

THE HOLY AGONY SHRINE – An Overview



In the left, eastern transept of the main Chapel is a dramatic Shrine dedicated to the Holy Agony. It provides a moving focus for meditation on the Passion of Jesus, and a locus for contemplation on his holy Mother who suffered with him and participated in his victory over sin and death.

Antoine Nicolle (1817-1890), a priest of the Congregation of the Mission, established the Archconfraternity of the Holy Agony at Valfleury, France in 1862. Subsequently the Vincentian Community has set up in all their churches and chapels a special shrine dedicated to the Passion of Christ.

Future Shrine Reflections — both videos and scripts — will describe in detail the significance of each of the images in our Holy Agony Shrine. For the present, we describe the overall arrangements in this special Shrine dedicated to the Passion of Christ.

Our Holy Agony Shrine includes a large stained-glass window featuring the Sacred Heart. Above the Sacred Heart one sees an image representing the Jewish Ark of the Covenant; it is marked with the Christogram I-H-S, the familiar monogram symbolizing *Jesus Christ*. Mary and the beloved disciple appear below the Sacred Heart. To the right and left are four small panels of the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary.

There are three large paintings: in the center above the altar, *The Crucifixion* which completes the sorrowful mysteries in the window; on the viewer's left, *The Agony in the Garden*; to the right, *The Descent from the Cross*.

A replica of Michelangelo's *Pieta* appears on the viewer's left; red votive devotional candles are available for pilgrims to offer prayers before the touching image of Mary embracing her dead Son after his crucifixion.

There are four detailed floor tiles featuring artifacts of the betrayal, passion and death of Jesus.

Our prayer recalls the agony of Jesus and asks for His help to carry our own crosses behind him.

We Pray:

*Jesus, our sufferings are nothing
compared with your Agony and Crucifixion.*

*As we face our trials, give us the strength
to imitate your willingness to say yes to God who
asked you to drink your cup of suffering.*

*We ask this through the intercession of Mary our Mother,
who witnessed and shared in your sufferings on Calvary.*

Amen.

Our next Shrine Reflection will focus on the first of three large paintings, *The Agony in the Garden*.