

Been struggling to find the time to tell the rest of the story of our incredible Anniversary Trip. The following pics highlight the Most Anticipated part of our trip. We took a Day Trip to Turin, Italy to view the Cathedral which houses The Shroud. We visited the Chapel inside the Cathedral where The Shroud is kept inside of a specially built custom case. We didn't get to see the actual Shroud of Turin, but knew it was inside the case we viewed. We were able to venerate, praise, and worship in front of The Shroud for as long as we wanted. Sure, don't get me wrong, it would be a thrill to see The Shroud during an Exposition. Maybe one day we will take another Pilgrimage Trip to Turin.



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The Shroud of Turin is a centuries old linen cloth that bears the image of a crucified man that I believe to be Jesus of Nazareth. Modern science has completed hundreds of thousands of hours of detailed study and intense research on the Shroud. It is, in fact, the single most studied artifact in human history. Yet, the controversy still rages. No scientist has any definite proof how the front and back images of Jesus came to be on The Shroud. The image has been created by some yet unidentified process. Did the intense light and heat generated by Jesus' body at the moment of resurrection burn his image into the cloth? I don't need a scientist to tell me what my faith already tells me. I believe it is The Shroud of Jesus and the image was made at the time of His resurrection. You can make up your own mind about who is the Man Behind The Shroud.



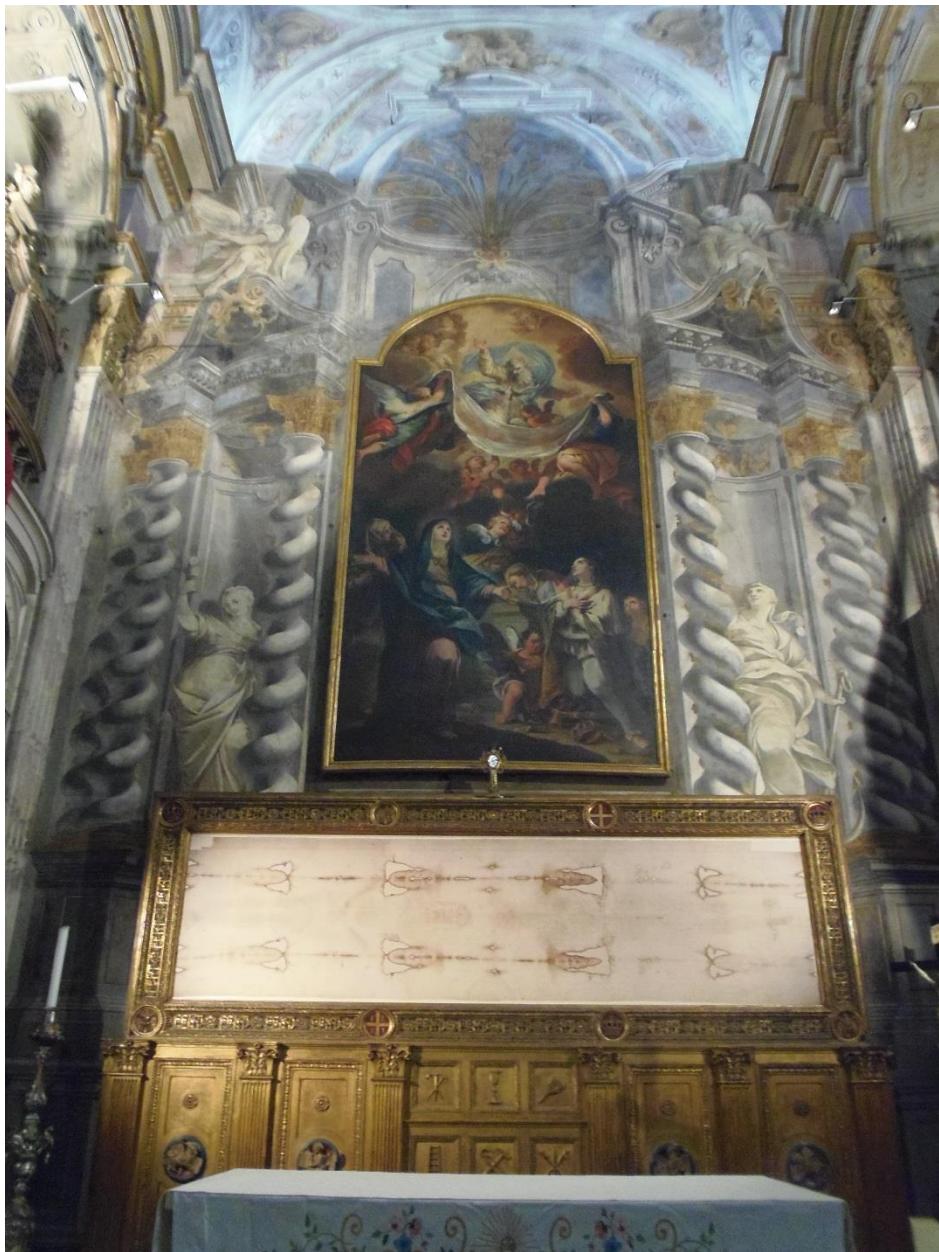
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The Shroud shows us the deep wounds of Jesus during his passion and death on the cross. But, at the same time, it shows us the light of His resurrection. In one piece of cloth, we can see how devastating sin and trials are that leads us away from Jesus and how our hope for the Easter victory that He gave to us in His resurrection.



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We learned that the Shroud will go on public display between April 19 and June 24, 2015. We had a rare chance to visit the Museum AND Cathedral where it resides, without encountering the millions of people who plan to view it during Exposition 2015. There are many tour companies arranging trips to Turin during the rare 67 day-Exposition. Even Pope Francis will be viewing the Shroud in June 2015. He will be only the third Pope to view The Shroud along with Saint Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI. We feel very blessed to have done this prior to the Cathedral closing for preparations before the upcoming 2015 Public Exposition. We learned later that the Cathedral and The Shroud Chapel were closed the week after our visit. The last Public Eposition was in 2010 and this is the case that was used to view The Shroud. Notice the oil painting above showing the Angels holding The Shroud.



A surprising thing we discovered was how large is the City of Turin. I imagined Turin to be a small Italian Village where the Cathedral housing The Shroud was the biggest thing at the heart of the town. I was so very wrong. Turin is a huge city with population of nearly one million. Turin is in Northwest Italy surrounded by The Alps. There are four major rivers passing through the city. Turin is also the home of the Fiat Automotive Company.



We visited Turin on a Sunday and was able to have mass in Turin.



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After mass, Lonny took his picture with a man posing as a Knights Templar. There were many in costume during the mass. Because it was in Italian, we didn't quite know what were they celebrating.

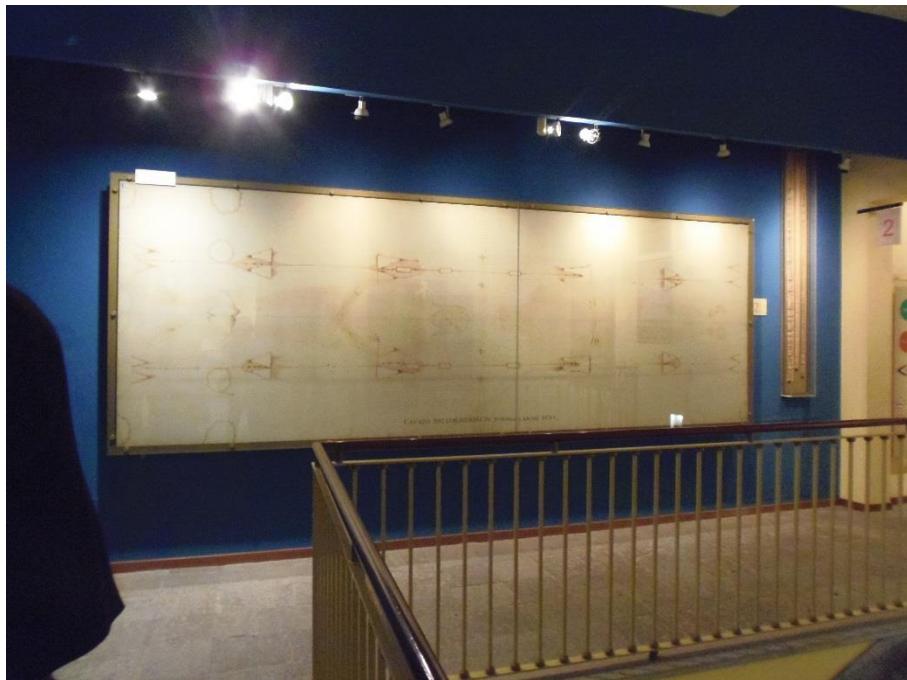


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The Museum of the Shroud of Turin is walking distance from the Turin Cathedral, but actually down a side street with a small sign at its entrance. My original misconception about Turin being a small village and The Shroud dominating the city was so wrong by seeing this small sign to enter one of the most amazing Museums I have ever been inside.

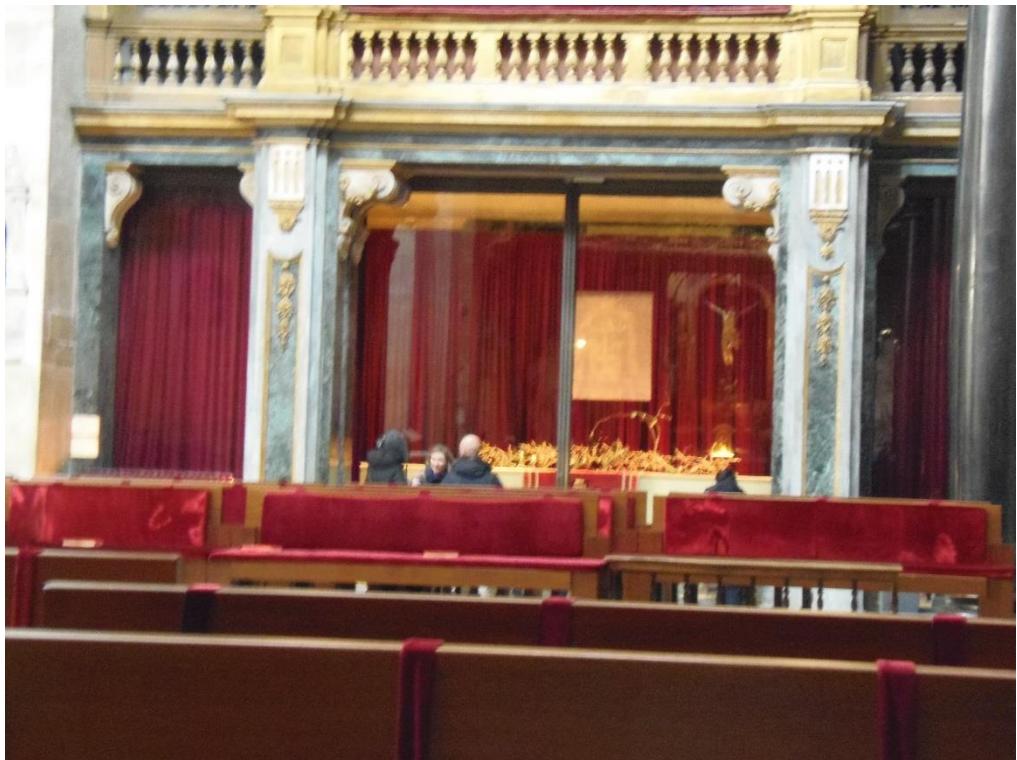


In the lobby, just before entering the Museum, there is a life-size replica of The Shroud where you can take photographs. Unfortunately, inside the Museum, we were NOT able to take any photographs. The amazing things we saw inside the Museum are beyond my ability to describe in words. Inside the museum, we viewed the silver casket that served as the Shroud's reliquary for hundreds of years. I swear, it looked like what I always envisioned the "Ark of the Covenant" would look like. There were also many items in the Museum showing the image of The Shroud from the last two thousand years. Of course in the bookshop, we purchased the book of the Museum for reference at home.



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We feel extremely blessed and fortunate that we were able to view the Shroud, the Museum, and the Cathedral, without the crowds and for as long as we wanted to stay. Since we were unable to take photographs while in front of the Chapel containing The Shroud, we went to the opposite side of the Cathedral and we were able to take this photo. The case containing The Shroud is in the chapel behind the glass with the red and white cloth covering with crowns of thorns on top.



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We feel very blessed to have done this prior to the Cathedral closing for preparations for Exposition 2015. The UV light from the Sun is one of the most damaging effects to The Shroud. Therefore, all windows will need to be covered to minimize the exposure to The Shroud. We learned later that the Cathedral and The Shroud Chapel were closed the week after our visit. Lonny loved using his selfie stick for this shot!



For the Exposition 2015, The Shroud will be moved from the glass covered side chapel to in between the wooden pews in the middle of the altar. Amazing to think millions of people will be passing here in only a few short months and we are here virtually alone for as long as we wanted to stay.



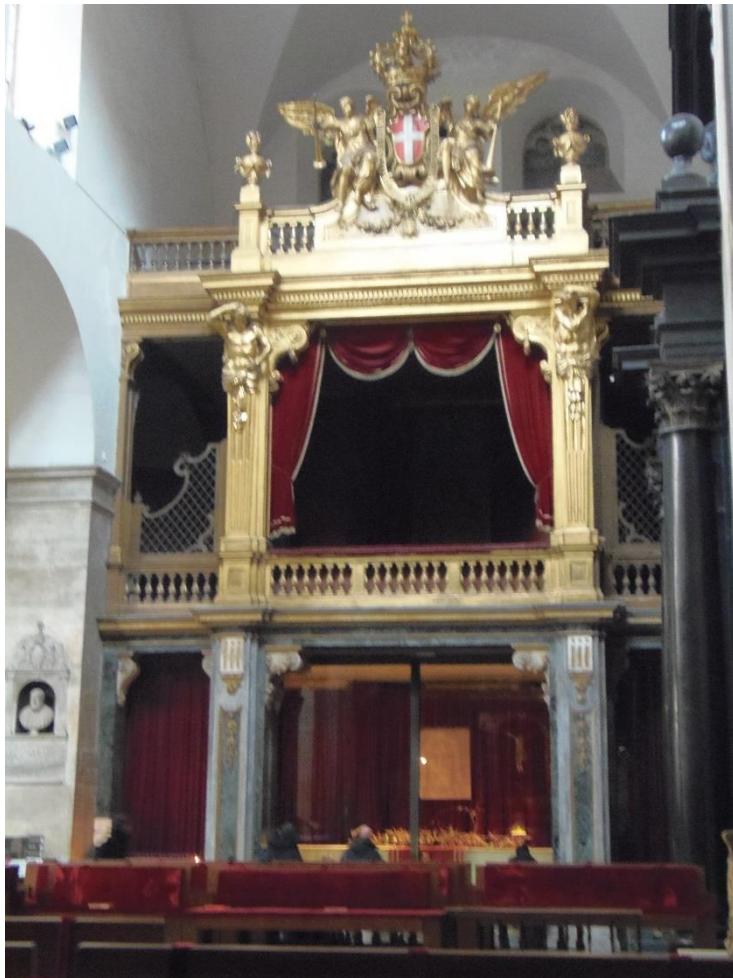
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We visited the Darkroom where we saw all of the original life-size photographs of The Shroud including the original 1899 image showing the negative image which was the first to observe the detail of the image of Jesus' face. The Darkroom also included photographs taken of The Shroud during the Public Expositions of 1998, 2000, and 2010.



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The Shroud was brought to Turin in 1578 by the Dukes of Savoy (the former ruling family of Italy). It has only been displayed a few times each century. Exposing The Shroud to polluted air and UV light during the exhibition can damage the cloth and image. The Shroud is now stored in a custom built, temperature and humidity controlled case to protect and preserve it in a chapel behind the altar in the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist. The Shroud is stored flat within the case which can be moved, raised, and opened to display it for the Expositions. We were able to kneel to pray at the prayer kneeler as long as we wanted to be there. Visitors who view during the Exposition will only be able to walk past The Shroud for maximum 30 seconds of viewing/praying time. We learned later that the Cathedral and The Shroud Chapel were closed the week after our visit in preparation before the upcoming 2015 Public Exposition.



A most interesting thing to note -- Above the door as you exit the Turin Cathedral of St. John the Baptist which houses The Shroud, there is a reproduction of DaVinci's Last Supper Painting.



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During our entire visit in Italy, there were reports that we could be the next target of ISIS Terrorists. After the deadly attack in France, the Public Square in front of the Cathedral housing The Shroud had a demonstration with "Je Suis Charlie" flyers which were still scattered on the ground.



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In 1997, during restorations inside the Turin Cathedral housing The Shroud, there was a fire. The Shroud had been moved from the Altar of the Chapel to a safer place inside the Cathedral while renovations were being made. Authorities agree that if it had been in its normal place at the altar, it would have been consumed completely by the flames. The fire which threatened The Shroud was possibly caused by arson. The scaffolding is still in place today for the restoration of the Chapel containing The Shroud.



Want your own Pic of Jesus' Face from The Shroud? This pic was taken by my son, Luke, from one of the brochures we picked up while visiting the Museum of The Shroud in Turin. He showed me how to invert the colors on the picture. If you have an iPhone, you can do this yourself by putting the picture on your screen, then triple clicking the Home Button and choosing "Invert Colors". The image waiting for you is AMAZING! You can see Jesus' face so clearly and so detailed. You can only imagine this is how the photographer felt in 1899 when he saw the negative image of his photograph. Jesus' ghostly image comes alive!



For those who can't get "Invert Colors" to work, please enjoy this image! It's my screen saver for Lent!
AMAZING!



Turin is known for their amazing chocolate called Gianduiotto. It is amazing!