

Vatican Notes

Volume IX

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Number 2

VATICAN CITY PHILATELIC NEWS

As the fall months come upon us the Vatican Post Office is preparing for the release of several commemorative issues. At the time of this writing, the following issues are in the planning, designing, or printing stages.

A set to commemorate the 10th Centenary of the famous Marian Shrine of Einsiedeln, Switzerland. This ancient Benedictine Abbey includes the Chapel of Grace, the home of the ancient statue of Our Lady of Einsiedeln. The Chapel itself, which houses this miraculous statue, is found within the Monastery Church. This set will be designed by the world's outstanding minaturist, Casimira Dabrowska. It should be noted that Miss Dabrowska has designed all issues, to date, which have depicted the various shrines of the Mother of God in European countries.

A set to mark the 1960 Nativity is to be issued. Reports indicate that a famous work of art, within the Vatican, will serve as the design of this issue. This will be the second annual issue to commemorate the Birth of Christ for Vatican City.

The Third Centenary of the Death of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louisa De Marillac will be commemorated by a joint issue of three values. At present it is reported that each saint will be portrayed on a stamp and the third value will depict both saints.

St. Vincent de Paul, founder of the society which bears his name, is particularly noted for his efforts to alleviate the sufferings of the destitute. He is also the patron saint of all charitable societies.

St. Louisa De Marillac assisted St. Vincent de Paul upon the death of her husband in 1625. They founded the order of the Daughters of Charity, better known today as the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul.

The long awaited new ordinary postage issue of Vatican City is the subject of many rumors. Reports claim the issue has been abandoned; that only Michelangelo's works are to be depicted; that the series, as originally planned, will be released in the fall; and finally, that the new ordinary postage stamps will feature works of mercy.

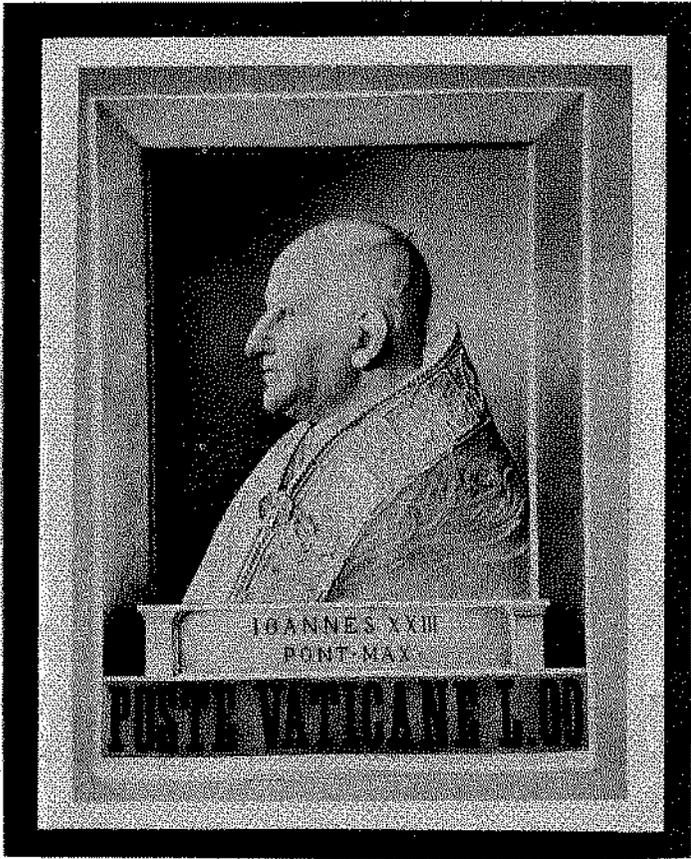
As these rumors continue to circulate it seems fairly certain that the issue, as originally reported several months ago, will be released before the end of the year and will feature the works of Raphael and Michelangelo found within the Vatican.

We now have a FIRST for the VATICAN NOTES. Pictured here are the original designs of this issue, except numbers 2 and 10 on the following list. This is the first time any publication has ever had illustrations of designs PRIOR to their release. The set will be composed of 13 values of vertical format of the approximate size of the issue it is to replace, the Popes of the Vatican Basilica.

The designs are the work of the world renowned minaturist, Miss Casimira Dabrowska, who has been responsible for the most pleasing designs of Vatican stamps of the past decade. The denominations are as yet undetermined but the subjects are as follows:

1. A beautiful portrait of Pope John XXIII in pontifical robes facing to the left. This likeness, of the reigning pontiff, is enclosed in a simple rectangular frame.
2. A portrait of Michelangelo Buonarroti based on that found in the Capitoline Picture Gallery in Rome.
3. A detail of the Separation of the Land from the Water painted by Michelangelo upon the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.
4. The prophet Jeremiah, detail of the Sistine Chapel ceiling.
5. The prophet Joel, detail of the Sistine Chapel ceiling.
6. The prophet Isaiah, detail of the Sistine Chapel ceiling.
7. The Delphic Sibyl, detail of the Sistine Chapel ceiling.
8. A self-portrait of Raphael Sanzio.
9. Francesco Della Rovere, a detail of the School of Athens.
10. Aristotle, a detail of the School of Athens.
11. Moses, a detail of the Dispute of the Blessed Sacrament.
12. St. Bonaventure, a detail of the Dispute of the Blessed Sacrament.
13. The liberation of St. Peter from Prison.

The works of Michelangelo, and his portrait, are enclosed by columns and border similar to that which marks his paintings upon the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Raphael's works, and his self-portrait, are framed by a portal. All thirteen values, in spite of the various type framings, have a common design for the postal legend across the bottom of the stamp and by the identification of the individual subjects. Miss Dabrowska has again displayed her artistic talent by her choice of subjects and particular unique ability to reproduce the facial characteristics and hands of the subjects, a talent which, unfortunately, engravers of postage stamps have yet to master.







Should the original designs be faithfully reproduced by the engravers, collectors (not only of Vatican stamps but general as well) will be proud of what will prove to be one of the most outstanding issues of the year.

The Lateran Pact set of 1959, which was to have been demonetized as from July 1st, 1960, will remain in use until June 30th, 1961, according to a Decree issued by the Pontifical Commission for Vatican City. This set is still on sale at face value.

According to the latest information the new set, depicting the Works of Mercy, will feature reproductions of famous ceramics by Della Robbia. The set will comprise eleven stamps; one for each of the Works of Mercy, two with the portrait of Pope John XXIII, and two with his coat of arms.

A massive modernization program is presently underway in Vatican City. The most extensive work, of this program, is that being done on the Vatican City Post Office. The present one-story structure, dedicated in 1933, will have two more floors added to cope with the increasing mail of the Holy See. Three miles of pneumatic tubing is being installed between the main post office and various offices of the Vatican to speed delivery of both incoming and outgoing mail. What direct effect this will have on Vatican philatelic policy, if any, has not been reported as of this date.

HELP ASKED BY MEMBER:

Member O. J. Simpson, of London, England, asks help in obtaining any information regarding the following two cancellations:

1. 1929, 80¢, (#8), bottom half of a cancel showing ERROVI.

This is almost certainly part of FERROVIA (Italian for Railway). The stamp also has some faint blue pencil lines on it. Could this be customs or revenue use?

2. 1935, Juridical Congress 5¢ (#41), cancelled MARSEILLE-REPUBLIQUE/BOUCHES DU RHONE/ 26-3-37.

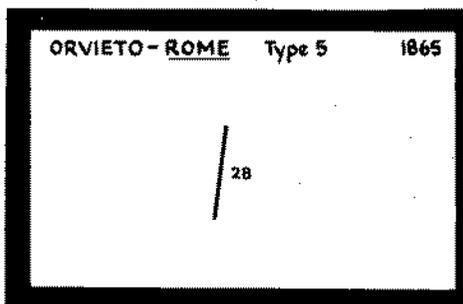
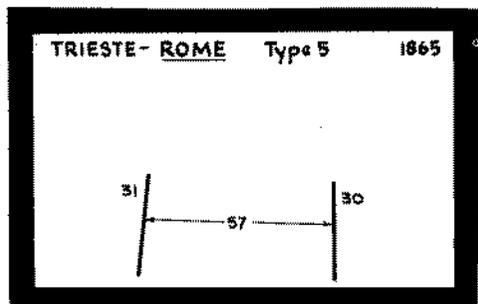
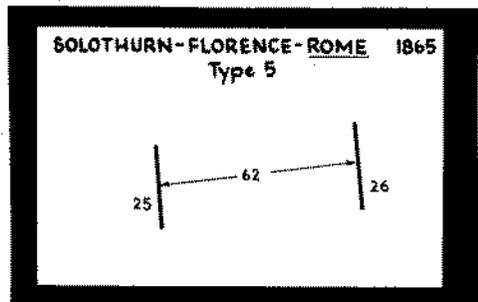
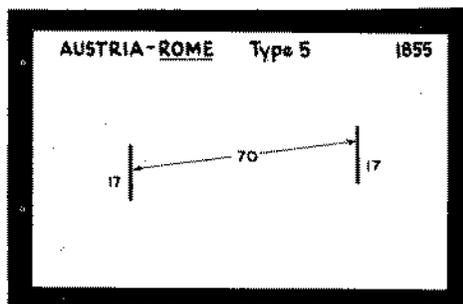
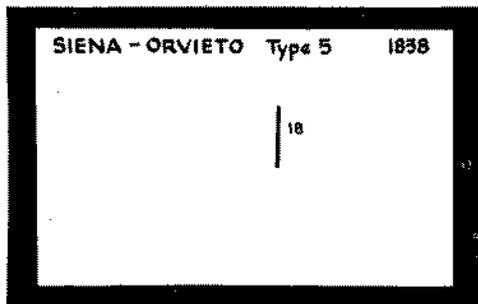
Was the stamp cancelled on arrival because it had been missed in Vatican City - or was it posted on board a ship?

Members are asked to send your answers to your Editor: Robert J. Hutcheson, 6606 Odell Ave. St. Louis 39, Mo. They will be published in the VATICAN NOTES.

Pontifical State Disinfected Mail Covers

This four-page article, on Pontifical State Disinfected Mail Covers, was originally published in the August 13, 1960 issue of Weekly Philatelic Gossip. Through the kind permission of the author Karl F. Meyer, MD and the editor Harry Weiss we have been allowed to reprint the entire article for the benefit of the members of the Vatican Philatelic Society. This article, by Dr. Meyer, is just one of a continuing series which he has written for Weekly Philatelic Gossip. Since this one deals with the Pontifical State we are publishing it only. The entire series will be published in book-form sometime next year and all those interested in this phase of the Pontifical State are urged to watch for publication information and make sure that they obtain a copy. This article will further compliment the previous articles, in Vatican Notes, which were written by Rev. Wm. Fletcher.

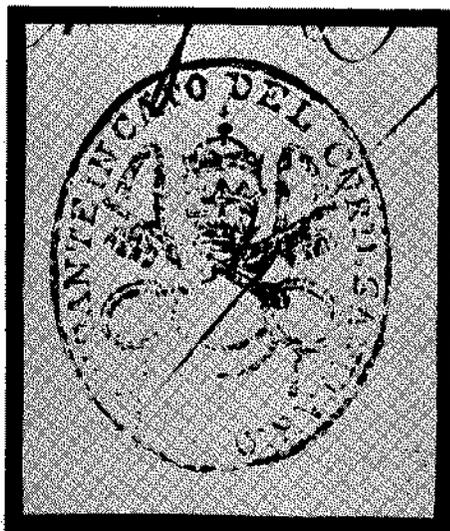
Pattern relationship and measurements (in millimeters) of slits found on letters carrying either one or two of the seven types of cachets in use by the Stato Pontificio (Papal Administrative Unit) at Civitavecchia or Rome.





For the purpose of defending themselves against the invasion of cholera the Pontifical authorities used troops to establish sanitary cordons. In 1816 the commander was stationed in Fiume-Esino as indicated by the following:

Oval single line cachet, black with papal coat of arms and inscription: " COMMANDANTE IN CATO DEL CORD(ONE) SANITARIO ". (lit. translation: ' Commandante of the Sanitary Cordon '. (Listed and illustrated by C. Ravasini, p. 60 Fig. 41).



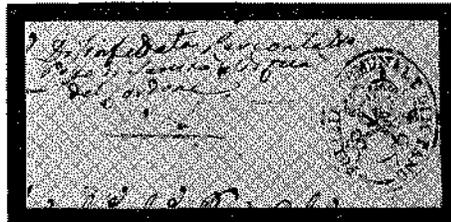
Circular single line cachet, 34 mm., black, papal coat of arms and inscription: " 3A. DIVISIONE SANITARIA RAVENNA. " (Lit. translation: ' THIRD SANTIARY DIVISION RAVENNA.) On a letter of the Commander to the Mayor of Codigoro in 1816 (C. Ravasini, p. 75, Fig. 76). Between 1835-1837 a sanitary cordon extended from Senigallia to Tavollo to the Po in the Marche's Provinces. Three battalions of auxiliary troops called in for this purpose with headquarters in Senigallia, constituted the " Cordone Sanitario Litoraneo Marchigiano ". (Lit. Translation: Sanitary Cordon on the border of Marche.) A company of gunners and a squadron of carbineers of the Pontifical forces formed the " Cordone Sanitario del Tavollo al PO ". (Lit. Translation: Santiary Corda from Tavollo al Po.) The Sanitary Cordon was placed on the Esino River to guard the coast from Ancona to the Po.



Circular double lined cachet, 32 mm., black, 1837, with papal coat of arms carries in outer ring the inscription: " TRUPPA AUXILIARE DI RISERVA " and below tiara " 20 BATT. E. " with ornamentalations. This is not a disinfection cachet but was used in connection with the suppressing of cholera. (Collection of K. F. Meyer.)



MANUSCRIPT CERTIFICATE - On an official letter with several horizontal slits from the Police Department of Fano as indicated by the oval cachet, fumigated by the sanitary cordon is indicated in handwriting reading as follows: " Disinfettata per Contatto/Posto di Sanita Diqua del Cordone ." (Lit. Translation: Disinfected against contact Public Health Post (Station) on this side of the Cordon. ") Collection of L. Bernardelli who sent it to Prof. C. Ravasini.



In this group of cachets belong several recently reported findings. On a letter dated 1837 from Macerata to Senigallia Prof. C. Ravasini (p. 69) found an oval stamp with the inscription: " Netto dentro e fuori " (Senigallia Type 1); in manuscript annotation: " Sanita Marittima, " two vertical slits and a cachet: " ISPEZIONE ECONOMICA, 2 DIVISIONE MILITARE. " (Lit. Translation: Economical Inspection Second Military Division.)

A letter in the possession of Dr. Mario Diena carries the sanitary cordon cachet listed under Acquapendente " CORDONE SANITARIO / le DIVISIONE / AQUAPENDENTE. " (Ravasini, p 415).

Saint Domenic Savio

SANCTUS DOMINICUS SAVIO

Domenic Savio was born at Riva di Chieri, near Turin, Italy, on April 2, 1842 and died there on March 9, 1857. He was the second of 11 children born to Domenico Savio and his wife, Bridget Gaiato. The father worked on a rented farm and the mother was a part-time dressmaker while the father was also a spare-time blacksmith. The young saint showed an early love for prayer. At the age of 5 he became an altar boy at Murialdo, where his family had moved, and on winter mornings was often found kneeling in the snow or rain waiting for the priest to open the church. Custom, at that time, was for First Holy Communion to be received at the age of 11 or 12, but Dominic was allowed to receive his at the age of 7. On this occasion he made four resolutions: " I will sanctify Sundays and Holy Days; my friends will be Jesus and Mary; I will go to confession as often as my confessor allows; death, but never sin. "

He was adverse to quarreling, but only after overcoming a temper. Desiring to be a priest, he walked several miles to school each day to prepare himself. On October 2, 1854, he was introduced to St. John Bosco, then a priest working for poor boys, and in Dominic Don Bosco recognized the makings of a saint, and at Dominic's request agreed to guide him along the road to sanctity. Dominic went to Turin to live at the Oratory established by Don Bosco where he not only sheltered homeless boys, but taught them to be true christians. When the cholera plague struck Turin, Dominic was one of 40 boys recruited by Don Bosco to do infirmery work in the city, even though Dominic was not very strong. On two occasions, through inspiration, he lead Don Bosco to people who were dying and were in need of a priest.

Dominic attended private schools near the Oratory where the boys of Don Bosco were given free instruction. In 1854 he made the Novena of the Immaculate Conception with great fervor, and told Don Bosco that he was consumed by an overpowering urge to become a saint, and from this time onward his progress in holiness so amazed Don Bosco that he began taking note of the boy's conduct for a future biography. Dominic organized the Sodality of the Immaculate Conception in the Oratory and from its original 18 members 17 were to form the nucleus of the Salesian Society, destined to become the third largest male religious order in the church. During this period many visions were granted to Dominic.

Never too healthy, he was sent home in the summer of 1856 to regain his health, and returned to the Oratory only to have his health fail again. By February he was so poorly that Don Bosco deemed it prudent to send him home for a second time. He told his unbelieving parents that he had come home to die, and over their protests received the last sacraments. On March 9th, while sitting up in bed and reciting psalms with his father, he said: " Oh, what a beautiful sight I see ", and died peacefully.

A month after his death he appeared to his father and told him that he was already in heaven. In December 1876 he appeared to Don Bosco, leading a host of youths. He foretold the deaths of some of the boys; the future of the Salesian Society, which Don Bosco had just founded; the death of Pius IX; and other events. Pius IX had Don Bosco commit this apparition to writing.. Almost immediately after Dominic's death his grave became the center of pilgrimages, and extraordinary graces were obtained through his intercession. On October 27, 1914, his body was laid beside St. John Bosco's in the Salesian basilica of Our Lady Help of Christians. He was beatified May 5, 1949 and canonized June 12, 1954. He was a model and patron for teenagers, called by Pope Pius XII: " A timely model for the youth of Catholic Action throughout the world. "