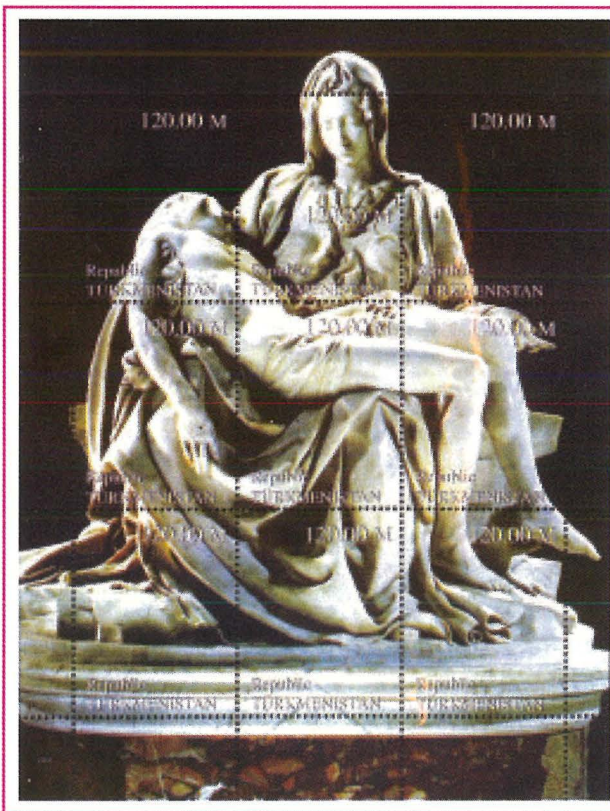


Marian Stamps from around the world

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Michelangelo Bonarroti 'PIETA' on Postage Stamps



The Pietà is a well loved subject in Christian art depicting the body of Jesus Christ, the Saviour taken from the Cross and placed on the lap of His sorrowing Mother, the Virgin Mary. This scene is mostly found in sculpture although there are numerous famous paintings of the same subject. La Pietà as described is also called the Lamentation of Christ, a scene from the Passion of Christ. When Christ and the Virgin are depicted accompanied by other figures, the subject is normally called in English, just Lamentation. In Italian Pietà also refers to two other representations, The Mater Dolorosa (Mother of Sorrows) and the Stabat Mater (Here stands his Mother).

The 'Pietà' subject know its beginning from Germany. Called in German 'Vesperbild' the Pietà was a common and loved subject in 1300. By 1400 the Pietà reached Italy and Central Europe and became a popular subject both in sculpture and in paintings.

THE FAMOUS 'PIETA' BY MICHELANGELO

A famous example of the Pietà is the one sculpted by Michelangelo. Everyday thousands of tourists from all over the world visit this great masterpiece which is found in St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican City. Compared to other earlier 'pietas' the body of Christ is differently depicted, while the Virgin is seen as a youthful and a repose mother, rather than a sorrowing older woman found in most Pietas of earlier periods.



Michelangelo by depicting the Mother of God as a youthful and beautiful woman wanted to send a message. All beauty comes from God and Mary is the closest of all things to Him.

THE PIETA ON POSTAGE STAMPS - A SELECTION

Several countries issued a stamp or miniature sheet depicting the famous PIETA by Michelangelo Bonarroti.

REPUBLIC OF ARGENTINA-1951

This stamp was issued on 22 December 1951. It depicts the sculptured image of the famous 'Pieta' by Michelangelo from a side view. It was issued by the Republic of Argentina with a value of 245 Pesos and an additional 755 Pesos. The surtax was to go in favour of Eva Peron Foundation. This Foundation was a charitable foundation founded by Eva Peron. She was a great political leader and was seen as Spiritual Leader of the Nation of Argentina. The Foundation operated between 1948 to 1955.



When Eva's husband Juan was elected President in 1945, Social welfare in the country was very poor. Eva who was born into the working class knew a lot about this. Most charity work was undertaken by the Sociedad de Beneficencia. The orphans of the Society had their heads shaved and had to wear blue smocks. At Christmas time they were put out onto the streets of Buenos Aires with collecting tins. Traditionally the chairpersons of this society was the Papal Nuncio to Argentina and the First Lady. When Evita became the First Lady on her husband's election to



the Presidency, the Society refused to extend the invitation to her. The Society brought up several excuses; Evita was too young; it was a disgrace for the First Lady to act as a Charity chairperson, etc. Evita became furious and effectively brought the Society to an end. With the words "It is time for real Social Justice" she created her own foundation.

MINIATURE SHEET – PIETA- REPUBLIC OF TUKMENISTAN

Probably the most beautiful stamp/s depicting the masterpiece of Michelangelo Bonarroti 'LA PIETA' was issued by the Republic of Turkmenistan (page 28). The republic is found in Central Asia and is one of the Turkic states. Until 1991, it was a constituent republic of the Soviet Union. One of the six independent Turkic states, it is bordered by Afghanistan, Iran , Uzbekistan , Kazakhstan and the Caspian Sea .

It possesses the world's fourth largest reserves of natural gas resources. Natural resources abound in this country but most of it is covered by a black sand desert.

The Post in Turkmenistan. Before the 26 April 1992, when its first Postage stamp was issued, Soviet Union stamps were used by this republic.

The government keeps close control over postal communications. As a routine Parcels and letters are opened by customs officials and delivery is unreliable.

The Stamps/ Miniature Sheet. This miniature sheet was printed in 1999 and issued in 2000. It depicts the whole image of Michelangelo's 'LA PIETA'. The miniature sheet is made up of 9 stamps, each with a common value of 120.00M. Each stamp shows a part of the statue. Although some of the stamps are difficult to recognize when seen alone, others are not just recognizable but quite beautiful, while the whole miniature sheet is spectacular.



ITALY 1954

To mark the end of the Marian Year 1954 the Italian Postal Administration issued a set of 2 identical stamps with different values. The brown and buff stamp had a value of 25 Lire and the black and cream with a value of 60 lire. The stamps were issued on 31 December 1954. Each stamp features the beautiful young head of the Madonna as sculpted by Michelangelo.

VATICAN CITY - 1964

On the occasion of New York world fair the Vatican City issued a set of 2 stamps. The 50 Lire stamp shows a detail of the 'Pieta', while the 2.50 Lire stamp depicts a close up detail of the same Pieta by Michelangelo.



1973

On the occasion of the 40th International Eucharistic Congress which took place in Melbourne Australia in 1973, the Vatican Postal Administration issued a set of 3 stamps on 27 February 1973. The stamps depict the Melbourne Cathedral, The logo of the Congress and a close up image of the Virgin Mary face by Michelangelo. This stamp carried a value of 75 Italian Lire and was printed in Green, Red and Black. Together with the wording XL CONGRESSO EUCARISTICO INTERNAZIONALE, the words MELBOURNE 1973 were printed on the image itself.

FUJEIRA

This beautiful miniature sheet was issued by Fujeira in 1971. It shows the whole statue of the Pieta.

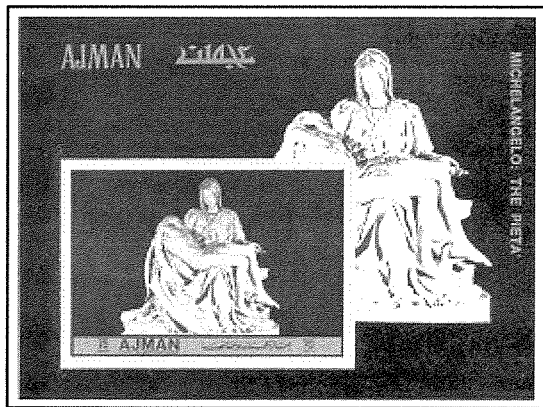
Fujeira or Fujairah is one of the seven emirates that make up the United Arab Emirates, and the only one on the Gulf of Oman in the country's east instead of Persian Gulf. In 1902, Fujairah accepted a British protectorate, becoming the last of the emirates to join the Trucial States.

On 2 December 1971, Fujairah joined the United Arab Emirates.



GIBRALTAR

A set of 3 stamps (page 29) was issued by Gibraltar in 1975 to commemorate the 500 anniversary from the birth of the Italian painter, sculptor, architect, poet, and engineer, Michelangelo Bonarroti. The stamps show work of sculpture by Michelangelo. One of the stamps depicts the Pieta in white marble colour on a black background. On the left of the statue, just behind the Dead Christ, the stamp designer included a halo in purple and white colours. This, together with the black background make the stamp sober, yet majestic in appearance.



AJMAN

Ajmân or Ujman is one of the seven emirates constituting the United Arab Emirates (UAE). It is just 260 square kilometres. This makes it the smallest emirate.

MOZANBIQUE - 2002

Mozambique, officially the Republic of Mozambique is a country in southeastern Africa Vasco da Gama explored the area in 1498. The area was colonized by Portugal in 1505. Mozambique became independent in 1975, and became the People's Republic of Mozambique shortly after. It was the scene of an intense civil war lasting from 1977 to 1992.

