

if each work was given its proper due attention. The shrine of St. Peter was the next most memorable impression of the tour.

The gallerys that house important saints tombs is roughly cross shaped with a ceiling a good three stories in height. It is made of marble. The spot above St. Peter's bones has an eery goldlit pendant above it and produces a drawing effect on the visitor. There is a good two hundred yards to walk from the entrance to the crypt, and the gold lit pendant beckons one to come to it. The statue of St. Peter, where the pilgrims touch his foot for a blessing drew as much attention from the people. I, a protestant, and for the majority of my time an agnostic, may have cursed himself by saying to myself this statue has no sort of power. I watched the pilgrims touch the foot of the statue and swoon on their feet, no one fell while I was there. There faces looked angelic after they made the gesture. I was sure it was a form of mass hysteria, and did not know the nature of the legend of this worship and do not to this day. As the seeker and student that I am I had to go through the ritual with a disbelieving mind. I lined up with the rest and made my way through the line and touched the statue. I placed my hand rather perfunctorially on the worn marble spot and thought, it just won't work for me. Oddly enough as i touched it i felt nothing, but a second or two later I did feel and odd electrical sort of feeling that spread through out my body. Being of a negative mind and not willing to con myself into beleiving in such powers I really was shocked. I was stunned for minutes and looked about the hall and had a thought to look for a possibility that the statue was wired. It looked real solid marble carved in the predominant style. the base seemed one block. I of course saw no conduits and only worn marble where we placed our hand. I guess I have to be a believer now as I couldnt understand how such a thing could be rigged., how electricity could be made to move through marble. I feel to this date that such supernatural sensations are possible from this experience. I'm sure all people imaginatively consider the possibility of ghosts and what not, and with a strong enough imagination can convince themselves that such things exist. The statue of St. Peter is something entirely different, and experiencing it as a dispassionate experimenter still must acknowledge that the sensation existed for me.

After
After the experience with the statue I wandered about the basilica. I walked into an enclave where two saints lie perpetually in state. Two old Italian men knelt to pray quietly. I watched the men and took in the sight approaching from twenty feet away. When I walked ten or so feet behind the praying men I saw they were quiet and motionless in their prayer. I heard a bumping in the coffin of the saint on the right hand side quite audibly. The crypt was on a stand and of inch thick marble a few feet from the wall on a marble platform. I was shocked and the hair stood on my neck as I heard this clumping sound from the crypt. I was now quite enthralled by the powers in the basilica. If these were pranks done by the priests and monks I'll never know, but cannot see how they were done. It will be hard to not recall these two experiences.

Our tour guide gave us the bulk of out tour the first day. I can't really recall the order of stops but we were taken to the Pantheon earlier in the day after the Vatican. This is one of the best preserved ancient structures according to our guide as it was a pagan temple converted over to christian rurposes and never fell into disrepair. It was solidly built to start with, and was not a copy of the smaller greek styled square column based temples. It was also later. The pantheon is in the area of sixty feet around and circular and three stories high at the center of it's dom. The cuts that allow light in record time like a sundail and rays strike different statuary as the day progresses. A block from the pantheon is a earlier ruin of a pagan temple.