

## CITTA DEL VATICANO

*Tony Curtis*

He showed us Michaelangelo's Pietà,  
 explained the Virgin's averted gaze.  
 In amaze, we stretched our necks  
 up to the Creation:

God's finger  
 crossing a narrow and infinite gap  
 to loath and lifeless Man.

An Eighth-Century Bible intrigues  
 with its painstaking script,  
 its detail of illumination:

Christ  
 dies before a simple-faced group of serfs.

But what brings gasps,  
   an eager pressing,  
 is Nixon's present to the Pope:  
 four fragments of Moon rock,  
 set beside the Papal medal those astronauts wore.  
 Protected thus, they returned with these  
 black scrapings, sealed now in the archive's glass,  
 set between the blue porcelain of Sèvres  
 and stiffly-sequined Papal robes.

If Michaelangelo's dying, dim eyes  
 had seen beyond St. Peter's Dome  
 then could he have reached out  
 for these nail-parings of the Moon.