

# Vatican Notes



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Volume XI

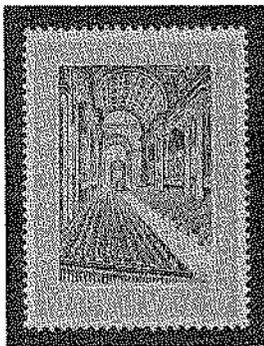
March-April 1963

Number 3

## VATICAN CITY PHILATELIC NEWS



Issue Commemorating the opening of  
The Second Vatican Council.



L.5- Allegory of Faith; L.10- Allegory of Hope; L.15- Allegory of Charity;  
L.25- Coat of Arms of John XXIII; L.30- Nave of St. Peter's Basilica prepared  
for II Vatican Council; L.40- Pope John XXIII; L.60- Bronze statue of St.  
Peter in Basilica; L.115- Symbol of the Holy Spirit.

MAXIMUM POST CARDS

by Walter J. Kennedy.

For those not too familiar with the term, a Maximum Post Card is a picture post card with the stamp affixed to the picture side bearing a valid postal cancellation of the stamp thereon. The picture on the card must be of the design, portion of the design or a slightly modified form of the design on the stamp. An enlarged photograph or reproduction of the stamp itself is not considered a genuine Maximum card.

The designs on the majority of the commemorative issues of Vatican City bear miniature designs of or a portion taken from paintings, photograph, statues or existing structures. Because the design on the stamp is a miniature many of the details may not be distinguishable. Although there is no prescribed size of the Maximum card, the average size is about 4 x 5 1/4 and it provides many details not easily decernable on the stamp.

The individual collector of stamps, first day covers and Maximum cards is desirous of placing his selection in an album that best illustrates them. As an aid to the individual who collects stamps there are various commercial albums. In trade papers for philatelists there have been considerable number of articles on how to prepare an attractive page for stamps.

To the writer's knowledge, there is no commercial album exclusively for Maximum cards. There have been very few articles concerning Maximum cards and the mounting of them. This is understandable since the cards are not issued by the Postal Department and may vary in size.

The writer has no difficulty in mounting his stamps to his own satisfaction, but the mounting of Maximum cards presents the problems of time and space, that is time to prepare a mounting that will best illustrate the card. As to space, only one average size Maximum post card can be properly mounted on an 8 x 11 page.

Since new issues are coming out in greater number than the average collector has time to properly mount them, it means that the cards have to be stored temporarily. If stored in a cigar box or paper bag for any length of time the card may become warped. In the case of the glossy photo type card, if you attempt to straighten out the card by bending it back in the opposite direction you may crack the glossy surface. The retail stamp stores have albums with acetate inserts for first day covers but these would be too narrow for some of the Maximum cards.

The writer obtained an album in a photo shop. The album which is a post binder consists of two posts running down each side and strung across the post are 25 wires about 1/4" apart from which hang acetate or clear plastic jackets (open on each side) 5 x 7 in size. There are two such assemblies, one on each side of the book, or a total of 50 jackets. The jackets, or covers, overlap one another similar to a Kardex File. This album can be used as a storage album or a permanent album. If used for a storage album you merely place the card in the acetate pocket. When the details of the new issue are published in the Vatican Notes and trade publications you can make a note of some of the interesting details and place these notes in the acetate pocket with the card. When ready to mount the card in a permanent album you will have available details of the issue which you may wish to record on the album page.

For the collector who doesn't have sufficient spare time to make up an individual 8 x 11 album page for each card, the photo album with acetate pockets may serve as a permanent album. For those wishing to use it as a permanent album, the following suggested method may be of some value.

Since Maximum cards vary in size, merely by inserting them in the pocket they would slide around. In a stationery store you can purchase white blank (no lines) index cards. The size of the larger index cards is 5 x 8 and generally sells for about 50¢ for 100 cards. By cutting off one inch from the width, the card will fit snugly in the 5 x 7 pocket of the album. Since the index card is larger than the Maximum card a notation can be made at the bottom portion of the card which will identify the stamp issue. For the collector who may want to remove the Maximum card at a later date for exhibition it can be placed on the index card by the use of two corner picture mounts. For a permanent mount you can use a small amount of rubber cement. Another method would be to make two small diagonal slits or cuts on the index card, the cuts being positioned so that two opposite corners of the Maximum card can be inserted therein.

For the collector who desires to record the details of the stamp issue, this information can be typed or printed on a separate index card and it can be placed on the back side of the acetate pocket. It is recommended that two separate cards be used, one for mounting the Maximum and the other for the detailed information concerning the issue.

Since there are 50 acetate pockets in the album you can store 100 cards or 50 Maximum cards with detailed explanations of the issues.

In a future article in the Vatican Notes, the mounting and various layouts for Maximum cards on 8 x 11 album sheets will be discussed. This article will be based on the writer's experience which is rather limited. The writer would appreciate receiving comments and suggestions from collectors as to the method they use in mounting and laying out their album pages. Such comments can be incorporated in a future article and may be useful to other collectors. Your comments can be sent to Walter J. Kennedy, 84-49 Elmhurst Avenue, Elmhurst 23 New York.

### VATICAN CITY PHILATELIC NEWS



#### Christmas Issue - 1963.

These stamps represent an Indian Nativity scene which was painted by Marcus Topno and exhibited at the Show of Missionary Art in Rome during the Holy Year of 1950.

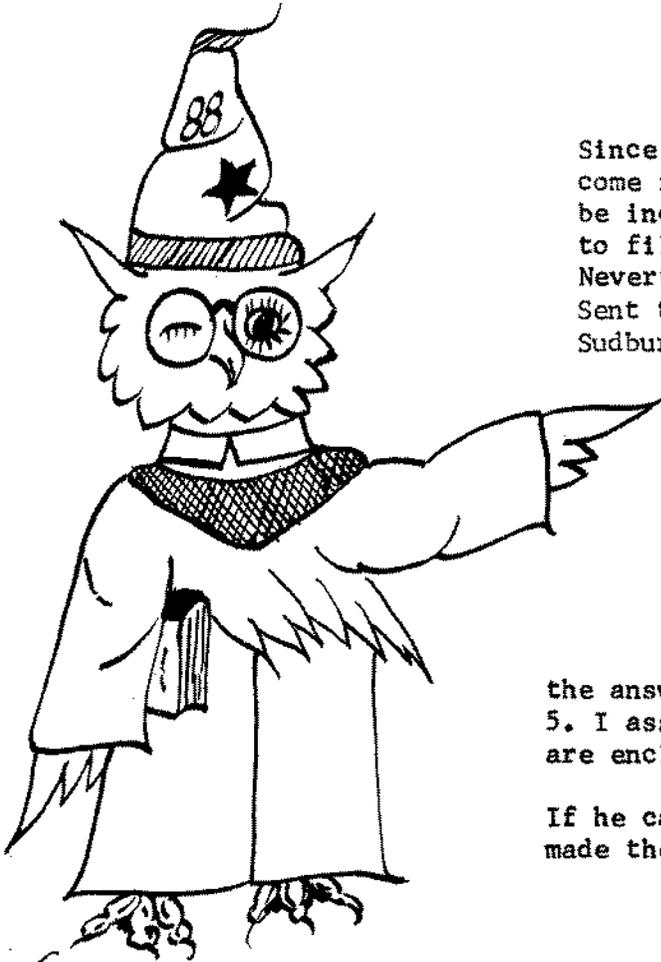
## DUES NOTICES.

Dues Notice was printed in the May-June 1962 issue and read as follows: "Dues for the year 1962-1963 are payable July 1. Please make your remittances payable to: VATICAN PHILATELIC SOCIETY and send it directly to the Secretary, Wallace R. Smith at 165-15 Union Turnpike, Flushing 66, N.Y. (see page 4- that issue)

It was no fault of the Editor or of the Northern Ohio Chapter (which mails out the Notes) that this issue did not reach members until October. But as a result, many members have failed to pay their dues (420). According to the Constitution these members should have been dropped for this reason on Sept. 30 (122 were dropped for this cause last year) but because of late notification, they are being given a period of grace. Please remit dues immediately; next years dues will be coming up in three months.



## The NO-IT-OWL.



Since becoming editor of Vatican Notes suggestions have come from several sources, that a Question-Answer column be incorporated into the Notes. This is a large order to fill, even for a Know-It-All, which the editor is not. Nevertheless, an effort will be made to answer questions sent to the editor: Rev. Herbert A. Phinney, Box 346, Sudbury, Mass., on the following conditions:-

1. The questions be on philately of the Vatican and Pontifical State. No stamp expertizing.
2. A self-addressed, stamped envelope must be enclosed with each inquiry.
3. The member's VPS number must be included.
4. Dont expect 24 hour service. Collecting is a spare time hobby with me too. Answers will be printed in the Notes if possible, or at least answered in your stamped envelope, with the answer or admission that I do not have the answer.
5. I assume no responsibility for unsolicited items which are enclosed with the inquiry.

If he can bat .500, the NO-IT-OWL will consider he has made the Big Leagues.

Give him a try, but dont be surprized if the NO-IT-OWL strikes out a few times.

# The NO-IT-OWL



Thank You, Mr. Editor!

In the rush to get out the January-February issue of Notes (trying to expedite elections) no word of thanks was expressed to our most recent Editor, Mr. Francis E. Welch. In the year which he promised to give to V.P.S. he sent to the printer seven fine editions of Vatican Notes. Having completed his successful year he joins the ranks of other men and women who have done so well for Vatican Notes over the years:- Robert J. Hutcheson, George M.K. Baker, Miss Catherine R. Hughes and William Wonneberger Jr. For keeping Vatican Notes on such a high level, with our thanks we say to Frank Welch: WELL DONE!

The Pontifical State Genuine 50 Baj.

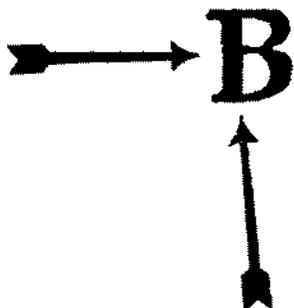


1. Bottom horizontal line of B of BAJ and upstroke join solidly.
2. Upstroke of B of BAJ. is straight.
3. Top horizontal stroke of 5 of 50 is complete.



1 & 2.

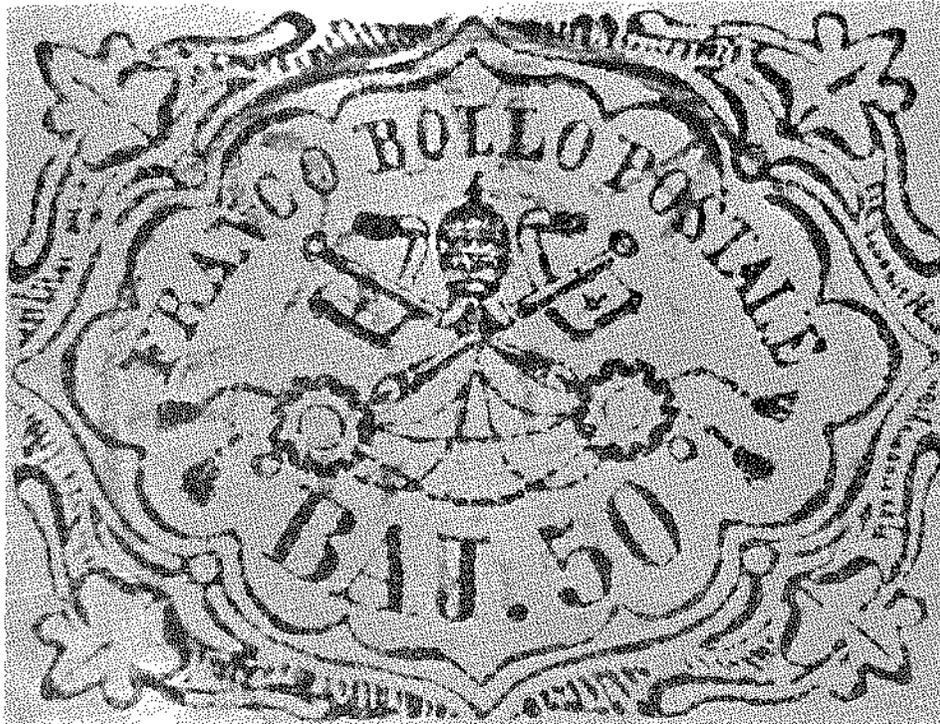
3.



5

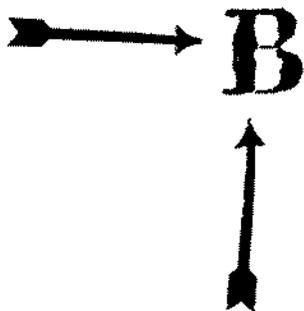
The De Sperati Forgery of the 50 Baj.

1. Break in the lower horizontal line of B of BAJ at left near upstroke.
2. Upstroke of B of BAJ bows out slightly to left.
3. Top horizontal stroke of 5 of 50 is defective.



1 & 2.

3.



### The Inscription Block of Five.

Beginning with the two stamps commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Martyrdom of St. Maria Goretti, the Vatican has issued stamps of this size on four occasions which require the inscription block: St. Maria Goretti (2), issued February 12, 1953; St. Bartholemew of Grottaferrata (3) on December 29, 1955; St. Rita of Cascia (3) on May 19, 1956; and St. Dominic Savio (4) on March 21, 1957.

This particular format came to my attention for the first time with the issuing of the Donizetti stamp of Italy, which had its first day on October 23, 1949. Italy had earlier stamps of about the same size, but I have never seen the inscription block connected with them, nor with any stamp until the Donizetti commemorative.

Because of the size of the stamp, there was room for 64 stamps on each pane. Ordinarily stamps printed at the Government Printing Office of Italy for both Italy and the Vatican have the inscription of value printed on the margin of the pane, giving the number of stamps in the pane and its total value.

If 64 stamps were printed on a pane, this would have made bookkeeping complicated for the post office and branches, since each pane would end in an odd value of Lire instead of ending in a zero. In order to simplify addition, and therefore the accounting, the stamps were printed in a number ending in zero- 60 to a pane, which brought the value of the page to a round number each time- easy for bookkeeping.

This left four spaces for stamps unused. In this space was placed (as in the case of the 15 Lire value of the St. Maria Goretti pane) the inscription: IL FOGLIO DI SESSANTA FRANCOBOLLI VALE LIRE 900 (A Pane of Sixty Stamps - Value 900 Lire).

For the Maria Goretti issue this block occupies the upper right hand corner of the pane. The St. Bartholemew of Grottaferrata and the St. Dominic Savio issue likewise have the inscription block in the upper right hand corner. The St. Rita of Cascia issue alone has the inscription in the upper left hand corner.

Like everything else in collecting, the rarity attracts attention. So collectors look for the inscription block surrounded by five stamps. Since there is only one inscription block in every pane of sixty stamps, the number of inscription blocks is very limited, the same condition we find with United States plate number blocks, but even more so.

In doing the mathematics to determine the exact number of inscription blocks which exist for each issue - by taking the total number of sets issued as given in the catalogues which carry this information and dividing by 60, the number of stamps to a pane, I came up with some very interesting answers.



The total number of sets given for the St. Maria Goretti stamp is 250,000 which makes 4,166 4/6 blocks. St. Bartholemew of Grottaferrata and St. Dominic Savio come out even, 300,000 sets resulting in 5000 inscription blocks each. St Rita has 400,000 sets given which result in 6,666 4/6 inscription blocks. The answer must be that the total number of sets was very near the number given, but not that exact number. The inscription block of five is a very attractive item. The numbers given above show that the number of collectable blocks is still quite restricted. With the number of Vatican collectors here and abroad, they are scarcer than you think.

The inscription is given in five lines as the illustration shows. Of course the total value of the pane differs with the value of the stamp, as shown below.

The spaces for the four stamps were used for the inscription to prevent government watermarked and perforated paper from falling into the hands of forgers for their illicit purposes. For this same reason (as well as for accounting) the inscription of value, greek borders and engraved designs have been printed along the margins of the panes. This is especially necessary in cases where the margin is wide or two panes may be purchased with the gutter between intact.



St. Maria Goretti:-

15:	IL	FOGLIO	DI	SESSANTA	FRANCOBOLLI	VALE	LIRE	900
35:	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	2100

St. Bartholemew of Grottaferrata

10:	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	600
25:	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	1500
100:	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	6000

St. Rita of Cascia

10:	IL	FOGLIO	DI	SESSANTA	FRANCOBOLLI	VALE	LIRE	600
25:	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	1500
35:	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	2100

St. Dominic Savio

4:	IL	FOGLIO	DI	SESSANTA	FRANCOBOLLI	VALE	LIRE	240
6:	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	360
25:	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	1500
60:	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	3600



JEAN DE SPERATI - Forger or Maker of Artistic Reproductions ?

Jean De Sperati, born Giovanni De Sperati, Oct. 14, 1884, at Via de Rossi 34, Pistoia, Italy, was one of four sons of Enrico DeSperati and his wife, Maria Arnulfi. One brother became a photographer and another a stamp dealer. Giovanni learned about both trades by helping his brothers in their businesses. Because of the photography he studied chemistry. In a paper mill belonging to relatives he acquired his knowledge of paper. He tried some reproduction of stamps at an early age, but it was in 1906 at the age of 22 that he seriously began copying stamps. In 1909 he moved to Paris, and changed Giovanni to the French, Jean. Later he moved to Lyons and then to permanent residence at Aix-les-Bains. As early as 1911 some of his forgeries appeared in Berlin.

It was legal in France to reproduce foreign stamps and even French stamps no longer valid for postage. He continued his career of reproducing valuable stamps, with and without overprints and cancellations, selling them as artistic reproductions. Each copy was signed on the back with soft pencil, which many unscrupulous dealers often erased to sell the forgery as the genuine.

In 1942 he sent some reproductions to Spain by mail. The letter was opened by French Customs, and he was charged with smuggling funds out of France. The philatelic experts of the government examined them and declared them genuine, and the estimated of value ranged from 78,000 to 223,400 francs. DeSperati admitted mailing the stamps but claimed against the experts for the government that they were reproductions made by him and so not worth even a small fraction of the valuation given. He was found guilty, and facing severe punishment, he appealed his case in 1945. Philatelic experts now refused to sit on a committee of three proposed to judge the stamps. Finally in 1948, Leon Dubus of the French Philatelic Academy declared them reproductions. De Sperati was found guilty on a reduced charge, but did not serve his sentence because of ill health. He died at Aix-les-Bains April 26, 1957.

The British Philatelic Association announced on March 1, 1954, the purchase of DeSperati's forging equipment, stock of forgeries, manuscripts and rights for an estimated \$15,000.00. They found there were 558 varieties of 391 stamps, which if genuine, would have the value of \$5,000,000.00. They published two volumes on the works of DeSperati, marked the reproductions indelibly and distributed them to members.

	10	26
DeSperati had two forged dated circular cancels: GIU	and	NOV
	64	64

He likewise used a forged normal grill of Rome, and ASS (from the ASSICURATA of Rome).

On the 1 Scudo the cancels have been observed only in black, but the grill and the dated circular cancel of June 10, 1864, are observed in red on two separate copies of the 50 Baj.

In the British Philatelic Association book we observe three printed proofs of the 50 Baj and two of the 1 Scudo, on paper approximately 2 inches high and 2 3/4 inches long, all signed by DeSperati.

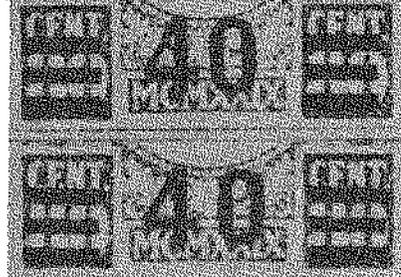
Called the "Master Forger" he holds a distinction that no other forger can claim. Yvert & Tellier put a special symbol, an "F" in a circle alongside all stamp numbers which DeSperati has forged.

Forgeries of the 35-40 Surcharges.

The unknown forger used genuine stamps on which he printed his forged surcharges. This set of forgeries was purchased about 1958-59, when the price of 1-13 was reasonably low. They were forged sometime before then.

#35 - 40 Cent. on 80 Cent.

In the sheet of 100 of the genuine #35 there were 50 stamps whose surcharges measure 15mm, and the space between the 4 & 0 of 40 is 1/2mm; on the other 50 the surcharge is 15 1/2mm and the 4 & 0 spaced 3/4mm. (Illustration of numerals reprinted from Bolaffi's Catalogue with permission of S.C.O.T., Torino)



Narrow (top) and wide space (bottom) betw. «4» and «0».



The Genuine #35 Surcharge.

+++++

The Forgery of the #35 Surcharge.

The forgery is almost exact in all its measurements with the genuine, with less than 1/2mm variance, which is difficult to measure with an ordinary millimeter scale.

A distinguishing characteristic can easily be seen in the 4 of 40. The 4 of the 40 in the genuine is all straight lines and sharp angles.

In the forgery the 4 of 40 is thicker at the top. This is caused by the outward curve in the left down stroke. This line is thicker than the genuine at the top, and the inner and outer sides of this line are irregular. The interior and exterior angle at the left, formed by the meeting of this same line with the horizontal stroke are not as sharp as the genuine, but are somewhat rounded.

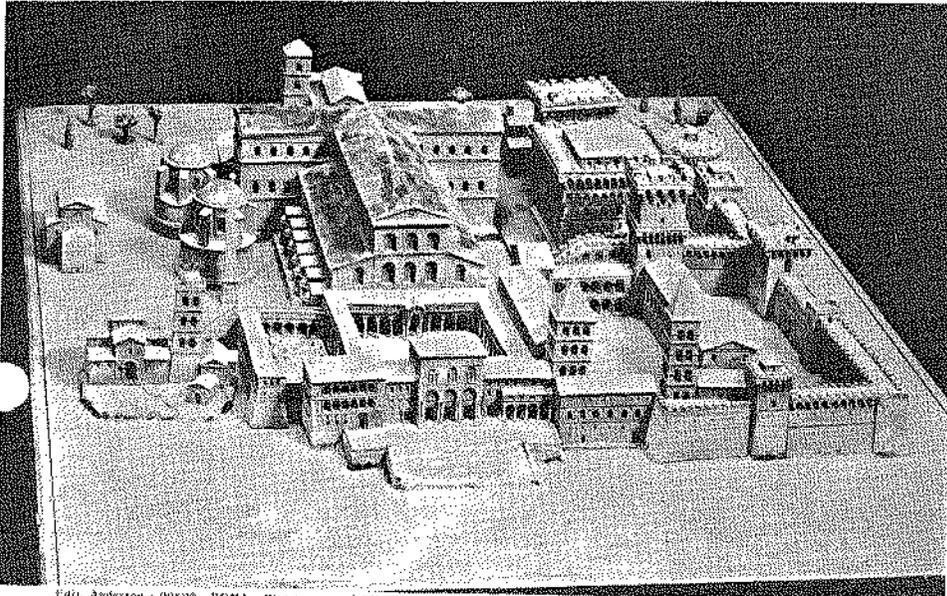


The Forged #35 Surcharge.

THE REBUILDING OF ST. PETERS BASILICA AND THE VATICAN PALACE (Cont.)

The plan of Nicholas V has been attributed to Leon Battista Alberti in its general conception and details. Nicholas V intended to build a more beautiful church in honor of St. Peter, and had carried out work on the walls of the choir apse raising them to the height of 52 feet. On the advise of Alberti this work was stopped and Alberti laid before the Pope his works on architecture. Nicholas had at that time no intention of pulling down the Old St. Peters, but had planned the restoration of the portico, repaving of the floor, renewing the mosaics, roof, doors and windows. He intended to retain the old basilica as long as possible by repairs and only to rebuild the apse. The impression made on Nicholas V by the 10 books on architecture by Alberti was instantaneous profound and convincing. He adopted the new gigantic plan.

Before a single step had been taken to rebuild St. Peters, Nicholas V died. Julius II later began the project but with a different set of plans. The idea of pulling down the ancient basilica of St. Peter was ill received both in the time of Nicholas V and later. Actually it was only a question of time before it must be done. It was stated that it would fall itself in 50 years. The old basilica was of daring architectural design. The upper walls were pierced by windows and rested on slender columns unsupported by buttresses. When these fall out of perpendicular to any degree, the condition of the building is hopeless and it must come down. Leon Battista Alberti states that the south wall of St. Peters leaned out 4 feet 9 inches; archivist Jacopo Grimaldi says that the paintings on the south wall were practically invisible because of the dust gathered on them due to the slant of the wall. Those on the north wall could be seen. Grimaldi estimated the building to be 3 feet 1/2 inch out of line in his day.



Ediz. Anderson - 1932 - ROMA - Ricostruzione dell'antica Basilica di S. Pietro - opera e dis. del Prof. Marcelliani - Museo Petriani

Reconstruction of the old Basilica of St. Peters.  
(By Prof. Marcelliani- Museo Petriani).  
Photograph- Fratelli Allinari- Florence.

In the first year of his reign, Nicholas V appointed a special architect for the Vatican Palace. One set of rooms was restored and decorated. Then the plan of Alberti was adopted and execution of it began. The new library, hall for equerries and the Belvedere, together with the Chapel of St. Lawrence were built in that order, while walls and towers rose round the citadel. Associated with Alberti as architects were Bernardo Gambarelli, surnamed Roscelino, and Antoniondo Francesco, both Florentines, and Fioravante degli Alberti, a Bolognese. Fioravante in 1452 transported four giant monolith pillars from an old building behind the Pantheon and placed them in the choir of St. Peters. He was chosen to execute the placing of the obelisk on the four giant statues of the Evangelists.

Work was done in three different ways: architects were paid fixed salaries and materials were supplied to them; work was paid by the piece; or a contractor put up an entire building. Beltramo di Martino of Varese was the contractor who built the choir of St. Peters. Nicholas V. was able to harmonize each art to its proportionate place, making architecture

the queen and all other subordinate. Sculpture seems to have been neglected, but only because its time had not arrived in the overall plan when Nicholas died. Marquetry and painting were employed in the decoration of the Palace.

Among the painters was Fra Giovanni Angelico da Fiesole (1387-1455). Fra Angelico's frescoes, started under Eugenius IV, and destroyed under Paul III, were the Vatican's most precious ornament at this time. In 1449 a study was decorated by Fra Angelico and his pupils. Fra Giovanni da Firenze did two windows in this room, of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Saints Stephen and Lawrence.



Distribution of Alms (Fra Angelico)

Photograph- Fratelli Allinari- Florence.

The paintings of Fra Angelico in the Chapel of Saints Stephen and Lawrence were done in this period and it has been inferred that these two rooms are one and the same, being built as a study and then turned into a chapel by Nicholas V. Three walls of this chamber are decorated by a double row of paintings of scenes from the lives of Saints Stephen and Lawrence, who were united by popolare custom when their remains were placed in the same tomb in St. Lawrence Outside the Walls. Fra Angelico was past sixty when he did these paintings, and still retained his mastery. The Ordination of St. Stephen, St. Lawrence receiving the Treasures of the Church, the Distribution of Alms and St. Stephen Preaching equal the best of the great master. Fra Angelico shows in his backgrounds that he grasped the principals of architecture of his time, combining the classic and the christian.

Among other painters attracted to Rome by Nicholas V were Benedetto Buonfiglio of Perugia, (one of Perugia's most distinguished predecessors), Bartolomeo da Foligno (master of Niccolo Alunno), Andrea del Castagno, piero della Francesca and Bramantino.

From Rome itself there was Simone da Roma. Nicholas V assigned each artist according to his judgement of their ability.

At this time also, Pope Nicholas V laid the foundation of the Vatican Library by his collection and search for manuscripts, translations by scholars, etc. The Library was intended for world-wide use by Scholars. (Pastor- Vol. IIpp. 169-190, 208-214)

The Nominations.

Eastern Massachusetts Chapter:

- For President: William P. Quinn
- For Vice-President: Rev. Herbert A. Phinney
- For Treasurer: Frederick J. Levitsky
- For Secretary: Dr. Augustino T. Forcucci

St. Louis Chapter:

- For President: William P. Quinn
- For Vice-President: Rev. William Fletcher
- For Treasurer: Frederick J. Levitsky
- For Secretary: Wallace R. Smith

Long Island Chapter:

- For Secretary: Wallace R. Smith

New York Chapter:

- For Secretary: Wallace R. Smith

Los Angeles Chapter:

- For Vice-President: Mr. W.J. Hoffman
- For Vice-President: Mr. W.F. Rawson

Southern Wisconsin Chapter:

Endorsed slate of Eastern Massachusetts Chapter.

Chicagoland Chapter:

No nominations received.

Northern Ohio Chapter:

No Nominations received.

Philadelphia Chapter:

No Nominations received.

Reading Chater:

No Nominations received.

Official Vatican Philatelic Society

Ballot - March, 1963.

(Vote for one for each office)

FOR PRESIDENT:	WILLIAM P. QUINN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
For VICE-PRESIDENT:	Rev. William Fletcher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Rev. Herbert A. Phinney	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	W.J. Hoffman	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	W.F. RAWSON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FOR TREASURER:	FREDERISK J. LEVITSKY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
For SECRETARY:	Wallace R. Smith	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Augustino Forcucci	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Mark an X in the box supplied, opposite your choice. Separate at line and mail to:

Mr. Wallace R. Smith, Sec., V.P.S.  
165-15 Union Turnpike,  
Flushing 66, N.Y.

To be counted, this ballot  
must be returned before  
April 30, 1963.