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RARE VATICAN EXHIBIT COMES TO THE U.S.
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MARCH 6 – AUGUST 28, 2016

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(SIMI VALLEY, Calif.) – The Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum has announced that it is the exclusive West Coast destination of *Vatican Splendors: A Journey Through Faith and Art*, opening March 6, 2016. This 12,000 square foot exhibition, comprising one of the largest Vatican collections ever to tour the United States, includes an extraordinary collection of historical and religious objects, some of which date to the first century, as well as works of art by Michelangelo, Bernini, Guercino and others.

From the opening theater experience, where visitors will become immersed in the grandeur of the Vatican, to the closing object of a cast of Saint John Paul II’s hand (which guests may grasp), visitors will encounter the art, history and culture of the Vatican with unprecedented access and insight. This special presentation of art and objects includes many never before on display in North America, and some not on view to the general public, even in Rome. **Pre-sale tickets for the exhibit, which include admission into the main Reagan Library Museum and Air Force One Pavilion, are now available at www.ReaganFoundation.org/VaticanSplendors.**

Editor’s Note: Additional photos available upon request.

“Throughout his life, my husband had great affinity for the Catholic Church and as President of the United States, his relationship with the Vatican was very strong,” said former first lady Nancy Reagan. “He established a unique and very special friendship with Saint John Paul II. Remarkably, they shared similar personal backgrounds and together, they worked very hard – mostly in secret – to free the people of Poland and other captive nations from Communist rule. My husband would have been honored to know that his presidential library will be sharing this remarkable Vatican exhibition with the American people.”

Prior to coming to the Reagan Library, the exhibit will be housed at the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia where it coincides with the historic Papal Visit (September 26, 2015) and the World Meeting of Families Congress (September 22-25, 2015).

Following its time at the Reagan Library, the items will return to the Vatican, from which they cannot be absent for more than one year. The exhibit includes one of Michelangelo’s signed documents and a rarely seen bas relief sculpture created towards the end of his career. Other objects include venerated remains (bone fragments) of Saints Peter and Paul, artifacts discovered at the tombs of Saints Peter and Paul, and historical objects from the modern and ancient basilicas of Saint Peter’s in Rome. The objects are presented in galleries and recreated environments designed to enhance the understanding of their historical and artistic significance. Visitors will feel transported to the Vatican, from the underground catacombs where the remains of Saint Peter were discovered to the magnificent papal chambers found above ground. From the sights and sounds of the grand Basilica to a touchable cast of Saint John Paul II’s hand, the exhibition is a multi-sensory experience. It’s a true “insiders” view of the Vatican, including its spiritual, artistic and ceremonial treasures.

“The Reagan Foundation hosts many exhibits at the Reagan Library, but few, if any, that make us more proud than this one,” said John Heubusch, executive director of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation. “Vatican Splendors is truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience that one has to see to believe.”

Vatican Splendors is organized and circulated in conjunction with the Congregazione per l’Evangelizzazione dei Popoli of the Vatican City State. Items in the collection—which include mosaics, frescoes, paintings by Renaissance masters, works by well-known sculptors, intricately embroidered silk vestments, precious objects from the Papal Mass, uniforms of the Papal Swiss Guard, historical maps and documents and relics are on loan from The Reverenda Fabbrica of Saint Peter, the Basilica of Saint Paul

Outside-the-Walls, the Basilica of Saint Mary Major, the Vatican Library, the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, the Apostolic Floreria, the Papal Swiss Guard, the Vatican Museums, Pontifical Urbaniana University, Private Papal Storehouse and private collections. The exhibition is produced by Evergreen Exhibitions.

The Reagan Library is located at 40 Presidential Drive in Simi Valley, California. Public hours are from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. The Museum is only closed on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Years Day. For Museum Admission fees, please visit www.reaganlibrary.com. Museum exhibit tickets may be pre-purchased at www.reaganlibrary.com/tickets. For more information, call (800) 410.8354 or visit www.reaganlibrary.com/vaticansplendors.

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About Evergreen Exhibitions

Evergreen Exhibitions is a world leader in providing high quality, state-of-the-art exhibitions in collaboration with more than 200 leading museums and research institutions in the United States and internationally.

About The Reagan Foundation

The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to the promotion of the legacy of Ronald Reagan and his timeless principles of individual liberty, economic opportunity, global democracy, and national pride. It sustains the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, the Reagan Center for Public Affairs, the Walter and Leonore Annenberg Presidential Learning Center and The Air Force One Pavilion. Located in Simi Valley, California the Library houses 63 million pages of Gubernatorial, Presidential and personal papers and over 60,000 gifts and artifacts chronicling the lives of Ronald and Nancy Reagan. It now also serves as the final resting place of America's 40th President. www.reaganfoundation.org