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Bishop Tran Dedicates Newest Addition to Shroud of Turin Exhibit *Unique Presentation Shares the Story of Hope*

A hidden gem in the Archdiocese of Atlanta is St. Brendan the Navigator's unique Shroud of Turin exhibit located in Cumming, GA. On February 18th Bishop Tran will bless its newest addition -- a custom, life-sized bronze cast sculpture of Jesus as he was laid in the tomb. This sculpture, titled "The Body of the Man in the Holy Shroud 2022" is based on size and body dimensions of Jesus taken directly from the Shroud of Turin and includes marks of the passion and the crucifixion found on the cloth. This exhibit offers an experience like no other – the ability to see the face of Jesus in the Shroud of Turin and touch His face in this new sculpture.

"This brand new work includes updates and perfections based on the knowledge I have gained over the last 20+ years. It is truly 'authentic' and will raise questions and offer answers to all who see Him" said renowned artist Luigi Enzo Mattei, who created this one-of-a-kind, original for St. Brendan.

"This sculpture is a dramatic bronze, 3D creation that shows the peace that was present at the moment of the Resurrection," said Father Matthew VanSmooenburg, L.C., Pastor of St. Brendan.

The sculpture's base is a collaborative design emulating the stone in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, where Jesus' Body was prepared for burial. The artist refers to this part of the sculpture as the "Marble of the Anointing."

Mattei recently produced three similar sculptures that currently reside in Rome, Italy, Jerusalem, and Ann Arbor, Michigan. The mold for those sculptures was retired and given to Pope Francis. To complete the commission for St. Brendan Mattei created a new mold. This sculpture is currently the only one of its kind in the world. "It took twenty-one trials, from 1998 to the present, to arrive at the quality of the Atlanta 2022 Corps" said Mattei.

The detail on the body is taken directly from the Shroud image and as described by the artist is "derived from research carried out at the University of Bologna by professors of anatomy and anthropology and confirmed by experts from the University of Padua, then [verified] from the International Center of Sindonology of Turin." In other words, details on the sculpture match the cloth!

There are six other permanent exhibits dedicated to the Shroud in the United States. St. Brendan's exhibit is the only one to present the complete story of the resurrection. The exhibit unfolds information as a detective story where visitors are asked to review evidence and draw their own conclusions. Sharing "A Story of Hope" the exhibit introduces historical, scriptural, and scientific evidence of the passion and resurrection of Jesus. The exhibit also displays four historically accurate artifacts used in His passion.

At its conclusion visitors are presented with an exact copy of the Shroud originating from the Commission on the Shroud of Turin. In this quiet space they discover His story doesn't end at the Ascension. Instead evidence is displayed of life after death and the hope it delivers, including surprising little known analogies. The addition of this sculpture offers a new way to experience hope through art.

Notes to editors:

- Photo opportunity with Bishop Tran on Feb. 18th at 10am
- Members of the Shroud Committee, who designed the exhibit based on experiences in the Holy Land, are available for interviews.
- The "Shroud of Turin: A Story of Hope" exhibit is viewable when the main Church is open. Guided group tours are available by calling (770) 205-7969.
- Two-day public viewing of the exhibit occurs April 22-23, 2023.