

2025 Australian Shroud Conference

Excitement about the Shroud is spreading around the world!

Recent reports on new dating tests indicating that the Shroud is from the first century, as well as new books on the Shroud, have caused excitement to spread.

Even "Down Under" -in Australia, many people are suddenly taking the Shroud seriously for the first time.

The country's first conference on the Shroud took place in Sydney from June 27-28, attracting a sell-out crowd.

The conference also hosted the launch of a new publication - the final book in William West's Shroud trilogy, *The Shroud Puzzle Solved - How You Can Be Sure It Is Jesus*.

The conference attracted prominent Shroud researchers, including David Rolfe, director of the first, award-winning Shroud documentary, *The Silent Witness* and international speaker on the Shroud, Fr Andrew Bolton.

Fr Dalton worked with Shroud experts around the world to bring university-level studies to the English-speaking world. (The course is run by The Science and Faith Institute of the Pontifical Athenaeum *Regina Apostolorum*, in collaboration with *Othonia*, and the *Giulio Ricci Diocesan Center of Sindonology* of Rome.)

Almost 300 people attended the conference - mainly non-scientists who were just learning about the Shroud's astonishing, inexplicable features.

Opening speaker William West explained that the evidence for the Shroud's authenticity was vast and that the puzzle it presented, like all puzzles, "only fits together one way that is, it only makes sense one way".

West outlined nine key puzzle pieces of the Shroud confirming it is genuine. They included:

- the Shroud's "impossible" photographic 3-D image;
- impossibly perfect blood deposits, including traces of chemicals indicating the man on the Shroud was tortured,
- evidence that only an eyewitness could know about,
- Jerusalem soil and pollen,
- historical evidence from the first millennium
- new dating tests indicating the Shroud is from the first century, and
- UV-light experiments indicating the Shroud image came from an impossible burst of radiation.

West pointed out that much of this evidence not only confirms the Shroud's authenticity but shows the Shroud puzzle could only be explained by a real body wrapped in the burial cloth, indicating how the blood was transferred to the cloth first, before a burst of light created the image. In the process, the body "dematerialised", leaving the blood flows and clots undisturbed.

West explored evidence that the flawed 1988 carbon dating of the Shroud could be explained by evidence that the Shroud sample used for the dating was part of a medieval repair of the Shroud.

He also outlined the theory that radiation caused the Shroud image, setting off a nuclear flux that increased carbon-14 levels on the cloth.

During Fr Dalton's talk, he invited the audience to "ponder on Christ's suffering before he was placed in the shroud."

Starting with the crown of thorns he said, "We don't know of anyone who was crowned and crucified, increasing the probability that it was Christ."

Referencing the lancing of Christ's side, Fr Dalton explained ultraviolet imaging of the bloodstains indicate "the blood and water flowing from Jesus' side" symbolising the union of Christ and his church - the nuptial union between God and his people.

"This story isn't just about Christ," Fr Dalton said. "It's a map for our own journey. He remains with us in the Eucharist; that's his promise. We too can meet him."

Film-maker David Rolfe told of his conversion to Christianity after being enlisted to produce and direct the documentary, *The Silent Witness*, that won a British Academy Award (BAFTA) for best documentary in 1978.

Rolfe hosted a special viewing of his latest documentary on the Shroud, *Who Can He Be?* - one of three films he has made on the Shroud.

Sydney's *Catholic Weekly* newspaper interviewed many at the conference who said the evidence about the Shroud had opened their eyes to its authenticity.

The newspaper summed up the message of the conference: "The Shroud is an image wrapped up in a mystery, woven into the fabric of faith and now, increasingly, supported by science."