

OBITUARY

MONSIGNOR GIULIO RICCI

by the Editor

Thanks to **Rex Morgan**, editor/publisher of this Newsletter's antipodean counterpart *Shroud News*, the news has recently been received of the death on 6 February of **Monsignor Giulio Ricci** of Rome, at the age of 82. Monsignor Ricci was a tireless researcher on the Shroud, particularly from the point of view of what the image seems to convey of the events of Jesus's passion. Those who remember, or have video copies of, the *Silent Witness* television documentary will recall Monsignor Ricci, before a small audience of students and nuns, giving a particularly vivid account of Jesus's scourging, complete with a life-size reconstruction of the scourge implement indicated on the Shroud

Monsignor Ricci's lavishly illustrated books, illustrated with some of his own graphic painted reconstructions, have circulated mainly in Italy. But he was also a leading expert on the purported 'sudarium' preserved at Oviedo, Spain, which he believed to have been used with the Shroud when Jesus was laid out in death. He argued that some of the blood-flows on the Oviedo cloth match those on the Shroud, and that they therefore corroborate each other.

My own strongest memory of Monsignor Ricci dates from 1973, and the semi-private exposition of the Shroud in that year when it was displayed suspended vertically in one of the rooms of the Savoy Royal Palace. Moments before those of us present on this occasion were ushered away, Monsignor Ricci dropped to his knees at the foot of the cloth, and gently and unobtrusively touched it with a spotless white handkerchief. His intention was clearly to create his own secondary 'relic'. For the more sceptically-minded, Monsignor Ricci could sometimes be over-imaginative. But no-one could ever doubt his erudition, or the intensity of his devotion to the Shroud.