

FATHER RINALDI'S GOLDEN JUBILEE

On the weekend of November 17th last year the town of Port Chester, just outside New York, celebrated a very special event: the fiftieth anniversary as a priest of Father Peter Rinaldi, SDB., Port Chester's pastor for nearly thirty years. As a mark of the deep affection in which Father Rinaldi is held, whole streets were renamed in his honour, there was a celebration banquet for 700 people, some of whom had travelled thousands of miles to attend, and two cardinals almost vied to officiate at the commemoration Mass.

But Father Rinaldi is not simply a legend in the parish he made his own. He is also the Salesian priest who for decades has patiently and tirelessly liaised on Shroud matters between America and Turin, between Britain and Turin, between scientists of many nations, the Cardinal of Turin, the Holy See and the late king Umberto. Born not far from Turin, and a graduate both of Fordham University, and of Turin's Don Bosco International Theological Institute, Father Rinaldi acted as an interpreter during the 1933 exposition of the Shroud, rubbing shoulders at that time with such pioneer researchers as Paul Vignon and Dr. Pierre Barbet, and, of course, seeing the Shroud at close hand. After returning to the States, in 1934 he published a magazine article on the Shroud, sparking off such interest in the subject that it was effectively the start of the involvement of many subsequent Shroud alumni in the U.S.A.. With the Redemptorist Father Adam Otterbein, in 1951 Father Rinaldi founded the still flourishing U.S. Holy Shroud Guild, and although technically retired from his parish duties he remains as active as ever, still regularly travelling between Italy and the U.S.A. to smooth the way for renewed scientific access to the Shroud.

In unison with Father Rinaldi's countless friends throughout the world, the British Society wishes him warmest congratulations on his Golden Jubilee, and many more happy years!