

'Pieta' replica donated to El Paso-area church



FOR RELEASE SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2015, AT 12:01 A.M. CST.- Daniel Fresquez of the El Paso Mission Trail Association looks over the new Pieta inside La Purisima Catholic Church in Socorro, Texas. (AP Photo/The El Paso Times, Victor Calzada) [more >](#)

By MARIA CORTES GONZALEZ - Associated Press - Sunday, February 1, 2015
SOCORRO, Texas (AP) —

A replica of a world-famous Michelangelo sculpture that is inside St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City is now at La Purisima parish in Socorro.

The replica of the Pieta - which translates to "pity or compassion" - was made from the original mold of the Vatican artwork, the only piece Michelangelo signed. The sculpture depicts Mary holding Jesus after the crucifixion.

It is a gift to the Socorro parish by Richard and Esther Stewart, who grew up in Socorro. They donated it in honor of Esther Stewart's parents, Santiago Fresquez and Cecilia Candelaria.

Her late parents were faithful and active parishioners of La Purisima, which includes the Socorro Mission, from 1935 through 1993.

"This is in dedication to my mom and dad. They were very active in this community and this is their love story - between them, their God and their church," Esther Stewart, one of 11 children, told the El Paso Times (<http://bit.ly/1H9lm5Y>).