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April 5, 2004

Holy Relics Display Comes to D.C.

by Terry Phillips, correspondent

A compelling display opens during Easter Week.

From now until Easter Sunday, a display of Christian relics is in Washington D.C. , at the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center .

A similar event last summer drew 10,000 to Washington and Baltimore. However, the relics on display now are associated with the Crucifixion, according to Andrew Walther and Tom Serafin, with the Apostolate for Holy Relics, the organizers of the event.

"There will be a replica of one of the nails, a piece from the wood of the cross, and there will be a piece from the burial shroud," Walther said.

Serafin added: "A piece of the Shroud of Turin, of course, which everybody's familiar with, is a piece from the exterior edge of the shroud."

Many believe the Shroud of Turin is the cloth in which Christ's body was wrapped. Russ Breault, who has researched the Shroud and lectures about it, says he's grown to 95 percent certainty the image on the Shroud makes it authentic.

"(The best evidence is) the fact that there's no paint, ink, dye, pigmentation or stain on the surface of the cloth," he said. "And it's a

negative image."

Of course, the relic on display in Washington represents but a few fibers of the total Shroud. There's also a fragment that is believed to be from Christ's Crown of Thorns. Serafin says seeing even small relics from the Crucifixion are as forceful as scenes from "The Passion of the Christ."

"It's kind of a tactile way to connect Heaven and Earth," he said. "This has made it very clear to a lot of people the extravagant extent that God went to, to show us how much he loved us, and the responsibility we have to his crucified Son."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The John Paul II Cultural Center [Web site](#) contains more information about the Relics.

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