

Vol. 1, No. 4

## Vatican Notes

### V.P.S. WILL NOT MERGE WITH A.T.A.

The voting blanks in the July Issue of the Vatican Notes asked if the Vatican Philatelic Society should merge with the American Topical Association and become one of its study units. The blanks returned showed only one member in favor of the merger, one abstained, and the remaining fifty-eight votes were against the merger. With such a clear cut majority in favor of staying a separate philatelic we have turned down the offer.

The Vatican Philatelic Society will NOT sponsor a special edition of Linn's Stamp News. Of sixty members replying, only three of the gang offered to write articles for it. Is that what is called co-operation?

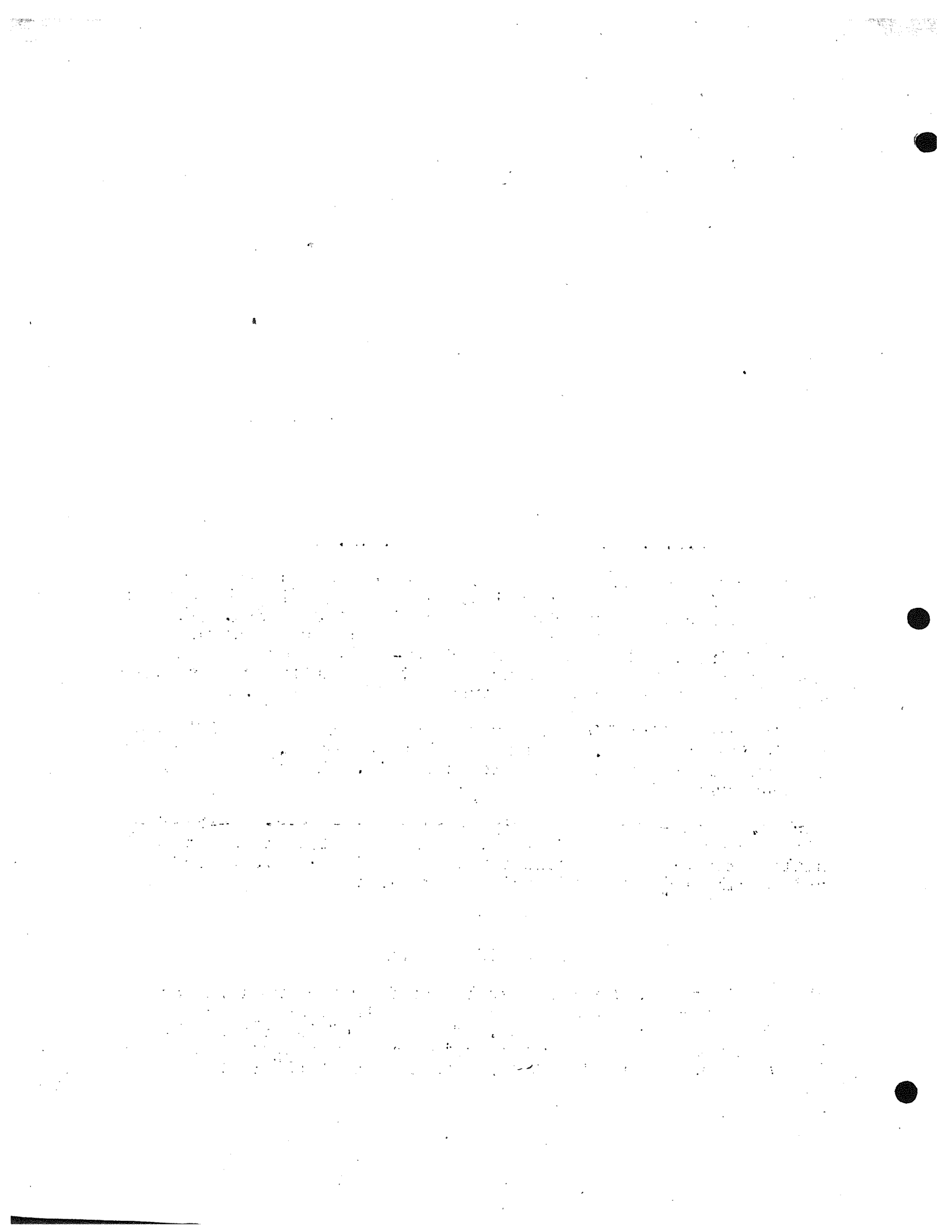
Carl P. Rueth of Linn's Weekly Stamp News was voted to be the first Honorary Member of V.P.S. We hope Carl will accept this small token of our appreciation for the aid he gave very freely and readily to make this society a reality.

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### NEW ISSUE IN OCTOBER

That's right, the Vatican Postal Administration will release the Saint Bernard commemoratives during the last days of October or the early part of November. Though no official announcement has been made as yet, our friend in Rome states that there will be two stamps with a total face value of 90 Lire or less.

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WARNING!!!

Handle those St. Clare stamps with extreme care! A number of collectors have found that the gum is very brittle and cracks very easy. One way to combat this fault is to remove all gum from the stamps.

Unfortunately we are again without an editor for the Notes. Hugo S. Barbiera has advised us that due to failing health he and his family must move to a state with more favorable climate. This sudden move will render him inactive with the group for about four to six months. Have we any offers to handle the editorship? If so please contact William Wonneberger, Jr.

ADDRESS CHANGE

Please note that the new address of the president is;

William Wonneberger, Jr.  
67 Jefferson Street  
Stratford, Connecticut

Be sure to make this correction on your membership list.

\*\*\*\*\*

September saw the release of two new sets of stamps. Each of these issues have some interesting varieties that are worth noting. The airmail stamps have been seen with the sleeve watermark "STATO DELLO CITTA DEL VATICANO" running through the marginal row of stamps. Both the 500 and the 1,000 Lire values have been noted with this watermark variety.

One copy of the St. Clare 25 Lire stamp has been seen with a plate flaw. It consists of a white crescent shaped mark that curves down from the "3" in 1953.

As dealers are usually in somewhat of a rush when sending out new issues that might have overlooked these varieties. Why not take a few minutes and check the copies you received? You might find at least one of these varieties.

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The advertising to appear in the Vatican Notes will be limited to just one page, and we might add that it will not appear in every issue. This will not be a money making scheme but it is being introduced to enable members to dispose of their duplicates and advertise for any items they might be searching for. ONLY VATICAN STAMPS MAY BE LISTED IN THE ADVERTISEMENTS, of course this will include Roman States material too. The right to advertise will be limited to V.P.S. members only and at the rate of three cents a word. Each catalog number will count as a word. Your complete name and address will be counted as a total of five words. Due to the limited space available we will be forced to limit members to a maximum of fifty words per issue. We also reserve the right to shorten the ad if necessary to oblige all members who wish to use this service. In case of cutting down on your advertisement, you

will receive full credit for the unused portion. This will be held over to the following edition and the remainder of the advertisement will then appear. If any attempt to defraud through such advertising in the Notes is discovered, the member will be forced to resign at once.

Arrangements have been made to secure colored reproductions of the painting of Casimira Dabrowska that was used for the central design for the Saint Maria Goretti issue. Details will appear on the advertising page of next month's issue.

\*\*\*\*\*

Where is your list of varieties and errors? Only a handful of the members have forwarded their list of the varieties and errors in their collections. We need these lists if a Vatican catalog is to be formed. If we do not obtain at least 25 more replies from you members before the end of October we will abandon the attempt of forming a catalog. This is one of the most needed items in Vatican philately but we can not do it unless we have some co-operation from the members. If we can not proceed with this work there will be no one to blame but yourself. Send your lists to;

Peter K. Murphy  
26 Lloyd Street  
Winchester, Massachusetts

Better do it today before you forget again.

\*\*\*\*\*

In this month's "Bookshelf" you will find a few books that can be obtained in Rome, Italy. If you decide to order these books be sure to allow for return postage. Unfortunately we do not know the weight of the books so we can only advise you to enclose about a quarter (25¢) extra. Use an international money order to send payments. Delivery will take about four weeks so be patient.

\*\*\*\*\*

We have learned that a dealer is preparing a series of about six cacheted covers to mark various events of importance in Vatican City. The series will mark different anniversaries during 1954 with the first being the Silver Jubilee of Vatican City as a nation. At the present no other details are available.

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The two new issues (airmails and St. Clare) were both designed by Prof. Edmondo Pizzi. Rumors have it that he will replace the late Corrado Mezzana in designing most of the forthcoming Vatican issues.

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We are still in need of articles telling the story behind the stamps particularly for the issues between 1929 and 1939. Have you thought of picking a particular issue and then going to your local library to do a little research on it? You will find it very interesting as well as beneficial. The Notes will be glad to publish your findings for distribution to all V.P.S. members.

COMMEMORATION OF THE DOGMA OF THE ASSUMPTION

By Rev. Harry S. Winca V.P.S. 33

It was customary to commemorate the days on which martyrs had sacrificed their lives for their faith in God and His Divine Son during the first few centuries of the church. But in time there was a demand to honor Saints who were not martyred and therefore by the end of the sixth century we find a feast dedicated to the Assumption of Our Lady into heaven on August 15th. This feast is annually observed by Catholics even to this day, and it is the oldest feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The foundation for this belief in the Assumption, which the present Pope decreed an article of belief for all Catholics, dates back to the Apostles. The Apostles had gathered from their various fields of missionary work to be at the bedside of the Blessed Virgin when she died. However, St. Thomas came after her burial and insisted on seeing her body. To satisfy him and also that they themselves would have an excuse to see her once more, they opened her tomb, in place of her body they found flowers exuding an unusual fragrance. Had the body of Mary been there, they would have kept relics of her since the Apostles revered her highly. But no one ever has claimed to possess such a relic and therefore it must be a certainty that she was taken up to heaven. Anyone who denies this dogma of the Assumption is as unbelieving as St. Thomas was after Christ's Resurrection. Jesus Christ who preserved His Mother from original sin certainly would preserve from corruption the body which bore him.

Besides the constant practice of the early church in honoring her Assumption we have the masterpiece of the Venetian painter, Titian, whose picture of the Assumption is in the Franciscan Church, Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari in Venice. Had there been any doubt or question of the Assumption, Titian would not have painted it some four hundred years ago.

The stamps commemorating this dogma tell the story in two emissions. (Scott 143-44) The 25L, in brown, shows Pope Pius XII proclaiming the doctrine from his temporary throne outside of St. Peters. The words simply state,

## VATICAN NOTES

Vol. 1 No. 4

### Dogma of the Assumption Continued-

"Assumpta est Maria in Caelum, Mary is taken up to heaven," and in the lower left corner we have the date of the proclamation, 1st of November, 1950. After many years of study by bishops and learned scholars of the church, the Pope now binds all Catholics to accept this belief, which is shown in the second stamp.

The 55L, in blue, shows the huge crowd assembled in the Square of St. Peter to hear this dogma. The giant arms of the colonnade were designed by Bernini to represent the arms of our Divine Redeemer stretched out to embrace the world. On this stamp then, the world is receiving the message of Pope Pius. The stamp itself has some angels playing a harp, and the words, "Gaudent Angeli, The Angels rejoice." These two stamps fittingly portray the dogma of the Assumption. The truth is one contained in Scripture or Tradition and is proposed to us by the Church through the Pope and it must be believed by the whole church. The first has Pope Pius speaking, the second, the members of the church accepting this belief.

Since our purpose in studying stamps is to know more about the stamps themselves, I would like to give a more detailed description of the giant colonnade which surround St. Peter's Square. Each colonnade has 142 travertine columns, four rows deep, and each is 64 ft. high. The inner rows are so far apart, 16 feet, that two cars can drive abreast between them. As you look at the columns it is hard to realize that there are four columns in each row and not one. On the balustrade of the colonnades are 140 statues, also in travertine, 10 feet high, and representing saints and founders of religious orders. Everything built around St. Peter's Square is so immense that one does not realize that the Piazza or Square is 1100 feet long and 780 feet wide. Imagine a building the size of the Terminal Tower of Cleveland on its side, across St. Peter's Square and having 72 feet to spare. If you would put the 1,474 foot Empire State Building at the back of St. Peter's and lay it on its side it would only reach to the middle of the square. From the stamp and from any pictures which you see of St. Peter's Square it is hard to realize the distance in so grand a setting.


VATICAN NOTES  
Vol 1. No. 4

Dogma of the Assumption  
Concluded

Even to read that three hundred thousand people stood there to hear the Pope's proclamation does not give you an idea of the size of St. Peter's. Here we find the largest church in the world, the Mother Church of that Church which was founded on St. Peter when Jesus said to him, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church" Matt. 16/18. Here we find the tomb of the first Pope, St. Peter, himself. (Scott 143-144)

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A GUIDE TO ITALIAN PHILATELIC TERMS

<u>WORD</u>	<u>ABBREVIATION</u>	<u>MEANING</u>
Annullo	Ann.	Cancellation
Annullo Nitido	N	Clear Cancellation
Annullo Nitidissimo	NN	Very Clear Canc.
Annullo di Mare		Sea Route Canc.
Ben Centrato	C	Well Centered
Centratissimo	CC	Very Well Centered
Dentallatura	Dent.	Perforation
Emissioni		Postal Issue
Filigrana	Filigr.	Watermark
Francobollo		Postage Stamp
Leggerissimo		Very Light
Posta Aerea		Air Mail
Serie Completa		Complete Set
Usato		Used
Usato su Frammento		Used on a Piece
Usato su Lettera		Used on Cover

If approved by the members, a postcard to your editor will do, this guide will be continued. In it shall be published philatelic phrases and words together with Italian words which can be of use to the group. If you know of any items that we can include please send them in and credit shall be given.

VATICAN NOTES  
Vol. 1 No. 4

CASIMIRA DABROWSKA, VATICAN STAMP DESIGNER

By William Wonneberger, Jr. V.P.S. No 1

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For the first time in Vatican philatelic history a woman has designed a set of stamps. The debut of women designers was made by Casinira Dabrowska for her portrait used for the design of the commemoratives honoring Saint Maria Goretti.

Casinira Dabrowska opened her eyes in this world for the first time in Voirsovie, Poland. She must have had an artist's brush in her hand at birth because by the time she was seven years old her talent was known throughout the city. Young Casinira received constant encouragement from her father who labored hard as an engineer. The fatherly inspiration were very assuring to Casinira and helped her to enter her first painting in an exposition in Voirsovie at the age of fourteen. The art work received wide acclaim and encouraged Miss Dabrowska to continue in the field she had shown much talent in. With a deep sense of pride Casinira continued painting without any help and absolutely no schooling in the ways of the world of art. Working on her own did not seem to hinder this gifted young lady as she had a total of twenty-eight expositions in Poland alone.

Poland was not to be the only country to acclaim Miss Dabrowska's work. She went to Paris and displayed her art in three more expositions in the Grand Palais des Artistes Francais. With success behind her once again she left the French capital for Rome in 1936.

While in Rome she had a portrait of His Holiness, Pope Pius XI. The Holy Father was so pleased with the finished painting that he decorated Casinira Dabrowska with the "Pro Ecclesia e Pontefice". In 1939 she painted a portrait of Cardinal Pacelli who later became Pope Pius XII. Her art work did not stop here. She went on to do a portrayal of Prince Chigi of Malta who again decorated her, Ex-King of Spain, Alphonso XIII, Queen Astrid of Belgium, Ex-Queen Mary Yose of Italy and her family, and various members of the diplomatic court. Casinira Dabrowska's masterpieces found great esteem in the Vatican and the newspaper Osservatore Romano has shown her work on many occasions. The Holy Year of Jubilee in 1950 brought many pilgrims to the eternal city where they had the pleasure of viewing a personal exhibition of her work in the Vatican's Palazzo della Cancelleria.

(continued on next page)



VATICAN NOTES  
Vol. 1 No. 4

NEW ISSUES

Subject	1st Day Of Issue	
St. Peter's Dome	August 10th, 1953	Airmail 2 Values
	500L Brown	Both of the same design, depicts St. Peter's Dome
	1000L Blue	
St. Chiara di Assisi	August 12th, 1953	2 Values
	25L Blue-green and Brown	
	35L Red and Brown	

Issued in honor of St. Chiara di Assisi, stamps depict the Saint.

Note: A most wonderful picture article on the above subject appeared in the August 31, 1953 issue of LIFE Magazine. On page 41 under the title of Religion can be found 4 pages of pictures and a brief write-up.

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Casinira Dabrowska  
Continued

In 1950 the pro-Secretary of State requested Miss Dabrowska to do a portrait of Maria Goretti. Casinira agreed and began her planning of a suitable way to present this young martyr.

It was a hot suffocating night in Rome and Miss Dabrowska was having a sleepless slumber concentrating on the portrait. Then about five o'clock in the morning she visualized the manner she would paint the portrait. It was then that Casinira began to place her ideas on paper in the form of a rough sketch to submit to the Pope. The Holy Father viewed this sketch with great enthusiasm. He was particularly pleased with the expression of purity, innocence, and grace. His Holiness gave his permission to finish the portrait and to be used as a motif for holy pictures to be distributed throughout the world. The same masterpiece used for the Holy pictures was brought forth in 1953 and used as the main design of the stamps commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the martyrdom of Saint Maria Goretti. Collectors desiring a reproduction of this work in color can do so by contacting the Director General; Imprimeur de Saint Paul, Fribourg, Switzerland.



VATICAN NOTES  
Vol. 1 No. 4

THE BOOKSHELF

Every collector should have a philatelic library, whether it consists of two books or a hundred. A well informed collector is a credit to himself and to his fellow collectors.

THE VATICAN AND THE HOLY YEAR  
by Stephen Fenichell and Phillip Andrews

This book is an illustrated history, guide, and reference book, with a complete Papal chronology and over 100 illustrations, including the famous art treasures. Another wonderful item is that every building in the Vatican is pictured. Publication date was 1950.

Available in two editions: \$1.00 soft binding

\$2.00 hard cloth binding

Order from:

GARDEN CITY PUBLISHING CO.

Dept 7SH, Garden City, N.Y.

Information furnished by Peter K. Murphy V.P.S. #5

A NEW GUIDE TO ROME  
Published Yearly

This guide book, which makes a yearly visit, is a very interesting compilation of facts of the Eternal City. It contains 64 illustrations, 7 maps and one large plan map of the city. The book gives an excellent account of Vatican City.

The price is

400 lire or about 66¢

Order from:

Enrico Verdesi Co.

Corso D'Italia 34

Rome, Italy

Information furnished by Peter K. Murphy V.P.S. #5

THE ETERNAL CITY  
by E. Venturini

This little gem of a book is a complete guide, album and history of Rome. It contains more than 200 illustrations, 3 maps and a plan of Rome. The feature is a floor model of St. Peter's.

The price is

\$3.00

Order from

Lozzi Publisher

Rome, Italy

VATICAN NOTES  
Vol. 1 No. 2

TRANSLATION  
SERVICE  
GERMAN

Anfang, A.J.  
#1  
STILLWATER, Minn

Oertel, Roland C.  
496 South Lincoln Ave.  
KANKAKEE, Illinois

Sister Callista, O.P.  
Superioress  
OBERNBERG, N.Y.  
via Hankins

Brother Canillus, O.S.F.  
St. Francis Monastery  
41 Butler Street  
BROCKLEN, N.Y.

Restifo, Alfred P.  
29 Douglas Ave.  
DELMAR, N.Y.

Weichelt, Frederick W.  
1153 East Sylvan Ave.  
Whitefish Bay, MILWAUKEE 11,

FRENCH

Brother Canillus  
as above

Morneau, Adrien  
774 Water Street  
FITCHBURG, Mass

Ennis, Father Francis T.  
761 Harrison Ave.  
BOSTON, Mass

Restifo, Alfred P.  
As above

LATIN

Elsen, Thomas E.  
25 South Hampton Road  
Wichita 8, Kansas

Murphy, Peter K.  
26 Lloyd Street  
WINCHESTER, Mass

Meyer, Lawrence  
865 N. Mercer St.  
DECATUR, ILL

Phinney, Herbert A. Rev.  
377 Walnut Street  
ROXBURY 19, Mass

SPANISH

Brother Canillus, O.S.F.  
as above

Elsen, Thomas E.  
as above

Father Ennis, Francis T.  
as above

Stout Edward M.  
9746 Longwood Drive  
CHICAGO 43, ILL

CZECH & ESPERANTO

Kovarick, Frank J.  
2502 So. Kedzie Ave  
CHICAGO 23, ILL

HUNGARIAN

Gaydos, John A.  
271 Somerset, Street  
NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J.

POLISH: Jadas, Leo T. 3626 E. 55th St, CLEVELAND 5, Ohio

## VATICAN NOTES

Vol. 1 No. 4

### OUR APOLOGIES

The last issue of Vatican Notes was a sorrowful job we admit. We are sorry that it went out this way but due to a Blessed Event, the time could not be devoted to it. We earnestly hope that such an edition will not be sent to members again. Mistakenly, the last issue was numbered "No.4" It should have been number three. This should explain to those that have written in why they never received a copy of the third issue.

\*\*\*\*\*  
FLASH!

An aerogramma just received states that the St. Bernard set will be released on November 10, 1953. The set will consist of a twenty and sixty lire stamp. No other details are available.

Another new item of interest to many of you is the release of the White Ace Vatican City supplement. We are informed by Washington Press that the supplement will consist of four pages and sell for 45¢. It will cover the sets issued for; The Council of Chalcedon, St. Maria Goretti, Pope of the Vatican Basilica, and possibly the new airmail stamps and the St. Clare of Assisi issue.

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We are in need of an editor for the Notes yet. Until we obtain one we will have only a bi-monthly Notes. We earnestly hope that some of the members approached will send their reply on handling this important task of the Vatican Philatelic Society. We would like to start off with a new editor in January with a new and more desirable layout for the Vatican Notes. We have benefited by our mistakes of the past issues and hope to round out the various suggestions made by members to improve the notes.

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Good News for a change. It looks (so far) as if we will be able to start listing the varieties and errors the first of the year. A number of you have forwarded your list of the material requested. If the rest of you will make up that list of varieties and errors in your possession we will have what we need.

To make this the most complete list ever produced, we still need an Italian reading member to help us. We have a number of errors listed in Italian that should be included in our summary but we will be unable to do so unless someone volunteers to translate. How about it fellas? Any offers?

We take our hat off to Thomas Boland of Haverhill, Massachusetts. Tom has sent in a vast assortment of material to be used in the Notes. It not only covers Vatican stamps, but various phases of Vatican City as well. It too will begin with the January issue.

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Everybody seems to predict various events and then waits for them to happen. We are going to do the same thing. What's our prediction?

Pope Pius XII has proclaimed the year beginning December 1953 to December 1954 a "Marian Year". That is, He calls upon all Catholics to stimulate an earnest devotion to the Mother of God and to lift their minds and hearts in prayerful intercession to Mary for the multiple needs of modern men. This year will mark the first centenary of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

In view of the importance of this jubilee we predict that a set of two or more stamps will be issued for the Marian Year and the centenary of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. Will we see this prediction come true?

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Thanks to the many request received, we will continue the column "Italian Phrases". Various philatelic terms will be translated for the use of members when they come into contact with Italian wording on covers, in catalogs, etc. We invite all to send in the terms that they have come into contact with that would be of interest to other collectors.

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To enable all members to have a photo of the portrait used for the design of the Saint Maria Goretti stamps we have purchased a number of them for distribution to V.P.S. members without charge. Each Card has a copy of the 15 Lire value tied to the card with a Vatican cancellation. Unfortunately we were not delivered the requested amount. We are mailing 99 with this month's Notes. All members from #101 to 116 will receive theirs with the next issue.

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We have a map of Vatican City that should be made available to all members. To do this we will need the help of a member who is a draftsman. The work consist of enlarging the supplied drawing to a size of 8½" x 11". If anyone can help please contact Bill Wonneberger.

There are a number of photographers among V.P.S. members that have offered their services to the group. To be fair to all we are asking that any photographer interested in making enlargements and prints for distribution to V.P.S. members should send a list of sizes they are capable of producing with their lowest price for each size. The member giving the lowest price will receive all the work involved in making photos for the forthcoming catalog. Mail your bids to.

William Wonneberger, Jr.  
67 Jefferson Street  
Stratford, Connecticut

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We have started to list the advertisements of members in this issue of Vatican Notes. We ask all members to read them. Some advertisements will offer material for sale that you might wish to add to your collection. Others will list the wants of members that are looking for specific material, some of which you might have to offer. Check the ads in this and every issue.

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#### TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance Reported September 30, 1953.....	\$126.15
Received.....	0.00
Paid Bank Account Service Charge for July...\$0.45	
	<hr/>
	00.45

Balance on deposit at Worcester County Trust Co..\$125.70

Respectfully submitted,  
F. J. Levitsky,  
Treasurer

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A number have written in to ask what a "Maximum Card" is. A "Maximum Card" is a picture post card with the stamp affixed to the picture side. The stamp is tied to the card with a cancellation. The picture on the card should be of the same person, place, or thing as shown on the stamp. The picture card however, SHOULD NOT be a reproduction of the stamp itself.

Maximum cards are a source of beauty and a new form of collecting. After completing a country or going as far as possible, a great number of philatelists are turning to this new field. The card is usually very colorful and brings out the finer detail of the stamp design. When a collection is shown to a non-collector their attention is usually drawn to maximum cards. If you have not looked into this form of Vatican philately why not do it now and add more color and beauty to your albums.

Before we are able to finish this edition the St. Bernard set arrives in the mails. So without further ado here are the statistics;

Title	Saint Bernard of Chiaravalle
First Day of Issue	November 10, 1953
Designer	Edmondo Pizzi
Printer	State Printing Office, Rome
Printing Method	Photogravure
Watermark	None
Final Validity	Not announced as yet
Stamps per Pane	40, arranged in 8 horizontal rows of 5 stamps

We urge you to be as careful with these as we did with the St. Clare Stamps. The paper is brittle and the gum will crack very easily.

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#### NEW VARIETIES

This month we find a few new varieties that have remained unreported for a few years. This is the first time they are to be listed:

#61 Vertical color line through right side of stamp

#63 Same as above

#66 Same as above

The line consists of the same basic color as the background but a number of shades darker.

#137 the word Santo along the bottom is spelled "SANTO". It looks as if this is a plate flaw and not a misplaced letter.

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This month's mailbag also brings a cover with a new type postal marking to the spotlight, "AFFRANCHISSEMENT INSUFFISSANT? PAR VOIE AERIENNE". This is loosely translated to read, "Franking insufficient for airmail". It was found on an airmail envelope delivered by surface mail as the prepayment was not of an amount to warrant airmail delivery. The lack of a return address made it impossible to return it to the sender for the additional required postage. The endorsement is in two lines. It looks as if it was a purple impression of a rubber stamp.

Another postal marking to be listed is "FUORI CORSO/HORS DE COURS". We are told that this means out of issue. The cover bears a Council of Chalcedon stamp uncanceled as it was no longer valid for postal use. This seems to bear out the marking. Like the first endorsement, it is rubber stamped in purple.



## SAINT PETER'S DOME

On April 23, 1953, the Vatican issued a new set of thirteen postage stamps honoring the Popes who played a prominent part in the building of Saint Peter's Basilica. Now, just a few months later, we have a set of two airmail stamps with a view of the dome as the motif. It is very appropriate that this segment of the basilica has an issue of its own. Respectfully named Michelangelo's Dome, it is the most impressive architectural feat ever undertaken on the Italian peninsula and the most familiar sight in the City of Rome.

The first thought of erecting a crown over the basilica honoring the first Pope dates back to 1503. It was then that Pope Julius II engaged the noted and renowned Bramante to design and build a new basilica to replace the one erected by Emperor Constantine that was falling to ruin. Bramante's plan called for a dome to be erected in the center of the basilica directly over the Tomb of the Apostle. This plan never was placed in use as Bramante died long before the dome could be started.

The dome, or sometimes called the cupola, was not heard of again for almost half a century. During the reign of Pope Paul III, Michelangelo was appointed to supervise the planning and building of the new edifice. He was given complete authority to alter, remodel, or demolish any part of the basilica that did not conform precisely with his plans. A number of changes were made, one of them the scrapping of Bramante's plans for the dome. When Michelangelo was questioned about his plans for the cupola he stated that he wanted to raise the Pantheon in the air. Before the dome could be completed the talented Michelangelo was called to his final reward at the age of 89. After his death in 1563, nothing more was added to the dome for a period of twenty-four years. During this time only the drum completed before his death was erected leaving the work in progress below exposed to the varying havoc of the seasons and elements.

In 1588, Pope Sixtus V the reigning Pontiff, became impatient and ordered that the work on the cupola to be finished. The order further specified that the plans and measurements laid down by the deceased genius were to be strictly adhered to. In the space of twenty-two months the famed dome was completed.

The exterior of the dome is a common sight to collectors of Vatican stamps as it has been shown on many of the stamps and stationery of the tiniest nation in the world. But the interior of the massive cupola is not as familiar.

The dome is supported by four immense pillars 16 feet square with a niche at the base of each sheltering a sixteen foot statue of a saint. The statues found in the niches are of Saint Longinus, the soldier who pierced Christ's side, the work of Bernini; Saint Helena, founder of the True Cross after the Crucifixion, the work of Bolgi; Saint Veronica, the woman who wiped Christ's face on the way to Calvary, the work of Mocchi; and Saint Andrew, a martyr for

his religion, by Duquesnoy. Above each statue an appropriate relic is preserved in a loggia of each saint; the spear that pierced the Savior's side, a portion of the True Cross, the sudarium of St. Veronica, and the head of St. Andrew.

Above each of the statues we find a mosaic of each of the four Evangelists in gigantic size. Still higher is a frieze with a blue background bearing six foot mosaic letters that read "TU ES PETRUS ET SUPER HANC PETRAM AEDIFICABO ECCLESIAM MEAM ET TIBI DABO CLAVES REGNI CAELORUM". (Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build My Church and to thee I will give the Keys to the Kingdom of Heaven).

Above the frieze are the sixteen ribs of the vaulting of the dome each made of gilded stucco. Between the ribs are six bands of mosaics depicting Our Lord, His Holy Mother, the Apostles and Heavenly Court, and God the Father. Just where the lantern begins is the inscription, "ST. PETRI GLORIAE SIXTUS PP. V. A. R. D. XC. PONTIF V." (To the glory of St. Peter, Sixtus V Pope in the year 1590, the 5th of his Pontificate). It is possible to gain a better view of the exterior of the cupola itself by ascending to the roof of the basilica. The most interesting way of making this climb is by the spiral staircase that winds its way to the top. Along the stairway are marble slabs testifying to the attempts made by royalty to climb the stairs, though not all have made it to the top. Atop the basilica's roof there are shops, a photographer's studio, a post office, and the workrooms of the workers of Saint Peter's. To gain entrance to the cupola, there are two staircases that lead from the roof to the dome. Inside the two shells of the cupola is a gradual ascending corridor that leads to the upper part of the dome. To best understand the two shells of the dome suppose we cut a lemon in half and hollow out the two skins. If we were to place one skin on a table and the second half over it with a small space between we would have a very good idea of how the two shells of the dome are erected.

The corridor leads to the first gallery where access may be obtained by climbing a short flight of stairs. The first gallery affords a wonderful view of the inside of the basilica directly below the cupola. By walking another spiral staircase and a narrow straight flight of stairs it is possible to reach the second gallery at the base of the buttresses. From here a beautiful view of the Vatican and surrounding City of Rome may be had.

It is possible to go still higher. By means of an iron staircase a visitor can climb to the ball at the top of the dome itself. This ball appears very small in pictures but it is capable of holding sixteen persons at a time. Around the outside of the ball winds an iron ladder leading to the base of the cross.

Many stories have been told of the great height of the dome but they are little more than statements of demensions. Perhaps we can

visualize the towering effect of the dome if we think of it as being higher above the ground than two Statues of Liberty placed one on top of the other. From the pavement below to the top of the cross on the cupola is a distance of 452 feet. The dome rises 300 feet over the roof of the basilica and has a diameter of 137 feet 6 inches, just five feet less than the diameter of Pantheon that Michelangelo wished to crown the basilica with. The circumference of the drum of the dome is 430 feet. This tribute to the first Apostle is topped by a cross and orb. The orb has an inside diameter of 8 feet with the cross reaching another 16 feet towards the heavens.

### SAINT BERNARD

Vatican City has added another Saint of the Roman Catholic Church to her philatelic hall of fame, Saint Bernard.

Bernard entered this earthly world in 1090 at the castle of Fontaines, near Dijon, Burgundy. His parents saw great undertakings for this young lad blessed with great intellect and grace. Bernard shattered their dreams when he renounced the royal splendor forever to join the monks of Citeaux. Thirty other young noblemen accompanied him on his journey to the monastery of Citeaux.

The order was still in its infancy having been formed only fifteen years before the joining of Bernard and his companions. The monastery of Citeaux was their goal, but they did not stay there long. Bernard was made Abbot of the fourth house of the order and he and his companions made their new home at Clairvaux.

All of Bernard's brothers soon followed in his footsteps, with the exception of the youngest, Nivard. He was told to stay with his aging father and he would soon inherit everything. To this Nivard replied, "Yes, you leave me earth and keep heaven for yourself, do you call that fair?", and with these words he joined his brothers. Soon after, their kindly father renounced his worldly gains and ambitions and joined his sons as a monk of Clairvaux.

The only member of the family left was one married sister who loved the riches and pleasures of the world. It is told that she visited Bernard, dressed in her magnificent clothes, only to have him refuse to see her. At length he consented, what he said was not recorded but the conversation moved her so much that, with her husband's consent, she retired to a convent two years later to spend the remainder of her days. Bernard's actions and example were not restricted to his family, through his ways he established 163 Cistercian monasteries.

Bernard was very harsh with himself, and he expected his followers to be equally strict with themselves. Many were disheartened at his severity, but his errors were soon seen by Bernard. He eased his rule and boosted the morale of the monks.

In spite of his desire to remain away from the world, Bernard's fame spread rapidly. Many churches requested him as their pastor but through the help of Pope Eugenius III, he escaped such requests. Though Papal intervention had saved him once, his seclusion was constantly invaded; the poor and weak sought his protection; bishops, and kings constantly went to him for his advice. In time Pope Eugenius charged him with preaching a crusade in France and Germany. His vigor did not go unrewarded. Two large and splendid armies were formed and dispatched to the Holy Land where they defeated the infidels.

Bernard's fame was not limited to founding monasteries and preaching the crusade. His other achievements were just as amazing; assisting at oecumenical and other councils, opposing and refuting Abelard, writing many treatises and sermons, particularly on the love of God and the Song of Songs, Bernard even entered the complicated politics to preserve the peace of the Church. It is said, "He carried the 12th century on his shoulders and he did not carry it without suffering." Like all humans, Bernard was not destined to remain on earth forever. On August 21, 1253, he closed his eyes for the last time and went to his final reward. His works and memory were not forgotten. Through his great teachings and writings he earned for himself the titles of the last of the Fathers and a Doctor of the Holy Church.

Bernard was canonized in 1174, and his relics preserved at Clairvaux and Troyes. This was not the end of the honors bestowed upon this great saint, August 20th of every year has been set aside by the Catholic Church as his feast day.

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FLASH!!!!

Today we have learned that a new set of six postage due stamps are due in the very near future. A second release states that a set of commemoratives are due in June 1954 for the anniversary of the Lorraine Treaty and the Silver Jubilee of the Vatican State.

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