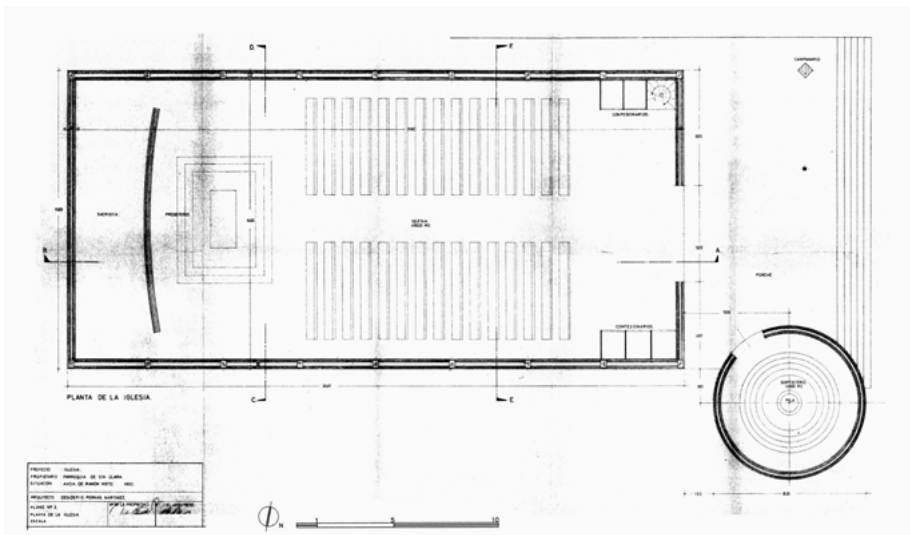
In any case, the new parish buildings that accompanied the process of parish subdivision promoted by Bishop José Delicado Baeza continued to be the center of a territorial structure deeply rooted in the Galician subconscious. Therefore, the multiple perspective offered by the study of parish architecture -observing in parallel its evolution in the three architectural, urban and ecclesiastical aspects-

Fig. 21
Location of the parish centers
of the new parishes created in
1970 (source: Own elaboration
from Google Earth).

23 Esteban Fernández-Cobián, *El espacio sagrado en la arquitectura religiosa contemporánea* (Santiago de Compostela: Colexio Oficial de Arquitectos de Galicia, 2005).



22a



22b

allows the construction of a complex and plural account of the development of the city of Vigo during the last decades of the 20th century, which establishes a very useful framework for understanding the architecture of the city and opens the possibility of delving into the trajectories -little studied- of the architects who faced the religious program at this historical moment.

Fig. 22a, 22b
Santa Clara, Desiderio Pernas
Martínez, 1968 (source:
Archivo del Colexio Oficial
de Arquitectos de Galicia,
Subdelegación de Vigo –
COAG, 53/68 and Archivo
Histórico Municipal de Vigo –
AHMV, 4231/68).

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