

The 2011 Fátima – Rome Holy Shroud Conference / Pilgrimage

This year, 2011 marks the 150th anniversary of the unification of Italy under the Head of the Savoy Royal Family and also the 100th anniversary of the death of Queen Maria Pia of Savoy Bragança, one of Portugal's beloved Queens. Maria Pia, who was the daughter of the first King of unified Italy, Vittorio Emanuele II, at 15 years of age wed Portugal's King Luis I in 1862 bringing with her to Portugal a series of Holy Relics from the Shroud of Turin.

To compliment the international celebrations being held in remembrance of these two anniversaries, the *Oureana Historical Cultural Foundation for Religious Research* and its *Portuguese Centre for studies on the Holy Shroud and the Relics of the Passion of Christ*, together with the *International Crusade for Holy Relics*, the *Apostolate for Holy Relics*, the *Blue Army (World Apostolate of Fátima)*, the *Royal Honor Guards of Portugal and Italy*, under the Patronage of the Royal Houses of Portugal and Savoy, decided to organize a series of events to honor the ancient Major Relic of the Holy Shroud venerated in Turin and venerated by countless members of both Royal Families.

The celebrations began earlier this year with a series of Solemn High Memorial Masses celebrated in the Lisbon Royal Pantheon and in the Superga Royal Pantheon in Turin where the body of Maria Pia was entombed after her death in 1911 whilst the Queen was living in exile in Italy, following the proclamation of the Portuguese Republic.

Subsequently some of the genuine relics of the Holy Shroud belonging to Maria Pia were donated by the Queen before her death to friends and devotees, and some of these reliquaries are today part of the impressive 25, 000 + relic collection of the *Lipsonateca* of relic expert Carlos Evaristo.



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One of the original “Ex Extractum” copies of the Holy Shroud (above) made in 1637 at Turin by *the* two Savoy Princesses who most promoted devotion to the Holy Shroud, namely Francesca Catarina di Savoia (1595 – 1640) and Venerable Maria Francesca di Savoia (1594 – 1656), was subsequently identified by Carlos Evaristo at Ajuda Palace where it is stored till this day far away from the eyes of those who would begin to venerate the relic.

Considered one of the most well preserved and the 2nd oldest copy by these dedicated daughters of Duke Carlo Emanuele I of Savoy, this copy was presented to a group of illustrious guests of the Portuguese Royal House, including Barrie Schwartz, during its first private showing since the end of the Monarchy in 1910.



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The restoration of this relic by Museum conservationists was considered, *“an unfortunate intervention,”* by Carlos Evaristo, *“since it may have removed debris that was considered important since ancient times, for the mystical transfer of the sacred nature of the original to these exclusive “Ex Extractum” copies.”*

During the private viewing (above), it was verified by Evaristo and Schwartz that two sections of “added fabric,” sealed with four red wax seals of the Ducal House of Savoy, were still intact. These were identified by Evaristo as being cloth strips made from the extracted essence of the original Shroud or in other words, tiny incorporated fragments so as to mystically make the copy. in the words of Pope Saint Pius V, a “Gemini” or twin “original,” instead of just an artistic replica.

The private viewing of the relic was followed by a tour of the Palace of Ajuda which contains many special artifacts connected to the Savoy Royal Family and allusive to their devotion to the Holy Shroud of Turin.

One of the major highlights of the scheduled Portuguese – Italian “Royal” events was undoubtedly the 3rd National Holy Shroud Conference held in Fatima, Portugal, at the Domus Pacis Auditorium, international headquarters of the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fátima, the largest apostolic movement of all times, founded by two Shroud devotees; namely Monsignor Harold Colgan and John Mathias Haffert.

The Conference held on September 24th began with an opening address by Foundation President Carlos Evaristo who welcomed all those present including former Cabinet Minister Dr. Teresa Costa Macedo, current member of the Pontifical Council for the Family and the Chaplains of the Portuguese and Italian Royal Houses; Fathers Mariani and Milimici who invoked God’s blessings for the event.

The Conference began with the inauguration of a Contemporary Art Exhibit dedicated to the theme of the Holy Shroud and Queen Maria Pia prepared by the artists of the Dom Carlos I Royal Atelier under the direction of Master Henrique Mourato.

The exhibit was followed by the presentation of a new book published in Portuguese by Oliveira Dias who defends that the name of Portugal actually holds the key to a Templar legacy which includes the Holy Shroud and the Holy Grail: Port of the Grail or Port du gral = Portugal.

The Conference began with a welcome address by Portuguese Shroud Centre President and Founder Fernando Lagrifa Fernandes and Director Antero Moreira with the main guest speaker of the day being Barrie Schwartz, who gave a talk entitled “33 years of Shroud Science: A Personal Perspective” to an international audience that included clergy, royalty, official representatives of the Royal Houses of Portugal and Savoy, a descendant of the Charney family, representatives of the Sultanate of Kupang and Sulu, members of the diplomatic, military corps and NATO, members of religious congregations and various international Holy Shroud Association delegates and representatives of major relic shrines.



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For over an hour the informative facts from the 1978 STURP intervention, as related with slides by Barrie Schwartz, then translated to Portuguese and Italian, kept the audience fixed to their seats whilst the comical anecdotes kept them rolling. The large Italian group present, part of the official Delegation of Nobles and Knights from the Royal House of Savoy, were especially interested in the “American perspective” of the Italian authorities’ handling of the 1978 examination authorized by King Umberto II. They were especially analytical of the details of Schwartz’s lecture that pointed out an apparent carelessness in allowing scientists like the late Swiss criminologist Max Frei to use ordinary cheap sticky tape for removal of samples from the surface of the Shroud, tape which left glue stains visible on the fabric. The STURP team had prepared not only a costly apparatus for controlling the pressure on the Shroud while taking the samples, but also a specially formulated, residue free tape for contact with the Sacred Relic.

By far the highlight of the presentation came when Barrie Schwartz revealed that the simplest proof that the Holy Shroud is NOT a Medieval manmade creation (painting) or forgery was by simply illuminating the linen with ordinary light from behind, as he did when he made his transmitted light photographs of the Shroud in 1978. The blood, water stains and scorches were all clearly visible, but the image itself was not, indicating that it was not painted or made by the application of any paint-like substance. Microscopic, spectral and chemical analysis later confirmed those conclusions.

Barrie Schwartz's presentation, which received a standing ovation, was followed by the presentation of a compilation of twenty years of talks and studies by Carlos Evaristo dedicated to the Holy Shroud and especially the long forgotten Savoy Royal House rituals, including those for the *mystical* duplication of the Major Relic and the medieval distribution of removed sections of the same.



The published work is titled, “The Untold Story of the Holy Shroud; the ancient rituals; the lost traditions of the Savoy Cult; the distribution of Passion Relics, and new theories for the image”, and merited Royal Savoy endorsement in a special forward by Prince Vittorio Emanuel of Savoy, Head of the Royal House of Italy, who had never before contributed to any Holy Shroud publication and who in a message read by his representative Roberto Favero wrote that “*Carlos Evaristo, a trusted member of our Dynastic Royal Order, offers those interested in the subject of the Holy Shroud, a collection of genuine, never before disclosed facts, regarding the tradition of distribution of Relics of the Holy Shroud by the Savoy Royal Family, and the long-forgotten rituals and practices that existed.*”

Barrie Schwartz, who had written the Introduction to the new book after only having proof read an early draft and after many long hours of telephone conversations with Carlos Evaristo on the subject matter stated: “*I am given the great honor to write a Preface to what may well become the most important Shroud book of the 21st century. I immediately realized the great significance of such a documented record that includes information from the Savoy and Braganza Royal Family Archives. As such, it becomes a truly significant resource for the Sindonologists of the world in their quest for the truth about this amazing Relic.*”

Amongst the many never before disclosed facts contained in the book, which also compiles hundreds of known facts on the history of the Church's most important Relic, is the origin of the eastern and western rituals of Ostentation and exposition of the Holy Shroud. It also provides the correct interpretation, for the first time, of the 14th Century “pilgrim's badge” discovered in a river in France. The medallion depicts the Holy Shroud being exposed for veneration by Canons with their hands concealed by crossed stoles at the chest, as is still practice in some of the Latin Catholic and Eastern Orthodox rite Churches during the rituals of imposition, blessing and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and veneration of Holy Relics.

Also revealed in the book are many newly discovered “Ex Extractum” or ordinary copies of the Holy Shroud that were said to have existed or that still exist in many countries and especially Portugal. Ancient Shroud art like the “Ecce Homo of the Shroud”, a 16th century painting from the National Museum of Ancient Art in Lisbon (and depicted on the cover of the book), is said by Carlos Evaristo to be entirely based on the image of the man of the Shroud, but that the ropes that were added on the chest and hands are misinterpretations of the blood flow stains.

The first printing of the book, although translated into English from the original Portuguese and Italian talks given by Evaristo between 1988 and 2011, was not translated by the author himself, so the text still needs some minor corrections before the release of the final edition.

After lunch in the Domus Pacis Restaurant, it was time to visit the Byzantine Chapel and then return back to the auditorium for the last of that day's conferences given by the official representative of the Savoy Royal House, Roberto Favero, who spoke on the life of Queen Maria Pia of Savoy Bragança and her devotion to the Holy Shroud.

Favero's talk was followed by an address from Portuguese Shroud Centre Founder and President Fernando Lagrifa Fernandes who thanked Carlos Evaristo for organizing the event and congratulated Barrie Schwartz for his work and presentation before going into an interesting account of the 40

years of his travelling exhibit on the Holy Shroud and of his work for promotion of the Holy Relic. Lagrifa said that given his advanced years and current lack of health. Antero Moreira, a medical doctor and his wife, Gloria, a school teacher, would carry on his work under his Patronage.

The presentation of the official commemorative medal of Queen Maria Pia and of the Holy Shroud followed. The first bestowal of this award went to Barrie Schwartz, with other Holy Shroud promoters such as Fernando Lagrifa Fernandes and Antero Moreira also receiving the distinction, which was presented by Carlos Evaristo in his capacity as President of the Oureana Foundation for Religious Research on behalf of its Patrons, the Heads of the Royal Houses of Portugal and Savoy and of the Royal Honor Guards.

At this time, Barrie Schwartz officially took charge as President of the Foundation for Religious Research's International Research and Study Centre at Fátima, thus relieving President Emeritus Frederick T. Zugibe, now an honored Patron, from the position he held since 2001. Zugibe had given two conferences in Fatima, the first in 2001 and a second special Conference in 2002 on the Crucifixion and the Holy Shroud presented to the Sisters of the Convent of Coimbra, including the late Fatima Seer, Sister Lúcia. At that time, Zugibe was honored by the Royal House of Portugal with the reception of two knighthoods in the Orders of Saint Michael and Our Lady of Conception of Vila Viçosa whilst Fernando Lagrifa Fernandes was awarded the Order of Merit of the latter.

The Foundation has the largest collection of genuine relics outside the Vatican including numerous relics of the Holy Shroud and of the Savoy Saints, many of which were acquired by Carlos Evaristo and his wife Margarida or else donated by Royals, religious orders or else by Major Benefactor and Chaplain of the Royal Houses of Savoy and Bragança, Father Carlo Cecchin.

At the close of the Conference Roberto Favero officially announced that in recognition of his 33 years of Shroud studies, Barrie Schwartz would be knighted in the Order of Saints Maurice and Lazarus by the Royal House of Savoy at the next Investiture Ceremony to be held in the United States, tentatively in December 2011.

Later that afternoon, there was a ceremony held in Ourém Castle, a majestic fortress perched atop a hill in a walled medieval village near Fatima, where an Apothecary Hospital originally built in 1394 by Saint Nuno, the founder of the Portuguese Royal House and Prior of the Order of Saint John (Malta), was restored by Carlos and Margarida Evaristo with help from various benefactors, including Paulo Falcão Tavares, Father John Mariani and the Cunha Coutinho Family. It was inaugurated by His Royal Highness Dom Duarte, the Duke of Bragança, members of the Order of Malta and government representatives.

The Apothecary which reproduces the medieval pharmacy also includes explanations on "religious medicine" and placebos of the time, including the application of relics such as copies of the Holy Shroud and of the Veil of Veronica.

The Mass at Collegiate See that evening was celebrated by the Postulator of the Cause of Saint Nuno Friar Francisco Rodrigues, a Carmelite who invested various persons in the Third Order, including Barrie Schwartz, who was invested by the Duke of Bragança as an honorary Constable of the Royal Confraternity of the Holy Constable founded by the Saint as the first Carmelite Third Order for personal consecration and sanctification and also in aid of the poor and homeless.

The Mass was followed by a genuine Medieval Banquet held at the Foundation's famous restaurant in the Castle where over 3 million people have dined over the last 40 years. The ambiance filled with Royals and Nobles, linked to the Savoy and the Shroud including a Charney, recalled the joyful times when the Sacred Relic was exposed during Royal Weddings and when copies were given as gifts, practices which Carlos Evaristo discovered were first introduced in the Savoy Duchy by a

Portuguese Princess. In fact, several Portuguese princesses wed Savoy Lords and several Savoy princesses wed Portuguese Kings.

During the dinner, Fernando Lagrifa Fernandes was awarded by the Royal House of Bragança the Grand Cross of the Order of Saint Michael for his 40 years of promotion of the Holy Shroud whilst Blue Army and Oureana Foundation Founder John Haffert was posthumously made an Honorary Constable on the 10th anniversary of his passing.



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After a good night's sleep at the Domus Pacis it was time for the group of Knights and Dames assembled from all over the world to attend an actual investiture ceremony held in the great Reliquary Chapel of the ancient Alcobaça Cistercian Monastery founded by the first King of Portugal and his uncle Saint Bernard (above). The Reliquary is filled with hundreds of busts containing relics of the Saints, including many of the Savoy House, including one that held a genuine portion of the Holy Shroud, believed to be the one enshrined today in the Lipsonateca at Fatima, and pillaged from the Monastery by the Napoleonic troops in the 19th Century.

The Monastery, which was, up until 1834, the original headquarters of many of the Religious Military Orders of Chivalry, was splendidly decorated with royal tapestries to receive the Duke of Bragança and the knights, and dames of various Orders, including Barrie Schwartz, who was invested in the Order of St. Michael last year and raised to the rank of Grand Cross with Medal of Merit that day.

The solemn High Mass was followed by a Gala lunch held in the cloister of the Abbey in honor of His Royal Highness, the would-be King of Portugal.

On the 25th a group of 14 pilgrims, including Barrie Schwartz and Carlos Evaristo began a long trek by minibus to Rome in two vehicles baptized the “Shroudmobile 1” and “Shroudmobile 2,” each with a large image of the Holy Face attached to the windshield for easy identification of the vehicle by its passengers.

The first stop on the pilgrimage was Santiago, the 4th greatest Shrine in Christendom, where the Apostle Saint James is buried. The group was welcomed by Luis and Juan de Castro Valle, President and Vice-President of the Diocesan Royal Brotherhood of Saint Michael of the Wing who brought the group to see the silver casket containing the relics of the Apostle.

After lunch in the plaza, the group travelled onto Mondoñedo, a medieval stone village nestled between the mountains and deep in the ancient heart of Spain. The majestic convent turned guest house once lodged pilgrims to the Shrine of the Apostle and also Kings and Queens of Spain travelling from Castle to Castle.



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At the nearby Cathedral the group was welcomed by Princess Simonetta, the wife of a Bulgarian Prince who runs the Diocesan Treasury Museum. The frescoes of the Cathedral walls (above) told of the struggle between Islam and Christianity during the Conquest, at the time when the Sacred Relics

of Iberia were gathered up and stored in a trunk called the “Arca Santa.” Amongst them was the “Sabana Santa” or Holy Face Cloth of Christ venerated in Oviedo, Spain as its most Sacred Relic, an object known worldwide as the “Sudarium of Oviedo.” And by special privilege, the following day the relic was exposed exclusively by the Canon of Oviedo Cathedral for the observation and veneration of Barrie Schwartz and Carlos Evaristo (below).



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Present also at the viewing were Manuel Ruiz de Bucesta y Alvarez and Felipe Diaz – Miranda y Macias, representatives of the Royal and Noble Corporations of the region, whose intervention, along with Bernardo Calvo de Barrientos, was invaluable to the success of the visit.

The rare moment of the blessing by the Canon given in the “Camara Santa” Relic Chamber “Holy of Holies of the Spanish Royal Family,” was captured on film by four time New York Times Best Selling Author and Producer Paul Perry. Together with Carlos Evaristo, Barrie Schwartz and award winning History Channel and National Geographic filmmaker Marlin Darrah, Paul will be working on a series of documentaries that focus on the unknown aspects of the Holy Shroud Cult.

It was at Oviedo, just outside of the reliquarium, that Barrie Schwartz gave on camera a detailed explanation of the characteristics of the *Sabana Santa* (Sudarium) and how they coincided with the facial image and other markings on the Holy Shroud.

From Oviedo the group continued the Pilgrimage to Lourdes, the Shrine famous for the great Marian Apparitions to Saint Bernadette in 1858. The Shrine is today renowned for its spring water, deemed to be miraculous, and is the second most famous Marian Shrine in the World.

The following day, at Saint Maximin, Carlos Evaristo recalled for everyone the Saint Mary Magdalene legends that gave origin to the “Holy Blood, Holy Grail” and “Da Vinci Code” theories and also explained how the Holy Relics of the Saint, first graced to have seen the Risen Lord, actually made their way to this site so as to still be venerated in the crypt till this day. It was in the crypt where Barrie Schwartz, a “Jewish student of the Shroud” met face to face (face to skull) with the fellow Jew (Jewess) that had first gazed upon the blessed linen sheet.

A brief stop in Monaco and its famous Casino, along with a visit to an “expensive” afternoon café, allowed for a momentary taste of elite living on the Côte d'Azur. Then the long haul to Rome put the patience of Knights and Dames to the test, but nothing that a hot meal shared in the company of friends and a comfortable bed couldn't resolve.

The first night in Rome the group slept at the “Casa Ravasco” convent guest house, a privilege arranged by our friend, Roberto Favero, official representative of the Savoy Royal House. The following day, quite early in the morning, the group was privileged to experience the Vatican Museum Patron's VIP tour guided by Prof. Gabriella La Latta and by Carlos Evaristo in his capacity as President of the Patron's Office in Portugal. We were also fortunate to meet Fr. Mark Haydu, L.C., who serves as International Director of the Patrons of the Arts in the Vatican Museums, and who met us in the Vatican Gardens.



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It was an experience which included an unimpeded visit of the magnificent Pontifical Apartments, the Papal Library, the Medieval Map Room, the Sistine Chapel and later the Treasury of the Pontifical Sacristy which included many Holy Relics such as the Holy Mandylion of Edessa, an ancient copy of the facial image of the Holy Shroud, kept in a costly reliquary frame recently restored by the Patrons of the Vatican Museums Office.

In the afternoon, the pilgrims were welcomed by the Procurator of the Patriarch of Antioch, a city that, according to Shroud scholars, holds an ancient connection to the Holy Shroud in the first centuries of its camouflaged existence following the Resurrection of Jesus.

A visit to the Pantheon, where the Savoy Kings of Italy are entombed, together with various celebrated artists, was also mandatory for this group that wanted to honor that Royal House's most important Relic.

It was at the Patriarchate Church where one of the oldest icons of Our Lady in Rome can be venerated. The following day, a Diplomatic Reception took place in the Patriarchate Throne Room during which Knighthoods were bestowed by representatives of the Royal House of Portugal and Imperial Royal House of Hungary and at which time Barrie Schwartz was awarded the rank of Honorary Commandant of the Royal Honor Guard.



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The Solemn Mass held in the Church of the Patriarchate (above) was sung in beautiful Orthodox liturgical chant and celebrated by the Procurator Archbishop Mikael Al Jamil himself.

Afterwards, Barrie gave a short talk on the Holy Shroud (the shortest ever) to all those assembled, because unfortunately, he could not show his slides due to a blown bulb in the digital projector and the impossibility to replace it on a Saturday at such a late hour. (*Editor's Note: Without the images, there was little for me to talk about. I was also told that as soon as my talk was over, everyone would get to eat dinner. So I gave the shortest Shroud talk of my career. After thanking my hosts, I simply said, "Bon appétit" and sat down! Dinner was great! BMS*)

The farewell dinner held at one of the superb restaurants of Rome near the Pantheon, gathered not only the Knights and Dames and the Pilgrims from Fátima but also many Princes who are direct descendants of the ancient Patrician Families of Rome that used to elect Popes and govern the Eternal City.

While in Rome, Barrie Schwartz was able to meet with some old friends, including Fr. P. Rafael Pascual and Fr. Hector Guerra at the Ateneo Pontificio Regina Apostolorum, the University in Rome where he will again teach his course about the Shroud in March 2012. He also met with Francesca Saracino and Paolo Monaci, the young film producers of a new documentary on the Holy Shroud (The Night of the Shroud), which has already aired in Italy and will be distributed worldwide in the near future.

This account was compiled with contributions from some of the members of the Military Commandry of Saint Michael that participated in the “2011 Fátima – Rome Holy Shroud Conference / Pilgrimage.”

Pilgrimage Participants:

Alberto D’ Ornellas
António Ponces de Carvalho
Barrie Schwartz
Bruce Argueta
Carlos Evaristo
HRH Dom Henrique de Bragança, Duke of Coimbra
John Thoma
Marlin Darrah
Paulo Falcão Tavares
Paul and Dee Perry
Reid Pherson
Richard Tatman
Stephen Pherson
Steve Besinaiz
Viki Argueta
William and Lauren Kautt