

# The Blue Pencil

DANIEL A. PIAZZA—DPIAZZA3@VERIZON.NET

I am proud to take up the editorship of *Vatican Notes* with this issue. In the September–October issue (p. 4), I recounted the accomplishments of Greg Pirozzi's tenure and promised to build on them. Toward that end, this issue incorporates some new design and content features.

The most obvious change should be a new font set for the entire publication. Body copy is now in 11-point Minion, a typeface frequently used for publishing because it is easy to read. Feature article headlines are in Cronos while officers' and chairmen's column headings are Sanvito. I hope you will let me know whether these font choices are pleasing to your eye and comfortable to read.

I have moved the masthead and the president's message from the inside front cover to page three. Philatelic material reproduces exceptionally well on the heavier cover stock, and I wanted to reserve that prime, color real estate for illustrated articles rather than 'spend' it on plain text.

Not all of the changes were made for aesthetic reasons. The Postal Service requested a redesign of our back cover so their automatic facing and sorting equipment can more easily distinguish between return and delivery addresses.

There is also new content. Joe Scholten will begin writing a regular Secretary–Treasurer's column. This month's installment (see p. 22) includes a partial listing of new members and a financial report; in the March–April issue Joe will review procedures for the upcoming Society elections.

New member Darrell Downam is trying his hand at an 'Auction Watch' column that surveys notable lots of Vatican City or Pontifical State material recently offered at auction (live or online). It appears for the first time on page 20 of this issue; let us know what you think!

For several issues now, Greg Pirozzi and I have taken turns penning a 'Notable Postcard' feature, which has taken up permanent residence on the inside back cover (see p. 23). Coincidentally, the American Philatelic Society recently announced the creation of a new picture postcard exhibiting class. This is especially good news for Vatican collectors, since a disproportionate amount of the mail handled by the Vatican post office consists of tourists' postcards.

I hope this will inspire you to begin collecting, studying, and even exhibiting postcards as a serious philatelic specialty. I would also welcome contributions to the 'Notable Postcard' feature from the members. A 'notable' postcard

might exhibit an unusual rate, franking, or destination; be sent by or to a notable person or institution; or depict an unusual view of Vatican City on the picture side.

One of the best parts of this hobby is meeting collectors who share your interests. I am currently planning to attend NOJEX (Secaucus NJ, May 23-25); NAPEX (McLean VA, June 6-8); and APS StampShow (Hartford CT, August 14-17). Drop me a note if you will be at any of those shows and perhaps we can chat about stamps in person. ✍️

## Letters Received

### Proud of *Vatican Notes*

This New Year can't go too long before I write and express my gratitude, awe and my esteem for the scope, quality, color gravure and overall quality of the journal. With pride I circulate each edition to my stamp circle, both to impress them with such fine, attractive and educational material, but to also encourage membership. Wonderful writing and color graphics abound in each issue. Magnificent!

*Brother Joseph V. Gallagher, OSF  
South Huntington, New York*

### Aldo Raimondi article was first-rate

You have outdone yourself again! The November–December *Vatican Notes* was truly fantastic. "The Watercolors of Aldo Raimondi" with all its colorful illustrations had me looking at my own Vatican postcards.

*Dick Dehner  
Gilbertsville, Pennsylvania*

### More real-stamp Christmas cards

The Christmas card on the back cover of the November–December *Notes* is one of four that I know to have been sent out by H.E. Harris with real stamps affixed. In 1950, their card had Brazil #695 affixed to it; in 1951 they used France #657; and the 1952 card had Lithuania #317-322.



In 1999 I received a Christmas card from the Vatican Philatelic Office (pictured) that had a copy of #997 tied by the special Christmas cancellation. I am not aware of Christmas cards sent by the Vatican Philatelic Office in any other year.

*Albert A. Antonellis  
Waltham, Massachusetts*