

## **EDITORIAL**

After a very fruitful manuscript hunt in the monasteries of Mount Athos this summer, I came back to a deluge of Shroud news, something that had not happened since the last showing in Turin in 2000. The first reports contained information about secret operation on the cloth, removing the backing cloth to restore the Shroud to what would be its natural appearance after the fire in 1532. The work was carried out by textile expert Methchild Fleury-Lemberg with all the necessary approval, although the fact that no other Shroud investigators or groups were consulted led to all kinds of comments and doubts. Before the official press conference in September, where the new look Shroud could be seen, there were concerns about other debris and particles being removed along with the backing cloth, resulting in permanent damage to information available from the relic. Perhaps the wisest policy was to wait and see before publishing any opinion, favourable or not. I am including in this newsletter a report by Ian Wilson, who saw the Shroud for himself after the backing cloth had been removed. Jorge Manuel Rodríguez, vice president of the Centro Español de Sindonología, was also at the press conference, and agrees with Ian's comments. Fuller accounts of the whole proceedings, with translations of all the articles published in the Italian newspapers, can be seen by those with access to Internet on Barrie Schwartz's web site, [www.shroud.com](http://www.shroud.com), along with good quality images of the Shroud before and after the operation, so you can compare and form your own opinion.

This will no doubt be a topic of conversation for a long time to come, and I look forward to receiving comments and appraisals. Meanwhile, this new edition of the newsletter includes excellent articles by Dr Daniel Scavone and Dr Allan Mills, together with a shorter investigation paper about the different shrouds that seem to have been present in Constantinople before and after the sacking of the city during the Fourth Crusade in 1204, by CES member César Barta. César was also present in the CIELT Symposium held earlier this year in Paris, and his comments on this meeting are also printed here.

Two well known personalities in Shroud studies have died over the last year, Maurus Green and Walter McCrone, and obituaries are included for both. Finally, Dr Fred Zugibe has replied to the comments made about his work in newsletter 54.

I would like to thank Juan Carlos Prado in La Coruña for all his help in the design of the newsletter. All that remains now is to wish everybody peace and happiness at Christmas and always, no matter what our individual thoughts about this particular festive time might be.