

# Vatican Notes

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## VATICAN CITY PHILATELIC NEWS



Dec. 6, 1960 saw the issuance Nativity set, the same design being used on all three stamps. The design is by Grasselini after a painting by Gherardo della Notti, who is better known by his Dutch name of Gerard van Honthorst, and shows the Nativity scene. The inscription reads MCMLX (1960) and the wording NATIVITAS D.N.I. CHRISTI (Birth Of Our Lord Christ). Values are 10 lire gray-green and black; 15 lire gray-brown and brown; 70 lire blue and greenish blue. Printing was by photogravure on paper with the Papal Keys watermark and perforation is 14½ x 14.

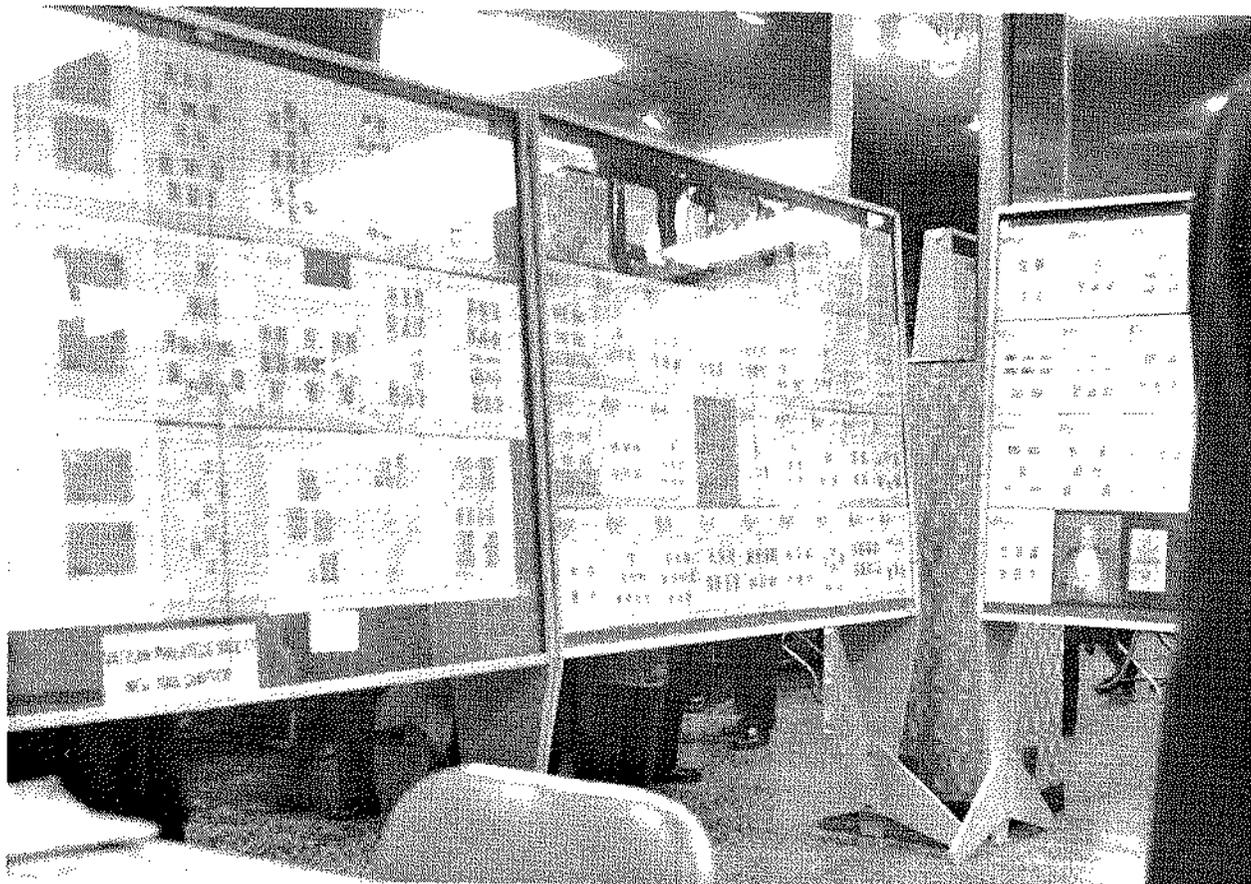


Dec. 6, 1960 also was the date for the issuance of the commemorative set honoring St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac. The 40 lire value, in violet, shows a portrait of St. Vincent de Paul; the 70 lire value, in black, shows a portrait of St. Louise de Marillac; and the 300 lire value, in brown, shows a meeting between the two saints. The first two values were designed by L. Gasbarra and E. Pizzi while the last value was designed by R. Mura and E. Pizzi. The printing was by photogravure on paper watermarked with the Papal Keys and the perforation is 14½ x 14.



*What a Local Chapter can do to Publicize Vatican Philately*

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 This fine article, written by Mr. Louis S. Marks, Vice-President of the New York Chapter of the Vatican Philatelic Society, shows what a Chapter can do when the entire membership goes all-out in cooperation and careful planning.  
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General view of the exhibit showing the collections of Rev. Aloysius Sterle and President Raymond T. Kelly.

They said it couldn't be done. All those we asked prophesied doom and gloom - but fools rush in where angels fear to tread, and so the New York Chapter of the Vatican Philatelic Society held a display in connection with " Interpex ".

" Interpex " is a different kind of stamp show. It is primarily the creation of Mr. Herbert Rosen. Each November we in the New York area have been privileged to have the famous ASDA show. But if the truth be told, the ASDA show is in reality a super-colossal giant bourse - there is lots to buy but not much to see. Interpex, as conceived by Mr. Rosen, is more like the large national and international shows with this big difference: instead of individual entries, all displays are by philatelic organizations. Because of the diversity and high degree of specialization of philatelic organizations, Interpex has a higher degree of cohesiveness and interest than do other shows. The

collector interested in Vatican or Pontifical State material did not have to wander all over the show - it was all in our display. This year Interpex was held at the New York Trade Show Building from March 25th at noon until March 27th at 8:00 P.M.

The purpose of the exhibition was to demonstrate to visiting collectors the tremendous philatelic possibilities in Vatican Philately. For this reason it was decided to show as many different types of collections as possible.

One key idea was to show a complete collection of Vatican stamps. The other key idea was to show how Vatican philately and its allied fields have much to offer for all collectors, from the beginner to the most advanced. It was agreed that the interests of the Chapter would be dominant to those of the individual members. In practice, this meant that members lent stamps and covers to each other to augment already existing basic collections.

The Chapter pitched in with enthusiasm. It might be of interest to other Chapters to learn how the old bugaboo of finance was solved. In the first place, all members paid for their own frames, or donated the money for frames to be used by other members where large numbers of frames were required. Some members donated philatelic items which were auctioned off and the proceeds applied to the Exhibition Funds, and an appeal for outright donations was met with a cheerful and healthy response.

The Chapter occupied its own lounge surrounded by its 16 frames. Our next door neighbor was the Cardinal Spellman collection.

As the visitor neared our lounge, he saw a part of the collection of our President Raymond T. Kelly, devoted to the Air Letter Sheets and Postal Cards of the Vatican. It was decided to use these, for while many collectors are familiar with the stamps of the Vatican, relatively few are aware of the existence of the highly colorful postal stationery. The postal stationery varieties were emphasized so that here was something for both beginner and advanced collector.

As the visitor entered, on his right was the collection of Father Aloysius Sterle entitled "The Stamps of the Vatican City State in Historical Context". This was a complete mint showing of Vatican stamps and souvenir sheets mounted on White Ace Album pages. This, the mint stamps mounted on the printed sheet, represents the goal of the average collector. Here the visitor could see such a realization. He saw the entire Vatican stamp output mounted chronologically and historically annotated on tasteful pages. Father Sterle had interspersed pictures of the Pontiffs, maps, and views of Vatican City. This was the "Key" collections which members of the Chapter used to answer visitors' questions. The two most common questions were "Where is the Vacant Seat set?" (this referred to the 2nd 'Sede Vacante' set. Apparently this set has fired the public imagination.) The second most asked question was "Where is the 'good' set?" (This referred of course to Scott 35-40, the famous surcharges.) It might be said in passing that there was always at least one member, generally three or four, on hand to answer the questions of visitors at all times.

The next collection on view was President Kelly's "Perforation Varieties of the Council of Trent Issue". This appealed to a

collector who likes to specialize. An oft heard criticism of those who collect 20th Century stamps is the lack of critical philatelic study. President Kelly's exhibit showed the possibilities of specialization with this inexpensive set.

Secretary Daniel Hedges' collection then occupied the visitors' attention. Its great strength lay in the Plate and Ornamental Corner Blocks of certain Vatican Issues. He also showed a magnificent array of Vatican First Day and other covers.

The Chapter had prepared a circular which was freely distributed outlining policies, procedures and above all advantages in joining our Chapter and the National Society.

Mounted on the table were two frames from the collection of Father Wendelin Heath, O.F.M., and Father Bertrand Campbell, O.F.M. The first frame showed the theme of " Our Blessed Mother on Stamps ", the second " Franciscans on Stamps ". Both frames had black backgrounds and gold lettering. The universal appeal of the subjects, combined with the taste shown in presentation, made these very popular exhibits.

Some of our newer members' collections occupied the next frame. Mrs. Helen T. Waldron and Miss Mary Warga showed selected sets of Vatican stamps, Mrs. Waldron on quadrille pages and Miss Warga on Minkus pages. Here again was a varient treatment on the basic theme.



President Raymond Kelly ( extreme right ) and Secretary Dan Hedges discuss a point with an interested visitor.

Mr. Vincent Romano's " Religion on Stamps " was an excellent treatment of an intriguing topic. Each stamp was illustrated by a Biblical text.

Dr. Louis S. Marks showed " The Stamps of the Pontifical State and Its Precursors ". This display was an excellent example of Chapter cooperation. Using Dr. Mark's collection as a base, Father Heath and Messrs. Kelly and Hedges contributed certain stamps and many rare covers. The result was a display beginning with the Stampless covers and showing all of the major numbers and many of the minor varieties of the Pontifical State. Dr. Marks had segregated the numerous reprints, falsifications, forgeries and fakes under the heading of " Study-Copies ".

As a result of the exhibition, new members were secured for the Chapter, many new enthusiasts were made for Vatican philately, and on the Chapter side, the practice and experience of arranging an exhibition was a fine lesson and experience to many.

What did it all show? It showed that with the genuine cooperation and enthusiasm of the members, a noteworthy exhibition can be put up by a Chapter. All it takes are interested people, and with those our Chapter is blessed.



Member Vincent J. Romano (left) points out an interesting stamp to member Peter J. Butkus. In the center background members Mary Warga and Father Wendolyn Heath discuss a philatelic point with Chapter Vice-President Louis S. Marks. In the foreground is Miss Butkus.

*Designers and Engravers of Vatican City Stamps*

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This article, as well as the one which appeared in our last issue, was also written by our member in London, England: O. J. SIMPSON. It was originally published in the July 15th, 1960 issue of STAMP COLLECTING ( an English philatelic publication ) and through the courtesy, and kind permission, of both the author and the publisher we are able to reprint it for the benefit of the members of the Vatican Philatelic Society.

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Since the first issue in 1929, Vatican City stamps have been designed by 13 different artists, but eight of them have been responsible for only nine stamps. The first 11 designs were produced by Enrico Federici who also engraved a number of them. Federici had previously designed Italian stamps including the Manzoni commemoratives of 1923.

Then came a long period during which Professor Corrado Mezzana produced no less than 64 different stamps, each a work of beauty. Take a good look at the 1946 Council of Trent issue; each value bears a portrait of some dignitary and under it are the arms of the respective religious order or the official headgear worn by each personage. Mezzana was an oil painter of note and was called in by Italy in 1930 to prepare the set for the second millenary of the birth of the poet Virgil. In all, he produced 154 different stamps before his death in 1953. During the next two years Edmondo Pizzi designed 10 different stamps, but the main artist between 1953 and 1958 was Miss Casimira Dabrowska who was responsible for 26 designs including the Brussels Exhibition set and the fine pictures of the 1958 Canova issue. Since then, 25 designs have been executed by Miss Andreina Grassellini and one more by Miss Dabrowaka in 1960. Is the Vatican City unique in using the work of two outstanding women designers?

Only three of the 19 engravers have been responsible for more than 10 stamps. Vittorio Nicastro has produced 14 since 1938, Mario Colombati 12 since 1940 and Mazzini Canfarini 20 since 1949. Many engravers the world over have included their name or initials on stamps and Vatican City engravers have followed suit. Although such stamps are the normal ones it adds interest to a collection to be able to show where this occurs. As the names can, usually, only be deciphered under a glass, there may be many collectors of these stamps who are quite unaware that they are there.

The 1933 Holy Year set was designed by Enrico Federici, but there is a doubt about the engraver. The catalogues are silent on this point and even Bolaffi and Pergolesi say nothing about it. I have seen it suggested that the printers of the stamps, the " Institut de Gravure et d'Impression de Papiers-Valeur " in Paris were also the engravers. This is possible, but I am of the opinion that Federici himself was also the engraver. There are two designs for the four stamps, each showing a globe surmounted by a Cross, that for the two low values differing from that for the two top values. The name FEDERICI appears on the last two under the value at the bottom left corner (Fig. 1), and in the corresponding right-hand corner under the surcharge ( the only ones in Vatican City postal history ) are the letters I.G.

These could indicate the designer and engraver, but I think they record the engraver and printers. When I was examining these stamps for proof, I was convinced that if Federici was the engraver his name would appear somewhere on the two low values, but this was no apparent. But a glass does reveal something unusual. The horizontal base of the Cross has four vertical lines of shading on the 25¢ green and the left-hand one is altered to an E. The 75¢ red shows five such lines, the left-hand one now being altered to an F. (Fig. 2). So here we have his initials EF, something of a puzzle in which both stamps are needed for the solution.



Fig. 1

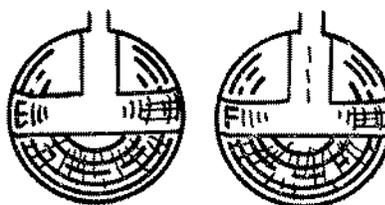


Fig. 2

I feel certain that any engraver who was not also the designer would not have taken these for initials, but would have considered them as slightly malformed shading lines. It is possible, of course, that Federici engraved only these two values and not the others. But in support of my theory is the fact that when he designed the 1929 Conciliation issue ( printed by photogravure ) he did not include his name in the design. Enquiries at the Institute do not provide the answer, as letters have been returned marked ' Not Known '. Possibly, the Institute was a war-time casualty, but it is all rather strange.

All values of the 1933 definitives were designed by Federici and the 5c value was also engraved by him and his name appears at the bottom of the frame on the left reading upwards (Fig. 3). This reads E. FEDERICI D.I., the ' D.I. ' standing for " Disegnatore, Incisore ", i.e. " Designer, Engraver ". Two designs were used for the next eight values, the frames being engraved by Federici in Rome and the vignettes by Ferdinand Schirnbock in Vienna, The same being true for the two Express stamps. Just to the left of the circle enclosing the numeral of value will be found the Schirnbock name abbreviated F.Sch with the 'S' reversed. Can this be considered an engraver's error?

The Vatican Gardens and the Dome of St. Peters are shown on the higher values and the abbreviation ( correct this time ) " F.Sch. " can be found at the bottom just to the right of the shadow of the wall. Underneath it, also in italics, appears "sc", standing for ' sculpitore ' or ' engraver ' (Fig. 5). If the vignette is displaced downwards on the stamp these marks may be hidden by the frame. Federici also included his name and once more it may be found towards the bottom of the left side of the frame (Figs. 6 and 7). The four lire values, portraying Pope Pius XI are the most difficult stamps of this set to obtain, their validity, along with that of the 5c., having

ceased at the end of 1940, while the rest of the set continued in use until February 1947. Federici designed and engraved these and his reversed initials FE appear at the bottom on the Pope's cloak (Fig.8). It took me some time to discover where Federici had put his mark on the top values, which depict St. Peter's Basilica, but his name is there towards the bottom of the inner frame at the left (Fig. 9). Beneath the label ESPRESSO on the two Express stamps can be found again E. FEDERICI D.I. (Fig. 10), and at the right-hand bottom corner of the solid white line surrounding the aerial view of Vatican City appears F. SCHIRNBOCK (Fig. 11). These two stamps were printed in other colors in 1945 and surcharged in 1946.

The 1940 definitives, known as the " Small Medallions " issue, were designed by Mezzana, the portrait of Pope Pius XII being from a photograph taken by Luigi Baumgartner. This was reproduced facing right ( engraved by Pietro Nicastro ) and left ( by Volumnio Cerichelli ). Just below the ermine collar round the Pope's neck can be found -P-NICASTRO-INC-(Fig. 12) or CERICHELLI (Fig. 13). I have a photographic reproduction of the original design by Mezzana and, of course, on this the shading covers the part later taken by the engravers' names. Nicastro shaded the collar of the Pope's habit with horizontal lines as shown in Mezzana's drawing, but Cerichelli used diagonal lines; in all other respects the engravings seem identical. The 5c value of the



Fig. 3 .



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10



Fig. 11



Fig. 12

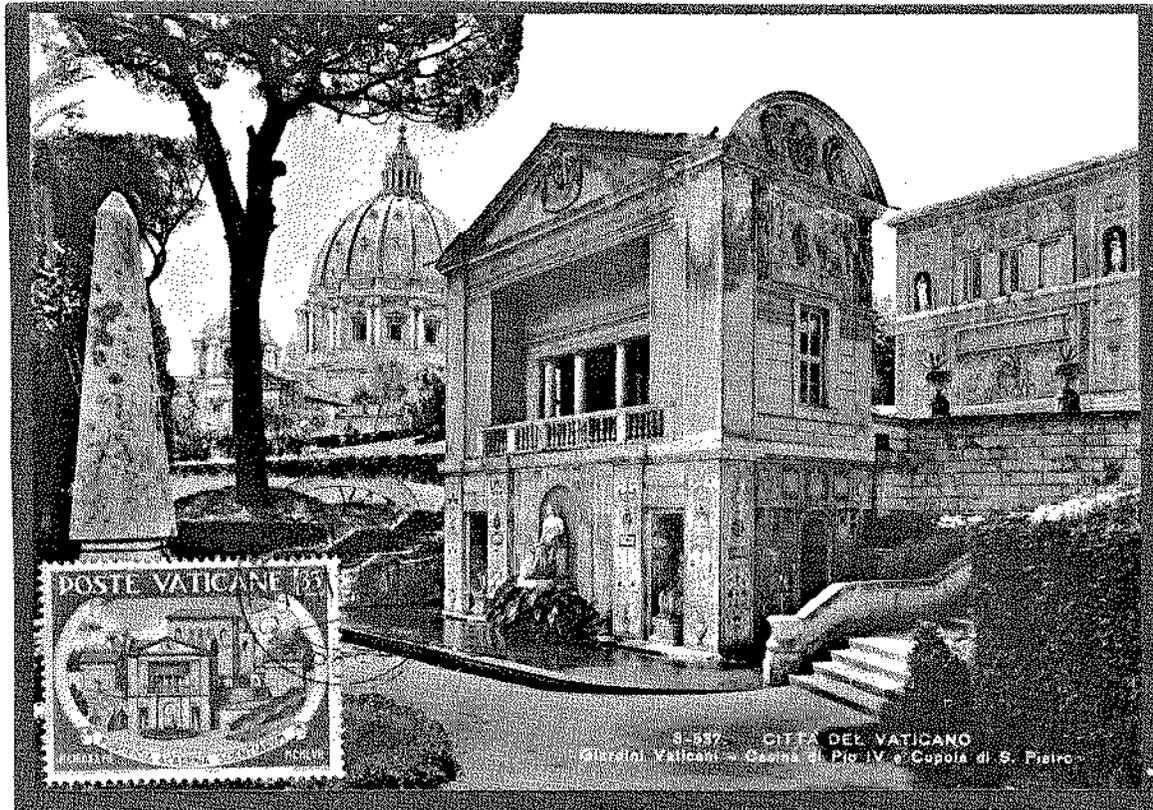


Fig. 13

same issue, showing the Papal Arms, was engraved by Mario Colombati, but he does not seem to have included his name or initials. Other values of this set appeared in 1945 and were surcharged in 1946.

I have not been able to find any such 'hidden' marks on later stamps. On nearly all of these the names of the designer and engraver ( if recess-printer ) and printers appear at the bottom of the stamp on the white margin between the design and the perforations. For instance on the 1956 'Angels' airmail set one can read easily C. DABROWSKA-DA ANNUNCIAZIONE DI P. CAVALLINI - I.P.S.OFF.C.V.ROMA-F. PAGANI INC. This, being translated, reads " C. Dabrowska after ' The Annunciation ' by P. Cavallini. State Printing Works, Security Division, Rome, F. Pagani, engraver ".

Up to March 1960, of the 152 different designs produced for Vatican City stamps, 69 had been engraved and recessed printed, the remainder being produced by photogravure.

*20th Anniversary of the Re-establishment of the Pontifical Academy of Science*

The Pontifical Academy of Science, in its present form, is of recent origin, but it traces its tradition back to 1603 when there was established in Rome by Federico Cesi, together with three other twenty year old men, the first scientific academy in the modern world. With interests in mineralogy, astronomy, zoology and botany, it aimed at both the discovery and dissemination of knowledge. They called themselves the "Lincei", those having the penetrating eye of the lynx. Galileo Galilei was a member. But with the death of Cesi the academy went down hill and activity ceased in 1651. An attempt at revival was made by Francesco Caetani in 1801, called the "Nuovi Lincei". The papacy had always supported the society and in 1847 Pius IX established it as "The Pontifical Academy of the Nuovi Lincei" in the Campidoglio. Under papal auspices it flourished until the new Italian government seized its library and archives, after which times its operations were slight for many years.

Benedict XV decided to revive the academy and appointed Fr. Giuseppe Gianfranceschi as its new president, with the intent of a complete reform and modernization of the academy, but death overtook the Pope. Pius XI confirmed the work and on the death of Fr. Gianfranceschi, called the founder and rector of the Catholic University of Milan, to be its head, Fr. Agostino Gemelli. In early 1936 Pius XI stated the purpose of the Academy as "not to honor Catholics, but dedicated to science as a font of truth and therefore a means of liberation from evil." Its new title was "The Pontifical Academy of Sciences".

"Study Week" brings together scientists to discuss difficulties and to iron out problems on a specific subject, in order to expedite progress in that field. World War II interrupted the work of the Academy, but it was resumed with peace. Study week of 1949 brought together

experts on cancer. Study week of 1951 saw geophysicists studying the localization of the position of oceanic cyclones. In 1955 the influence of microelements on vegetable and animal life, which can result in increased food crops and curing of functional and organic diseases. Cardinal Pacelli, as Cardinal Legate, officially participated at the inauguration of the Academy in June of 1937 and later as Pope Pius XII he supported and encouraged it.

The Casino of Pius IV, or Villa Pia, is the meeting place of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences. This is a country house constructed in the Vatican Gardens in a small grove facing the Cortile di Belvedere by Pirro Ligorio, ( probably born in Naples before 1510, and who died in 1583 ), a man of great learning in architecture, engineering, painting, writing, archeology and antiquity, but who had a bad name among archeologists because of his frequent falsification of inscriptions. His vast knowledge of antiquity is shown in the Villa Pia. Many ancient country villas are indicated as his model, but actually he drew from all of the best of antiquity to design this original conception.

Pope Paul IV had begun its construction in May, 1558, but his death halted the work in the same year, and Pius IV resumed it in May 1560. The general work was completed in 1561, and the interior by 1562, but antique materials were added constantly. The purpose of the Casino was to provide the Pope with an easily accesible place of quiet and recreation whether alone or with friends. The Villa Pia is the only secular building in complete preservation from the period of transition from the Renaissance to the Baroque style. It combines architecture, decoration and painting in perfect harmony.

The Villa originally consisted of two small buildings, the Cassino and the Loggia. These were separated by an oval shaped court enclosed by a parapet, with seats, and a fountain in the middle. The fountain and its oval basin show two marble figures of putti riding a dolphin, the work of Casignola. The courtyard is paved with white travertino and dark peperino with no regular patern, and the enclosing wall with but two entrances insures privacy.

The decorative art balances the architectural. The facades of both the Casino and Loggia are covered with stucco ornamentation, columns of gray Numidian pranite adorn the entrances of both buildings. The Casino has a mosaic decorated portico leading to three rooms while on the floor above one finds corresponding rooms. The interior of the Casino is more magnificently decorated than the exterior. The Loggia was used for open-air meals, and had a view of a fish pond and garden. It was decorated interiorly by the same artists as did the Casino. The Villa Pia was a clever combination of house and garden with the appearance of happy informality. Pius IV spent much time there. Pius V dined there frequently, while Pius VIII and Gregory XVI frequently held audiences there.

Pope Pius XI enlarged the Villa in 1932, having Giuseppi Momo keep the new construction in harmony with the original buildings. The entrance to the new addition faces the picture gallery, while on the Vatican side there is a private entrance for the pope. The new addition is connected with the rooms on the first floor of the Villa by an arcade. Its setting, amid the quiet of the Vatican Gardens, ideal for meetings of the Academy of Science.