



ARTE DIVINE™

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Vatican Observatory Foundation



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

Life-size Marble Replica of Michelangelo's Pietà to be Unveiled and Blessed by Archbishop Chaput at World Meeting of Families Congress

Philadelphia, PA (September 4, 2015) – The Archdiocese of Philadelphia, [World Meeting of Families – Philadelphia 2015](#) and [Arte Divine](#) today announced that a life-size marble casting of Michelangelo's 'Pietà' will be unveiled and blessed by Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap. at the Philadelphia Convention Center during the opening ceremony for the World Meeting of Families – Philadelphia 2015 Congress on September 22, 2015.

This famous work of art depicts the body of Jesus on the lap of his mother Mary after the crucifixion. The Vatican Observatory Foundation has authorized and licensed the creation of 100 Pietà marble castings from a mold derived from the original Pietà. While some have been acquired by private collectors, most of these castings have been acquired by generous private or corporate benefactors and then donated to Catholic cathedrals, churches, hospitals, and academic settings as legacy gifts.

Of all his sculptures, the Pietà is the only sculpture Michelangelo ever signed. He considered it to be the consummate expression of both his personal talent and the Divine inspiration that he believed to be the guiding hand behind his work.

“We are so grateful to have World Meeting of Families – Philadelphia 2015 selected to display an exact replica of one of the greatest works of religious art ever created,” said Donna Crilley Farrell, Executive Director for the World Meeting of Families – Philadelphia 2015. “To be able to share this truly moving exhibit with visitors coming to Philadelphia from around the world is an extraordinary opportunity.”

“We are honored to be of assistance to the World Meeting of Families here in Philadelphia and His Holiness Pope Francis’ Apostolic Journey to the United States of America,” said David Newren, Arte Divine’s founder. “It is Arte Divine’s mission to place Michelangelo’s Pietà in one hundred sacred and secular settings around the world. In so doing we hope to elevate the hearts and minds of millions of the faithful who may not have the opportunity to travel to Saint Peter’s Basilica in Vatican City and personally experience the transcendent beauty of this divinely inspired work that is Michelangelo’s Pietà.”

Co-sponsored by the Holy See’s Pontifical Council for the Family and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, the World Meeting of Families is a triennial global event that seeks to strengthen the sacred bonds of family across the globe and highlight its intrinsic value to the good of society. This international gathering will welcome Pope Francis to the United States for the first time in his Papacy. Being held in the United States for the first time ever, the official theme for the 2015 World Meeting of Families is **“Love is Our Mission: The Family Fully Alive.”**

For more information regarding the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia, visit www.WorldMeeting2015.org. For more information regarding The Holy See’s Pontifical Council for the Family, which co-sponsors the World Meeting of Families, visit http://www.familiam.org/famiglia_eng/00002554_HOME_ENG.html. You can also engage the World Meeting of Families – Philadelphia on Facebook (*World Meeting of Families 2015*) (*Encuentro Mundial de las Familias – Filadelfia 2015*), Twitter (@WMF2015) (@WMF2015ES) and Instagram (WMF2015).

About World Meetings of Families

Beginning with 1994, The Year of the Family, the Pontifical Council for the Family has been responsible for organizing the World Meetings of Families in Rome (1994); Rio de Janeiro (1997); Rome (2000); Manila (2003); Valencia (2006); Mexico City (2009); Milan (2012); and now, Philadelphia (2015). Since its inception by Saint John Paul II, the World Meeting of Families has sought to strengthen the sacred bonds of family across the globe.

About Arte Divine/Vatican Observatory Foundation

Arte Divine is a worldwide distributor of the Vatican Observatory Foundation’s licensed reproduction of Michelangelo Buonarroti’s Pietà.

The Vatican Observatory Foundation (VOF) generates revenue in support of the Vatican Observatory to foster its mission of scientific education, research and discovery. VOF brings together scientists, philanthropists and the Catholic Church to facilitate and promote scientific research of the heavens through support of the Vatican Advanced Technology Telescope and educational initiatives around the world.