NEW ISSUES

Design by John Mason of Armadale, Victoria, and depicts a child looking at a miniature NATIVITY SCENE.

NORFOLK ISLAND: Same design and release date as Australia.

MALTA: (A-1 Category). Released November 3, 1964; 3-stamp set with same design on all. Design by E. V. Cremona is a modernistic NATIVITY SCENE. Beautiful colors: magenta and gold, dark blue and gold, dark green and gold. Paper is watermarked with Maltese Cross.

LIECHTENSTEIN: (A-1 Category). Issued Dec. 9, 1964. Christmas issue of a 3-stamp set. Unfortunately, the stamps were received too late to be photographed for this issue. The 1.30 value pictures a statue of MADONNA AND CHILD with Saints Sebastian and Roch. The statue is on the altar of the Masecha Chapel which is depicted on the 10c stamp in the set.

SPAIN: (A-1 Category). Christmas stamp issued December 1, 1964, reproducing the Nativity detail from Zurbaran's masterpiece, ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS. The original is in the Grenoble Museum.

SPAIN: (A-6 Category). Issued October 26, 1964, picturing the Cathedral of Leon, which is dedicated to OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION. (Article and illustration on page 9).

VATICAN CITY: (A-1 Category). Christmas issue consisting of a 3-stamp set, the sixth in the series begun in 1959. The same design on all stamps but borders are in different colors. Selected this year was a design by the Japanese painter, Teresa Kiniko Kosuki, depicting a Christmas scene in a Japanese setting, entitled "The Christmas Poesa." NATIVITAS D.N.I. CHRISTI.

NATIVITAS D.N.I. CHRISTI.

Madonnas in miniature appear on the following stamps:

PORTUGAL: M.T. SANTO SHRINE - Scott 928-930
A statue of the IMMACULATE CONCEPTION stands to the right of the Church and is a copy of the one venerated in the church; the latter was carved by Italian sculptor, Macogenali. The Shrine depicted on this issue is dedicated to the IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.

VATICAN CITY: A 2-stamp set released Nov. 16, 1964, commemorating the 5th centenary of the death of Cardinal Nicholas of Cues; a Madonna in miniature appears on the 40 lire stamp in this set.

FORTHCOMING ISSUES

SPAIN: Antonio Benet, Valencia, Spain, has written us that on February 15, 1965 there will released a stamp of the ARCH OF SANTA MARIA OF BURGOS, 30 cts. value; and on March 24, 1965 a 70 cts. value depicting THE VIRGIN OF THE LAMPLIGHTERS, (Virgen de los Faroles.)

HAITI: Although promised since February 1964, the issue with the design of OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP has not as yet been released by this country.

A PROSPEROUS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR
MARIAN POSTAL CANCELLATIONS

BELGIUM:
32. Tongeren, 12-9-64. Tower of Basilica of OUR LADY OF TONGEREN. "Europadagen Tongeren."

UNITED STATES:

Belgium #32 U.S.#20

The Belgian cancellation forwarded by Rev. Father de Troyer, and the United States cancellation obtained for us by Rev. Father Eggleston.

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******

SCOTT CATALOG NUMBERS FOR RECENT ISSUES

Czechoslovakia: Souvenir Sheet - Charles Bridge #1257
France: Semi-postal - Strasbourg Cathedral #8-380
Belgium: Souvenir Sheet - Van der Weyden's "Descent from the Cross" #8-763
Spain: Postal issue - Sta. Maria del Alcazar #1264, 1265

******

MOZAMBIQUE: CHURCH OF OUR LADY QUEEN OF THE ROSARY AT BEIRA - Scott Nos. 315, 317

This gothic style church is dedicated to Our Lady Queen of the Rosary and is evidence of the accomplishments of the Franciscan Portuguese Missionaries who have cared for the Mission at Beira for fifty years. The cornerstone was laid by Don Sebastiao Pereira, and the church was solemnly consecrated in 1925. The building is marble, and there is an electric clock in the tower, as well as some excellent bells. The majestic windows made in France. (Translated from the May 1948 issue of the German GABRIEL.)...submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Frank H. Benjert....

MARIAN PHILATELIST

January 1965
The Patroness of the Monastery is Mary, or rather, THE NATIVITY OF MARY, because the cornerstone was laid on Sept. 8, 1089 by William von Hirseu.

Rev. Father Horn wrote to the Monastery for identification of the figures on the facade and the monks there gladly supplied the following information: In the center, towards the top of the facade, is OUR LADY, holding the Infant, standing on a serpent-entwined globe. To the left is St. Stephen, the first martyr, whose hand is preserved as a relic in Zwiefalten. To the right of Our Lady is St. Aurelius, whose remains are also preserved as relics in Zwiefalten.

On the three-cornered gable, about the middle of the facade, are the kneeling figures of the two founders of the monastery, Counts Kun and Luithold; just above the portal is St. Benedict.

Where the two Aachens flow together—Zwiefalten—the Benedictine Monks of Hirseu in the 11th century founded an abbey which fell by the secularization of 1802-03 to the City of Wurtemberg. It was then converted into an insane asylum.

In 1109 the old Abbey was rebuilt in Roman style and torn down in 1739. The new Abbey, as shown on the stamp, was erected by the Munich architect Johann Michael Fischer (1701-1766). This highly gifted architect, who built 32 churches and 23 monasteries, is proclaimed as the leading builder of Baroque-style churches in southern Germany.

In Zwiefalten he built one of the largest and most magnificent churches of the 18th century. The principal item of the Monastery is the Main Altar with the figure of OUR LADY OF ZWIEFALTEN, a Swabian (Schutzmantel Madonna), or "Our Lady of The Protecting Mantle," which dates to the year 1460. The Monastery in Zwiefalten is now a parish and pilgrimage church. (Translated from the January 1957 issue of the German GABRIEL.)

...submitted by Mr. & Mrs. Frank Benjert...

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LIECHTENSTEIN - MADONNA CARVED IN WOOD
Scott #A-179

So many visitors to Vaduz wished to see the original used for the famous stamp design created for Liechtenstein for the Marian Year by Karl Bickel, Swiss artist, that Prince Franz Joseph permitted it to be transferred from the castle collection to the museum. The artist selected a small wood carving made in the 14th century and called his model "Madonna Enthroned." He placed the picture at the right and added exquisite symbolic designs, including a dove, grapes and foliage in a panel at the left, creating a three-dimensional effect. (Extracted from OUR LADY'S DIGEST, April 1963.)

**** January 1965
The Cathedral of Notre Dame is famous for many, many things, but probably its three Rose Windows (North, South and West) are more widely known; at least the West Rose Window has certainly become the best known and the most photographed.

Stained glass had its beginning at the end of the 8th century, reaching its peak at the end of the 13th century. The beginning of the 13th century saw "light" entering cathedrals, churches and other buildings - this "light" being the use of glass, and more to the point, the use of stained glass. Some edifices were rebuilt and some remodeled to incorporate the new idea.

In 1250, when the facade of Notre Dame with its West Rose Window was completed, the Cathedral was almost ninety years old. Jehan de Chelles was the "Master of the Works of Notre Dame," and to him is given credit for installing the West Rose Window during the years 1220-1225.

Actually, very little is known about him. His surname indicated he had been born in the town of Chelles, some fifteen miles west of Paris on the river Marne; and in the year 1250 he was considered "middle aged," yet he must have established an enviable reputation with his talents to have been named "Major Architect" of Notre Dame.

The design on a 1964 French stamp, commemorating the 800th anniversary of Notre Dame, depicts the medallion of MADONNA AND CHILD from this 13th century West Rose Window. A black and white reproduction fails to convey the beauty of the colors.

It is amazing to read that although 86% of its surface is glass, and with little care or maintenance given it from the 16th to the 19th centuries, its frame has remained rigid; this in spite of the fact that in 1730 the Cathedral organ was attached to the frame with iron clamps.

One might say this window has a distinction all its own. Since the "west" signified the "life hereafter," the west windows of Chartres and Mantes depict Christ of the Doomsday, but at Notre Dame, Our Lady as Queen of Eternity occupies this place. Another point is the "Marian blue" background, emphasized by the reds, greens, browns and yellows.

Some writers have expressed an opinion that the North Rose Window is the jewel of Notre Dame, but we tend to agree with one writer who states, "the West Rose Window of Notre Dame Cathedral is indeed a Marian Paradise, resulting from its field of Marian blue and the Madonna in its center."

The medallion on the stamp is but a very small detail from this beautiful window, which in its entirety covers 650 square feet and is 32 feet in diameter. Father Horn has graciously supplied us with the illustrated sketch obtained from Mr. Marcel Poignant, (Director of the French publication, "La Philatелия Christienne," )which gives us information not readily available.

Repairs and restoration were made to the window around 1850 by Viollet-le-duc, and on the original sketch Mr. Poignant indicated with red numbers which portions had been replaced; since we cannot reproduce colors, we have indicated the restored portions with an asterisk *. The restored areas were shaded on the sketch and appear slightly darker on the illustration.
Mr. Poignant has also numbered the various rings, identifying the designs in each:
(1) Medallion of Madonna and Child; (2) The Twelve Prophets; (3) The twelve Vices; (4) The Twelve signs of the zodiac; (5) The Twelve Virtues; (6) The Twelve months of the year.

**TWELVE PROPHETS:** Isaias, Jeremias, Baruch, Ezekiel, Daniel, Osee, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheas, and Nahum.

**TWELVE VICES:** Idolatry, Despair, Avarice, Injustice, Madness, Pride, Cowardice, Anger, Harshness, Discord, Revolt, Inconstancy.

**TWELVE SIGNS OF THE ZODIAC:** Aquarius, Pisces, Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Leo, Cancer, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, and Capricorn.

**TWELVE VIRTUES:** Faith, Hope, Charity, Purity, Prudence, Humility, Courage, Patience, Mildness, Peace, Obedience, Perserverance.

**MONTHS OF THE YEAR:** Represented by various activities which are connected with each month.

The Virtues and Vices are represented by a woman bearing a symbol of each: Faith by a Cross, Hope by Cross and Standard, Charity by sheep, Purity by Salamander, Prudence by a serpent, Humility by a Dove, Courage by a lion, Patience by an Oxen, Mildness by a Lamb, Peace by an olive branch, Obedience by a kneeling camel, and Perserverance by a Crown.

We extend our appreciation to Father Horn and Mr. Poignant for sharing with our readers the detailed sketch which is of material assistance in "the story behind the window," particularly, "the story behind the stamp."

**MARIAN PHILATELIST**

January 1965
In Latin America, colonized by the Spanish and Portuguese, we encounter with certain frequency the Holy Virgin in the coats-of-arms of cities whose population, by inheritance and tradition, had an extreme love for the Queen of the Heavens. In addition to the cities, we find provincial or national coats-of-arms, and also institutions, such as Universities, etc. Many times this Marian motif is in miniature. We present below a complete list (alphabetically by country), with catalog numbers for these stamps:

I. COLOMBIA
(1) Coat-of-arms of the College of Our Lady of The Rosary. In spite of the fact that the coat-of-arms is typical of the Dominican Order (which now-a-days is encircled by the words "Laudare, Benedictere, Praedicare"), we consider this Marian because the Holy Rosary encircles it although the number of pearls is exaggerated. It appears on the following stamps:
   - Scott: 632, C-266, 696, C-315/16, C-335, 341

(2) Coat-of-arms of the City of Medellin, with the Candlemas.
   - Scott: Does not list it.
   - Yvert: Medellin 5, 6, 11

II. ECUADOR
(3) Coat-of-arms of the City of Cuenca with a ribbon which says "First God and then You," which refers to The Immaculada.
   - Scott: 613, C-312, 314
   - Yvert: 613, 306-308

III. HONDURAS
(4) Coat-of-arms of the City of Trujillo, with the Virgin and Child four times in the frame.
   - Scott: C-156
   - Yvert: A-147

(5) Coat-of-arms of the City of Comayagua, La Immaculada.
   - Scott: C-157
   - Yvert: A-148

(6) Coat-of-arms of the City of Comayagua, La Immaculada.
   - Scott: C-160
   - Yvert: A-151

(7) Monogram of "Mary" in the coat-of-arms of the City of Tegucigalpa.
   - Scott: C-162
   - Yvert: A-153
IV. **MEXICO**

(8) Coat-of-arms of the City of Zacatecas, The Virgin with the Infant.

Scott: 820/821
Yvert: 608/09

V. **PARAGUAY**

(9) Coat-of-arms of the first Archbishop of Asuncion, Mons. J. S. Bogarin, with the monogram of "Mary."

Scott: 309-311
Yvert: 320-322

(10) Coat-of-arms of the City of Asuncion, with the bust of The Assumption.

Scott: 341-345
Yvert: 358-362

(11) Coat-of-arms of the state of Paraguay, La Immaculada. (The four motifs in the four squares are very similar to the coat-of-arms of Asuncion, but vary in details.)

Scott: 362-365
Yvert: 382-385

VI. **PERU**

(12) Coat-of-arms of the University of San Marcos of Lima, with Virgin and Child.

Scott: C-114
Yvert: A-103

VII. **EL SALVADOR**

(13) Coat-of-arms with the monogram of "Mary of the Republic of El Salvador."

Scott: 685-691 C-179-183
Yvert: 635-41 A-161-165

VIII. **VENEZUELA**

(14) Coat-of-arms of the Federal District of Caracas with the Marian inscription, "Hail Mary Most Holy, conceived without sin."

Scott: 485-491 C-365-373
Yvert: 322-324A 316-319A

(15) Coat-of-arms of the City of Valencia del Rey with the scene of The Annunciation.

Scott: 673-676 C590-596
Yvert: 382-325A 316-319A

(16) Coat-of-arms of the City of Trujillo with a bust of La Immaculada.

Scott: 725-734 C690-700
Yvert: 579-588 A664-674
In order to complete this listing we mention the series of Cuenca, Ecuador, of which various postal sheets were issued: two of these show the above-mentioned Marian ribbon and carry Yvert catalog number as sheet No. 3, showing four times the stamp listed as Yvert 613, in the same color but with face value of 0.50 airmail; and No. 4, which shows the stamps listed as Yvert A306-308, having the same design as those of the airmail series and the same face value for such designs but varying a little in color; for the 50c. in place of sepia on cream paper it is orange on white; in place of red on blue for the 80c. value, now sepia on white; and, finally, the 1.00 airmail, in place of lilac on cream, now lilac on white.

We also note that El Salvador, Yvert 683, was double surcharged - one time with 5 and another time with 6 centavos, and for that reason has the following catalog numbers: Scott 695/696 and Yvert 643 and 647.

We have sketched some of the Marian motifs on the above-mentioned stamps in a form most accurate, in some cases going to the original in order to obtain a more exact reproduction, and naturally losing much of the illustrative grace because of blurring, etc.

We do not offer more historical data on these coats-of-arms for various reasons; one is able to ascertain easily such dates of the coat-of-arms of the respective country; we encountered historical information on the stamps, for example those of Peru and Honduras; and, finally, with the Marian motif as the primary interest, which interpretation is easily ascertained through the sketches presented, historical dates are of little importance. We do not wish to exclude the possibility of discovering additional coats-of-arms in the future; that of Cuenca with its Marian character was completely unknown until now and we present it for the first time as such, reserving an extensive study on Cuenca and its Cathedral for a later issue of our magazine.

(The foregoing translated from the Oct. 1964 issue of GABRIEL-LATINOAMERICANO. Following are the sketches which accompanied the article.)
SPAIN: CATHEDRAL OF LEON - DEDICATED TO OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION
W. J. Hoffman

The city of Leon is located in the northern part of Spain on the banks of the Bernesga, and is the capital of the ancient kingdom of Leon. It is considered to be "the most Spanish capital of all Spanish capitals," and its magnificent Cathedral is often called "one of the loveliest in all Spain." Of Gothic architecture, it ranks with Toledo and Burgos.

Three churches have stood where now stands the Cathedral; the third one being built in the 11th century. The present church was begun in 1258 and completed in 1303. The western facade is thought to be the finest of its kind in Spain and is of the 13th century type. Three doorways are separated by narrow arches sculptured as those of Chartres.

On the central shaft of the main doorway is the statue of "Nuestra Senora la Blanca," and in the ogive is Christ between the Virgin and St. John, below which is the Last Judgment. The side ogives illustrate the life of Christ and The Virgin.

The two west towers rise 213 and 223 feet, and are of the 14-15th centuries. The openwork spire on the south was done between 1458-72 by Joosken van Utrecht.

The interior forms a Latin Cross - one with very short arms, and the church is quite narrow considering its length: 298 feet long and 131 feet wide. The stained glass windows are of every period from the 13th century on.

The choir has stalls of walnut wood with carvings of the saints, the work of Malinas and Diego Copin de Holanda between 1467-81. The retablo in the major chapel is considered to be a modern composition but contains paintings done after 1427 by Nicholas Frandes. To the north is a Pietà by Roger van der Weyden.

The many chapels are of historical interest in that they contain numerous tombs of royalty and religious.

In the east corner of the north transept is the altar of "Nuestra Senora del Dado," (Our Lady of the Die), of the 15th century, so called because of the legend of an unlucky gambler who flung his dice into the face of the Infant, causing it to bleed miraculously.

The cloisters were of the 14th century but were altered around 1540, and contain numerous tombs of church dignitaries, as well as murals of the life of Christ believed to have been done between 1459 and 1470.

Father Horn tells us there is a possibility that there is a Madonna statue high up on the facade of this cathedral and also on the very highest point, but he will have to check or study photos carefully to confirm this possibility. From the view card we have, it does appear there are statues on the peak between the two towers and also on the peak over the doorway on the right.

(Acknowledgement is given to Antonio Benet and Mr. and Mrs. Frank Benjert for philatelic and photographic material illustrated above.)
Last spring I spent many hours poring over illustrations and struggling through books in several languages while preparing an article on the Charles Bridge for the May-June 1964 issue of the FINE ARTS PHILATELIST. As a result, I can readily give the details of the new Czech stamp and miniature sheet listed in the November MARIAN PHILATELIST. I hope my facts come in time to save somebody some work, particularly as it was indicated that further research was being made.

Briefly, the miniature sheet contains at least two Madonna statues. The first statue on the right side of the bridge is the group of MADONNA AND CHILD with St. Bernard on his knees to the right and an angel holding a cross to the left. The next statue on the right side is also a MADONNA AND CHILD: St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Dominic should be in the group but the artist has not attempted to do more than identify the Madonna. She should also appear in the third group on the right (Crucifixion) and in the third on the left (Pieta), but the artist has not detailed these groups. The first groups on the right are also seen, but there is one very strange thing: the artist has given the first group on each side in excellent detail so that they can be identified without possibility of error, but he has made an important error of perspective. The first group on the left is St. Yves and is located on the bridge directly opposite the Madonna and St. Bernard group. They are, in fact, the first two groups at the east end of the bridge.

None of the statues on the stamp is a Madonna. The view is from the south side in the center of the bridge. On the near side are (left) St. Ludmila with her young grandson, St. Wenceslas, and (right) St. Francis Borgie. The two statues opposite are not represented in detail but they ought to be (left) St. Anthony of Padua and (right) St. John of Nepomuc.

Incidentally, my article in the FINE ARTS PHILATELIST may be of use to anyone trying to identify the Charles Bridge statues. It includes a complete list of the statues on the bridge with their sculptors, dates, etc., a general history of the bridge, and a checklist of stamps showing the bridge with details of the statues that appear on each stamp.

(Editor's note: Mrs. Clare McAlister, 915 Nelson Drive, Muskogee, Oklahoma 74401, is the Editor of the FINE ARTS PHILATELIST, and members interested in obtaining a copy of this issue mentioned by Mr. Rodgers should direct their correspondence to her. Based on the annual subscription rate, we presume a copy could be obtained for fifty cents.)

SPANISH POSTAL CANCELLATION No. E58M13 - OUR LADY OF PUY

The text reads "Coronation of Our Lady of Puy." The statue stands in the Royal Basilica of Our Lady of Puy in Estella; she is seated, a crowned Madonna with Child and a rose.

In the middle ages Estella was a resting place on the pilgrimage highway coming from the north on the way to Santiago de Compostella. The word "puy" is a contraction of the ancient word "puyo" used in Navarro and meaning "high place or summit." In Navarro many are of the opinion that the statue at Estella is of French origin and it is possible that D. Pedro de Rada named this statue at the time of establishing the Bishop's seat in Pamplona and Don Ramirez ruled in Navarro. The Bishop came from Toulouse and was well acquainted with the French pilgrimage place of "Le Puy." Historically, the statue at Estella did not originate in France; it was miraculously discovered in 1085. The statue is carved of wood which cannot be identified. With the exception of the face and hands, it is entirely covered with silver. The celebration of the crowning of this ancient statue during the Holy Year of Lourdes was considered a time of grace and drew many pilgrims. The Basilica also contains a "finger" relic of St. Mark The Apostle.

Spanish influence is also found in France; the Cathedral at Estella is 100 years older than Chartres and both cathedrals have identical figures.

(Translated from the July 1959 issue of the German GABRIEL.)

....submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Frank H. Benjert ....
COLLECTING

It is well to plan the housing of a collection at the outset. From many people we hear compliments on the K-Line pages. The publishers have put thought and care, and good taste into these. Some collectors prefer to use quadrille ruled blank pages and draw frame line in various arrangements. This offers scope to print descriptions and comments as one's imagination may dictate.

Some like the idea of completing one country before starting another. In this way the collector builds solidly as he progresses. We advocate the purchase of the most expensive sets first. These are more apt to advance in price. The common stamps, because they are plentiful, are not so apt to advance. We recall that, not so long ago, several of our customers felt that $50. was a high price for the "Blue Madonna" set of Belgium. Now it will cost $100. or more.

For collectors of Madonna Stamps, certain countries are particularly colorful. We would include Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Saar, Spain and Vatican City.

-0-

We have found it quite unsatisfactory to publish price lists by advertisement, or circular, of our Madonna and Vatican City stamps. Price changes cannot be anticipated. By the time the editor or printer produces a price list, many quotations are obsolete. However, we will quote our prices on request by return mail. This saves much misunderstanding.

We do advertise certain sets of which we have an adequate supply. Often these are bargains by intent, not because the market price had gone up. For instance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Set</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>8653-59</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>8186-91</td>
<td>1.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
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<td>Saar</td>
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<td>6.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vatican</td>
<td>356-59</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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MARSHALL H. WILLIAMS
A.P.S.No.24686 Life Member of COROS No. 18 S.P.A.No.14046
98 East Rock Road New Haven 11, Conn. 06511
In the world of today much importance is given to the "presentation." In business, for instance, the merchandise is presented to us in its best aspect: in a beautiful container, in a wrapper of beautiful colors. Equally, commercial announcements attract our attention by their dimensions, by their coloring, or by their elaborate "slogans," presented to us by specialists on the subject. Frequently this presentation increases the price of the merchandise exorbitantly, nevertheless, a good thing is not made except to benefit from a beautiful presentation.

The manner in which our collection develops a well studied theme (first part of our study), put together by stamp adaptation and philatelic material (second part), should be presented in a perfect form (third and final part).

It is practically impossible to give precise rules with respect as to what is "a beautiful presentation" since this aesthetic term "beautiful" or "lovely" is an item very subjective and varies greatly according to the character and education of the persons concerned in each individual case. Nevertheless, I am going to give some advice, looking more to that which must be the "objective" in this question of beauty. This can be summarized in two general principles:

A. The postal stamp should be the principal and predominant element in the entire thematic collection. (Article 3 of the regulations.)

In effect, a thematic collection should never fail to be a philatelic collection and should be composed exclusively of stamps and philatelic items. We should exclude from our collection sketches, photographs, and excessive, lengthy or amplifying texts. It is agreed that objections against this principle have been formed, and not only in Gabriellistic circles. Perhaps the most frequent is this: "By our collection we wish to make an apostleship, meaning, we wish to convey a religious idea; therefore, if we explain our collection better by employing a beautiful photograph, or a sketch, we undoubtedly induce people to admire our collection more, thus better accomplishing our major purpose of apostleship, which should, after all, be the primary objective."

It is certain that by means of our collection we desire to diffuse and explain a religious idea, but this can be done in many other ways: sermons, reproductions of artistic pictures of a religious character, pictures of charity, etc.; however, it is also certain that from the moment we commence to mount a thematic collection of a philatelic character we voluntarily limit our apostleship to philately and in this we employ, essentially and exclusively, postal issues and philatelic material.

It is well known that a collection adorned with beautiful sketches and photographs is able to attain great success in a certain number of exhibitions where Christian Art Exhibits are found. But the apostleship we must undertake in the mounting of our collection of religious philately is precisely a "philatelic apostleship" — and who is able to calculate the effect of a beautiful thematic collection? As an example we think of a religious exhibit in Prague, a completely Communist country, where a religious collection was honored with a Gold Medal in an International Exposition patronized by FIP, and which collection was immediately invited to remain for countless private exhibitions which attracted thousands of persons. Undoubtedly, we are able to develop this apostleship at home, among our good friends, or in an atmosphere of better forcefulness, and with collections that never obtain a Gold Medal. But I have seen too many very beautiful collections, private, individual successes, for me to remain silent on this point. Let us, however, present our stamps and philatelic items, emphasized by an abbreviated text, without photographs or sketches detracting attention from the principal objective of our collection.

B. Our collection should be of a simple and well presented beauty.

And since no one is capable of giving a complete definition of "beautiful," I will limit myself to enumerating four practical counsels, none authoritative, but having their value in the judgment of experts on the subject.
Concerning the pages of our collection: We must choose between album sheets of paper or thin cardboard. The sheets have an advantage when one wishes to leaf through a collection, but the thin cardboard is preferred for exhibiting because it better resists the risk of creasing or wrinkling. As for the color, we advise any soft color (ivory, white, pale gray), but all sheets must be of one color.

Concerning the stamps: It is advisable to have them project in some form so that their image contrasts better. To this effect, we may sketch a very thin black line around the stamps, or mount them under transparent paper which has an obscure background, thus avoiding the hinged stamp. A collector who considers the black background on most mounts excessively heavy, may select another color, such as dark green, etc.

Concerning the disposition of the stamps on the sheets: This point is very important. It is clear this depends on each individual's choice, but we must observe certain classic regulations, such as the placing and orientating the stamps (horizontal/vertical), which indicate the method to us.

(a) Let us not look for extravagant effects by arranging the stamps in the form of a cross, circles, or zig-zag, but let us select a natural and simple arrangement by previously assembling and distributing the stamps on the sheets to find the best manner of distribution and arrangement. The stamps and philatelic material of other character will advise the variation.

(b) We should try to acquire a technical knowledge of printing and of the "golden rule" (section of gold, Goldener Schnitt), and not forget that the center of gravity is in the lower part of the sheet.

(c) Let us not place either too many or too few stamps on the page. A sheet with one or two stamps is not permitted, but neither should we excessively overload our pages. It is necessary to give an air of distinction to our sheets. In deciding on the arrangement of the stamps, we should also take into account the text we are going to put on the page.

Concerning the text and type of lettering we are going to use: Every thematic collection should have its explanatory text but it should be reduced to a minimum (article 8 of the regulation). Not only its content but also the space it is given, the lettering used, well-matched paper, are important in the "beauty" and disposition of our sheets. Hand lettering sometimes causes a diverting impression, but in COLONIA '64 Exhibit, as an example, the Gold Medal was awarded to a collection whose text was hand written but in a truly calligraphic manner. These letters do impart an artistic element to our collection, however, let us use simple and clear letters, no complicated gothic letters which few people know how to read. Typewritten letters are able to give a good effect provided the entirety has been typewritten with extreme care. I propose that the sheet begin with a heading, very distinct, of 7-8 mm in height; let us arrange the stamps, augmenting them with an explanation in brief form: philatelic or artistic indications, or of another type as, for example, 'dent 14' if the stamp exists with another distinct perforation, Murillo's Madonna, etc. More in the center or below should be the appropriate explanatory text in letters of 3-4 mm, no larger; and in order to distribute the text properly it is necessary to count the number of letters in order to obtain a perfect distribution and centralization.

How to fill an album page: Here we have one of the greatest difficulties of a thematic collection because at times one is able to place but one stamp on the page in order to display a church, or indicate the life of a saint, etc. What do we do in such a circumstance?

(a) Philately offers us some solutions: Of such a stamp there probably exist varieties of perforations, colors, impressions, errors, costly sheets, omitted perforations, etc.

(b) Some stamps are issued in small blocks (for example, the stamps of Liechtenstein), or in very large sheets with special inscriptions, such as the El Greco series of Spain, in which case the first four stamps are substituted for a text (100 stamps of 40 cts. ordinary mail El Greco Series - detail of The Holy Family): a block of this type with such text and eight stamps make a very good effect.
(c) Sometimes we are able to utilize a first day cover in order to emphasize the stamp.

(d) Better yet when one is able to obtain a cancellation which illustrates the same design on the stamp in question, as an example, that which is seen of Our Lady of Czes-tochowa on a cancellation from Munich in 1947.

(e) Finally, one is able to make use of the stamps which have a relation to it: for example, the churches of Our Lady in Mexico; the Holy Martyrs of the third century; etc.

(6) We should avoid photos and drawings or sketches which have nothing to do with philately. We live in an era and in a world which always tries to arrive at the core of the problem and we do not wish to lose ourselves in accidental things. The stamps ought to say the same, and they will do it! In spite of their small size, at times they are true art pictures because of their engraving, their drawing, their color varieties. Let us employ maximum cards with great prudence. Certainly, they are philatelic items, but the large size and the colors detract from our sheets in such a manner that attention is easily diverted from the essential items.

(The foregoing translated from the Oct. 1964 issue of GABRIEL-LATINOAMERICANO, edited by Rev. Father Struve Haker, and submitted to our readers through the cooperation of Rev. Father De Troyer and Rev. Father Struve Haker.)

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