

Pilgrimage 2010

Shroud of Turin and the Oberammergau Passion Play with Father John Geinzer

Would you like to see the Shroud of Turin and the Oberammergau Passion Play? A unique pilgrimage is now being organized for next year 2010. This pilgrimage is unique because it will combine two events which seldom occur.

The first of these two rare events is an exhibit of the Shroud of Turin in the city of Turin, Italy. This shroud is arguable the cloth in which the body of Jesus was buried. Its authenticity has been in dispute, but scientific evidence is mounting that no other explanation can account for its daunting image of a scourged and crucified man. This piece of cloth was first photographed in 1898. At that time the photographer himself as well as many others were shocked by the stunning image of a man on the film negative. Since 1898, there have been only five exhibits open to the public: 1931, 1933, 1978, 1998, and 2000 and one additional viewing restricted to the members of the media. In other words, the upcoming 2010 exhibit will be only the seventh time in 112 years that the general public have been permitted to view the Shroud of Turin.



The second of these two rare events is the presentation of the Oberammergau Passion Play in the town of Oberammergau, Germany. This play is world-famous. It began in the 1630's, when the townspeople of Oberammergau were largely spared from the bubonic plague that wreaked havoc throughout Europe. In gratitude to God for having been spared that contagious disease, subsequent generations of the citizens of Oberammergau have presented an awesome play, involving over 2000 performers, musicians, and technicians. This play is rare because it is presented only every ten years --- and will not be available again until the year 2020.



Those two events are the highlights of this unique pilgrimage. However, there are other noteworthy activities as well. In Milan, Italy, we plan to view a painting which is a masterpiece: the "Last Supper" by Leonardo da Vinci. This enormous fresco (29 feet long and 15 feet high) was painted from 1495 to 1498 and restored over a period of 20 years toward the end of the 20th century. Since the restoration its colors are far more brilliant than the usual pictures that people have seen on holy cards, in art books, and elsewhere.

In addition, this pilgrimage will include (1) sightseeing in Milan, (2) a scenic train ride in the Alps Mountains, (3) sightseeing in beautiful Innsbruck, Austria, and (4) sightseeing in Munich, Germany.



Such a trip, however, is not inexpensive. The rate is \$3,589.00, based on double occupancy, along with taxes, fees, and fuel surcharges amounting to \$431.50. While many could not afford such a trip, the uniqueness of this pilgrimage deserves the serious consideration of those who can afford the expense. The trip is being arranged by Ponzio International Travel, 412-571-1111.

The pilgrimage will begin Tuesday, May 11th and conclude on Thursday, May 20th. For more information, consult Father John at the rectory, 412-793-4511.