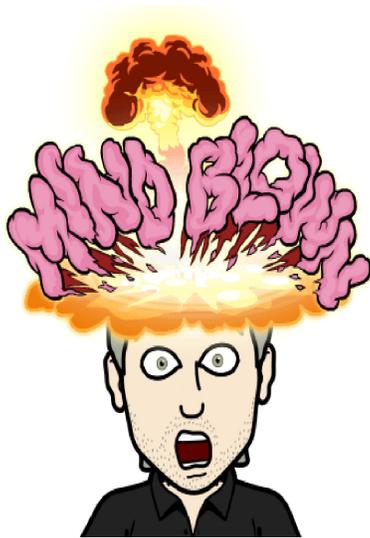


I once attended a presentation on *The Shroud of Turin*. I have been interested in the Shroud since watching a television show on it as a kid with my Dad. Perhaps, some of you remember the TV show, *In Search Of...*, hosted by Leonard Nimoy. Over the years, I have seen many presentations on the Shroud. Anyhow, for anyone who does not know, some people believe the Shroud to be the burial cloth that covered Our Lord's Body in the tomb. One such person is believed to be Pope Saint John Paul II. Apparently, he thought the image on the cloth was authentic. Nobody knows for sure how the image of a bloody beaten man, an image that looks a lot like how we imagined Jesus looked, wound up on the cloth. Those who believe it's authentic tend to hold that the energy and/or heat that the Resurrection produced, created the bodily image on the cloth.



At the end of the evening, I talked with the expert privately. I thanked him for the interesting and detailed presentation. I told him that as much as I liked his presentation, I couldn't get past the radiocarbon dating analysis done on it in 1988, which dated the Shroud's origin to be somewhere between 1260-1390 AD. To me, as much as I wanted it to be Our Lord's burial cloth, it didn't seem possible. To be fair, during the presentation, he explained how the dating could be wrong. I found his explanations thought provoking but I wasn't convinced by any of them. I said to him, between you and me, there has to be another reason that test was wrong. There were too many intelligent, sane people who thought the Shroud was legitimate, despite the evidence that indicated otherwise. I said please tell me, I'll never say anything, even if I'm tickled. He told me. I was blown away. I knew immediately he was right. I couldn't believe I had missed it. This is one of many examples when I have been enlightened by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is highlighted in our Mass readings this Sunday. In the first reading, the Apostles Peter and John travel to Samaria after hearing that Samaria has come to believe in Jesus. They lay hands on these newly baptized believers, conferring on them the fullness of the Holy Spirit. This is one of the biblical origins of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

In the Gospel, Jesus tells the Apostles shortly before His Death and Resurrection that, "I shall ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate to be with you forever, that Spirit of truth whom the world can never receive since it neither sees nor knows Him; but you know Him, because He is with you, He is in you" (John 14:16-17).

The Holy Spirit leads us to all truth. Our Advocate, the Holy Spirit, opens our minds to the mysteries of our Faith. In order to do so, our cooperation is usually required. That means we need to stay in a state of grace. When we are in a state of grace, God enlightens our immaterial minds through the power of the Holy Spirit. In this manner, we come to understand over time our Faith in a deeper way. Also, we come to understand and accept God's plan for our lives. Furthermore, we need to be prayerful and think with the Church. For instance, if I told you what that expert said about the Shroud, and I won't, even if I'm tickled, many of you wouldn't believe it. In response, I'd argue you think too much like the world and not with the Spirit. The remedy for this predicament is for all us to be prayerful and keep the Commandments. If we do, we should get ready to have our minds blown away through the power of the Holy Spirit.