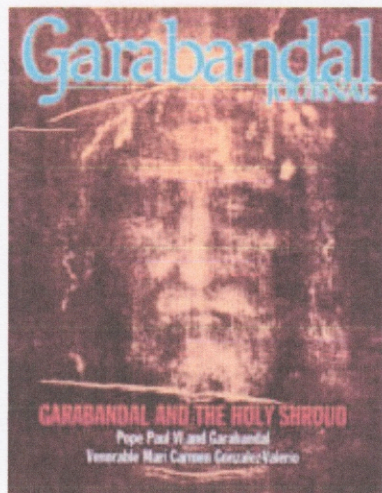


# Garabandal and the Holy Shroud

## *The case of the Holy Shroud of Turin and what the Blessed Virgin said about it at Garabandal .*

Reprinted with kind permission from [GARABANDAL JOURNAL](http://www.garabandaljournal.com) March-April 2006

By Barry Hanratty



The Shroud of Turin is Christendom's greatest relic. For centuries it has been revered by popes, saints and all classes of people. At the same time it has always been a source of great controversy. Is it really the burial cloth of Jesus or is it a fraudulent fabrication? In the twentieth century, modern science would be given the chance to find out, while the Blessed Virgin at Garabandal would have her own say.

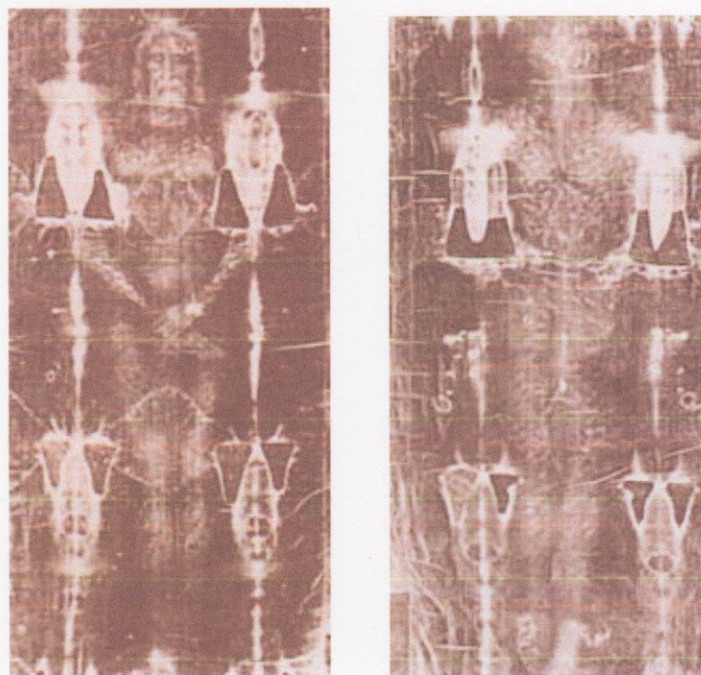
The first modern piece of equipment to which the Shroud was exposed was the camera when in 1898, Secondo Pia, a lawyer by profession but an avid amateur photographer, was allowed by the Cardinal custodian of the Shroud in Turin, Italy, to take the first pictures. When Pia developed his film he could hardly believe his eyes. The faint sepia colored markings on the cloth when reversed on film in the darkroom showed the clear image of a man who had been flogged, crowned with thorns and crucified. Through the camera, the Shroud yielded its first secret: it was actually a negative centuries before the advent of photography! More and improved pictures were taken in 1931 by Giuseppe Enrie although still only in black and white. Color would come later.

But it wasn't until 1969 that Cardinal Pellegrino, custodian of the Shroud at the time, permitted a committee of 11 scientists, ten men and one woman, to examine the Shroud and make recommendations for further tests. As a result, in 1973, several threads were removed from different parts of the cloth and examined under high powered microscopes by a few experts. To establish the date of the Shroud the scientists in 1969 had suggested Carbon-14 dating which would require the destruction of the sample, but Cardinal Pellegrino would not agree to that.

Five years later in 1978 came the most extensive examination when a team of scientists from the United States, the Shroud of Turin Research Project (STURP), headed by Drs. John Jackson and Eric Jumper were permitted, immediately after the public exposition of the Shroud that year, to examine the cloth for five consecutive days around the clock using the latest advanced technological equipment.

As a result, the Shroud yielded many more of its secrets and demolished the possibility of it being a painting since there was no pigment. The idea of it being the work of a medieval forger also became increasingly remote. For example, the image on the cloth is subtle and looks uniformly sepia colored (including the blood stains) on the yellowed linen under normal lighting conditions, but when exposed to high-powered photographic lights the blood stains show up as a different, carmine color. No medieval forger would have been able to anticipate the effects on the Shroud of different light sources, especially those that had not yet been invented.





Science had no answer as to how the image got on the cloth, and after the 1978 examinations by STURP, the burden of proof weighed heavily in favor of the Shroud's authenticity. At the time, a thread from the Shroud was preliminarily carbon dated at 50 A.D. with a margin of error within 100 years in either direction, however, this test must not have met the requirements for insuring the greatest possible accuracy.

So, ten years later in 1988, the Cardinal custodian agreed to a strictly controlled Carbon-14 analysis. A small piece of the cloth was cut from the edge and a section was sent to three different radiocarbon laboratories: in Arizona, United States, Cambridge, England and Zurich, Switzerland. The results were not what believers in the Shroud expected or hoped for. All three laboratories carbon dated the Shroud within a span of 130 years between A.D. 1260 and 1390 with 95% confidence. The findings of STURP were suddenly overshadowed by the later Carbon-14 dating and for many people this was the end of the Shroud as an authentic relic of Jesus Christ. Science had spoken. Despite all the previous positive findings, the Shroud was suddenly condemned as a fake.

## GARABANDAL AND THE SHROUD

Only after Father Eusebio Garcia de Pesquera had written his comprehensive book on Garabandal, SHE WENT IN HASTE TO THE MOUNTAIN, did it come to light that the Shroud was mentioned at Garabandal. It was during one of Conchita's ecstasies when the Blessed Virgin spoke to the visionary about the *Sabana Santa* (Spanish for Holy Shroud). Among the spectators at that ecstasy was the Marquesa de Santa Maria, an excellent witness, and it was from her that Prof. Jacques Serre learned what the Virgin said about the Shroud. The Marquesa heard Conchita repeat the words of Our Lady: "*It is the divine imprint of my Son.*" It would seem that these words of Our Lady did not agree with the findings of science.

## BUT THEN...

Those who had in-depth knowledge of the Shroud and were aware of the considerable body of evidence in its favor, were not ready to accept the 1988 Carbon-14 analyses as final. Among them was Raymond N. Rogers (R.I.P. March 8, 2005), a highly respected scientist from the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New



Mexico where he had been elected fellow in 1981. He also had served on the Air Force Advisory Board with the equivalent rank of Lt. General, receiving their Distinguished Service Award.

In 1978, Rogers was invited to be the Director of Chemical Research of the STURP team with the aim of determining the scientific properties of the image on the Shroud. At the time, his study showed the Shroud to be much older than the 1988 carbon dating revealed.

But it wasn't until January of 2005, shortly before his death at the age of 77, that Rodgers made what was perhaps the most significant contribution to the case involving the 1988 carbon dating. After his retirement, he had continued to work on the Shroud project and published on January 20, 2005, the results of his forensic work in the scientific journal *THERMOCHIMICA ACTA* which he edited. His research revealed that the material used in the 1988 carbon dating was not sampled from the original fabric, but from a part of the Shroud that had been rewoven in medieval times. [Preliminary estimates of the kinetics constants for the loss of vanillin from lignin indicate a much older age for the cloth than the radiocarbon analyses. The radiocarbon sampling area is uniquely coated with a yellow-brown plant gum containing dye lakes. Pyrolysis-mass-spectrometry results from the sample area coupled with microscopic and micro-chemical observations prove that the radiocarbon sample was not part of the original cloth of the Shroud of Turin. The radiocarbon date was thus not valid for determining the true age of the shroud.] His work also reinforced what his previous studies had shown regarding the age of the original cloth. Due to his findings, the case for the Shroud's authenticity must now be reconsidered by those who had accepted the 1988 carbon dating as the final word.

Whatever science finally judges, if it ever can, for those of us who believe in Garabandal the words of Our Lady are sufficient: **"It is the divine image of my Son."**

In her second message of Garabandal Our Lady ends with: "Think about the passion of Jesus." This is certainly salutary advice coming from the Mother of God and there are many ways to help us call to mind the suffering of our Savior such as making the Stations of the Cross, saying the Sorrowful Mysteries of the rosary or reciting novena prayers devoted to the passion. But perhaps the best way is to *meditate* on the passion, and reading accounts of Our Lord's passion and death based on visions of accredited mystics such as Blessed Catherine Emmerich, Mary of Agreda and Saint Bridget of Sweden provide food for thought. Another excellent source of inspiration is the Holy Shroud. In addition to simply gazing at the images, there are books that detail what the Shroud reveals. One such book is *A DOCTOR AT CALVARY* by surgeon Dr. Pierre Barbet, who performed experiments based on photographs of the Shroud. It gives the extent of Christ's physical sufferings from a medical standpoint. After completing his experiments and research, Dr. Barbet was no longer able to make the stations of the cross. When Cardinal Pacelli (later Pope Pius XII) heard what Dr. Barbet's studies revealed he said, feeling both grief and compassion: "We did not know. No one ever told us that."

With the assurance of Our Lady that the Shroud is the *divine image* [If this is true then it is unlikely that science will ever be able to determine how the image got on the cloth.] of her Son we can confidently avail ourselves of this great gift of God to help us fulfill her request at Garabandal to "think about the passion of Jesus."

*Reprinted with kind permission from GARABANDAL JOURNAL March-April 2006*  
By Barry Hanratty

~~click~~ order your copy of GARABANDAL JOURNAL