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The Marian Philatelist, Whole No. 34

A. S. Horn

W. J. Hoffman

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The Marian Philatelist

PUBLISHED BY THE MARIAN PHILATELIC STUDY GROUP

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Whole No. 34

JANUARY 1, 1968

We Wish You a Blessed and Merry Christmas and a Prosperous and Happy New Year

NEW ISSUES

AUSTRIA: (Class 2). A 2-schilling Christmas stamp released November 27, 1967. Design reproduces THE NATIVITY, central portion of the Veit Stoss Altar in the Abbey of Benedictine Nuns on Nonnberg, Salzburg. The altar, carved in 1498, consists of wood carvings depicting incidents in the Life of Mary and is considered the most significant in Salzburg Art. Some believe Stoss did not do the work himself but that it was done by some of his students. When the original Monastery was discontinued, Archbishop Wolf Dietrich donated the Altar to Nonnberg. At present it is found in St. John's Chapel above the arch of the doorway leading to the Monastery entrance. A Christkindl cancellation was used for first day cancellation.



COOK ISLANDS: Set of 6 Christmas stamps released December 1, 1967 reproducing Renaissance Art. Small sheets also issued with inscription in margins conveying the Christmas Spirit and identification of the paintings:

- 1¢ (Class 2) - HOLY FAMILY by Peter Paul Rubens. Original in the Prado, Madrid.
- 3¢ (Class 2) - ADORATION OF THE MAGI by Albrecht Durer, painted in 1504. Original in Uffizi Gallery, Florence. More of the painting is seen on the .02¢ stamp in Panama issue of December 1966. Article on this design is on page 23 of the March 1, 1967 issue.
- 4¢ (Class 1) - THE LUCCA MADONNA by Jan Van Eyck painted in 1435. Original in the Stadel Institute, Frankfurt.
- 8¢ (Class 2) - ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS by Jacopo da Bassano. Initial research indicates it may be in the National Gallery of Ancient Art, Rome.
- 15¢ (Class 2) - ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS by El Greco, painted about 1600, and in the Prado, Madrid.
- 25¢ (Class 1) - MADONNA AND CHILD by Antonio Allegri da Correggio, also known as the "Campori Madonna" because purchased in 1636 by Cardinal Campori. Original in Room VIII of Estense Gallery, 18th century palace at Modena, Italy.



BELGIUM: (Class 1,5). A 1-Fr. value issued November 13, 1967 as a Christmas stamp and to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the crowning of the famous image of VIRGA JESSE enshrined in Our Lady Church, Hasselt. Notice the rosary draped over the Virgin's arm and the "AM" Monogram on the dress. Articles by Ernest A. Kehr and Jozef Peeters on pages 10 and 11.

COSTA RICA: Set of 20 airmail stamps issued in August 1967. Designs reproduce the churches of Costa Rica. Five show Marian churches:

- (Class 8) 5 cts - Church of La Soledad;
- (Class 8) 30 cts - Church of La Merced;
- (Class 7) 35 cts - Basilica of Our Lady of the Angels;
- (Class 8) 45 cts - Ruins of Shrine of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception at Ujarras; and
- (Class 8) 5 colones - Church of El Carmen. As yet no definite information has been obtained for the Church of Desamparados seen on the 90 cts stamp.



Cook Islands is on the "tread with caution" list. It is possible the black blot may be applied to this issue because of the sheets.



CYPRUS: (Class 2). Issued November 8, 1967 honoring an exhibit of Cypriot Art at the Louvre held from November 7, 1967 to January 3, 1968, covering a period of 8000 years of Cypriot Art. Stamp design reproduces an Icon from the 13th century, CRUCIFIXION, from the collection of Phaneromeni, Nicosai. This is a double-face Icon, that is, one side shows the "Crucifixion" while the reverse side shows the Virgin Mary.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA: (Class 8). Publicity set for PRAGA 1967 issued October 30, 1967. Designs honor the host cities of previous international exhibits. The 1 Kcs. value shows the NOTRE DAME CATHEDRAL, Paris

Further research is being done to ascertain if any Marian churches are included in the 30h and 2 Kcs. stamps honoring Amsterdam and Prague.

It should be mentioned that Czechoslovakia is on the "tread with caution" list.



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GERMANY (WEST BERLIN): (Class 1). Two stamps in the Art Treasures Series issued November 17, 1967. The 1 DM value shows the sculpture, THE MADONNA, by Joseph Anton Feuchtmayer (1696-1770), a 1740 sculpture now in the State Museum, Berlin. Research indicated various spellings of the artist's name, but we believe the correct one is "Feuchtmayer."

GIBRALTAR: (Class 2). A 2-stamp Christmas issue, released November 1, 1967. The 2d value presents THE HOLY FAMILY, designed by staff artists of Harrison & Sons, Ltd.



GREAT BRITAIN: (Class 2). The two additional stamps in the Christmas issue were released November 27, 1967. The 3d value shows the ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS, School of Seville, and the 1/6d value shows ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS, by Louis Le Nain. Both originals are in the London National Gallery. Illustrations and articles are on pages 7 and 8.



MALTA: (Class 2-entire tryptych. Issued October 20, 1967 a Christmas set of 3 stamps in tryptich-style.

The 1d value presents angels announcing the Glad Tidings. The 8d value shows the Star of Bethlehem and an angel announcing the Birth of Christ to a shepherd superimposed on the stable roof under which is seen THE NATIVITY. The 1/4 value shows angels on high. "Christmas 1967" in gold appears on all three stamps.

MALAWI: (Class 2). A 4-stamp Christmas issue, released November 21, 1967. Same design on all four values, depicting a stylized NATIVITY. Souvenir sheet with three of the stamps also issued.



PARAGUAY: (Class 1). A 9-stamp set issued October 16, 1967, identified as Famous Sculptures

January 1, 1968



Set. The G50.00 airmail value depicts THE PIETA by Michelangelo. Stamps were issued perf and imperf and overprinted "Muestra."

An article on "The Pieta" appeared on page 15 of the March 1, 1963 issue.

Paraguay is on the "tread with caution" list.

PHILIPPINES: (Class 2). This country released its first Christmas stamp on December 1, 1967. Two values, 10 and 40 sentimo, depict the HOLY FAMILY in Filipino costume and setting. Mary holds the Infant Jesus, St. Joseph holds a sugar cane stalk, and the background shows the Mayon Volcano. Details on the issue, supplied by Mrs. Teofila Garcia of Manila, together with illustration on page 6.

ROMANIA: (Class 8). We finally obtained the stamp issued to commemorate the 450th anniversary of the founding of the Curtea de Arges Monastery, which is dedicated to OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION. Exact date of issue not known but believed to be August 1967. The value is "55 bani" and not "55 lei" as previously stated. An article on this Monastery appeared in the May 1, 1967 issue, page 42.



SAN MARINO: (Class 2) Although the philatelic press indicated that this 300 lire value stamp issued December 5, 1967 was a Christmas issue, we are not certain that it actually is a Christmas stamp or charity issue for the benefit of the restoration fund. The design depicts THE CRUCIFIXION by Cimabue. This work was damaged beyond restoration in the November 1966 devastating flood in Florence. The head of the SORROWFUL MOTHER is seen in the left panel of the cross and that of St. John in the right panel. The masterpiece was painted about 1280 for the Church of Sante Croce by Cimabue who was called the "Father of Florentine Painting." It is one of the masterpieces marking the transition from Byzantine to Renaissance art. Illustration and article on page 7.

SWITZERLAND: (Class 3m). Research by Father Horn has disclosed that a statue of the MADONNA AND CHILD is under the window or niche near the top of the facade of St. Oswald's



Church at Zug, seen on the 2.50 value stamp in the historic buildings series released September 18, 1967. This church was begun in 1478, is noted for its external sculpture and finely carved 15th century choir stalls.



SPAIN: (Class 8). A 3-stamp set issued November 24, 1967, honoring OUR LADY OF VERUELA MONASTERY located in Municipal of Vera del Moncayo, near Zaragoza. The 1,50 ptas shows the main entrance, the 3,50 ptas shows an aerial view, and the 6 ptas shows the cloisters.



This Cistercian Monastery dates to 1171 and the cloisters to the 14th century. Its church has three naves with radiating chapels, and somewhat resembles Poblet Monastery in its interior furnishings.



Antonio Benet, of Valencia, Spain, writes that it was founded, according to tradition, by a nobleman of Aragon, Pedro Atares, who was hunting in the area when a frightening storm

suddenly arose. Extremely frightened by the severity of the storm, he implored Our Lady to help him through it safely, and promised that if he survived he would dedicate a temple to her. The edifice consists of three styles -- Roman, Gothic and Renaissance. This Monastery was well known by Spanish Poet Becquer, for he gave several extensive descriptions of it.

SPAIN: (Class 2). A 1,50 value Christmas stamp issued December 5, 1967 reproducing THE NATIVITY sculpture by Francisco Salzillo (1707-1783), an Italian whose father had settled at Murcia. Original figures in the Salzillo Museum, at Murcia.

Salzillo virtually taught himself the art of sculpturing. The 18th century was a prolific period for religious sculptures, and artists were active in most Spanish cities. They carved a multitude of altars and polychrome images. Salzillo was the most prominent among them. He specialized in figures used for Holy Week Procession, but his most popular work was



"The Nativity" portraying the traditional Spanish Creche.

LIECHTENSTEIN: (Class 3m). Although issued on December 7, 1967 for the Christmas Season, the designs show no relation to the Birth of Christ but the Patrons of various Liechtenstein Churches. The 1.20 fr. value shows St. Anne, the Patron Saint of the Vaduz Castle Chapel. With her is seen the YOUNG VIRGIN MARY, holding a book, following the tradition of St. Anne being her teacher. The style is ultra-modern with faceless images, similar to the Christmas issue from the Congo several years ago. The stamp was not obtainable for illustration.



COSTA RICA: (Class 1). Christmas issue of four stamps, all with 5 cts value, but in colors of blue, aquamarine, magenta and green. A MADONNA & CHILD is sketched against the colored backgrounds. At the bottom is inscribed "Stamp of Christmas for City of Children, 1967."

VATICAN CITY: (Class 2). Three stamp Christmas issue, released November 28, 1967, with values of 25L, 55L and 180L. Same design on all three, THE NATIVITY, from a carving from a Byzantine reliquary box of the 9th century.



UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC: (Class 2). A 3-stamp set issued October 24, 1967 publicizing Egyptian Art. The 55 mils value shows a "Christ in Glory" from the Coptic Museum in Cairo. The BLESSED VIRGIN HOLDING THE CHRIST CHILD is seen seated among the Apostles. On high is seen "Christ in Glory" with His left hand raised in



benediction and His right holding the Book of Truth. Archangels Michael and Gabriel kneel in adoration. Symbols of the Four Evangelists are also included.

"Coptic Art" refers to the art produced by the Christians in the Nile Valley from about 313 until 640. The word "Copt" is a corruption of the Greek word "aigyptios" (Egyptian), and was used to designate the Christians who continued to adhere to their own traditions and ancient language though the language of the Christian Church during this period was Greek. Only fragments or incomplete items of Coptic Art

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remain and it is difficult to date them. It is possible that a date is ascribed to this work but we have not been able to ascertain it.



UNITED STATES: (Class 1). A 5-cent Christmas stamp released November 6, 1967, repeating the 1966 Christmas stamp design - Memling's MADONNA AND CHILD WITH ANGELS in the Mellon Collection in our National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

The larger size stamp permits a little more of the Madonna to be seen. Cancellation was at Bethlehem, Georgia. An illustration of a maximum card with article on pages 8 and 9.

UNITED NATIONS: Miniature Art Sheet released November 17, 1967, reproducing Marc Chagall's stained glass window at the United Nations Headquarters, New York City. See page 6. for illustration and article. (Class 3m)

The many beautiful Christmas stamps released this year bear greetings from around the world. Each year more countries join in this custom. There is no doubt that some are issued merely for profit, but at least there is evidence of the Christmas Spirit.

Now a word about some of the more questionable issues. We admit that many countries are on the "tread with caution" list, and many postal issues are aimed directly at our pocket book. However, we feel we must list and illustrate them in our publications, but we must again remind you that the choice to buy or not to buy is yours.

We appreciate the support and encouragement received during the year. We will continue our efforts in providing Marian collectors with the best possible publication to assist you in your collecting.

Rev. A. S. Horn
W. J. Hoffman

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MARIAN POSTAL CANCELLATIONS

BELGIUM:

48. Antwerp, November 11, 1967. NATIVITY. "Madonna Exhibit - Antwerp." Special cancel used on first day issue of the "Virga Jesse" stamp and for the special exhibit of Father De Troyer's Madonna Stamps at Antwerp.
49. Hasselt, November 11, 1967. VIRGA JESSE. "Festival Crowning Our Lady of Jesse - Hasselt." First day cancel for issue of "Virga Jesse" stamp.

BRAZIL:

35. Listed in November 1967 issue but not illustrated.

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BRAZIL (Continued)

38. Sao Paulo, October 12, 1967. "M" WITH CROSS. "Aparecida-Sao Paulo-1717 Jubilee Year 1967." Special cancel used on first day of issue of La Aparecida stamp.
39. Guanabara (G.B.), December 8-25, 1967. HOLY FAMILY WITHIN TREE DECORATION AGAINST CANDLE. "Christmas Feast (G.B.) Brazil." Cancellation used for issue of Christmas stamp showing tree decorations.

PORTUGAL:

14. Fatima, May 13, 1967. FATIMA BASILICA. "Fiftieth Anniversary of the Apparitions at Fatima." Same cancel used at various cities.

VENEZUELA:

1. Maracaibo, November 18, 1967. OUR LADY OF CHIQUINQUIRA. "18 of November - Maracaibo, Venezuela, Our Lady of Chiquinquira." Cancellation authorized to commemorate 25th anniversary of the crowning of Our Lady, Virgin of Chiquinquira.



Belgium #48



Belgium #49



Brazil #35



Brazil #39



Brazil #38



Portugal #14

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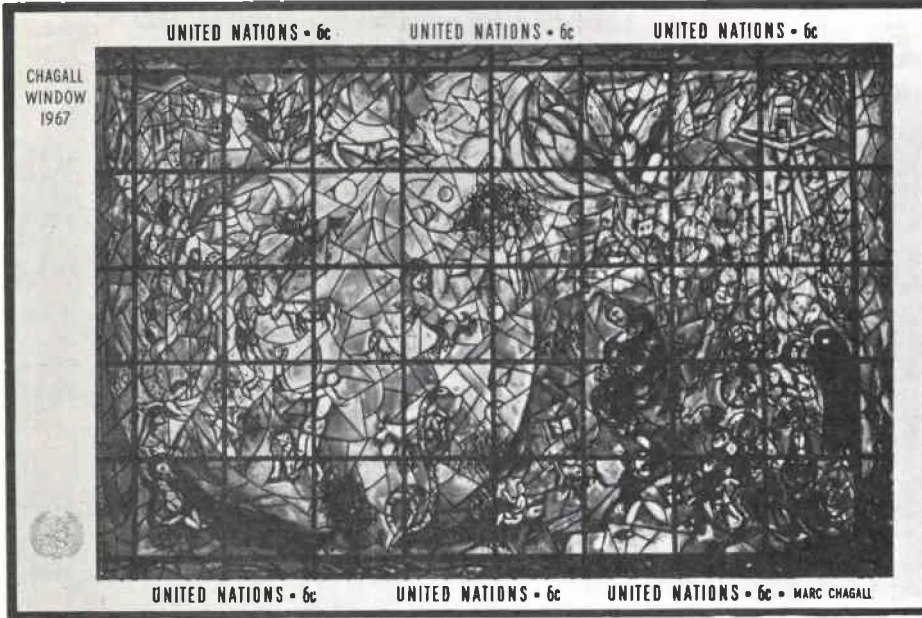
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Venezuela #1

UNITED NATIONS



This miniature art sheet, 81 x 123 mm, was issued November 17, 1967. The design reproduces the Marc Chagall stained glass window, a memorial to Dag Hammarskjöld, at the United Nations, New York City. The sheet is slit perforated to produce six 6-cent stamps.

A crucifixion is seen in the upper right, however, Chagall has never fully explained this work.

Arthur W. Clinton, of New York City, obtained for us a pamphlet from the UN which gives some information on the memorial, and the unveiling ceremonies.

At the unveiling of the window, on September 17, 1964, the artist gave us a reason to include the lower left stamp, and the full sheet, in our Madonna collection. He appears to have copied here a Madonna and Child very similar to the style of Cimabue and Giotto, or early Byzantine artists, when depicting Nativity Scenes. The statement Mr. Chagall made was: "On the left, above and below, are depicted Motherhood and the people who are struggling for peace."

Who is more worthy to be portrayed as "Motherhood" and the "Symbol of Peace" than Mary, the Mother of the Prince of Peace?

PHILIPPINES: FIRST CHRISTMAS STAMP - Issued December 1, 1967



The first Christmas postage stamps ever to be issued by the Bureau of Posts came out on December 1, 1967. For the first time the Postal Administration of the Philippines joins the rest of the world in commemorating the Nativity of Christ. Christmas is symbolically portrayed on a vertically composed 26 x 45 millimeter postage stamp. In the middle of the upper portion of the stamp shines the Star of Bethlehem over the typically Filipino scene with the beautiful and famous Mayon Volcano, the golden rice fields, the coconut palm, the carabao, and The Holy Family.

The Holy Family is shown in Filipino costume with Mary holding the Babe on her lap, and St. Joseph holding in his left hand a sugar cane stalk.

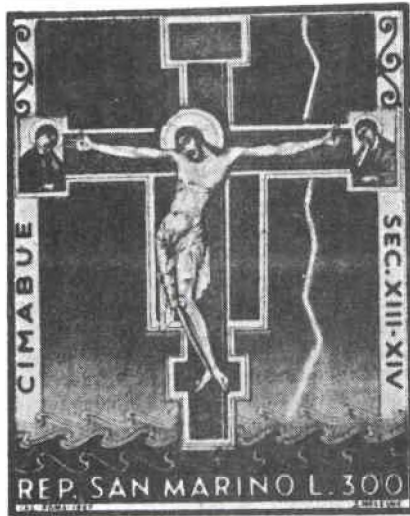
On the lower portion are the Tagalog words, "Maligayanq Pasko at Manigong Bagong Taon," which is the equivalent of "Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year."

This special issue of stamps was designed by philatelic artist Nemesio Dimalig, Jr., and heliogravure processed in four colors by the Government Printing Bureau of Tokyo, Japan. Two denominations of 10 and 40 centavos, in quantities of ten million and five million respectively, have been printed in sheets of 50.

A closer look at the stamp shows the strict Filipino motif that has been artistically portrayed. Mayon Volcano is a landmark which is a must for tourists from other countries to see; the coconut and the sugar cane are typical sights throughout the Philippines and represent two of the main crops of the country; the golden rice fields stand for the staple food of its people, and the carabao is a typical working animal on Philippine farms.

Christmas is observed as a time of festivity and rejoicing in all countries of the world. Likewise, may philatelists rejoice in the addition of this special stamp to their collection.

(Our thanks to Mrs. Teofila L. Garcia, Acting Postal Fiscal Service Chief, Stamp and Philatelic Division, Manila, for sending us the commemorative pamphlet on the issue of this stamp, and from which the above was taken.)



For the design used on this 300 Lire stamp San Marino selected "The Crucifixion" by Cimabue, from the Church of Sante Croce, Florence. This was the masterpiece which was totally destroyed by the November 1966 flood in Florence. Art critics consider this to be the greatest loss inflicted by the Arno river on the City of Art. But San Marino has given us a stamp which preserves for us in our collections the irreplaceable masterpiece.

The design is somewhat unique in that a bolt of lightning flashes from top to bottom on the right, and at the bottom are swirling waves denoting the rampaging river. "The Crucifixion" was painted about 1280 and is indeed a great artistic loss. Christ is shown on the cross as a "Man of Sorrow," expressing the agony of the hours on the cross. The Sorrowful Mother is seen in the left panel and St. John in the right. In this work Cimabue has used light and dark shadows to accentuate the rigidity of the dead Christ and the agonizing facial expression--these are the focal points in this work.

This type of crucifix evolved in the 13th century. Prior to that time the figure of Christ on the cross was depicted as "triumphant" - eyes wide open, body erect, head up, and no sign of agony or indication of death. The very early Christians wouldn't even consider showing the figure of Christ on the cross. Such a portrayal made its first appearance in the 6th century. Prior to that time a Lamb was placed at the foot of the cross as a symbol for the Crucified Christ. The first to use the Crucified Christ image were the manuscripts and rare church books, but on these Christ was portrayed as "triumphant." Pope John VII permitted the first portrayal of a "Christ in agony on the cross" in a mosaic for the Vatican, done in 705.

In the 12th century the figure of Christ was shorn of all garments except the loin cloth, and an expression of agony was imparted to the face and body, with the head bowed. Small panels or scenes were added to depict various incidents in the life of Christ. Such is Cimabue's "Crucifixion." Christ is presented as a "Man of Sorrows," His head droops, His eyes are closed, His body sags in weariness. Only the Sorrowful Mother and St. John are included in the side panels. The large square panel behind Christ's body is not filled with scenes and merely forms a decorative background.

Not a great deal is known about Cimabue. Vasari states that Giovanni Cimabue was born in 1240 and died in 1302 (unconfirmed), and that he came of a noble family by the name of Cimabue. His given name was Cenni di Pepo. His father sent him for schooling to the Church of Santa Maria Novella, where one of his relatives was a teacher. But Giovanni spent more time drawing or sketching than he did studying. He would also play hooky from school so that he might watch the Greek painters then working in the church. His father finally got the message and gave up on the education part; he placed him to study painting under the tutelage of the Greek artists.

It is known he did work for the churches in Florence and Pisa, and that the name of Cimabue was widely known throughout Italy. This reputation brought a summons to assist in painting the lower church in Assisi. He was so good, Vasari states, that he began a fresco all by himself, however, he was called back to Florence and the work was completed by his protegee, Giotto. Cimabue is considered the most important painter before Giotto, and Dante, in his epic poem, compares Cimabue with Giotto.

GREAT BRITAIN: CHRISTMAS STAMPS FOR 1967 - Issued October 17 and November 27, 1967

Three classical paintings were chosen by Great Britain as designs for Christmas stamps. The selection was made by Postmaster General Edward Short; he chose three works which belong to the National Gallery in London. Considering the size of the stamps, one cannot but admire the clear and colorful reproductions of the masterpieces. These are indeed "masterpieces in miniature." The Queen's head in gold appears on all three stamps, as well as the name of the artist.

The first stamp, a 4d value, was issued early enough for mail abroad. The design presented the "Madonna and Child" by Murillo, now on loan to the Rijk Museum, Amsterdam. An article

on this design appeared in the November 1, 1967 issue.



The 3d value, released November 27, presents "The Adoration of the Shepherds," attributed to the School of Seville. A view card of the painting in our files states it is a work by Zurbaran. The Blessed Virgin, in kneeling position, has drawn back the cloth from the face of the small Infant Jesus so that the adoring shepherds may see the Christ Child which the angels had announced had just been born. Three shepherds kneel at the side of the straw-filled manger and gaze in apparent wonder at this small Infant about whom the angels had said: "This day is born unto you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord, in the City of David. And this shall be a sign unto you:



you will find the Infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger." The stamp design truly depicts this incident -- the shepherds have found the Infant in the manger and Mary has just drawn back the swaddling clothes.

In the lower right hand corner is a small lad kneeling, one hand resting on the handle of his basket which appears to be filled with edibles, the other outstretched with his offering to the Christ Child. Two lambs and a sheaf of grain are seen at his feet, apparently the offerings of the shepherds.

Above the Madonna and Infant stands St. Joseph, one hand resting on his staff and the other folded over his wrist, looking down at the Infant Jesus. In the background stands a woman with a basket of provisions on her shoulder. Streaks of light in the distant landscape show that dawn is breaking, probably symbolical of the new day resulting from the Birth of the God-Man in the stable at Bethlehem.

The School of Seville actually originated with the works of Pedro de Campana, however, its leading exponents were Velasquez, Zurbaran and Murillo. The School also had considerable influence on Latin American paintings, and Zurbaran and Murillo were most frequently imitated in paintings done for Latin American churches.



The 1/6d stamp of the November issue presents the "Adoration of the Shepherds" by the French painter Louis Le Nain (c.1593-1648). The original was painted in 1640. He was also called "the Roman" due to his preference for Roman settings, and the scene in this work appears to be just outside the ruins of a Roman palace or Forum.

The Infant Christ Child lays on a bed of straw. The Blessed Virgin, robed in red with a dark cloak, kneels in adoration. At her right are two small angels, also kneeling in adoration. Joseph stands behind them, leaning on a staff. In the foreground is an adoring shepherd. Behind the oxen are seen a woman and another shepherd; the latter as well as one of the angels look to the left as if still hearing the angelic chorus. At the extreme right stands the ass, still in harness, as though St. Joseph had had no time to look to his comfort after the journey to Bethlehem.

Louis was the middle of the three Le Nain brothers who came from a 17th century family of painters. All three were recognized for realistic landscapes. Louis, however, showed more originality than his two brothers. He preferred to place his scenes in rustic backgrounds, and painted his subjects as he saw them from his own viewpoint. His works were influenced by the arts of Italy, Holland and Spain, however, all three Le Nain brothers were greatly influenced by Dutch and Flemish masters.

UNITED STATES: MADONNA AND CHILD WITH ANGELS, by Memling -- November 6, 1967 Issue

The United States joined the many other nations in issuing a Christmas stamp for 1967. Although it is to be regretted that the design used was a repeat of the 1966 design, we do have a larger size stamp which shows a trifle more of the Madonna and Child from Memling's painting in the Mellon Collection in our National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. The illustrated maximum card presents a more comprehensive view of the painting.

A young and somewhat sedate Blessed Virgin is enthroned under a canopy. She holds the Christ Child on her knees, supporting Him with her left hand while in her right hand she holds a book. By the size of it we may assume it may be the Scriptures. The Christ Child has placed



His left hand on the Book, having turned several pages to the place wherein His coming is foretold. His right hand is extended towards the apple which the kneeling angels holds.

Memling has varied the "apple" in this painting -- neither the Virgin nor Christ Child hold it, but an angel, and it seems to be apparent that the angel had been interrupted in his playing of the viol to accept the apple. Perhaps Memling meant to imply that the Word was now fulfilled, indicated by the Christ Child's hand on the Book, and therefore He returned the apple to the angel. The angel on the right continues to play the harp.

A rich tapestry decorates the back of the throne, and the red canopy emphasizes the colors. The arch wherein the throne is placed is decorated with two unidentified figurines and two cherubs. A rich oriental rug is placed beneath the throne. Through the two openings, or windows, is a landscape; on the left is seen a castle, and on the right the spires of a church.

ST. LUCIA: THE ALDOBRANDINI or GARVAGH MADONNA, by Raphael
October 16, 1967 Issue

As the design for its first Christmas stamp this British Colony in the West Indies selected a Raphael masterpiece, the original of which is in the London National Gallery. Value of the stamp is 4¢. The design is within a gold frame and carries the identification "Raphael - Madonna, Child and St. John." The words "Christmas 1967" are also seen just above the words "St. Lucia." The original is a panel painting measuring 38 x 33 inches, and is generally associated with, or related to the last fresco in the "Stanza della Segnatura." From this it is believed that Raphael painted it in 1510.



Here Raphael paints a beautiful seated Madonna. She appears to be in her twenties, with classical features. She is robed in the Italian dress and head covering associated with early 16th century. She holds a lively Christ Child, fair of face and hair. At the Virgin's left stands the Child John; his left hand reaches to touch the hand of the Christ Child which is being extended to him and holding a carnation. The Virgin's left arm tenderly gathers the Child John closer to the Child Jesus. Through the two windows in the landscape background are seen the suburbs of Rome by the Tiber.

The work at one time was the property of the Aldobrandini Family, from which it acquires the name "Aldobrandini Madonna." It later passed to the Borghese Collection in Rome. At the end of the 18th century it was purchased by Day, who sold it in 1824 to Lord Garvagh, and thus it acquired its second name of "Garvagh Madonna." From Lord Garvagh it passed to the London National Gallery.

COOK ISLANDS: "IA ORANA MARIA" (WE GREET THEE, MARY), by Gauguin - October 1967 Issue

We regret no illustration accompanies this article, however, we seem to have lost the photograph. A copy will be made for inclusion in the March issue.

The 1¢ value in this six-stamp set reproducing the works of Paul Gauguin presents a canvas he painted in 1891, measuring 44-3/4 x 34-1/2 inches, and now in the Lewishon Collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City. Early in 1892 Gauguin wrote a friend in his native France: "I have painted a canvas: an angel with yellow wings points out to two Tahitian women the figures of Mary and Jesus, also Tahitians. In the background are somber mountains and flowering trees. A dark purple road and an emerald green foreground. I am rather satisfied with it." The title of the picture stems from the acknowledgement of the presentation of the women to the Virgin and Child - "We Greet Thee, Mary."

Gauguin had painted several biblical or religious subjects while he lived in Brittany, and during his first visit to Tahiti was inspired to do this work, using a tropical background or setting for a biblical scene. This painting has all the tenderness of genuine religious emotion combined with exotic scenery. Here he paints a Virgin who carries the Christ Child

according to the custom of the Tahitian people, her face expressing gentleness and maternal love - for the Christ Child as well as for the two women whom the angel is presenting to her.

To understand the work of Paul Gauguin (1848-1903) one must know something about his life. As a young man he was employed in a Paris brokerage house and painted only as a hobby in his free time. However, when he was 35 he gave up his job to devote himself entirely to painting. It did not provide the substance to maintain his family, and as a result his wife left him, returning to her native Denmark with their children. After this break in his family life, he studied under Pissarro, and then went to Brittany. Then he got the urge to visit the tropics, and made a trip to Martinique, but he did not find there the paradise he was searching for so returned to Brittany. It was at this time that he met Emile Bernard and from him learned an awareness of his capacities and aims. He was a friend of Van Gogh's and journeyed to Arles to be near him, but a quarrel split them apart. Gauguin, then 43, and still searching for paradise, journeyed to Tahiti, staying for two years. However, he found the island too primitive and it soon became irritating to him, so he returned to France but there he found modern surroundings more irritating and returned again to Tahiti. He wrote many times to friends in France that he wanted to return, but was told that his paintings were beginning to take the fancy of the buying public and he should remain in Tahiti and paint, which he did for eight years until his death.

In his letters he wrote that he could not put on canvas all he saw and felt while in Tahiti, but the works he did while there are almost like tapestries, full of decorative effects, exotic backgrounds. The forms are defined with black outlines and the intense colors used serve to enhance the tapestry quality. Yet his works belie that this was the paradise he was looking for and never found, Not once did any of this disappointment show up in his paintings. What he put on canvas was the "Tahiti of his dreams," even as seen in this stamp design - The Blessed Virgin and Christ Child are normal Tahitians, embodying all the grace and beauty of the native people and surrounded by an almost unbelievable tropical paradise but showing none of its primitiveness.

THE VIRGIN CALLED JESSE

By Ernest A. Kehr



The one-franc stamp issued by Belgium on November 13, for use on 1967 Christmas greetings features one of the more remarkable of European Madonnas. Designed by M. A. Lauwers, the famous statue is framed by a ribbon that is minutely inscribed, "The Miraculous Image of Our Lady at Hasselt, called the Virgin Jesse," in both Flemish and French.

Enthroned on a pedestal in front of the main altar, the statue is the most famous of many sculptures in Notre Dame, one of several churches serving the spiritual needs of the town's 31,000 residents.

Notre Dame was completed in 1728, to replace a demolished chapel originally erected in this Limbourg Province settlement early in the 14th century. During the 1944 bombings it was severely damaged again, but faithful restoration was completed in 1951, with hardly a trace of the terrible destruction.

Like the original chapel, the statue was carved during the 14th century, and while it is not the most beautiful example of that era's sculpture, the 17-inch image has been widely and fervently venerated for several centuries not only by the residents but by thousands of pilgrims that annually come from all parts of Belgium and other European countries.

Carved from a deep reddish wood--probably cherry--the Virgin and Child are garbed in heavy jewel-encrusted robes and crowned with golden tiaras in a style that is known as "Spanish."

Once each seven years the pedestal and statue are carried in solemn procession by four Franciscan friars from Notre Dame



Notre Dame Church

through all the main streets of Hasselt and back again.

A great many pilgrims come with spiritual problems or physical afflictions as they have for more than three centuries. There are records of miraculous cures due to devotions to Virgin Jesse which have been formally acknowledged by the Church after intensive investigations.

By Jozef Peeters, Bevel, Belgium



Commemorating the 100th anniversary of the crowning of the image of Our Lady called the "Virga Jesse," located at Hasselt in the province of Limburg, the Belgian Postal Authorities issued on November 11, 1967 a single stamp, having a 1 franc value, which presents the statue found in the Church of Our Lady, Hasselt. The image in white stands against a background of blue. The Dutch and French inscription around the image reads: "The Miraculous Statue of Our Lady at Hasselt, called Virga Jesse."

The visitor to the Church of Our Lady at Hasselt knows this image only as a "dressed Madonna," after the manner of the 16th century. Yet, under all that brocade and velvet is a graceful polychromed statue. An unknown medieval artist sculptured it. At present, the image in all its beauty is enshrined in the center of a sumptuous baroque altar considered a masterpiece by Jean Delcour (1631-1707).

The Jubilee cancellation authorized at Hasselt for the commemoration of the crowning and issuance of the stamp portrays the statue in its original form.

Already in the 13th century a Sodality of Our Lady existed in Hasselt, and still exists today. Its favorite hymn was "Virga Jesse floruit." The words of this song were transferred upon the statue and are there even today. The words of this hymn are directly connected with Christmas: "The stem of Jesse bloomed. A Virgin brought forth the God-Man. God brought peace." Therefore, this stamp was released on the occasion of Christmas, the Feast which inspires everyone for it brings a message of peace and goodness towards all men. The same hymn-text is also engraved in the crown which was presented to the image 100 years ago.

The history of the solemn crowning of the image shows the very close connection of the Virga Jesse with the city of Hasselt. Hasselt was a town of gin distillers. The corn residue from the distilleries was used to fatten the cattle of the area. In 1867 a plague afflicted the cattle, and Hasselt faced total economic ruin. After a novena in honor of the Virga Jesse, the cattle-plague disappeared, almost miraculously and very rapidly. The gin distillers, supported by the entire population, offered in thanksgiving the two golden crowns - one for Our Lady and one for the Christ Child, which she holds on her left arm.

The golden and bejeweled crowns were consecrated in Rome by Pope Pius IX. The Papal Legate, His Excellency Monsignor de Merode, crowned the Virga Jesse and the Divine Child on August 15, 1867 in the market place at Hasselt. It was the first time, certainly in Belgium, that such an honor was bestowed upon a Virgin statue.

Even today Hasselt is closely connected with the Virga Jesse. For the postal issue commemorating the crowning is only a forerunner of the septennial festivities which are being planned for 1968 with exceptional splendor. In this way Hasselt keeps up a tradition of centuries.

Two special postal cancellations were authorized at the release of this Madonna stamp. One was given at Hasselt and depicts the statue of "Virga Jesse" in its original form. Another was used at Antwerp and depicts a "Nativity Scene." On the latter occasion Father F. De Troyer exhibited once more his famous collections of Marian stamps.

The Virga Jesse also appears on two former Belgian postal cancellations -- Nos. 1 and 7 on page 25 of "The Marian Philatelist" of May 1963. She also appears on a postal stationery of 1961, a postcard with a 2 francs value, with inscription in Dutch and French, and on one of 1954 with a 1 franc 20 cts value, also bilinguious.

With this stamp of the "Virga Jesse" Belgium extends Christmas greetings flowering from the "Root of Jesse."

NEW LISTING: PANAMA: The February 1964 issue commemorating Vatican II, series of famous churches. The 21¢ value, olive green, Scott C316, shows the CATHEDRAL OF THE ASSUMPTION, Toledo (Class 8). This stamp was not included on souvenir sheet nor overprinted.

By Paul Gauci, B'Kara, Malta

"The soil of Malta is brittle with treasures of history," once said a famous archeologist.

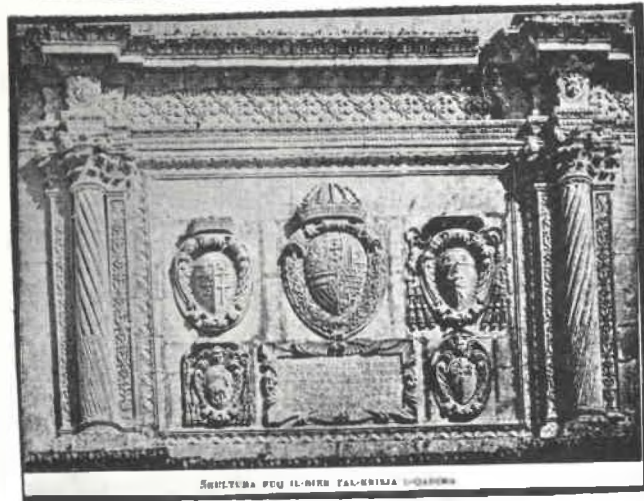


When you consider that Malta is only 60 square miles in area, you do not expect to find anything worth noticing on it. But this is not the case. On the contrary, the entire island is like an encyclopedia of History and Architecture. When compared with other big countries that are famous for their history, Malta is by far richer than any of them. The whole island is an open book of History, Archeology and Architecture, which began in Pre-History and carried on without interruption to modern times.

The composition of Malta's limestone is unique -- hard yet mellow, thus can be worked with ease and perfection. For this reason the island is profusely adorned with precious gems of architecture, some of which excell more than others.



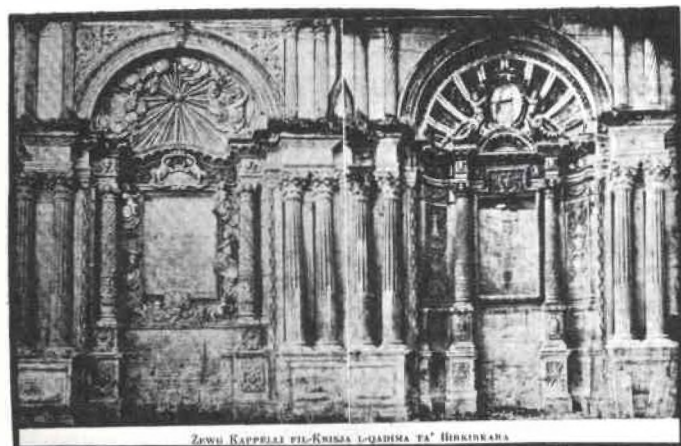
In B'Kara, a village of nearly 20,000, the remains of a famous Marian temple can still be seen. This was once the Collegiate Church of the village and was built around 1617. (See stamp illustration on page 76 of November issue). The plan was designed by Maltese architects Victor Cassar and Thomas Dingli. Incidentally, Cassar was the son of that famous Girolamo (Gerome) who built nearly all famous churches and auberges in Valletta.



This old Collegiate Church was dedicated to "The Assumption of Our Lady into Heaven," and in addition to its main high altar it had six other altars, all dedicated to Our Lady under different titles. It was by far the Marian church "par excellence."

At present the church is roofless because of several earth tremors and heavy rainfall, but it is still used as a cemetery and Mass is still said in it every day. The present Provost of B'Kara, the Most Reverend Monsignor Ignatius Sciberras Psaila, intends to restore it as soon as the necessary funds are raised.

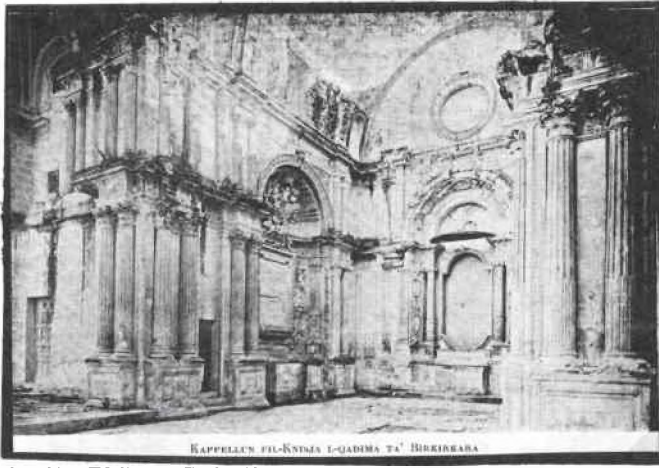
The church has the form of a Latin Cross with perfect architectural proportions. The upper end of the cross is a bit longer than the sides, and the lower end is nearly twice as long as each of the sides. The over-all length of the Temple is 134 feet, and the width 110 feet. The famous facade, which is 48 feet wide, is a masterpiece of art, looking like a piece of fine filigree hewn on stone. The inscription on the center reads: FATHER PHILIP BORG ERECTED THIS TEMPLE THROUGH HIS OWN FUNDS AND WITH THE ENDLESS ASSISTANCE OF ALL HIS PARISHIONERS. HE ERECTED THE CHURCH IN 1617 AND DEDICATED IT TO THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY.



Around this central inscription one can see five coats-of-arms. The largest one, which is just above the inscription, is that of Philip III, King of Spain. On its right stands the emblem of Grand

Master Alof de Wignacourt; and on the left that of Bishop Balthasar Cagliares. Just beneath Wignacourt's coat-of-arms are those of Father Philip Borg, and on the opposite side those of Father Andrew Galea, who was the Vice Parish priest.

Internally the Temple is far more magnificent than externally, as can be seen from these illustrations extracted from a very rare book written in Maltese.



The first two photographs show the Church as it is today, with No. 2 bearing a close resemblance to the stamp design.

Illustration No. 3 shows the central inscription and the five coats-of-arms, portion of which may also be seen on the stamp.

Illustration No. 4 shows two of the Chapels in the church dedicated to Our Lady.

The illustration to the left shows the interior of the church.

Even in its present state this is a famous Marian Temple one admires very much

INFORMATION WANTED:

Alois Zurmuhle, Kagiswil, Switzerland, sent us this illustration and requested information concerning the Madonna cancellation. He wrote it is one he has never seen before. It is listed in an auction catalogue of Corinthia in Zurich, October 1967. Description given was as follows:

"Los Nor. 2908: Airmail 1927: Volo de pinedo sesto calende-brasile dell 8 Febbraio-letteras ufficiale interstat ed Affrancata con tre francobilli (annulo violetto "Santa Maria") timbro die arrivo 22.2.1927."

Father Horn informed us this has to do with the Sixth Flight of De Pinedo, Calinde-Brazil, February 8, 1927, official letters, franked with three postage stamps (cancellation in violet "Santa Maria") and stamped on day of arrival February 2, 1927. Anyone having any information is requested to write us.



NEW MEMBERS

- | | |
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| Mrs. A. A. Phillips | 212 W. Market Street, Newark, New Jersey 07103 |
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VENEZUELA POSTAL CANCELLATION #1: This cancellation taken from the souvenir folder forwarded by the Maracaibo Philatelic Club. We also received from Mrs. Francisco Borjes information on the design of the cancellation and Our Lady of Chiquinquira, however, it did not arrive in time to be included in this issue but will be in the March issue.

SPANISH LOCALS: Information received from Mr. Andre Longueval, Belfort, France, identifies two new Spanish Locals in the Marian category:

- (1) FUENGIROLA (Malaga) - Galvez B319 to B322. (On page 72 of Galvez Specialized).
In pairs and tete-beche.
Above portal, in niche, one can see a statue of the Virgin.
- (2) SEGOVIA - Galvez B791-2, B795-97, B798-805-6, 809-10, 813, 814.
(Pages 107 and 108 of Galvez Specialized).

Marian Cathedral of The Assumption at Segovia. (Galvez type c)

It is in this Cathedral one finds the Virgin of Fuencisla represented on the blocks of Galvez B823 to B825 and B823s.

B E W I L D E R E D

-0-

We have so much material for collectors of Madonna Stamps that we are bewildered when it comes time to compose our advertisements. We have a high percentage of the existing sets in which the Virgin appears on a stamp.

To start the New Year, we offer the following beautiful stamps which are printed in more than one color:

Belgium	B631-7	\$ 3.00
	B653-9	3.50
Cook Islands	1967 Gauguin	1.20
Ethiopia	396-402	2.25
France	1090	.90
	1150	.40
Jugoslavia	681-6	2.40
	750-5	2.25
Liechtenstein	376-8	1.50
Luxembourg	389-99	5.30
	B186-91	5.80
Monaco	262-73	20.40
San Marino	414-15	1.70
Spain	1140-50 & C171-4	5.75
	CB8-17	105.00
Togo	535-7	1.40

The above are all unused (mostly never hinged) and in fine to very fine condition.

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