
SAN FRANCISCO CHAPEL PROJECT REPORT

Office name:	PARALELA
Building consultants:	Martín Hurtado (Architect) Mario Wagner (Structural Engineer)
Builder:	Volunteer students from different universities and careers
Completion Year:	2019 (5 chapels), 2020 (14 chapels)

Within the framework of the Capilla País project, active from 2015, during the first weeks of the summer of 2019, more than 500 university volunteers travelled to different locations in Chile to build chapels to provide meeting and prayer spaces for people in small and vulnerable communities in the country, where people practice their faith collectively, simply and honestly.

That year, 5 out of the 15 chapels built (including the one of the photos in Viña El Campesino) corresponded to the PARALELA design (thereafter named San Francisco Chapel), that won the architecture competition organised by Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile in 2018. In 2020, all the 14 chapels built during the summer corresponded to this model, and the aim is to complete 50 San Francisco chapels in total in the following years.

Inspired in the phrase by *Papa Francisco* “The parish must be in contact with the homes and with the life of the people ...”, and conditioned by the challenge to build a chapel of more than 75 sqm for less than USD 7.500 (except for the floor structure), and built exclusively by workforce of small groups of university volunteers from different careers with no previous building experience, the proposed and executed project is based on the following design principles:

Symbolic Character: A structure clearly recognizable as a chapel, encouraging prayer as well as the realization of social activities. Using the most elementary image of a church, based on a symmetrical structure with a gable roof.

Constructive Simplicity: A chapel that is built entirely by university volunteers, without difficulties and within the available time frame, based on in-situ prefabrication processes and simultaneous assembly.

Efficient Use of Materials: A chapel that allows an excellent performance of its components, both to maximize the use of economic resources as well as to minimize material loss and loss of time.

Indirect Lighting: A chapel that takes advantage of sunlight to indirectly illuminate the perimeter of the structure, with the possibility of also installing artificial lighting, providing an atmosphere of prayer.

Versatility and Expansion: A chapel with a basic design that allows simple variations and enlargements, depending on the requirements and capabilities of the communities.

Conditioning: A chapel that allows achieving better thermal conditioning with simple subsequent interventions that the community can execute within the wall thickness generated by the structure.

A rigid gable frame is the most essential unit of the chapel. The repetition of this frame forms a base module determined by the length of a standard plate. The thickness of the pillars and composite trusses allow variations in the installation of coatings, generating various types of additional modules (atrium, doors, finishing, among other possibilities), with multiple possible combinations allowing, on one hand, to adapt the chapel to different geographical conditions and locations, and on the other hand, facilitate its subsequent expansion, without sacrificing the distinctive character of the proposal.

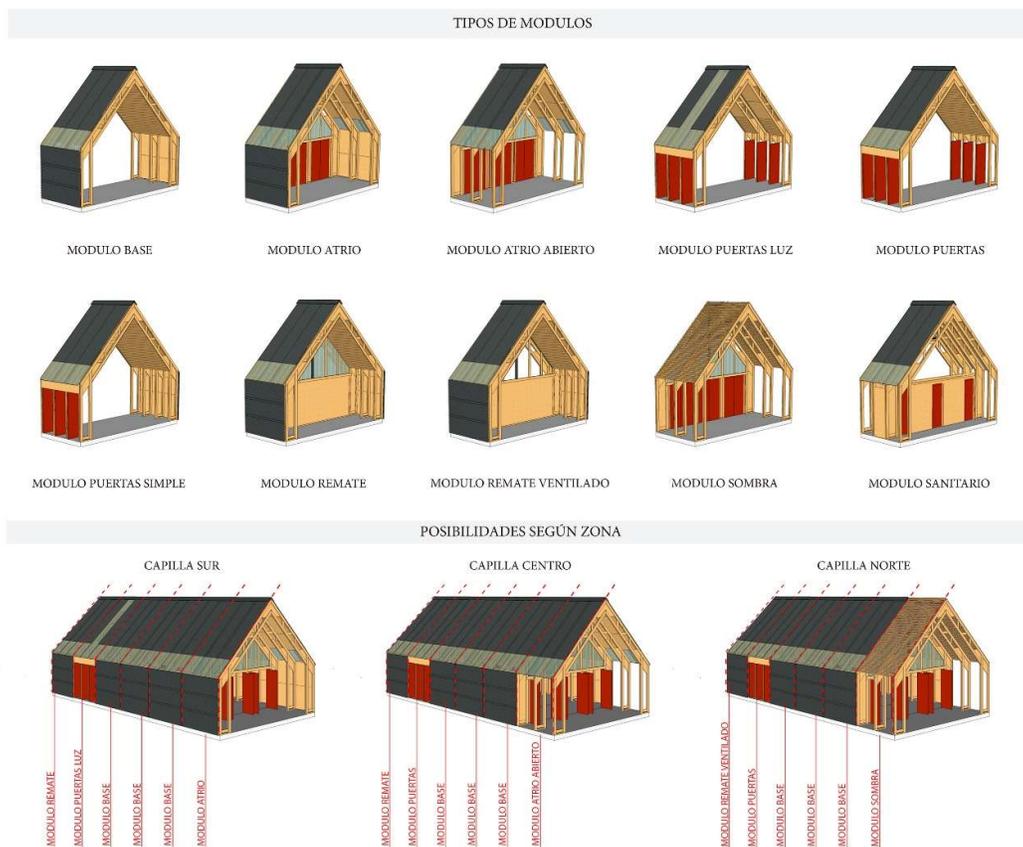


FIG.1 / Type of modules and some possible configurations according to geographical conditions

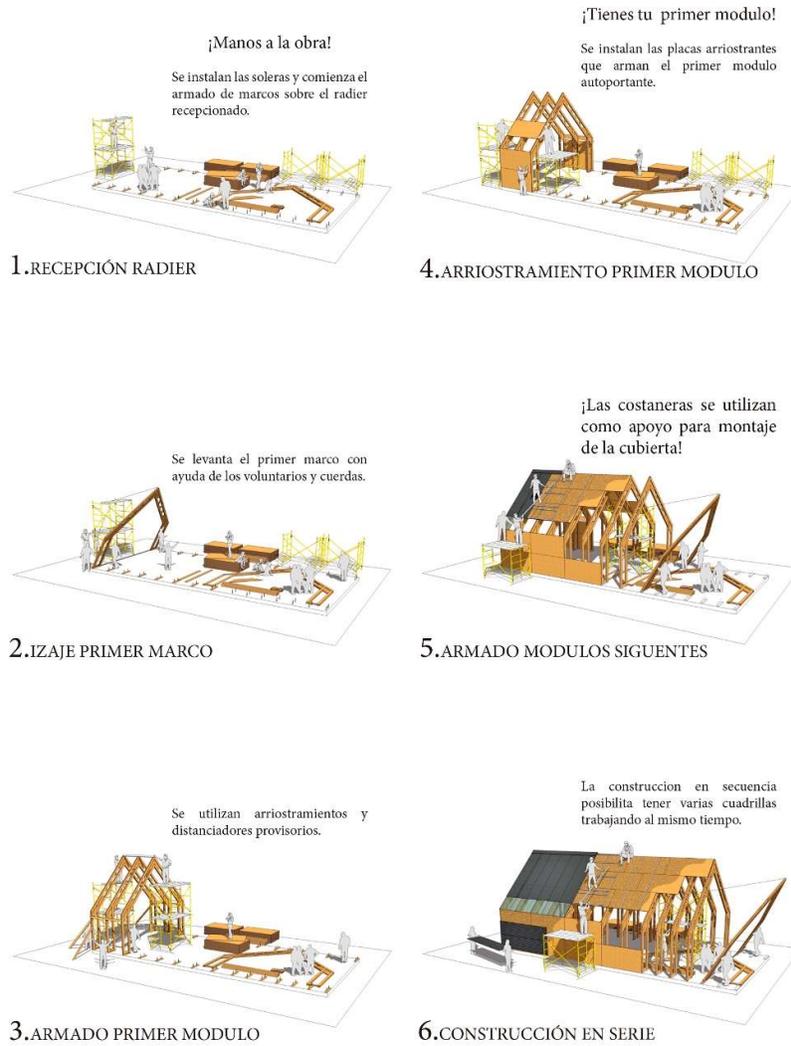


FIG.2 / Prefabricate and assembly system



FIG.3 / Illustration of a San Francisco Chapel community (by Fabián Todorovic)