

Vatican Notes

Volume XI

July - August 1962

Number 1

VATICAN CITY PHILATELIC NEWS



PRIESTLY VOCATIONS

The set of five stamps shown above was issued on June 12 for the purpose of stimulating interest in vocations to the priesthood and the religious life. Three of the stamps bear a representation of a 4th century statue of the Good Shepherd, presently located in Rome at the Lateran Museum. To the right of the figure appear the words "The priest, another Christ" in Latin. The other two stamps show a field at harvest time. These bear a Latin inscription which means "Pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers unto His harvest."

Issuance of this set follows the recent first International Congress on Priestly Vocations at the Vatican, which was attended by more than 400 laymen, priests and bishops. Meeting in the Vatican's Consistorial Hall, this group concluded its deliberations with an address in Latin by Pope John XXIII.

Technical details of the issue were given in the preceding issue of VATICAN NOTES.

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St. CATHERINE OF SIENA

The fifth centenary of the canonization of Saint Catherine of Siena was commemorated by the issuance, on June 12th, of the set of three stamps shown above. The design is identical on each of the stamps, and shows St. Catherine praying for the soul of an executed criminal. Source of the design was the painting by Giovanni Antonio de' Bazzi Sodoma (1477 - 1549) which hangs in the Church of Saint Dominic in Siena. The painter's name appears on each stamp in the lower right margin.

St. Catherine was born on March 29, 1347, the youngest of twenty-five children, of whom only thirteen survived. She died at the age of 33 after a life of mortification, self-sacrifice and service. Although unable to write, she left nearly 400 dictated letters which have become a treasure of Italian literature. Her most important work was the "Dialogo" (Book of the Divine Doctrine) which she dictated in 1377. She was declared a patron saint of Italy in 1939.

Italy, in 1948, commemorated the sixth centenary of the birth of Saint Catherine by the issuance of a set of 4 postage and 2 air mail stamps. They were designed by Corrado Mezzana, whose work on Vatican City stamps is well known, and collectors will find in them a suitable complement to the Vatican's St. Catherine set.

MEMO FROM THE EDITOR.....

With this issue of VATICAN NOTES, my appointment as Editor expires. While I do not know at the present time who will succeed me, I am confident that President Wonneberger will have appointed a successor before the next issue is due at the printer's. To the new Editor, my best wishes for success, and to those VPS'ers and others who have contributed material for the NOTES during the past year, my heartfelt thanks.



On March 26th, the Philatelic Union of St. Gabriel presented to Pope John XXIII a miniature of himself, painted on ivory by Miss Casimira Dabrowska, famous designer of Vatican City stamps. The Union, which is world-wide in scope, is composed of collectors who specialize in religious subjects on stamps. It is especially strong in Europe.

The presentation was made by Avv. Nicola Berardi, Vice President in Italy of the World Union of St. Gabriel, and by Count Luigi Piloni, Vice President of the "Centro Studi italiano di Filatelia Religiosa Gabriel."

The Holy Father expressed himself as pleased with the progress of religious philately throughout the world and imparted the Apostolic Blessing to the World Union, the Centro Studi and to the Italian members of the Philatelic Union of St. Gabriel and their families.

The photo at top shows Miss Dabrowska's painting, while the lower photo shows the actual presentation to the Holy Father. Those pictured are, l. to r., Count Luigi Piloni, Avv. Nicola Berardi and his son, Enzo.





Following agreements with the Italian Government, Pope Pius XI contracted with the Societa Marconi for the construction of a short wave radio station in Vatican City. Guglielmo Marconi himself supervised the construction and installation of the equipment, and at the inauguration, which took place on February 12, 1932, Cardinal Pacelli, among those present, heard Marconi state "The Pope for twenty centuries has made the Word of God heard in all the world, but this is the first time that his voice has been heard simultaneously over the whole face of the earth." He concluded with the sentence "My satisfaction as an Italian and the honor which touches me as a researcher reaches its climax on the anniversary of a day happy for Italy and all Christianity." His reference was to the anniversary of the Lateran Pact, February 11, 1929, which was celebrated the same day. Pius XI then spoke over the air to the listening millions.

Since the original radio station was capable of only two wave lengths, 19.84 and 50.26 megacycles, and because it was outgrown over the years, despite the fact that improvements had been introduced, it was decided in 1952 to replace it with a more powerful transmitter of 50 kilowatts. The new station was capable of transmission from 13 to 50 megacycles. By an accord reached in 1951, consent from the Italian Government for the construction of the new station in the area of

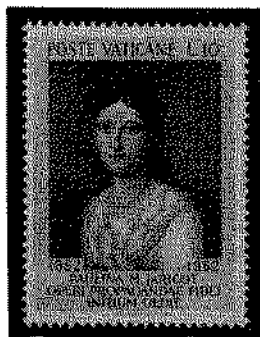
Santa Maria di Galeria and Castel Romano was gained. Vatican City was too small in area for the construction of a really large radio station, and the area of Castel Gandolfo was unsuited for it. Castel Gandolfo had been joined to Radio Vaticano by microwave by Marconi in 1933, and much interference with Italian radio stations resulted. This accord gave Vatican the right to join this outside station with the original station within Vatican City by a radio bridge and cables.

Along the Via Claudia about 20 kilometers from Rome in Santa Maria di Galeria are grouped 24 towers for transmission and receiving, among which stands out one built in the form of a cross. His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, on Sunday, October 27, 1957, inaugurated the new radio station with an address in Latin which began: "Listen, O distant peoples, attend all ears; from the new Vatican Radio Station, from the wood of the antenna which stands high and unconquered, the Cross, sign of truth and charity, directs to you my words."

This ceremony was repeated for television, and was transmitted over most of the radio stations of the world. The new outside station for radio and television of Santa Maria di Galeria is connected with the old installation within Vatican City, and particularly with the loggia of St. Peter's, whence are telecast and broadcast the principal functions and ceremonies of St. Peter's.

The stamp designs show the cross shaped antenna of Santa Maria di Galeria and the statue of the Archangel Gabriel by Alcide Tico.

PAULINE JARICOT



July 5 was the issue date of the set of three stamps shown above. This set commemorates the centenary of the death, in 1862, of Pauline Jaricot, French foundress of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. The stamps reproduce a portrait of Pauline Jaricot which currently hangs in the Great Hall of the Superior Council of the Pontifical Organization for the Propagation of the Faith in Rome.

The portrait was commissioned by Pope John XXIII in 1921 when, as Msgr. Angelo Roncalli, he headed the Italian branch of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

The stamps measure 30 x 40 mm. and were printed by rotogravure on paper watermarked with the crossed keys design. Printing was done by the "Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato Italiano" in panes of 40 subjects each.

Marie-Pauline Jaricot was born at Lyons, France on July 22, 1799. Even at an early age she was exceptionally pious, and while still in her teens worked actively among her friends and countrymen to stimulate interest in missionary work. She remained actively interested in the missions throughout her life, and in 1822 founded the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Four years later she founded the lesser known Association of the Living Rosary. She died on January 9, 1862.



THE OBELISK AIR MAILS
(Issued October 27, 1959)



Sixtus V accomplished the raising of the Vatican obelisk. This was the only one that remained standing from ancient times, having been brought from the city of Heliopolis in Egypt to Rome by Caligula, and set in the spina of the circus which he commenced and which Nero completed. Nicholas V had intended to place it in front of St. Peter's, resting on a colossal bronze of standing figures of the four Evangelists.

The difficulty of lowering and lifting this mass of red granite may be realized from the account given by Pliny of the Vatican obelisk and by Ammianus Marcellinus' story of the erection of the Constantine obelisk in the Circus Maximus. For more than 1,000 years no such problem had been solved and there was no account of machines used by the Romans in ancient times.

Michaelangelo and Sangallo had declared the idea impracticable, but Sixtus V was determined to carry out the move and had a wooden model erected in St. Peter's Square. A Commission of Cardinals was appointed for the work and architects and mathematicians were called to solve the problem. Three general plans evolved.

The majority favored moving the obelisk while keeping it in its perpendicular position. Others favored lowering it to a horizontal position, moving it and raising it. The third plan called for lowering it to a 45-degree angle, moving it and raising it. Fontana, the Papal Architect, favored the second scheme, that of lowering it to the horizontal, and his models convinced the Pope to choose him. Opposition arose and the Commission chose the aged Bartolomeo Ammanni; however, after discussion with Fontana, Sixtus V placed Fontana in charge, with his brother Giovanni as assistant.

Excavation for the foundations was begun in the center of the Square, and the land was found to be marshy. A fence of oak and chestnut was built and carefully prepared cement was laid, containing a casket of medals of Sixtus V. Then Fontana erected a wooden scaffolding to take the weight of the heavy stone until it would be lowered onto a wooden platform. Hemp for 44 ropes 100 ells long (about 375 feet), to be made in Rome, was gathered. Oaken beams, so large that it required 14 oxen to draw each one, came from the forests of Campo Morto in the Roman Campagna. From Terracina came boards and from Santa Severa other wood. All the blacksmiths in Rome, as well as others from Ronciglione and Subiaco, were hired for the iron work.

The buildings around the obelisk were demolished to make room for the scaffolding, which Fontana describes as looking like a castle. The obelisk was enclosed in a matting of boards and bound with iron bands to which pulleys were attached. The weight of the whole was computed so that the weight of the ropes and the scaffolding would equal the weight of the stone. The ropes were as thick as a man's arm. After careful calculation, Fontana found the obelisk to weigh nearly a million Roman pounds.

The wooden platform for transporting the stone and 40 windlasses for lowering and raising it were prepared. After some six months' preparation, the stone was to be lowered on April 30, 1586. Swiss Guards held back the crowds. Masses were celebrated and prayers said for the success of the venture. At the blast of a trumpet, the windlasses started and on the twelfth pull the stone was raised enough to place it on the wooden platform for transportation from the left of St. Peter's Basilica to the center of the Square. It was lowered to the platform on May 7th.

The hollow bronze ball on top was removed and found empty. It had been reputed to contain the ashes of Caesar. Small holes in it were thought to be from bullets fired during the Sack of Rome in 1527.

The site of the obelisk was higher than St. Peter's Square, so a causeway was constructed and on July 13 the journey of the obelisk along it began. Because of the heat of the season, the raising was postponed until fall. The foundation of travertine was completed, the first stone bearing the name of Sixtus V. Medals of Pius V were placed in it.

On September 9, Fontana attended Mass and received Holy Communion. On September 10, he set the windlasses in motion. The 40 windlasses were operated by 800 men and 140 horses. The stone rose slowly and by noon was half up. Everyone stopped calmly for lunch. The spectators were so excited that they could not eat. Work started again and after the 52nd pull the obelisk was in place. Salvos were fired from the Castel Sant' Angelo, informing the Pope at the Quirinal that the work was accomplished.

The story of the sailor, Bresca of San Remo, stated as "Historical" by Hubner in his "Sixtus V" is not mentioned by Fontana in his description of the operation, nor in any contemporary accounts. This story has the machinery raising the obelisk suddenly stop and threaten to fall, when Bresca calls out "Acqua Alle funi!" ("Water on the ropes!") and saves the day. As a reward, the story goes, he was given the privilege of supplying the Pope with artistically woven palms at Eastertide.

Fontana was well rewarded with gifts and titles, receiving all of the material used in the project. On September 24, Sixtus V went in procession after Mass to an altar erected in front of the obelisk, where Bishop Ferrantini blessed the gilt bronze cross that Sixtus had ordered to crown the obelisk. The cross was placed on top of the ball. The obelisk was exorcised and blessed because it had been used in pagan worship. An inscription was placed on the side facing St. Peter's Basilica.

(For Colonnade and Apostolic Palace in background, cf. VATICAN NOTES Vol. IV, No. 10, P. 7, April, 1956 and Vol. IV, No. 12, P. 10, June, 1956)



OBELISK OF THE LATERAN

Immediately after the erection of the Vatican obelisk, Pope Sixtus V gave orders for the excavation of the largest obelisk known, brought from Hierapolis to Alexandria by Constantine the Great and moved to Rome by his son, Constantius, who placed it



in the spina of the Circus Maximus. It was richly adorned by hieroglyphics and had been erected according to some in the Temple of Amman at Thebes by Thutmosis III and IV. Emperor Augustus had wanted to transport it to Rome, but found this too difficult an undertaking. Constantius built a special ship of 300 oars to transport it from Alexandria to Rome, where it was landed in the Tiber, three miles below Rome in A.D. 357.

Champollion's interpretation of the inscription shows that it honors Thotmes or Thutmosis IV of the 18th dynasty, the Moeris of the Greeks. The inscription was altered at a later date and the name of Amman was substituted for that of another deity, whose worship had gone out of style, and this alteration can still be distinguished. It is not known when it fell from its base.

By February the obelisk was completely cleared. In April, excavations in the same Circus, then a kitchen garden, uncovered another obelisk set there by Augustus, which came to light in the time of Gregory XIII. This second obelisk was intended for the space in front of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme. The large red granite obelisk intended for St. John Lateran was in three pieces and lay 26 feet below the surface of the arena of the Circus Maximus. Nevertheless, Fontana successfully removed it to the Piazza of the Lateran and joined the pieces together. In doing this, it was necessary to cut off a portion of the lower part. Despite this, it is still the tallest in Rome, measuring by itself 105 feet 7 inches in height. With base and ornaments it measures 141 feet in height.

The sides are of unequal measurement, two sides being 9 feet 8½ inches wide at the base and the other two being only 9 feet wide. One side is slightly convex. The weight of this obelisk is estimated at 455 tons. In order to erect it on the site of the so-called Torre degli Annibaldi and on a new base in place of the old one, which had been damaged, Fontana used the same means as employed for the Vatican obelisk. The dedication took place on the Feast of St. Lawrence, August 10, 1588. The obelisk was adorned with the diadem of the Cross, as a symbol of the Church of Christ Triumphant.

Between 1586 and 1588, Fontana had erected the beautiful Loggia of Benediction in two stories near St. John Lateran, having five arches in each story, with Doric pillars below and Corinthian pillars above. The erection of this Loggia was connected with the destruction of an extensive mass of buildings which had grown up around the basilica since the 4th century.

(For background on the Basilica of St. John Lateran cf. VATICAN NOTES
Vo. VI, No. 1, p. 12, July - August 1957)



OBELISK OF TRINITA dei MONTE

From the Piazza di Spagna rise the Spanish Stairs leading up to the church of Trinita dei Monte, built in 1494-5 by Charles VIII, King of France, at the request of Saint Francis da Paola. It was plundered during the French Revolution and restored by Louis XVIII in 1817 from plans of Mazois. It is now



attached to the convent of the Madams of the Sacred Heart, devoted to the education of girls. Its outstanding painting is a "Descent from the Cross" by Daniele da Volterra with an assist from Michaelangelo.

Pope Pius VI decided to add decoration to Rome when, at the suggestion of Francesco Cancellieri, he re-erected three obelisks which had been brought to Rome in the time of the emperors. In front of the Trinita dei Monte the architect Giovanni Antinori, in 1789, erected an obelisk which had stood in the gardens of Salus. Without base or ornaments, its height is about 48 feet. It was erected in such a way as to be visible from the Via Sistina and the Via Condotti, and corresponds to the obelisk at St. Mary Major, each standing at an end of the same long street. Goethe was a witness to the work which began in 1787 and was completed in 1789. The other two obelisks were placed in front of the Quirinale and in the Piazza di Monte Citorio.



OBELISK OF
PIAZZA DEL POPOLO



Another obelisk excavated from the Circus Maximus, a flame-shaped shaft of red granite, said to be the symbol of the sun and supposed to have once borne an orb on its peak, was destined for Piazza del Popolo by Sixtus V. It bears hieroglyphics and is from the time of Seti I and Rameses II, who was the pharaoh who oppressed the Hebrews. It had stood before the Temple of the Sun in Hieropolis. Others give it various dates of origin. Augustus removed it from Egypt to Rome and placed it in the Circus Maximus in B.C. 23. It had fallen from its pedestal by the time of Valerian and was broken into three pieces. It remained buried until excavated under Sixtus V. It was erected by Fontana in the spring of 1589, and crowned with a cross. On March 24, the Vigil of the Feast of the Assumption, the ceremony of purification and blessing took place, since it had been dedicated by Augustus to Apollo. Two inscriptions tell of its dedication to the Holy Cross and its dedication to pagan worship. The shaft is 78 $\frac{1}{2}$ feet high; with base and ornaments it reaches to 112 feet.

A base of four fountains was added by Fontana, to make this an impressive point of entrance to Rome from the north, whence came most pilgrims. Sixtus V intended the obelisks as symbols of the victory of the Crucified, to excite in the hearts of the pilgrims, on their way to the major basilicas, prayer and devotion. Fontana also tells us that Sixtus intended this obelisk as an adornment to the church of Santa Maria del Popolo, which the Pope not only made a cardinalate church, but also made one of the Seven Churches of Rome, in place of St. Sebastian's. The Porto del Popolo, the old Porta Flaminia, is one of the main entrances to Rome.

The twin churches which stand in the Piazza del Popolo, at the head of the Corso, were dedicated, one to Our Lady of Miracles and the other to Our Lady of Monte Santo. They are octagonal in shape and were said to have been built to replace two chapels which once stood at the head of the Bridge of Sant' Angelo, and which were demolished because the troops of Charles V had used them as outworks in their attack on Castel Sant' Angelo. Alexander III began their construction and they were completed by Cardinal Gastaldi after the Pope's death.

The twin churches are said to occupy the site of a tomb of Sylla, who died at Puteoli in B.C. 82, but who was given a public funeral at Rome. A folk story tells of a poor old lady who lived nearby, who saved for many years, and at her death willed 150 scudi for the completion of the churches.



OBELISK OF
ST. MARY MAJOR



For the piazza of St. Mary Major, which had been cleared at great expense, Sixtus V intended an obelisk from the Mausoleum of Augustus, one of a pair which flanked the entrance to the tomb. They were of red granite and were brought from Egypt by Claudius in A.D. 57. The one selected was without hieroglyphics. It had been broken into pieces (either 2, 3 or 4) and had been lying near Porto di Ripetta, where timber was unloaded. Without ornaments and base it measures 48 feet, 5 inches.

In March of 1857 the foundations were dug, and the Pope insisted that the obelisk be quickly repaired and set up for the Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady (August 15th). Despite the great heat of the summer, Fontana pushed the work around the clock in shifts, so that on August 11th, the cross was set in place on the obelisk and it was dedicated on August 15th. Inscriptions were placed on it recording the divine power which brought the victory of Christianity over paganism. Mention is made of the Crib preserved in St. Mary Major's, and of the legend connecting Christ and Augustus, stemming from the 4th eclogue of Virgil.

The obelisk was placed in front of the apse of St. Mary's in such a way that it formed the beginning of an effective vista for the great straight avenue leading to Trinita dei Monte, and in the same way the Lateran obelisk formed the end of the long road leading there from St. Mary Major's.

(For background data on St. Mary Major's Basilica, cf. VATICAN NOTES Vol. VI, No. 1, P. 11, July - August, 1957)

BEST DESIGN of 1961

The January - February issue of VATICAN NOTES contained a ballot which afforded VPS members an opportunity to express their choices for the best designed Vatican stamp issued in 1961. The response has been disappointingly light, with only 66 ballots received up to the time of publication. Approximately one-third of the ballots received did not indicate second and third choices.

The greatest number of votes for first place went to the 1961 Nativity stamps, which reproduced a painting of the Nativity by the Chinese artist, Luca Ch'en. That these stamps were the most popular was shown by the fact that the design also received the greatest number of votes for second place, and several votes for third place.

Second choice was the 40-Lire value of the St. Meinrad set, showing the Madonna of Einsiedeln, while third place went to the 40-Lire value of the "Osservatore Romano" set. The latter stamp depicted mastheads of "Osservatore" as it was founded and as it appears today.

EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER - The Eastern Massachusetts Chapter of the Vatican Philatelic Society held its exhibition and banquet on Sunday evening, June 24, at St. Augustine's School Hall, South Boston, Mass. In the exhibition, 16 frames were displayed. Awarded first prize was the exhibit of Frederick J. Levitsky of Auburn, Mass., which showed autographed stamps, the designers, and original designs of many of the stamps of Vatican, with a very informative write-up. Second award went to Fr. Phinney of Roxbury, Mass. with a display of covers showing Philatelic Fun with the Vatican Post Office. Mrs. Martin Sullivan of Malden, Mass received third honors with religion on stamps featuring the Vatican issues of the St. Patrick stamp.

First honorable mention went to William P. Quinn of Milton, Mass., with an exhibition of special events covers and maximum cards of Vatican. Thomas Burke of Malden, Mass. secured second honorable mention with a display of maximums with first day cancellations. To Leo Wissell of Worcester, Mass. went third honorable mention for his group of early Vatican issues. Fr. Phinney was given fourth honorable mention for a display of Pontifical State bisects on piece and cover. Thomas Boland of Haverhill, Mass., who has received many national awards for his collection of the Council of Trent issue, displayed some of his rarer items in a Court of Honor and acted as judge. Each member present received a philatelic book-mark. A door prize of a First Day Cover album went to Joseph Carroll, and a flowered wallet to Miss Alice McNamara. The forty members present enjoyed a fine dinner, which was followed by a short meeting and an auction.

CHICAGOLAND CHAPTER - The June issue of Chicagoland's informative newsletter, "The Epistle" reports election of officers for the coming year as follows:

President:	John E. Walz	Vice president:	William J. Holton
Secretary:	Marie Kalish	Treasurer:	James J. Doheny
Governors:	S. J. Sieben, E. Jonas, Rev. E. J. Furlong and Tony Rizzo (retiring president)		

The Chapter's participation in COMPEX '62 appears to have been a success, and plans for COMPEX '63 are expected to get under way in the fall. No further meetings are scheduled until September.

LOS ANGELES CHAPTER - At the Chapter meeting held in April, officers for the coming year were elected as follows:

President:	Bill Rawson	Vice president:	W. J. Hoffman
Secretary - Treasurer:		J. Ray Tierce	
Program Chairman:		Gerald L. Hovley	
"NUNCIO" Editor:		Waller Sager	

The May meeting featured an interesting showing of the first set of slides of Vatican City stamps and the film strip on the Sistine Chapel. Outside Chapter activities included participation in the Hobby Show held in Los Angeles at the Shrine Exhibition Hall, at which Chapter members Bill Rawson, Bill Hoffman, Reuben Arety, Ray Tierce and Walley Sager displayed Vatican City and Religion on Stampe material.

On June 3rd the Chapter enjoyed its annual "pot luck" picnic at Barney Barnett's. Barney and Gertrude Barnett were the gracious hosts for about thirty members and their spouses.

Treasurer's Report

Period: July 1, 1961 to June 30, 1962

To: President, Vatican Philatelic Society

Balance reported on June 30, 1961: \$1141.72Received:

Dues:	1	Payment for 1960-61	\$ 2.00
	501	Payments for 1961-62	1002.00
	67	Payments for 1962-63	134.00
	4	Payments for 1963-64	8.00
	3	Payments for 1964-65	6.00
	2	Payments for 1965-66	4.00
	38	New Members at \$2.00	76.00
	16	New Members at \$1.50	24.00
	18	New Members at \$1.00	18.00
	13	New Members at \$.50	6.50
		Sale of back issues of NOTES	30.30
		Sales Dept. Profit	20.00
		Special Contributions	1.23

\$1332.03

Sub Total \$2473.75

Paid:

Bank Account Service Charges	\$ 4.89
Bad Dues Checks returned by Bank	18.00
Postage	64.25
Envelopes (1500)	8.18
Express Charges (Membership Chairman Files)	8.08
Rubber Stamp (Membership Chairman)	2.40
Printing 500 Letters (Secretary)	18.50
Slide Writeup Materials	13.16
Mimeograph Shipping Charges	8.27
VATICAN NOTES	
Printing (5 Issues)	685.00
Postage (6 Issues)	139.69
Supplies (5 Issues)	17.43
Cover Sheet Printing (5 Issues)	35.00
2 Card File Cabinets	6.00
100 Envelopes	2.00
Annual Bulk Permit Fee (1962)	20.00

\$1050.85

Balance on Deposit at Worcester County National Bank

\$1422.90

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ F. J. Levitsky, Treasurer

(12)