

200,000 to the Tunic of Argenteuil

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PARIS: In the suburb of Argenteuil there is a big cathedral, Saint-Denys, named after the bishop of the place, a martyr of the year 250. In the church there is a Tunic, which many people think is the one Roman soldiers were throwing lots for while Jesus was hanging on the cross. Tradition says it should be exhibited every year, ending on -34 and -84.

The exhibition this year however, for a short period of time between March 25 and April 10, was an exception, marking the *Year of Mercy* according to Pope Francis.

My friend Oddvar Søvik and I, both Norwegians, had found the news on the Internet (and also on www.shroud.com) and took a plane to Paris, just to see this Tunic, believing it is the Tunic of Jesus. Oh, it was a moving and excellent experience! Everybody knows that Paris has very much of interest to show travelers: Churches, great buildings and museums among the finest in the world, but both of us agreed that just to see that very Tunic was worth going.

A friendly man

The exhibition was well organized and had been announced all over the country and the capital. On the Internet one could find information and news, but little was translated into other languages. Here we also booked the visit, date and time being fixed. Oddvar and I followed the recommendation to use the train from one of the main train stations in Paris, Saint Lazare, to Argenteuil. It only took ten minutes. Then we had to walk for ten minutes through a nice suburb.



Outside the church, waiting for the exhibition to open, we met a queue of 30. But soon there were as many as 300 pilgrims there, I think only Frenchmen. There we also met some guards, hiding a little not to disturb the pilgrims, and many volunteers in nice, dark red clothing, helping all the people with information and care.

We were so lucky to meet the leader of the exhibition, an abbot, Abbé Guy-Emmanuel Cariot (Recteur). He was surprised and pleased when he heard we came over from Norway just to see the Tunic – and still more when we said we were Protestants.



Into the big church we calmly walked along to the altar, where the Tunic was exhibited in a beautiful way.

The wonderful volunteers always showed the way, and up there we stood wondering and let this moving adventure and the sight of the Tunic of the Saviour sink in.



If we wanted, we could repeat the viewing, as most of the pilgrims did, or sit down in front of the church for a short service. All this was a nice experience, and later on we left the church in gratitude, joyful for what we had taken part in and had been a part of.



We will never forget this. Thanks a lot to those who arranged it! Later on we heard that as many as 200,000 took part in exhibition.



Mostly Frenchmen

Our impression was that mostly Frenchmen came to see the Tunic. Only a few outside France know about it. We have never heard of Norwegians knowing of it's existence. Additional information about the Tunic, in French called *Sainte Tunique du Christ*, was also made available (in French only). It also included scientific literature, 7-8 books in all. In the queue we got a beautiful pamphlet, *Petit Guide: La Sainte Tunique d'Argenteuil. Basilique Saint-Denis* (2016) [A little guide. The Holy Tunic of Argenteuil. Basilica of St. Denis], which could be folded into 8 sheets of A-5 size.

A new book had been published and was sold outside the church: *La Sainte Tunique D'Argenteuil. Le livre de l'ostension 2016* [The Holy Tunic of Argenteuil. The Book about the Exhibition 2016]. 238 pages.

On the Internet at www.saintetunique.com we later on were able to see copies of as many as 46 articles from newspapers from all over the country, many of them published beforehand. In these, and in the

program, we saw reports of the many arrangements, processions, services, and so on that were planned. Impressive!

Literature

The book about the Tunic we liked the best, was written by two splendid French scientists, André Marion & Gérard Lucotte: *Le Linceul de Turin et la Tunique d'Argenteuil. Le point sur l'enquete* (2006, 330 pages) [The Shroud of Turin and the Tunic of Argenteuil. Main Points of Research]. The very same Marion also wrote *Jésus et la science. La vérité sur les reliques du Christ*, (2000, with 85 pages about the Tunic), [Jesus and Science. The Truth about the Relics of Christ].

The three

Oddvar Søvik (right) and I were in Turin in 2010 to see the Shroud. That was moving! During the exhibition five years later, we had the pleasure to be guides for 350 Norwegians. In September 2012 we also visited the town of Oviedo in the north of Spain. Here we saw the little cloth from the Grave, the Sudarium, also an unforgettable experience.

Earlier we studied very carefully the research being done about these two cloths and we gave lectures about them. Therefore it was very interesting also to see the Tunic of Argenteuil and read about how all three fit together and are linked to Jesus, just unbelievable. Those three confirm each other. Therefore we call on everybody to study their history and in this way find out more about what happened that exiting Easter once in Jerusalem!



Carried by the same person

Science on the Tunic of Argenteuil shows big spots of blood from the AB group. This man once had carried something heavy on his shoulders. The Tunic is woven in one piece, as the Bible says. The technique of weaving is as it was performed in the Middle East at the time of Jesus. Pollens found on the Tunic, are consistent with those on the Shroud and on the Sudarium of Oviedo. Even pollens of two trees only growing in Israel, are found on the Tunic, proving that once it must have been in that country. In this way we could continue, and the conclusion is evident: The very man once carrying the Tunic, is the same later lying in the Shroud and the one who got the Sudarium around his head to gather his blood, in fact: A Jew. Science forces us to admit that this was Jesus of Nazareth.

And this is very challenging, don't you agree?