

NEWS & ACTIVITIES AROUND THE WORLD

New Address

The Rev. Adam J. Otterbein, C.S.S.R., President of the Holy Shroud Guild, has announced the recent transfer of his office from Ephrata PA to Mount St Alphonus, Esopus NY. Special correspondence should be addressed to:

Rev. Adam J. Otterbein, C.S.S.R.
P.O. Box 155
Esopus, NY 12429
tel: (914) 384-6601

To order photographs, prints, slides, books, please write to:

Holy Shroud Guild
Material Distribution Center
294 East 150th St.
Bronx, NY 10451
tel: (212) 585-3678

The Guild has added five new titles to its list of books. The list and Order Blanks can be obtained from the Bronx address.

True Portrait Made by Hand

Ever since the photographic reversal of the Shroud, in 1898, revealed the hidden and haunting portrait of Christ, artists have felt the challenge to create a likeness in painting, sculpture, bas-relief ... Many times, after careful study of the facial structure, with reverence and love artists have reconstructed the features to show how Jesus might have looked before the terrible disfigurements of the Passion; to show us that Face which countless generations longed to see, that Face which seized the hearts of his contemporaries and which, legends tell us, caused artists to throw down their brushes in defeat. Unquestionably, these interpretations are often very beautiful; they are, nevertheless, interpretations, infused with the sentiments of the artists who made them. Inevitably, in these artistic portrayals, however beautiful, some element was always missing. More realistic than the icons of earlier centuries, they lack the spiritual dimension which emanates from the icon. A perfect synthesis of reality and spirituality seemed impossible to achieve in modern terms.

Now another portrait has been produced by means of art. Neither a painting nor a sculpture, it is a screen print made directly from a life-size Enrie photograph, and in the opinion of all who see it, the screen print surpasses by far all previous artistic attempts. The reality we demand and the spiritual quality we yearn for, both are present.

After lengthy experimentation with various materials, a university

student, Eugene Hoyas, who lives at 95 Prospect Avenue, Hillsdale, New Jersey (07642), succeeded so well in producing copies of fine definition, clarity and sensitivity, that a set of the prints will be included in an art exhibition in Rome during this Holy Year.

The prints, measuring 13" x 16", are individually made, on pure linen, hand-woven in a two-to-one herringbone pattern. The cloth is imported from Poland—the only place, Mr. Hoyas says, where this fabric can be obtained. Three versions are made; 1) "P" print: positive prints showing the face as it is on the Shroud, a dark sepia image on the ivory-toned fabric. Bloodstains are discreetly highlighted with a diluted burgundy fabric dye; 2) "N" print: negative prints on black background on which the face appears in opaque white; 3) "B" print: negative prints, the face an opaque white on cloth dyed a Van Dyke brown. On each print, a backing cloth is attached and an identification/copyright label sealed onto it.

Mr. Hoyas suggests that the prints are suitable for display in libraries, schools, museums, churches; and that Shroud lecturers will find them valuable as demonstration exhibits.

Obviously, they are not suitable for scientific study; only the official Enrie photographs are approved for this purpose. But it is natural that the general public desires an aesthetic quality which photographic paper rarely provides. The intense, widespread and long-lasting cult of the Veronica Veil is proof enough that a "True Portrait" inspires devotion.

Whatever its origin, and whatever its fate, the Veronica Veil was on cloth. Is there some secret in that fact? For on the Hoyas prints there is a softness, a depth and a certain mystery—due, perhaps, to the way the image skims the surface of the fabric?

All those who have fallen in love with the Holy Face as it appears on the Enrie photographs will be content that, on the Hoyas prints, the majesty, the serenity, the unspeakable beauty of the Shroud image is neither betrayed nor interpreted; that the sacred signs of suffering are neither alleviated nor exaggerated; and that a "True Portrait" made by the hand of man (χειροποίητος) can be conducive to pious meditation.