

**The International Centre of Sindonology expresses reservations about Fanti-Gaeta
volume**

Referring to the news about the release of the volume “The Mystery of the Shroud” by Rizzoli, written by Giulio Fanti and Saverio Gaeta, supposedly dealing with research carried out on Shroud material, the International Centre of Sindonology has expressed reservations about the approach of the book to the theme. According to the International Centre of Sindonology, the volume has approached the subject through the analysis of some cloth samples which can not be proved to belong to the Shroud fabric as they can not be traced.

As far as this is concerned, the International Centre of Sindonology refers to the official statements about the “*experiments and analysis concerning the Holy Shroud*” made when analogous research was attempted on material supposedly belonging to the Shroud. Those statements were made on behalf of the Holy See, owner of the Shroud, by Cardinal Giovanni Saldarini in September 1995 and Cardinal Severino Poletto on 4th May 2009, “Papal Custodians of the Holy Shroud”.

Turin, September 1995

More and more reports are being published about experiments carried out on Shroud material aiming to check the results of the tests conducted with the Carbon 14 method in the summer of 1988. This purpose may be legitimate, and the Church recognizes to every scientist the right to carry out appropriate research in their field of science. However, given the circumstances, it is necessary to point out that:

- a) no new sample of material has been taken from the Holy Shroud since 21st April 1988, and according to the Holy See and the Custodian of the Holy Shroud it is highly unlikely that a third party may be in possession of any residual material from that sample;*
- b) if such material exists, the Custodian reminds everybody that the Holy See has not given its permission to anybody to keep it and use it and he therefore demands to give it back to the Holy See;*
- c) it is not possible to know with any degree of certainty whether or not such experiments were carried out on material coming from the fabric of the Shroud. Therefore, the Holy See and the Papal Custodian declare that no serious value can be recognized to the results of those alleged experiments;*
- d) this is evidently not the case of the research carried out on material taken for the tests in October 1978 and following the explicit authorization of the Papal Custodian;*
- e) within the climate of mutual trust established with scientists, the Holy See and the Cardinal Archbishop of Turin encourage scientists to be patient until a clear and systematically planned research programme is arranged.*

Giovanni Card. Saldarini
Archbishop of Turin
Custodian of the Holy Shroud

Turin, 4th May 2009

News concerning research conducted with various purposes on supposed Shroud material has lately appeared in mass media. The Papal Custodian of the Shroud feels that it is his duty to express his position on this, following the guidelines of the statements already made by his predecessor, Cardinal Giovanni Saldarini in September 1995. The Church does not dispute the fact that scientists have the right to conduct appropriate research on the Shroud, as long as they are respectful of people's faith and sensitivity and the rights of the Holy See, as the owner of the Shroud. However, it is necessary to point out some aspects about the use of such supposed Shroud material:

- *No new samples of material have been taken from the Shroud for research purposes since 21 April 1988. According to both the Holy See and the Custodian of the Holy Shroud, it is unlikely that a third party may be in possession of any residual material from that sample. What was obtained during the restoration work of 2002 was immediately inventoried and put under seal, for exclusive use of the Holy See.*
- *It is not possible to know with any degree of certainty whether or not such experiments were carried out on material coming from the fabric of the Shroud. Therefore, the Holy See and the Papal Custodian declare that no serious value can be recognized to the results of those alleged experiments.*
- *Within the climate of mutual trust established with scientists, the Holy See and the Archbishop of Turin encourage scientists to be patient until a clear and systematically planned research programme is arranged. As far as this is concerned, the research programme is to be considered on hold until the end of the forthcoming exposition. It is to be hoped that it will start to be planned in the period of time which will follow.*

Severino Card. Poletto
Archbishop of Turin
Papal Custodian of the Holy Shroud