



Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum
Science and Faith Institute



Postgraduate Certificate in Shroud Studies

In collaboration with



**CENTRO DIOCESANO
DI SINDONOLOGIA**
GIULIO RICCI

The Giulio Ricci Diocesan Center of Sindonology (Roma)

2025-2026 Academic Year

2025-2026 ACADEMIC PROGRAM

First semester

ISFD1E01 Introduction to Shroud Studies (2 ECTS)

Joseph Spence FFm

This introductory course is based on an interdisciplinary approach to research, applied to the Shroud; it will especially focus on the historical, scientific, and theological aspects of Sindonology. After examining the Shroud as described in the four canonical Gospels, the course continues with a historical reconstruction of the various locations and circumstances – both hypothetical and certain – in which the Shroud has been and been involved. Passing on to the scientific research done on the Shroud, starting with the first photograph taken in 1898 A.D., various findings and hypotheses regarding the scientific aspects of the Shroud will be analyzed and discussed. Science and Faith find a common ground of interest in the Shroud; thus, the last part of the course will be dedicated to a “technical” and “theological” examination of the Shroud, where each step of the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Christ narrated in the Gospels, finds further and complementary explanations and details to be found on the Shroud of Turin. The findings discussed throughout the course give way to the final topic, whereby the Shroud is considered as a privileged instrument of evangelization; a telling example will be given by recounting the experience of Msgr. Giulio Ricci and Mother Maria Elisabetta Patrizi, Co-founders of the “Roman Center of Sindonology”.

The course will be held live, according to this calendar: October 8, 22, 29; November 12, 19, 26; December 3, 10.

ISFD1E02 History of the Shroud (3 ECTS)

Flavia Manservigi (International Center of Sindonology, Turin)

The aim of the course is to study the History of the Shroud of Turin. In the introduction the several problems regarding this complex matter will be analyzed from a religious and historical point of view. The problem regarding the correct method for studying the Shroud will be part of an autonomous lesson, which will be followed by an overview on the historical periods that characterized the history of the Shroud from the 14th century onwards, with particular attention to the moment when the Cloth officially appeared in Europe. The last lessons will focus on more specific historical topics, such as the peculiar forms of devotion that were attributed to the Shroud in specific historical moments, the matter of the position of Jesus' burial cloths according to the Gospels description, the issue of the Roman *flagrum* that was used, according to scholars, to scourge the Man of the Shroud, and the relationship between the Shroud and the iconography of Christ.

ISFD1E03 Pastoral and Biblical Approach to the Shroud (3 ECTS)

Andrew Dalton LC and collaborators

This course focuses on the biblical theology of the Passion of the Christ. The four canonical gospels constitute the primary source material, but the entire biblical canon also provides essential context. Shroud studies cannot be content merely with questions regarding the authenticity of the cloth. Nor is it sufficient to investigate what the man of the Shroud suffered from a forensic perspective. Essential as these and other topics are, the empirical sciences are incapable of discerning the deepest theological reasons for the Passion. Only divine revelation, received from the apostles and passed down by the Church, can attain this end. This course aims to bridge the gap between scientific observation and theological interpretation. Students will learn not only about what Christ suffered during every stage of the Passion, but also why he did so.

Second semester**ISFD1E04 Scientific Research on the Shroud; STURP, History and Results (3 ECTS)**

Barrie Schwartz (†) (STERA, Inc.), and collaborators

The aim of the first part of this course is to provide a clear overview of the STURP team and its members, the team's genesis and history, the in-depth level of their advance preparation, their actual examination of the cloth in October 1978 and the resulting scientific papers that were generated from their work and ultimately published in refereed scientific journals afterwards. Their cumulative work and conclusions form the primary database of credible scientific knowledge that exists today in the scientific literature and points to the Shroud's authenticity.

The aim of the second part of the course is to provide a clear overview of the evolution of Shroud research in the post-STURP era. The course covers key events in recent Shroud history, including the 1997 Turin Chapel fire and its repercussions and the 2002 restoration of the Shroud. The course provides access to Shroud research that has been completed in recent years, evaluates its techniques and conclusions and examines the role the internet has played in furthering communication, publication and distribution of data amongst Shroud scholars worldwide.

ISFD1E05 The Shroud and Archaeological Studies (2 ECTS)

Ada Grossi (Associazione Italiana dei Paleografi e Diplomatisti)

The aim of the course is to provide an overview of the tortures inflicted on the Man of the Shroud: the lectures then move on towards a thorough knowledge of the historical context of tortures in the ancient world. The course focuses mainly on Roman flagellation and crucifixion and on Jewish burial traditions.

All the issues are analyzed both scientifically and historically, with a particular emphasis on Jewish culture and Talmudic literature.

The course will be held live, according to this calendar: February 25, March 4, 11 and 18 2026, at 3:30 - 5:30 pm CET.

ISFD1E06 *The Shroud and Science* (3 ECTS)

A series of conferences coordinated by Bruno Barberis

Collaborators: Nello Balossino, Bruno Barberis, Tristan Casabianca, Paolo Di Lazzaro, Roberto Falcinelli, Alfonso Muñoz-Cobo, Marco Riani, Luigi Rodella (†), Enrico Simonato.

"We do not simply observe; we venerate. Ours is a prayerful gaze. I would say more: it is letting yourself to be gazed upon. This face has closed eyes; it is the face of one who is deceased. Yet, mysteriously, he looks at us, and, in the silence, he speaks to us. How is it possible? Why do people of faith, like you, want to pause before this icon of a man scourged and crucified? Because the Man of the Shroud invites us to contemplate Jesus of Nazareth. This image—impressed on the cloth—speaks to our heart and urges us to climb the Mount of Calvary, to look at the wood of the Cross, to immerse ourselves in the eloquent silence of love."

Pope Francis, video message for the extraordinary exposition of the Shroud of Turin on March 30, 2013

Director

Rafael Pascual

Scientific Committee

Bruno Barberis, Antonio Cassanelli, Andrew Dalton, Flavia Manservigi, Rafael Pascual, Joseph Spence

Teachers and Lecturers

Nello Balossino, Bruno Barberis, Tristan Casabianca, Andrew Dalton, Paolo Di Lazzaro, Roberto Falcinelli, Ada Grossi, Kelly Kearse, Flavia Manservigi, Alfonso Muñoz-Cobo, Rafael Pascual, Marco Riani, Barrie Schwartz (†), Enrico Simonato, Joseph Spence

For further information

othonia@upra.org

Cel.: +39 348 5976099

Pontifical Athenaeum *Regina Apostolorum*

Via degli Aldobrandeschi, 190

00163 Roma

www.upra.org