

# Mysterious Shroud of Turin is object of photo display

A collection of photographs and scientific research on the Shroud of Turin — a centuries-old cloth some believe to be the burial shroud of Jesus — is making its United States debut at the Oblates of St. Joseph's Shrine in Santa Cruz until Jan. 2.

The exhibit of about 90 pieces includes several close-up photos of the Shroud, its image of a face and body and what many believe are stains of the blood of Jesus when he was executed by Roman soldiers almost 2,000 years ago.

There is also a full-length replica of the 14-foot-long shroud and a life-sized rendition of Jesus on the cross, made specifically to show body wounds exactly as they appear on the shroud, said Rev. Aldo Grasso, the shrine's rector.

The display, which Grasso believes to be one of the largest collections ever shown in the United States, was made available by the International Center of Sindonology in Rome, Italy with some relics of the shroud coming from the personal collection of Grasso's brother, the Rev. Enrico Grasso, a member of the Sindonology group.

The touring collection was spon-

sored in part by the DeRance Foundation of Milwaukee, Wisc., whose president, Harry John, is heir to the Miller Brewing Co. fortune.

"One of the reasons they sent it here is as a temporary gift to the city of the Holy Cross," said Grasso, referring to the Spanish meaning of the name Santa Cruz.

The result of 20 years of study are encapsulated in the exhibit, said Grasso.

The shroud became the object of intense scientific research in 1978. The results are inconclusive.

The exhibit can be seen from noon to 5 p.m. daily at the shrine. After Jan. 2 it will be dismantled where some of it will go back to Italy, and some of the relics belonging to Grasso's brother "will never be shown again in the United States."

Grasso is also sponsoring a non-denominational essay contest on the shroud. Anyone in grades 1-12 who view the exhibit. Twelve prizes ranging from \$30 to \$150 will be presented Jan. 3.

There is no admission fee to see the exhibit.



The Rev. Aldo Grasso stands in front of photographic collection of the Shroud of Turin

Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel