

**Ask a Priest!**  
**July 27, 2021**

**Question: What is the church's stance on the Shroud of Turin? Are there any artifacts on display by any church in the world that are considered directly touched by Jesus? What about Veronica's veil?**

**Answer: Stance on the Shroud of Turin:** Currently the Catholic Church neither formally endorses nor rejects the shroud, and in 2013 Pope Francis referred to it as an "icon of a man scourged and crucified". The shroud has been kept in Turin since the 16th century and is now in the custody of the Vatican. It is not generally viewable by the public and is only available for viewing during expositions set by the Vatican.

A helpful video considering the facts of the Shroud:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VUIEC9TiyF0>

**Other artifacts on display:**

- **Jesus' Crown of Thorns** - The famous Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris houses several relics from Jesus' passion, including the Crown of Thorns placed upon his head, as well as a piece of Jesus' cross and a nail used in the crucifixion. The Cathedral notes that despite numerous studies and research, the crown's authenticity cannot be certified, though it has been revered for more than 16 centuries. The crown is made of canes bound with gold threads, which once held the thorns. It is on public display the first Friday of each month and on every Friday during Lent.
- **The Pillar or Column of the Scourging of Jesus Christ** - St. Helena, the mother of Roman Emperor Constantine, who made Christianity legal in the Roman Empire, is credited with saving and bringing many Christian relics from the Holy Land to Rome in the 300s. A fragment of the marble scourging pillar of Jesus Christ is one such item and is kept in Santa Prassede Basilica in Rome where it has been housed since 1223. The Byzantine church is also the burial site of some 2,000 saints, including two early church saints who were sisters, Saints Prassede and Pudentiana, and was a popular pilgrimage stop in the Middle Ages.
- **The Burial Slab of Jesus Christ** - In Jerusalem, tourists flock to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, built on the site where St. Helen is said to have discovered Jesus' cross. Christians thus revere the church as the site of his crucifixion. According to the Israel Ministry of Tourism, Jesus' tomb was on the site, though it was largely destroyed in 1009. There are now just a few surviving portions, concealed from

public view. Also inside is a slab, on which Christian tradition says Jesus' body was prepared for burial, as well as the cave tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.

See the following sites for more information:

- Passion of Jesus Christ Relics: <https://passionofchrist.us/passionrelics/>
- Catholic Pilgrimage Sites in the United States (Many of these have not been touched by Jesus himself:  
<https://catholicpilgrimagesites.wordpress.com/sites-by-state-2/>

### **What about Veronica's veil?**

- Older article from 2006 (Pope Benedict's visit):  
<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/7508/pope-visits-veronicas-veil-tells-crowd-to-search-for-the-face-of-christ-in-their-lives>
- Interesting read on Veronica:  
<https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/lifting-veronicas-veil>
- St. Veronica: [https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint\\_id=1953](https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=1953)