

Congregació
de l'Oratori

de **Sant Felip Neri**
de **Palma**

Museum
visitor guide

english

**Welcome to the Museum of Saint Philip's Neri
Oratory in Palma.**

In this guide you will find information about the history, the activities of the Congregation and a descriptive list of the different objects distributed in display cases and throughout the exhibition space.

CONGREGATION OF THE ORATORY OF SAINT PHILIP NERI (1689-1854)

On 26th March, 1689, Dr. Martí Ballester i Bauçà, a former student of the *Sapiencia*, who had been parish priest in the town of Santa Margalida, and later of the parish of Santa Eulalia in Palma, donated 200 pounds and some houses to found the Congregation of the Oratory of Saint Philip Neri. Bishop Pedro de Alagón y de Cardona gave license for the foundation on 26th April, 1689. However, it was not until 24th May, 1712 when the church, which was located in the current Plaza Mayor, was blessed, many years after the death of Martí Ballester (1693).

The first community was formed by Father Gabriel Tallades, *praepositus*, Father Antoni Barceló, priest, and Jaume Canyelles, cleric. Not even a year had passed since the foundation when Pope Clement XI sent his approval bull, dated on 27th March, 1713. In order to consolidate the foundation, Fathers Juan Bautista Verge and Miguel Gonzalvo came from Valencia, where in 1643 had been founded the first House of the Oratory in Spain.

Our fathers, who were almost always few, would dedicate themselves above all to the worship of our church, to the simple preaching (*more oratoriano*) of the Word of God and the ministry of Penance, through the confessional and spiritual direction.

On 3rd May, 1836, different political circumstances led to the civil suppression of the Congregation being decreed, until 2nd December, 1852, when it was reestablished. Father Francesc Frau had been left as the only congregant and had to support alone the weight of the Community for some years.

However, the misfortunes did not end here. On 26th July, 1854, the Congregation received a Decree from the Mayor by which they had to abandon the House and the church in less than twenty-four hours because a square had to be built on the site. And so, after 142 years since its founding, they had to leave the House. Before leaving, they hurriedly removed altarpieces, images, ornaments, paintings and other valuable objects, which were deposited in the private homes of devotees of Saint Philip. The fathers, who were then Francesc Frau, Francesc Molina and Gaspar Perelló, and the brothers Martí Frau and Pere Antoni Canyelles, went to live in a house on Oliva Street (Saint James Parish).

ORATORY CONGREGATION OF SAINT PHILIP NERI (1855-2024)

Father Francesc Frau had asked the City Council for compensation for the demolition of the House and the church. As time passed and it did not arrive, Father Frau managed to have the exchange of the abandoned convent and the church of the Holy Spirit, previously in the hands of the Trinitarians, approved on 22nd October, 1858. Both buildings were in a dilapidated state: the convent lodge propped up, the main staircase impassable, the cells out of reach and at imminent risk of collapsing, and the refectory about to fall. The church had become a straw warehouse and the Chapel of Sorrows, completely deteriorated, into a firewood warehouse. The chapel of Divine Love, or *Remei*, served as a theatre. However, the exchange was accepted and restoration works began immediately, directed by the versatile architect Pere d'Alcàntara Penya. On 2nd February, 1859, Father Frau died and Father Molina remained alone as priest.

Francesc Molina i Guardiola (1825-1906) is considered one of the most prominent members of the Oratory of Mallorca and the person responsible, always with a determined spirit, for the restoration of the Community in the time of greatest difficulty. On 17th May, 1859, the old church of the Holy Spirit, now called Saint Philip Neri, was reconciled. The same altarpiece that was in the original church, in a baroque style and the work of the sculptor Andreu Carbonell and the painter Miquel Pont, was placed on the main altar.

A distinguished member of the Palma Oratory was also Father Joaquim Rosselló i Ferrà who, after almost twenty-six years in the Congregation, on 25th April, 1890 moved to Saint Honoratus with the intention of living a retired life; but he would soon found the Congregation of Missionaries of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, today responsible for the Monastery of La Real and the Sanctuary of Lluc, among others. In this period, it is also worth highlighting the foundations of the Houses of Porreres (1891) and Sóller (1920) and the regency of the parish of Saint Paul by the Community (1973).

Already in the 20th century, there are many figures who, in one way or another, have stood out in the maintenance and development of the Congregation and our country, not only in his tireless apostolic work but also for his commitment to our music, language and culture. In recent years it is worth highlighting the work carried out by Father Marc Vallori, who has done so much to give prestige to the work of the Oratory.

1

Holy water font

Undated

Stone

It probably belongs to the old Trinitarian convent.



2

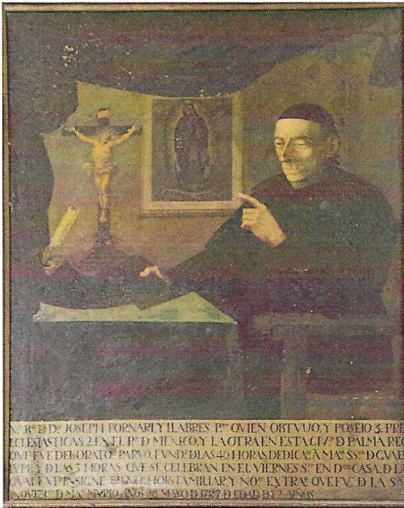
Mn. Josep Fornari i Llabrés

Undated

Anonymous

Oil painting on canvas

Mn. Fornari introduced the devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe from Mexico in Mallorca.



3

Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Oratori Parvo

18th century

Anonymous

Painting on wood

Origin: Mexico



4

display case 1

Books from the Oratory Library



5

Ecce Homo

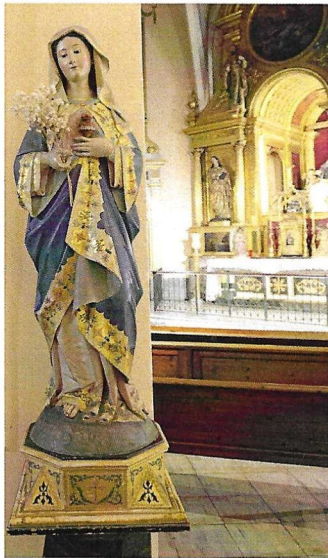
Undated
Anonymous
polychrome wood



6

Mary Immaculate

19th century
Anonymous
Property of Fr. Francesc Molina. It was exhibited
in the dining room on Saint Philip's day.



7

Resurrected Christ

19th century
Anonymous
Image that crowned the pulpit located between the
chapels of Saint Joseph and Our Lady of Lourdes.



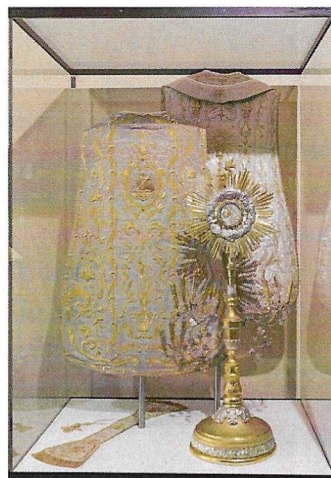
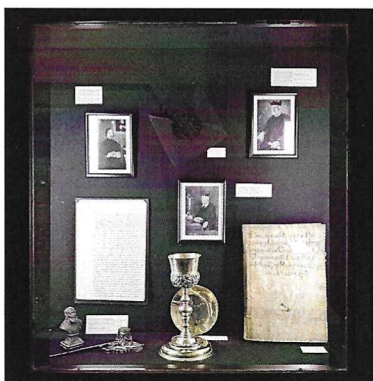
8

Crown

Undated
Stone
Probably from the main portal of
the ancient Trinitarian convent.

9

display case 2
Liturgical set



10

vitrina 3
The founders

11

Holy water font
Undated
Stone
It probably belongs to the old
Trinitarian convent.



12

De la Guardia Boy
Undated
Anonymous
Polychrome wood
It probably belongs to the ancient
Trinitarian convent.

13

display case 4

Documents of the Oratory Archive



14

Fr. Joaquim Rosselló C.O.

First confessor and spiritual mentor of Mn. Costa i Llobera. Founder of the Missionaries of Sacred Heart of Mary and Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Fr. Francesc Molina C.O.

Restorer of the Oratory in Mallorca.

15

Saint Philip Neri

20th century

Damià Jaume

Oil on canvas

Donation from the painter, friend of the Oratory Palma House. It shows the light that Saint Philip gives to the Catholic Church.



16

display case 5

Relic of Saint Philip Neri

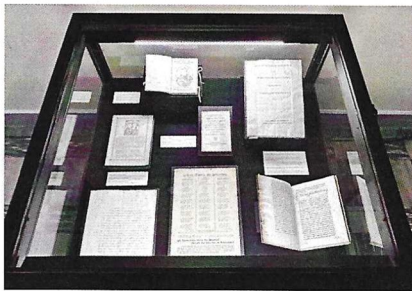
17

Chapter

Undated

Stone

It probably belongs to the ancient Trinitarian convent.



18

display case 6

Documents of the Oratory Archive

19

Mn. Costa i Llobera

Oil painting by Ramón Nadal discovered at the celebration event of the 1st Centenary of the settle in of the FF. of the Oratory at the church of the Holy Spirit (May 31th, 1959).



20

display case 7

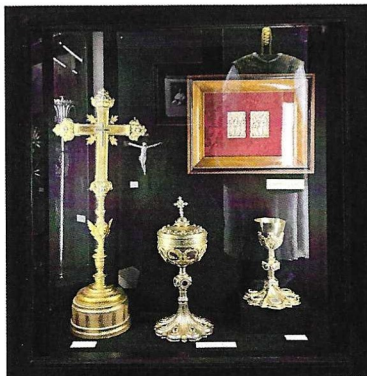
Mn. Costa i Llobera

21

Banner of the Communion of Reparation

19th century

It has embroidered the escutcheon of Mallorca and the heart of Saint Philip.



22

display case 8

23

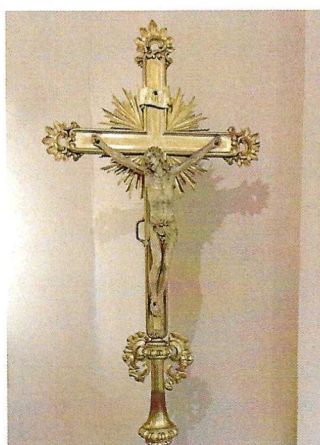
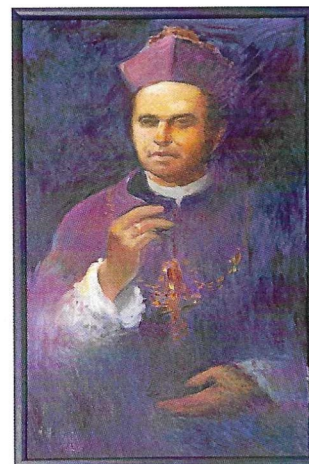
Bishop Huix, martyr

20th century

Daniel Codorniu

Oil painting on canvas

Donation by the painter, former
singer of the Oratorian Chapel.



24

Crucified Christ

s. XX

Anonymous

Golden wood

The image presides the procession
of the Rescued Christ.

25

display case 9



26

Oratori Parvo's banner
s. XIX

27

display case 10
Saint Philip Neri



28

Rescued Christ

Undated

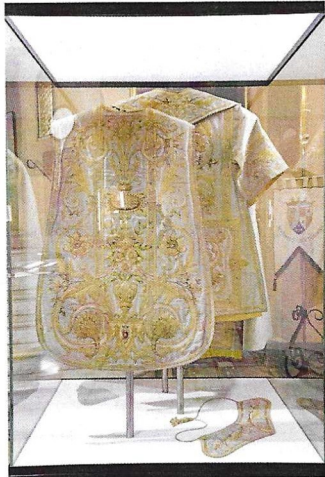
Anonymous

Oil painting on canvas

It represents Fr. Joan Antoni Bello, trinitarian, buying the image in Algiers. The scapular of the order hangs from the chest of the crucified.

29

**Joventut Oratoriana
broderhood banners**
1932 and 1940

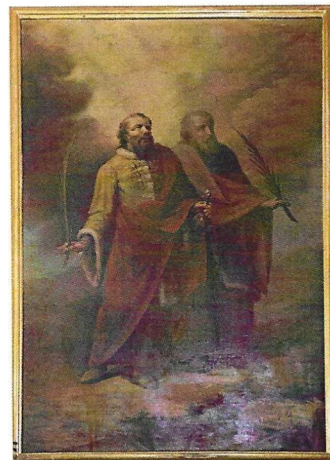


30

display case 11
Liturgical set

31

Saint Cosmas and Saint Damian
Undated
Anonymous
Oil painting on canvas



32

**The seven swords of
Our Lady of Sorrows**
18th century
Anonymous
Oil painting on canvas

ORATORIAN YOUTH BROTHERHOOD (1960-2024)

Thanks to the dedication of Antonio Buades Tomàs and his Board of Directors, and always with the support of the Oratory Congregation, during the 60s and 70s the Brotherhood lived happy days of great participation in the processional parades. In 1986, the «Thorn-crowned float» was transferred to the Brotherhood. Formerly known as the Ecce homo, it is a carving by the sculptor Gabriel Juan Marroig from the old Provincial Council of the Balearic Islands.

With the passage of time and political developments, with the end of the military dictatorship and the democratic transition, this era of prosperity gave way to difficult days, in a generalized context in all the brotherhoods of Palma. These circumstances undermined the strength of the President who, at the end of 1984, resigned.

Thus, on 7th December, 1984, Vicente Roig Aparicio was elected new President and he remained in office until the beginning of 2009. V. Roig tried to give a new focus to the Brotherhood and, after several years of internal inactivity, he surrounded himself with some brothers who helped him in his work to promote the association. Among them, the figure of Jaime Riera Valverde, who acted as secretary until 1997, stands out and, above all, the enormous work of Pedro Crespí Pizà, who was Vice President until his death in 2006, and in whom the President had placed all his trust.

Since 2009 Juan José Terrassa Crespí presides over the Brotherhood. His work is based on the integration and collaboration of the Brotherhood with the Oratory Community. In this period the procession parades of the image of the Rescued Holy Christ stand out, being carried on shoulders on the Holy Monday procession from 1952 until 1971.

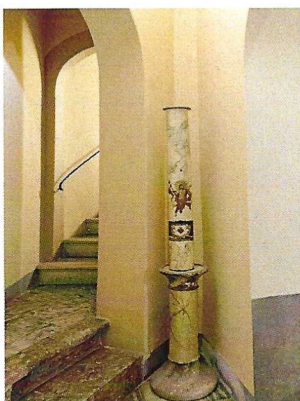
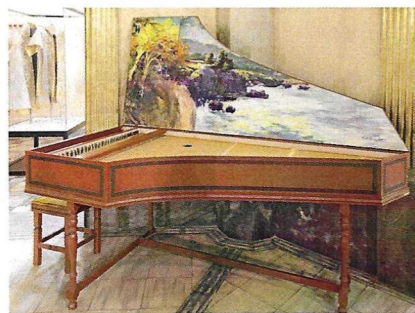
From 2010, the Brotherhood has taken the Saint Christ of the Choir School to the Holy Monday procession. This image dominated the Hall of the Choir School of Saint Philip Neri. In the times when the Good Friday Service was celebrated in the morning, it was the image that dominated the High Altar of the Church. This image was restored in 2011 with the contribution of a friend of the Brotherhood, and devotee of the image, who has preferred to remain anonymous.

33

Harpsichord

decorated interior by
Daniel Codorniu, painter.

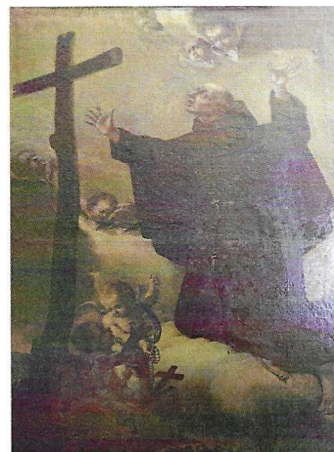
Made by Jaume Vidal Bucher, luthier.
Valldemossa, 1988.



34

Paschal's Candle Column

19th century
Polychrome wood



35

St. Peter of Alcantara

Undated
Anonymous
Oil painting on canvas



36

Ecce Homo

Undated
Anonymous
Polychrome wood

37

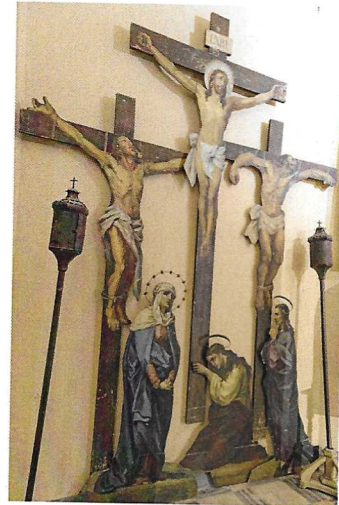
Calvary

Undated

Anonymous

Painting on canvas and wood

At Holy Friday, it was placed on the main altar accompanied by candles engraved with scenes of the Passion of Jesus.



38

Processions flags

Undated

Anonymous

They presided over the Holy Week's processions.

39

Procession flag and angels of Calvary wearing the nails and the crown of thorns

Undated

Anonymous

Painting on wood



40

Souls of Purgatory at the feet of Carmel

18th-19th century

Anonymous

Painting on wood

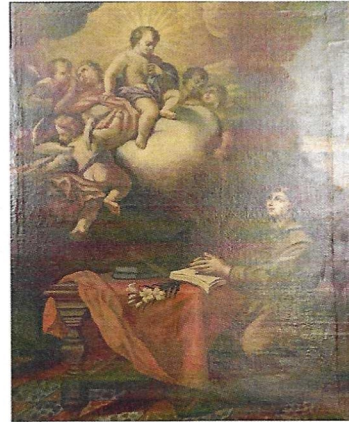
41

Saint Anthony of Padua

Undated

Anonymous

Oil painting of canvas



42

Jesus and Saint John the Baptist as kids

Undated

Anonymous

Oil painting on canvas

43

**Old main altar's frontal with
medaillon of Saint Philip**

17th century

Anonymous

Oil painting on canvas



44

display case 12

Liturgical set

45

St. Michael

Undated

Anonymous

Oil painting on canvas



46

Romanesque Christ

Wood

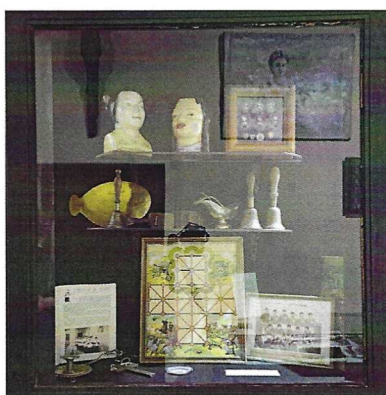
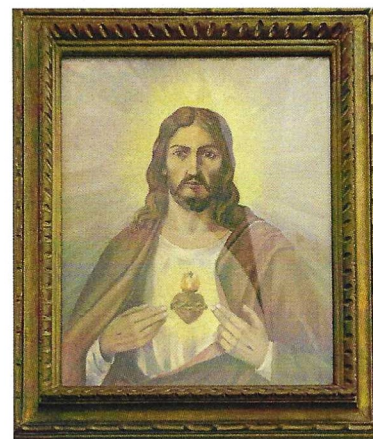
Gift

47

Jesus's heart

20th century

Manuel Barrado



48

display case 13

Pastoral Activities of the Oratory in Palma.

SAINT PHILIP NERI SCHOOL

On 25th November, 1949, Father Reynés Pizà proposed the creation of a school where the singers and altar boys of the church could study. The idea was accepted and, in January 1950, they started with a classroom in the upper part of the convent. On 5th February it was officially inaugurated, and the first teacher was Miquel Trias, from Consell. Four years later, work on the new school was completed on the grounds of the cemetery adjacent to the church, according to a design by the architect J. Ferragut Pou and with Ferrer Ginard as master builder. On 10th October, 1954, Father Joan Ginard, then priest, blessed it. A year later, it already had four classrooms.

In January 1978, a debate arose on the possibility of the school's teachers taking charge of its management and paying the House a monthly rent, while they would take care of the works that had to be carried out. Finally, there was no agreement and the Community continued with its ownership.

On 11th July, 1990, the teachers once again asked to run the school as a cooperative. The conditions pleased the Community and, on 1st September, 1991, the Gorg Blau Cooperative, made up of 8 members and 3 workers, began to carry out the administrative, economic and educational management. That year, the First Cultural Week was already held and, in response to parents' demand, a school cafeteria was adapted.

In 2012, the cooperative was made up of 24 members and 13 hired workers, 365 students distributed in preschool, primary, secondary education, and an initial professional qualification programme for assistant sales clerk; in addition, early morning school, extracurricular activities (computer science, English, drawing, painting, chess...) and Catalan courses for adults.

At a pedagogical level, there is also a clear commitment to the most disadvantaged social classes and the incorporation of students with difficulties in their learning process, as well as the reception of students from other countries, more than 50 % at present. This represents a plural school, open and rooted in the territory.

49

Conversion of Edith Stein

20th century

Damià Jaume

Oil painting on canvas

Gift from the painter, friend of the Oratory Palma House.



50

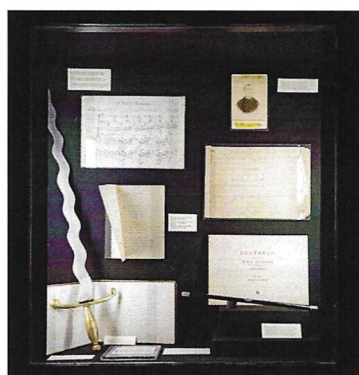
display case 14

Fr. Marc Vallori, C.O.

51

Orfeó Mallorquí banner

The choral entity was founded in 1899 and dissolved in 1936. The banner and some wooden benches were deposited in the Congregation of the Oratory and are part of the heritage of the Oratorian Chapel.



52

display case 15

Music

53

**Saint Cecilia, patroness
of music**

Undated

Anonymous

Oil painting on canvas



54

St. Victoria, martyr

20th century

Fausto Morell



55

Mary Immaculate

Undated

Anonymous

Porcelain from la Cartuja, Sevilla.

Gift



56

**Crucified Christ from the choir
of Saint Philip Neri**

Undated

Anonymous

Polychrome wood



MUSIC AT THE ORATORY

It is known that Saint Philip Neri was a great lover of fine arts and, especially, music. His friends were Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, Giovanni Animuccia, Francisco Soto de Langa, Tomás Luis de Vitoria and many other well-known musicians. The musical spirit of the Oratory was already reflected in the first constitutions, where some of the prefect's functions were mentioned: warn the singers, ensure that they did not make a lot of noise at the church choir, etc. Musical instruments were not allowed in the rooms, however, because they distracted from study and prayer.

Regarding the House of Palma, founded in 1712, music was soon one of the constants. Thus, on Carnival Sunday in 1718 the oratorio *Verdaderos Entretenimientos*, by Miquel Suau was sang; on 20th March of the same year, *The Glory of the Saints*, by Pere Rabassa. A year later, *the Sacred Oratorio in the Passion of Christ*, by Antoni Ortells. These and many other musical works are preserved in the Oratory's Musical Archive.

In February 1878, the organ, which was the work of the engineer Josep Barceló and the builder Julià Munar, was used for the first time on the occasion of the accession of Pope Leo XIII to the pontifical throne. But times passed and so did musical tastes thus oratorios gave way to solemn masses of established composers such as Charles Gounod (1893), Saverio Mercadante (1895), Bartomeu Torres (1895) or Giovanni Pacini (1896). To carry out these performances, musicians and singers were usually hired. The music of Saint Philip Neri Day was paid for by the noble Felipe Villalonga y Despuig every year. Starting in 1901, the festival of Saint Cecilia, patron saint of music, began to be celebrated.

It is worth highlighting the figure of Father Miquel Cardell Tomàs (1855-1946), who was born in Lluçmajor into a family of renowned organ builders. He was a student of Father Ferragut, Miquel Tortell (1802-1868) and Guillem Massot (1842-1900), and became one of the most recognized organists in Mallorca. In 1885 he entered the Congregation of the Oratory of Palma, of which he was Prefect between 1903 and 1912. In the Oratory, in 1898, he founded a choirboys. He wrote many religious works, among which we can highlight: *Trisagio in Our Woman of Divine Love* (1888), *Stabat Mater* (1895), *Hymn of the II Centenary of the Congregation of the Oratory of Palma* (1912) or *The Pine of Formentor*, about the famous poem by Costa y Llobera.

Upon the death of Father Cardell, in September 1946, the need to have a stable choir arose. And so, in the Holy Week of 1947 the Oratorian Chapel was born, at the request of Mn. Joan Maria Thomàs, together with Antoni Esteva as first director. A year later, the boy Santiago Caraballo sang, for the first time in church, the traditional *Sibil·la*

THE ORATORIAN CHAPEL AND THE PHILIPPUS NERIUS CHOIR

The Oratorian Chapel was founded on April 1st, 1947. It is mainly made up of alumni of the Saint Philip Neri School in Palma. Musical education, and the familiarization of the different styles and musical schools that its singers receive, is a valuable complement to their human, social and cultural training.

Its director since 1979 has been Gori Marcús, student of the teachers Llorenç Galmés, Vicky Lumbroso and Denis Menier, and also Ive Wolts and Roger Calmel. Previous directors were Antoni Esteva (1947-1954), Llorenç Galmés (1954-1959) and Miquel Miró (1959-1979).

The Oratorian Chapel has offered countless concerts throughout its history, both on the Islands and in many cities in Spain and abroad. Countries such as France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Austria, Holland, Czech Republic, England, Portugal, Hungary and the United States have been the scene of its performances.

Its musical repertoire is very broad. It ranges from the Renaissance, through the great polyphonists and masters of history, to the composers of our century.

The works performed with the accompaniment of orchestra and soloists include: the *Coronation Mass*, by W. A. Mozart; the *Magnificat* by Baldassare Galupi; *Glory and Creed* by A. Vivaldi, and the *Magnificat* by Francesco Durante. But perhaps the most significant performances are the premieres in Spain of the famous *Misa Criolla* by Ariel Ramírez and the *Cantata Mundo Nuevo*, by Raúl Maldonado and Héctor Miranda, which were presented with the collaboration of the South American group Los Calchakis. Also noteworthy is the complete interpretation of the *Red Book of Montserrat* and the concert at the Auditorium of Palma, with the Balearic Symphony Orchestra «Ciudad de Palma» performing Mozart's *Spatzen-Messe*, in addition to the performance of unpublished works by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, Giovanni Animuccia and Francisco Soto de Langa.

In 2007, the Philippus Neri Choir was created, made up exclusively of women, which regularly accompanies the Oratorian Chapel to its concerts and has been a determining element in the recovery of choral music in our Oratory.

