



RELICS OF THE
PASSION
TOUR

THE VENERATION OF RELICS

The veneration of relics is not a question of proof or science but an act of faith. Throughout history, there has been an unbroken chain of tradition in the veneration of relics and reference can be found in both the Old and New Testaments where the Holy Scriptures fully supports the true virtue of relics and the request to honor them. (See II Kings 13:20-21, Exodus 13:19, Mark 5:25-29, Acts 5:15-16). Historically their significance differed from place to place, and from person to person, there was no class of individuals, be they theologians, kings, or peasants, for whom relics were not of the greatest importance.

From the church where they were required equipment of the altars, to the court of law where they were necessary for oath taking, to the battlefield where they helped bring victory, relics were an indispensable part of daily life.

THE RELICS OF THE PASSION

For over a thousand years, the faithful have gone on pilgrimage to venerate the relics of Christ's Passion and Death, and this tour has been designed to make such a pilgrimage possible to the people of twenty-first century America. Two sets of Passion Relics will be displayed during the Lent 2005 tour. The first set comes from the collection of the Apostolate for Holy Relics, and the second set comes from the Archives of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The following is a list of the relics from the AHR's collection that will be displayed.

RELIC OF THE TRUE CROSS

A piece of the True Cross discovered by Saint Helena, the Emperor Constantine's mother, and brought back to Rome in 4th Century. To

house the single most significant relic in Christianity, St. Helen built the Basilica of Santa Croce in Rome - where a large piece of the cross is kept to this day.

Skeptics have said that if all the Relics of the True Cross were put together there would be enough wood for two or three crosses. However, in 1870 a Frenchman, Rohault de Fleury, catalogued all the relics of the True Cross including relics that were said to have existed but were lost. He measured the existing relics and estimated the volume of the missing ones. Then he added up the figures and discovered that the fragments, if glued together, would not have made up more than one-third of a cross.

RELIC OF THE CROWN OF THORNS

The Crown of Thorns was documented as being in Jerusalem in 409 AD. It was transferred to Constantinople in 1063, although it seems that the thorns were removed and presented to various rulers in Europe at an earlier date. In 1238 Baldwin II, the Latin Emperor of Constantinople, anxious to obtain support for his tottering empire offered the crown of thorns to Louis IX King of France who built the Sainte-Chapelle to house it. During the French Revolution, the crown was kept in the Bibliotheque Nationale until 1806 when the thornless remains were deposited in the Cathedral of Notre Dame.

RELIC OF THE HOLY NAILS

The **Holy Nails** were discovered by Constantine's mother the Empress Helena about 300 years after the Crucifixion. According to legend, one nail was tossed into the Adriatic to calm a storm. The other two were used by the Empress to protect her son. One was placed in his crown and another formed into a bridle for his horse. Filings were taken from the true nails and imbedded

in copies to make relics of a lower class. Some of these are presented as true nails rather than copies but it is safe to say that the one kept at the Basilica of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, in Rome is among those most likely to be one of the True Nails used in the Crucifixion.

RELIC OF THE BURIAL SHROUD

Sindonis D.N.J.C

(from the burial shroud of Our Lord)

There are two Sindonis relics, one is believed to be from the Shroud of Turin itself, the other is from the covering in which the shroud was stored when it was not being venerated. Throughout history, references have been made to this latter practice.

RELIC OF THE COLUMN OF FLAGELLATION

The Holy **Column of Flagellation** was transported from Jerusalem to Rome by John Cardinal Colonna, one of the leaders of the sixth Crusade, in the year 1223, and was placed in his title church of St. Praxedis.

RELIC OF ST. LONGINUS

St. **Longinus** is the centurion who pierced the side of Christ while He was hanging on the cross and it was he who was to exclaim. "Indeed this was the Son of God." St. Longinus then converted, left the army, took instruction from the Apostles, and became a monk in Cappadocia. There he was arrested for his faith and beheaded. St. Longinus' relics are now in the church of St. Augustine in Rome. Part of his lance is contained in one of the four pillars over the altar in the Basilica of St. Peter in Rome.

RELIC OF THE VEIL OF VERONICA

The effigy of the **Veil of Veronica**.

The veneration of a "Veronice" can be dated

back to the pontificate of John VII (705-707), according to the chronicle of Benedetto di Sant'Andrea. In 1011, Pope Sergius IV consecrated a special altar for the veneration of this "sudarium" (veil, sweat cloth). A regular veneration was established in the 12th century, adding to its status and popularity, which grew with the establishments of the Holy Years in 1300 by Pope Bonifaz VIII. St. Veronica was the woman who wiped the face of Christ with a veil while he was on the way to Calvary. According to tradition, the cloth was imprinted with the image of Christ's face. The relic is still preserved in St. Peter's, in Rome and the memory of Veronica's act of charity is commemorated in the Stations of the Cross. The veil shown here is one that has been touched to the original as attested to by the stamp of the Vatican.

Scientific Investigation

Ultraviolet examinations of the cloth, carried out by Prof. Donato Vittore of the University of Bari, confirm that the image is not paint. Particularly noteworthy are several small flecks of reddish brown presumably drops of blood from the wounds caused by the crown of thorns. Enlarged digital photographs of the veil reveal that the image is identical on both sides of the cloth – a feat impossible to achieve by ancient techniques. These photographs have also been used to compare the veil with the face on the Shroud of Turin, which millions of Christians believe to be Jesus' burial sheet. Striking similarities were apparent: the faces are the same shape; both have shoulder length hair with a tuft on the forehead, and the beards match.

RELIC OF THE TABLE OF THE LAST SUPPER

Mensae Coenae D.N.J.C.

(the room where the Last Supper took place)

This relic is from the table or the upper room where the Last Supper took place.

PRAYERS

NOVENA IN EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

Jesus, Who because of Your burning love for us, willed to be crucified and to shed Your Most Precious Blood for the redemption and salvation of our souls, look down upon us and grant the petition we ask for

(State your intention here...)

We trust completely in Your Mercy.

Cleanse us from sin by Your Grace, sanctify our work, give us and all those who are dear to us our daily bread, lighten the burden of our sufferings, bless our families, and grant to the nations, so sorely afflicted, Your Peace, which is the only true peace, so that by obeying Your Commandments we may come at last to the glory of Heaven.

PRAYER BEFORE A CRUCIFIX

Behold, O Kind and most sweet Jesus, before Thy face I humbly kneel, and with the most fervent desire of soul, I pray and beseech Thee to impress upon my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope and charity, true contrition for my sins and a firm purpose of amendment. With deep affection and grief of soul, I ponder within myself, mentally contemplating Thy five wounds, having before my eyes the words which David the Prophet spoke concerning Thee: "They have pierced my hands and my feet, they have numbered all my bones."

LITANY IN HONOR OF THE HOLY CROSS

The word of the Cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (1 Cor. 1:18)

R. God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. (Gal. 6:14)

Jesus has many who love His Kingdom in heaven, but few who bear His Cross. He has many who desire comfort, but few who desire suffering. He finds many to share His feast, but few His fasting. All desire to rejoice with Him, but few are willing to suffer for His sake.

R. God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. (Gal. 6:14)

Why do you fear to take up the Cross, which is the road to the Kingdom? In the Cross is salvation and life, protection against our enemies, infusion of heavenly sweetness; in the Cross is strength of mind, joy of spirit, excellence of virtue, perfection of holiness. There is no salvation of soul, nor hope of eternal life, save in the Cross.

R. God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. (Gal. 6:14)

Take up the Cross, therefore, and follow Jesus, and go forward into eternal life. Christ has gone before you, bearing His Cross; He died for you on the Cross, that you also may bear your cross, and desire to die on the Cross with Him. For if you die with Him, you will also live with Him. And if you share his sufferings, you will also share His glory.

R. God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. (Gal. 6:14)

See how in the Cross all things consist, and in dying on it all things depend. There is no other way to life and to true inner peace, than the way of the Cross. Go where you will, seek what you will; you will find no higher way above nor safer way below than the road of the Holy Cross.

R. God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. (Gal. 6:14)

The Cross always stands ready, and everywhere awaits you. You cannot escape it, wherever you flee; for wherever you go, you bear yourself, and always find yourself. Look up or down, without you or within, and everywhere you will find the Cross. And everywhere you must have patience, if you wish to attain inner peace, and win an eternal crown.

R. God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. (Gal. 6:14)

All: Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us to follow you not only to the Breaking of Bread but also to the drinking of the Cup of Your Passion. Help us to love You for Your own sake and not for the sake of comfort for ourselves. Make us worthy to suffer for Your name, Jesus, our Crucified and Risen Lord and Savior, now and forever.

Amen.

- from The Imitation of Christ by Thomas À Kempis, 1380-1471

PRAYER TO THE HOLY FACE

O Jesus, Who in Thy bitter Passion didst become 'the most abject of men, a man of sorrows,' I venerate Thy Sacred Face whereon there once did shine the beauty and sweetness of the Godhead ... but now it has become for me as if it were the Face of a leper! Nevertheless, under those disfigured features, I recognize Thy Infinite Love and I am consumed with the desire to love Thee and make Thee loved by all men.

The tears which well up abundantly in Thy Sacred Eyes appear to me as so many precious pearls that I love to gather up, in order to purchase the souls of poor sinners by means of their infinite value. O Jesus, Whose adorable Face ravished my heart, I implore Thee to fix deep within me Thy Divine Image and to set me on fire with Thy Love, that I may be found worthy to come to the contemplation of Thy glorious Face in Heaven.

Amen.

— Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face

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“RELICS OF THE PASSION” Tour

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