

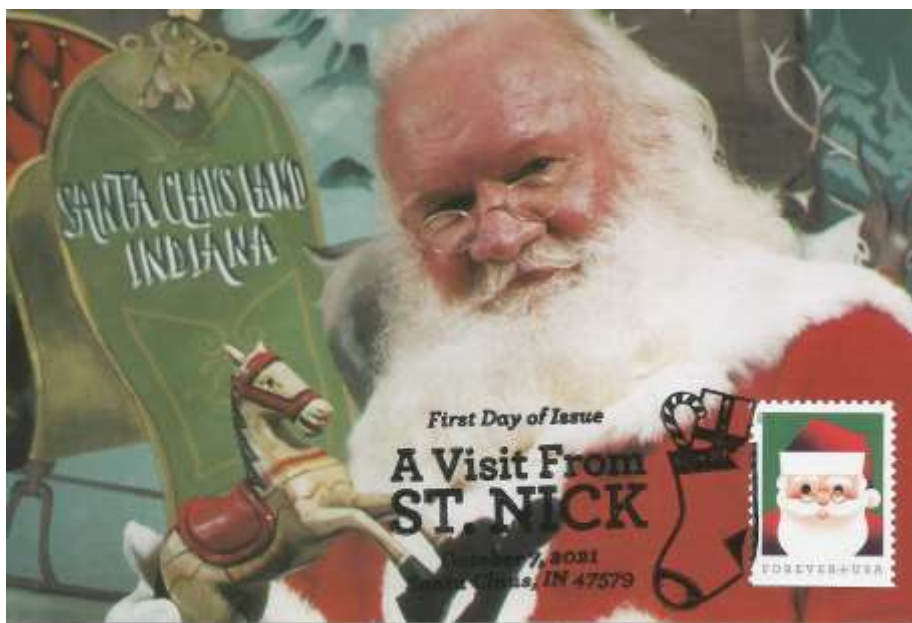
# The Quarterly Journal of the Maximum Card Study Unit

## NORTH AMERICAN MAXIMAPHILY

Stamp: Santa Claus (head),  
Scott #5646

Postcard: Santa Claus,  
published by Mike Roberts

Postmark: pictorial FDOI,  
“A Visit From St Nick”,  
Santa Claus, IN 10/7/2021



### Volume 41, No. 5

## Special Christmas Edition, 2023

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# Letter From the President

## MAXIMUM CARD STUDY UNIT OF NORTH AMERICA

The Maximum Card Study Unit (MACSU) is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to the creation, collection, exchange, enjoyment, display, and study of Maximum Cards, by spreading the knowledge of Maximaphily among its members. The activities of MACSU are planned and carried on entirely by the volunteer services of its officers and members. MACSU is Affiliate # 106 of the American Philatelic Society, Chapter # 67 of the American First Day Cover Society and an affiliate of the American Topical Association.

### Board Members:

Terry Watson  
President, Editor  
Lithia Springs, GA  
[terryw7633@comcast.net](mailto:terryw7633@comcast.net)

Sun Yu Ng  
Vice President  
Menlo Park, CA  
[sng94025@gmail.com](mailto:sng94025@gmail.com)

Amanda Dempsey  
Treasurer  
Forest Park, IL  
[suozib@gmail.com](mailto:suozib@gmail.com)

George Constantourakis  
At Large  
Montreal, Canada  
[geo.constant@sympatico.ca](mailto:geo.constant@sympatico.ca)

Dorin Cojocariu  
At Large  
Herndon, VA  
[dorindorinco@gmail.com](mailto:dorindorinco@gmail.com)



MADONNA AND CHILD WITH ANGELS after 1479

by Hans Memling (1435 -1494), oil on panel.  
Andrew W. Melon Collection,  
National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

1966 – Nov. 01, 5c. (Scott 1321) Small stamp

Memling adheres to the Flemish tradition, by using a framing archway, in the middle a brocade panel (behind the enthroned Madonna) and to the left and right of it background landscape window views. Madonna is portrayed with a calm and graceful elegance reading a book while holding the Child and accompanied by Angels. The painting is filled with symbolism to signify the importance of Christ's mission on earth. The Child reaches out for an apple, emblem of Original Sin; his acceptance foreshadows his future sacrifice on the cross. The angel who offers the fruit of redemption is dressed in liturgical vestments worn by a deacon during the High Mass. The arch has a carved vine of grapes referring to the wine of the eucharistic rite. On the columns stand David, as an ancestor of Christ and prophet Isaiah who foretold the Virgin Birth.

MADONNA AND CHILD WITH ANGELS after 1479  
by Hans Memling (1435 -1494), oil on panel.  
Andrew W. Melon Collection,  
National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

1967 – Nov. 06, 5c. (Scott 1336) (larger stamp).

In 1967, the US Postal System choose to issue a Christmas stamp that featured the same painting as was used in 1966. However, this stamp was issued in a larger format.



## “ANGEL GABRIEL FROM “THE ANNUNCIATION”

circa 1434-36

by Jan Van Eyck (1390 -1440), oil from panel to canvas.

Andrew W. Mellon Collection,  
National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

1968 – Nov. 01, 6c. (Scott 1363)

Van Eyck perfected the new technique of oil painting. His Annunciation is regarded as one of the most complex paintings, rich in symbolism, iconography, and stylistic detail. It has been said that he knew buildings like an architect, fabrics like a weaver, and plants like a botanist. Here the archangel Gabriel delivers a salutation from God: AVE GRACIA PLENA (Hail. Full of Grace). His words flow out in gold letters. Mary draws back with surprise and modesty. She has been chosen to bear the son of God. As she speaks her acceptance—ECCE ANCILLA DOMINI (Behold, the handmaiden of the Lord), written in reverse for God to see—the dove of the holy spirit descends to her on rays of light. This is the very instant of the Incarnation, when word is made **flesh and Jesus is given earthly life and when God’s salvation plan is set in motion.** It is a moment of abiding mystery that Van Eyck makes concrete.

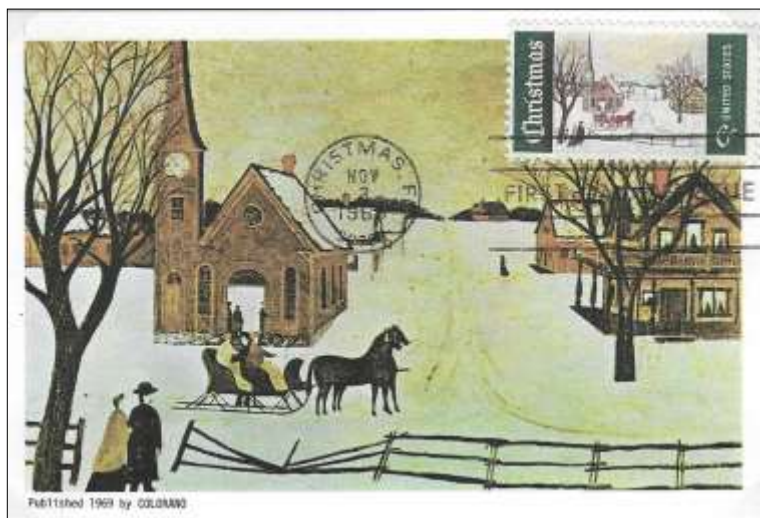


## WINTER SUNDAY IN NORWAY, MAINE

circa 1860 by *Unknown Artist*, oil on canvas.

*Collection of the New York State Historical Association,  
Cooperstown, New York*

1969 – Nov. 03, 6c. (Scott 1384)



This Folk Art colorful painting is believed to show a winter Sunday in Norway, Maine about 1870. It is by an anonymous artist whose somewhat primitive, linear style is combined with a good eye for composition. One enters the picture with the couple at the lower left, passes by the sleigh and the church, and is then drawn up the road into the countryside. Thus, one is taken through part of the village, an experience which recaptures the feeling of nineteenth century rural Maine in winter. The usual seasonal colors of black, brown and white are enlivened by the gold paint and red brick chimneys on the buildings. The Postal authorities chose this painting, because, in their words, "*the lovely and authentic winter scene depicts fully the meaning of Christmas. The man and woman linked arm in arm give a genuine warm feeling.*"



**NATIVITY SCENE 1523**

by Lorenzo Lotto (1480 -1556), oil on panel.  
Samuel H. Kress Collection,  
National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

1970 – Nov. 05, 6c. (Scott 1414)

Mary and Joseph kneel to either side of a baby outside of a barn-like structure. Mary with her hands crossed is looking down, her hair is covered by a white veil that drapes across her shoulders. She wears an azure-blue cloak over a rose-pink, long-sleeved dress. Joseph with gray hair and beard holds his hands up in prayer. He wears a red robe wrapped in a yellow cloak. Glimmering gold rings create halos around Joseph's and Mary's heads. The baby lifts his hands toward Mary with one foot is raised and knee bent. Along the left edge of the painting, a dark wall hangs a crucifix. The crucifix, that foreshadows Jesus' death to come. At the top center, three, winged, childlike angels gather around a sheet of music.



**ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS** c. 1505-10  
by Giorgione (1478 -1510),  
oil on panel.

Samuel H. Kress Collection,  
National Gallery of Art,  
Washington DC

1971 – Nov. 10, 8c.  
(Scott 1444)

*Giorgione's Adoration of the Shepherds* is a Venetian painting. The main scene is portrayed on the right, in front of a dark grotto, while on the left is a bright landscape crowned by trees. The kneeling Shepherds are placed in the center of the painting. The entire group of Joseph, Mary, Child, and Shepherds form an anchored rectangle. The Shepherds are having their back to the viewer. It is meant to view the scene from the shepherds' perspective. This is a counterbalanced focal point to the receding landscape on the left. In the foreground *Giorgione* has left an open space, making an incomplete circle. If the viewer inserts himself into the open space, the circle becomes complete. It is meant to think that one is not simply viewing the actual event of the Adoration, but a spiritual moment in time.



**ANGELS “MARY, QUEEN OF HEAVEN”**  
c. 1485 (Detail)

by *Master of St. Lucy* (active 1480-89), oil on panel.

*Samuel H. Kress Collection,*  
*National Gallery of Art, Washington DC*

1972 – Nov. 09, 8c. (Scott 1471)

Detail of two *Angels* on top right side of the painting “*Mary, Queen of Heaven*”. An angel bows a *vielle*, an early form of violin (right). Next to him is a figure playing a soprano or treble *shawm* (a double-reed instrument), a distant forerunner of the **oboe** (left). Historians refer to the artist as the *Master of the Saint Lucy Legend* because his principal work, an altarpiece dated 1480, depicts episodes from the life of that saint. His style is characterized in both paintings by oval faces that are restrained in expression, the use of intense color, and the emphasis on elaborate textures.

**ANGELS “MARY, QUEEN OF HEAVEN”** c. 1485 (Stamp detail)

by *Master of St. Lucy* (active 1480-89), oil on panel.

*Samuel H. Kress Collection,*  
*National Gallery of Art, Washington DC*

1972 – Nov. 09, 8c. (Scott 1471)

This painting depicts *MARY*'s corporeal Assumption. She stands on a crescent moon, behind a bright light surrounds her, signifying the person as holy. She is surrounded by angels in brightly colored and embroidered robes. Some angels assist in her ascent, others sing and play musical instruments. At the top, ringed by clouds, are the enthroned figures of God the Son and God the Father holding a crown between them. The dove of the Holy Ghost hovers over the crown. Mary. This painting is of great interest to musicologists, as it depicts Renaissance instruments with great accuracy. The musician angels can be divided into two groups, those accompanying the Virgin and those clustered around the "inner heaven" of the enthroned Trinity.





**“SMALL COWPER MADONNA”**  
 circa 1504-05 by *Raphael* (1483 -1520),  
 oil on panel.  
*Widener Collection,*  
*National Gallery of Art, Washington DC*

1973 – Nov. 07, 8c. (Scott 1507)

*Raphael's* High Renaissance painting '**Small Cowper Madonna**' depicts Mary and Child in a typical Italian countryside. It was painted probably as a private commission. The church on the right is that of San Bernardino in Urbino (*Raphael's* birth-place). The fair skinned blonde Madonna is sitting in the center, in a bright red dress. Across her lap is a dark drapery upon which is her right hand. A translucent ribbon elegantly flows across the top of her dress. In her left hand she holds the baby Christ, who embraces her with one arm around her back, the other around her neck. He looks back over his shoulder with a coy smile. Their heads are surrounded by golden halos. Behind them unfolds a clear and bright day. On the left, in the distance is green scenery. On the right, a large impressive Church at the end of a long path.



**ANGEL** from the “PERUSSIS ALTARPIECE” 1480  
 (Stamp detail)

by an *Anonymous French artist*  
 (circle of *Nicolas Froment*), Avignon.  
*National Gallery of Art, Washington DC*

1974 – Oct. 23, 10c. (Scott 1550)

The subject of this large Altarpiece, the Adoration of the empty Cross on Golgatha, is unusual. There are two Angles on each side of the vertical part of the Cross. **The Angel of this Stamp detail appears to the left, with hands crossed, wearing in red robes.** According to a documented inscription on the lost original frame, the painting was made in 1480 for *Aloisius Rudolphe de Pérussis*, whose family coat of arms and motto are displayed on the side panels. One of the kneeling donors, presented by *John the Baptist* and *Saint Francis*, may be *Aloisius* himself. Originally from Florence, the *Pérussis* or *Peruzzi* took refuge in Avignon after they were exiled by *Cosimo de' Medici* in 1434. Included in the background landscape is a faithful topographical view of Avignon.



**ANGEL** from the “**PERUSSIS ALTARPIECE**” 1480 (whole Painting)

“**MADONNA AND CHILD**” circa 1470  
 by *Domenico Ghirlandaio* (1449 -1494), *tempera on panel*.  
*Samuel H. Kress Collection; Nat. Gallery of Art, Washington DC*

**1975** – Oct. 14, late cancel Jul. 18, 1990,  
 (10c.), (Scott 1579),

Born *Domenico Bigordi*, became known as *Ghirlandaio*, as his goldsmith father specialized in gold garlands (*ghirlande*). He painted mainly frescos, but also some tempera paintings like this one, which shows similarities to *Verrocchio*'s, who probably trained him. He worked under *Alesso Baldovinetti* and may also have assisted *Verrocchio*, as his early panel paintings and frescoes clearly betray that master's influence. He differed from his teachers in temperament and approach. He simplified their realistic styles into one more suitable for frescos. His most notable Florentine works in the 1480's, are in the chapels of *Santa Trinità* and *Santa Maria Novella*. To complete such undertakings, he had an organized workshop employing his brothers *Davide* and *Benedetto*, *Sebastiano Mainardi*, and even young *Michelangelo*.





## EARLY CHRISTMAS CARD ANGEL 1878

by Louis Prang

National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

1975 – Oct. 14, (10c.) (Scott 1580)

Louis Prang was known as the “father of the American Christmas Card.” This may not have been the case if not for a chance encounter in Vienna. In 1873, he travelled to Austria for the Vienna Exposition. There, he handed out chromolithographed business cards decorated with flowers and other simple designs. The wife of his British agent, suggested that he take these small decorative cards and sell them with a Christmas greeting. To test whether this would work, Prang sold these small greeting cards in England the next year. After success overseas, Prang began selling Christmas cards in Boston for the 1875 holiday season. By commissioning the country's best illustrators and creating design competitions, Prang sold beautiful cards that were unmatched for years and became a household name. At its height, Prang was producing up to five million cards per year.



EARLY CHRISTMAS CARD ANGEL  
1878 by Louis Prang



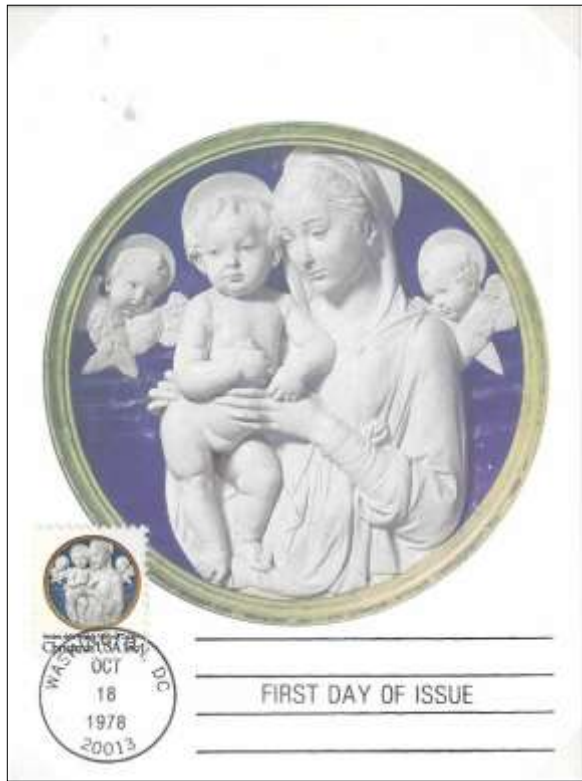
1976 – Oct. 27, 13c. (Scott 1701)  
Cancel 1976, Dec. 24

John Singleton Copley (1738 -1815) an Anglo-American painter, probably born in Boston MA. He became a portrait painter of the wealthy in colonial New England. In 1774, he moved to London where he became successful as a portraitist. He also painted large history paintings. His *Nativity* offers a glimpse of the Holy Family through the lens of American colonial portrait painter. Copley was famous for capturing the idealized character of his subjects. In this image, Mary, Joseph, and the infant Jesus are surrounded by shepherds and some animals, all coming to pay homage to the newborn child. Interestingly, the scene is largely devoid of symbolic elements. There are no angels, no star, and no halos on the Holy Family. A bright light illuminating the scene from the top left, guiding the eye toward Mary and the child, is our only explicit indication that this is an extraordinary birth. The light here points the shepherds directly to the Christ child. Bathed in the light, the shepherds are reverent and in awe.



## EARLY THE NATIVITY circa 1776

by John Singleton Copley, American (1738 -1815), oil on canvas. Ernest Wadsworth Longfellow Fund Museum of Fine Arts, Boston MA



**MADONNA AND CHILD WITH TWO CHERUBIM** circa 1485, by *Andrea della Robbia* (1435 - 1525), white glazed terracotta relief  
Andrew W. Mellon Collection,  
National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

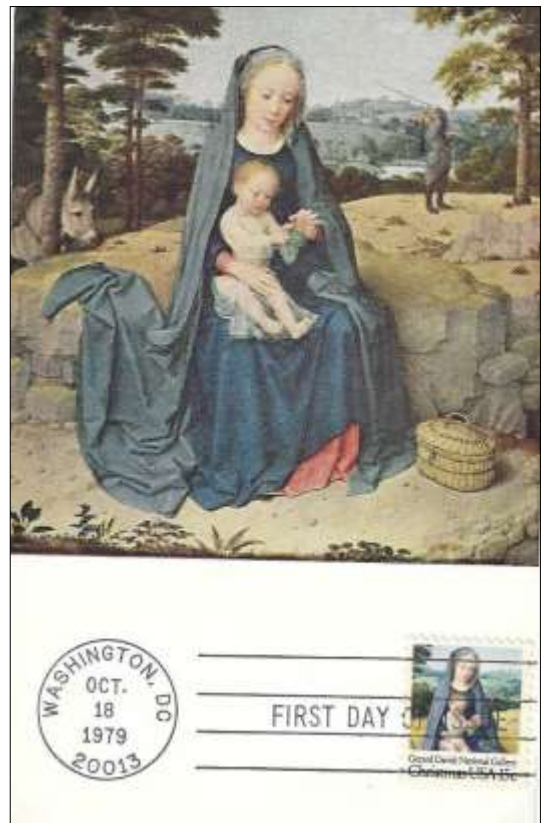
1978 – Oct. 18, 15c. (Scott 1768)

*Andrea della Robbia* (1435 -1525), Florentine Renaissance relief sculptor. Pupil at his uncle's Luca workshop. Became the most important artist of ceramic glaze. Here the relief figures are made of white terracotta glazed with enamel and set off against deep blue background. The Virgin is depicted with tenderness and solemnity. She holds the Child gently and the child rests his left arm against her chest and clutches her left hand, as he clings to a corner of her veil. Yet for all their physical closeness, they do not look at each other, and their expressions are grave. The Virgin's downcast gaze suggests meditation on the child's fate. The child turns his face toward the world, but his eyes, also suggest contemplation. Their thoughts seem to converge on the same sorrowful theme: the coming Passion and death of Christ.

THE REST ON THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT circa 1510  
by *Gerard David* (1460 -1523), oil on panel.  
Andrew W. Mellon Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

1979 – Oct. 18, 15c. (Scott 1799)

*Gerard David* (1460 -1523) an Early Netherlandish painter known for his brilliant use of color. The theme of 'The Rest on the Flight into Egypt' was a popular one for painters. According to the biblical account, the weary family paused after three days of travel. The Virgin longed for food, but the date-palm branches were too high for Joseph. Thereupon Jesus commanded the tree to lower its branches. *David* deemphasized this miracle by giving Joseph a sturdy stick and by replacing the date palm with a Flemish chestnut tree. *David* created a mood of calm equilibrium. The Madonna and Child are centrally placed, while receding diagonals and alternating bands of light and dark skillfully lead back into the landscape. The predominance of the restful blue color throughout the composition unifies the work. *The Rest on the Flight into Egypt* is one of *Gerard David's* most peaceful creations.





**MADONNA AND CHILD – dated 1912**

*Detail from the **EPIPHANY** Stained Glass window  
Bethlehem Chapel of the National Cathedral in Wash-  
ington DC*

1980 – Oct. 31, 15c. (Scott 1842)

This ‘*Madonna and Child*’ is taken from a stained-glass window in the Bethlehem Chapel of the National Cathedral in Washington DC. The Nativity story is told through a series of five stained-glass windows located behind the altar. They were crafted in a 15th-century English style and meant to be viewed up close. The 1<sup>st</sup> window called “*The Genealogy*” shows ancestors of Christ from Adam to King David. The 2<sup>nd</sup> called “*Gloria in Excelsis*” shows an Angel announcing Christ’s birth to the Shepherds in the field. The 3<sup>rd</sup> “*The Annunciation*,” depicts the angel Gabriel telling Mary she is to be the mother of Christ. The 4<sup>th</sup> window “*The Epiphany*,” shows the Adoration of the Christ by the three Wise Men. It is a detail from this 4<sup>th</sup> window, namely, **Mary holding the baby Jesus**, that is depicted in the stamp. The 5<sup>th</sup> window entitled “*Nunc Dimittis*”, shows Christ being presented in the Temple and being blessed by Simeon. Bethlehem Chapel of the National Cathedral in Washington DC



Whole Artwork (below)  
EPIPHANY STAINED GLASS WINDOW





**MADONNA MADONNA OF THE GOLD-FINCH** circa 1760

by *Giovanni Battista Tiepolo* (1696 -1770),  
oil on canvas. Samuel H. Kress Collection,  
National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

1982 – Oct. 28, 20c. (Scott 2026)

*Tiepolo* a Venetian painter tended to use high keyed, muted colors. His ‘*Madonna of the Goldfinch*’ portrays Mary holding baby Jesus in her arms. Both have pale, peachy skin with pink cheeks. Mary looks down with eyes under arched brows. Her hair is covered by a white veil, and an azure-blue mantle is draped over her rose-pink robe. She cradles the plump child in her crossed arms. The baby has short wavy hair, a round face and hazel eyes that look at us. His right arm holds the veil of his mother, while in his left he holds a bird. The bird has an off-white body with dark wings and neck, and a red face. According to legend, the goldfinch acquired the red face when it removed a thorn from Christ's head during his ascent to Calvary, and was splashed with a drop of blood. Its inclusion in this image is a symbol of Christ's future Passion.



**‘THE NICOLINI - COWPER MADONNA’** circa 1508

by *Raphael* (1483 -1520), oil on panel.  
Andrew W. Mellon Collection,  
National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

1983 – Oct. 28, 20c. (Scott 2063)

The ‘*Nicolini Cowper Madonna*’, also known as the ‘*Large Madonna*’ may have been the last of *Raphael's* Florentine paintings before he left for Rome. It is more complex than a similar painting the *Small Cowper Madonna* of a few years earlier. The Virgin and Child fill the canvas, creating an imposing effect. They are more closely related, both by positioning of their bodies and their intimacy. *Raphael* may have derived the talent for creating a natural intimacy through *Leonardo da Vinci*. The portrayal of the infant's energy is reminiscent of works of *Michelangelo*. The playful Child reaches for the Madonna's top as if wanting to nurse.



**‘THE MADONNA AND CHILD** circa 1440-45  
by *Fra Filippo Lippi (1406 -1469)*, *tempera on poplar panel.*

*Samuel H. Kress Collection,  
National Gallery of Art, Washington DC*

**1984** – Oct. 30, 20c. (Scott 2107)

Fra Filippo Lippi was a major Early Renaissance painter. He produced both frescoes and altarpieces depicting religious subjects. He became associated with a more vibrant and decorative style based on effects of color and line. Among his pupils was the celebrated painter Botticelli. The composition of this Madonna and Child depicts the pictorial space as very shallow. The sacred figures are painted on a large scale, pushed up against the picture plane. The presence of the Virgin is made more tangible and imposing by her cast shadow falling against the back of the stone niche, giving physical dimensions to the compressed space. The Virgin meets the eyes of the beholder, who must have been positioned close to the panel to view these tabernacle images. It is not until the Madonna and Child paintings by Raphael that we encounter such an intimate relationship between the viewer and the sacred figures.

**MADONNA AND CHILD (GENOA MADONNA)**

c. 1450-55

by *Luca della Robbia (1399 -1482)*,

*Enameled Terra Cotta, gilding*

*The Detroit Institute of Arts, Michigan*

**1985** – Oct. 30, 22c. (Scott 2165)

*Luca della Robbia (1399 -1482)* Although he also worked in marble, he is best known for introducing enameled terracotta sculpture around 1440 and for founding a family dynasty of sculptors working in this medium, among them his nephew *Andrea*. **Luca della Robbia** invented terracotta sculpture. He then added enamel for the white and blue colors and fired the piece a final time. The technique achieves the subtle sheen and hard appearance of marble. This Detroit’s Institute of Arts *Madonna and Child* (also known as *Genoa Madonna*) depicts both figures with their hair and haloes having traces of gilding and the pupils of the eyes have been painted blue. Painted blue eyes on his white sculptures are a Della Robbia signature. This terracotta sculpture, is one of four versions of the so-called *Genoa Madonna* (one of which was originally in Genoa), each with slight differences in their modeling and expression.







**MADONNA AND CHILD** c. 1501  
 by *Pietro Perugino* (1445 -1523), oil on poplar panel.  
*Samuel H. Kress Collection,*  
*National Gallery of Art, Washington DC*

**1986** – Oct. 24, 22c. (Scott 2244)

*Pietro Perugino* (1445 -1523), a contemporary of *Leonardo* and an associate of *Raphael* (whom he would influence). He painted religious subjects and portraits, overseeing two workshops and diffusing his characteristic style and imagery throughout central Italy in the late 15th century. He is thought to have been a pupil of *Piero della Francesca* and from 1470 was associated with the circle of *Verrocchio* in Florence, but may also have worked with *Botticelli*. From 1480–2, Perugino was put in charge of producing wall frescoes for the Sistine Chapel in Rome, some of which were later destroyed to make space for *Michelangelo's Last Judgment* (1535-41). *Perugino's* paintings are often noted for their “sweetness”, particularly his graceful, pious Madonnas and female saints set against gentle landscapes.

**MADONNA AND CHILD** c. 1555  
 Detail from **A GENTLEMAN IN ADORATION BEFORE THE MADONNA**

by *Giovanni Battista Moroni* (1524 -1578), oil on canvas.  
*Samuel H. Kress Collection,*  
*National Gallery of Art, Washington DC*

**1987** – Oct. 23, 22c. (Scott 2367)

*Giovanni Battista Moroni* (1524 -1578), also called *Giambattista Moroni* was a Late Renaissance Italian painter. He is considered one of the great portrait painters: best known for his elegantly realistic portraits of the local nobility and clergy. Moroni invented the genre of the donor portrait and the sacred portrait. Here the ‘Gentleman in Adoration before the Madonna’ is one of three surviving sacred portraits. The contemporary sitter who appears to pray before



the sacred figures dominates the composition. Moroni has painted from life the young man with the naturalistic effect characteristic of his portraits, while his *Madonna and Child* are based on a print by *Albrecht Dürer* and are rendered in the abstracted, stylized mode typical of *Moroni's* religious paintings.







Stamp Detail from **THE DREAM OF SAINT CATHERINE OF ALEXANDRIA**

by *Lodovico Carracci (1555 -1619)*, oil on canvas.  
*Samuel H. Kress Collection,*  
*National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.*

1989 – Oct. 19, 25c. (Scott 2427)

*Lodovico* was the eldest of the three *Carracci*, the family of Bolognese artists who inaugurated the age of the Baroque. His depictions of saints in states of visionary ecstasy were highly prized in an age when the purpose of religious art was to arouse intensely pious emotions in the spectator. On the left, we recognize the sleeping figure of Saint Catherine by the fragment of spiked wheel in the lower corner. Here *Lodovico* represented her legendary dream in which Mary and the infant Christ, accompanied by angels, appeared to her. Plighting his troth, Christ placed a ring on Catherine's finger, and through this mystic marriage she became his bride. To cast the event as a dream, rather than having Saint Catherine receive the ring while awake, is *Lodovico's* innovation.

**MADONNA AND CHILD** c. 1475

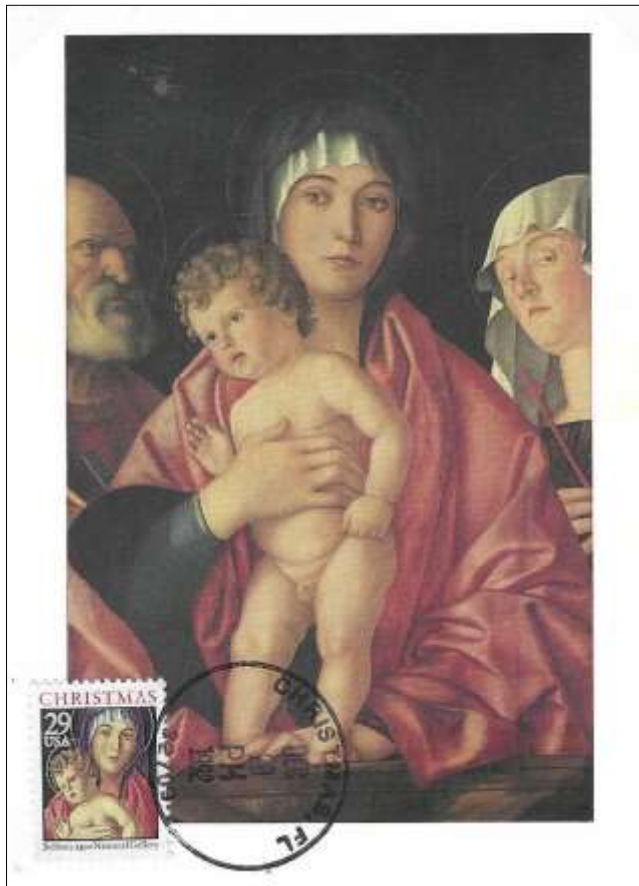
by *Antonello da Messina (c. 1430 -1479)*, tempera and oil on wood.

*Andrew W. Mellon Collection,*  
*National Gallery of Art, Washington DC*

1990 – Oct. 18, 25c. (Scott 2514)

*Antonello da Messina* was a Sicilian painter, active during the Early Renaissance. His work shows strong influences from Early Netherlandish painting, although there is no documentary evidence that he ever went abroad. *Vasari* credited him with the introduction of oil painting into Italy. His work proved influential on painters of northern Italy, especially Venice. This *Madonna and Child* is assumed to be painted by *Antonello da Messina*. Mary and the baby Jesus' faces touch and in a realistic manner, the baby indicates that he wants to nurse, lending the portrait a very human aspect.





**MADONNA AND CHILD WITH SAINTS**

c. 1490 by Giovanni Bellini (1445 -1523), oil on wood. Samuel H. Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

1992 – Oct. 22, 29c. (Scott 2710)

*Giovanni Bellini* was considered to have revolutionized Venetian painting, moving it toward a more sensuous and coloristic style. Through the use of clear, slow-drying oil paints, *Giovanni* created deep, rich tints and detailed shadings. His sumptuous coloring and fluent, atmospheric landscapes had a great effect on the Venetian painting school, especially on his pupils *Giorgione* and *Titian* and later on *Tintoretto* and *Veronese*. This ‘*Madonna and Child with Saints*’ painting though signed *Giovanni Bellini*, was probably done by a contemporary follower of the better-known artist. In the painting, the saints surrounding Mary and child give the composition a more crowded and symmetrical feel. Their gazes are somewhat foreboding; with Mary wearing a slightly concerned, yet serene expression, perhaps foreshadowing Jesus’ death. It illustrates *Bellini’s* particularly Venetian style of Madonna and Child portraits, in which Mary frequently gazes out of the painting, hauntingly engaging the viewer

**MADONNA AND CHILD IN A LANDSCAPE**

c. 1496-99

by Giovanni Battista Cima (c.1459 -c.1517), Oil on panel.

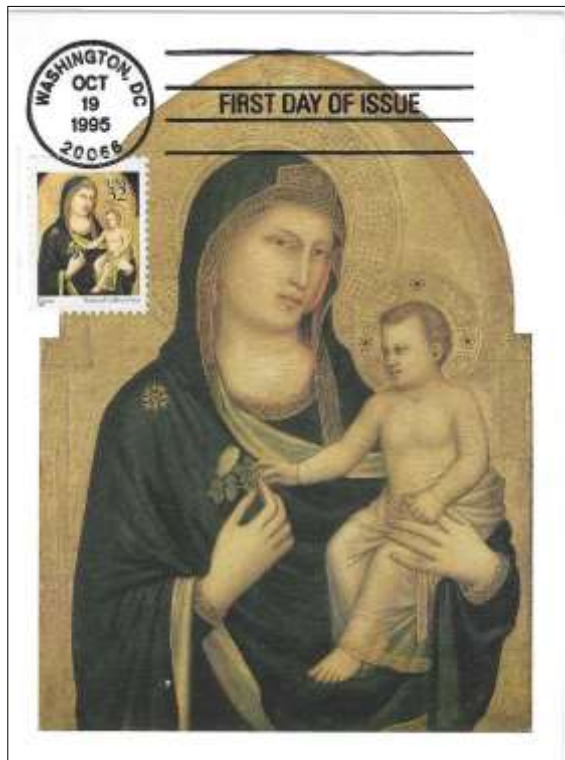
The North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh NC

1993 – Oct. 21, 29c. (Scott 2789)

*Giovanni Battista Cima* also called *Cima da Conegliano*, was a Venetian Renaissance painter. He was influenced by *Antonello da Messina*, in the emphasis he gives to landscape backgrounds and the tranquil atmosphere of his works. This *Madonna and Child* has brilliant blues and greens and is among *Cima’s* finest works. The active twisting pose of the standing infant Jesus evolved from earlier more sedate paintings of him. This painting was repeated in several times in different variations of a composition.







**MADONNA AND CHILD** c. 1320-30  
 by Giotto di Bondone (c.1267 -1337), *Tempera on panel.*  
*Samuel H. Kress Collection,*  
*National Gallery of Art, Washington DC*

1995 – Oct. 19, 32c. (Scott 3003)

*Giotto di Bondone* Italian painter from Florence during the Late Middle Ages. While *Duccio* - with his reliance on Byzantine traditions, flat planes, and decorative line - sums up the past, *Giotto* was recognized even by his contemporaries as anticipating the future. *Vasari* described *Giotto* as making a decisive break with the prevalent Byzantine style and as initiating "the great art of painting as we know it today, introducing the technique of drawing accurately from life". This wood panel, probably the central section of a five-part altarpiece, was painted late in *Giotto's* career. The colours are sober and restrained. Soft shadows model the Virgin and child. We sense the weight and volume of their bodies and feel the pull of gravity on them. We are witnesses to the human interaction between a mother and a child. The infant steadies himself by grasping his mother's finger and reaches - like any child - for the flower she holds. This emphasis on the humanity of the participants is a departure from the devotional Byzantine tradition.

**MADONNA AND CHILD – 1712**  
 Detail from the **THE ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS**

by Paolo de Matteis (1662 -1728), *oil on canvas.*  
*The Adolph D. and Wilkins C. Williams Fund*  
*Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond VA*

1996 – Nov. 01, 32c. (Scott 3107)

*Paolo de Matteis* was a pupil of the Neapolitan painter *Luca Giordano*. Through additional training in Rome, *Paolo* also acquired a knowledge of the works of earlier Baroque artists such as *Domenichino* and *Guido Reni*. His esteemed work *The Adoration of the Shepherds* is a large painting, depicting a classic Christian Nativity scene. Here a dozen or so individuals surround the newborn Christ and his parents, gazing at him in admiration and paying him homage while animals look serenely on and angels assemble around the heads of the Holy Family. The artist employs several classic artistic elements, such as line, light, color, and shape, to draw the viewer's focus directly to his intended point of emphasis, the infant Jesus.





**MADONNA AND CHILD** - circa 1425  
 by Unknown Artist, Florence, Polychrome Gilded Terracotta Sculpture  
 Samuel H. Kress Collection,  
 National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

1998 – Oct. 15, 32c. (Scott 3244)

This 15th century Florentine polychrome terracotta *Madonna and Child* is known as the ‘Kress Madonna’, remains unattributed. This is despite considerable attention by Art Historians, who have suggested such renowned early Renaissance artists as *Lorenzo Ghiberti*, *Donatello*, *Luca della Robbia*, and *Jacopo della Quercia*. The size and hand-modeling, the exquisite gilding with punchwork and delicately painted details, together with the inscription and wooden backing render this work unique among the many of its kind, and suggest an important commission for a wealthy patron. Here the baby Jesus is chubby and realistic, as he playfully reaches for her headdress. Mary seems to be leaning to one side to support his weight.

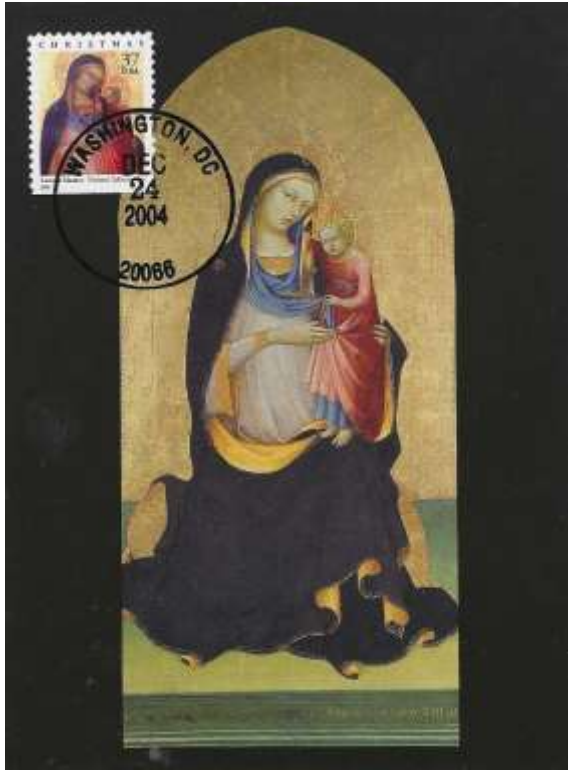


**MADONNA AND CHILD** - circa 1475  
 by Bartolomeo Vivarini (c.1432 -c.1499), *Tempera on poplar panel*.  
 Samuel H. Kress Collection,  
 National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

1999 – Oct. 20, 33c. (Scott 3355)

*Bartolomeo Vivarini* (c.1432-1499) was born into an influential family of Venetian painters. He studied under his brother *Antonio* (c. 1415-1484) and he probably trained in Padua as well. His highly colored art also shows the influence of *Gentile da Fabriano*. The *Vivarini* workshop, was based in the island of Murano near Venice and specialized in carefully composed, highly finished polyptychs. *Bartolomeo's* Gothic style of figures against gold backgrounds, later evolved to the newer Renaissance convention of setting figures against a landscape or interior view. This *Madonna and Child* painting depicts the Madonna in front of a panel, set against a landscape view (see left and right). This painting is also considered more realistic than some of its counterparts, particularly in the expression of the child and the rendering of their hands and feet. *Bartolomeo* learned oil painting from *Antonello da Messina* and is said to have produced, in 1473, the first oil picture done in Venice. However, most of his works, are in tempera.





**MADONNA AND CHILD - 1413**

by *Lorenzo Monaco* (c.1370 -c.1422),  
*Tempera on panel. Samuel H. Kress Collection,  
 National Gallery of Art, Washington DC*

**2004** – Oct. 14, 37c. (Scott 3879)

Here *Lorenzo Monaco* presents Mary with elegant garments set on a glowing golden-leaf background following the iconography of the *Madonna of Humility*. The Child stands on Mary's knees, turning towards the spectator while supporting himself with one hand on her shoulder in an affectionate gesture and holding her veil with the other. Clearly, the artist, wished to place the emphasis Mary's grace, the elegance with which she presents her divine son to the faithful. It was probably her much elongated and slightly curving torso that suggested the idea of representing the Christ child standing, his body slightly inclined towards her; this permitted the painter to fuse mother and child together in a single harmonious group. *Lorenzo Monaco* in his maturity became the first to combine the motif of the standing Child, with the iconographic scheme of the *Madonna of Humility*.

**MADONNA OF THE CARNATION** – c. 1515

by *Bernadino Luini* (1481 - 1532),  
*Oil on panel. Samuel H. Kress Collection,  
 National Gallery of Art, Washington DC*

**2007** – Oct. 25, 37c. (Scott 4206)

*Bernadino Luini's* painting the '*Madonna of the Carnation*' shows the Virgin with the Christ child seated in her lap as he turns to grasp a carnation growing in a pot nearby. During the Renaissance a carnation symbolized either the Crucifixion or the Virgin's pure love. Thus the painting suggests that Christ, even as an infant, embraced his future sacrifice on the cross, while his mother's pensive expression implies her comprehension of what his action signifies. *Luini* was once considered the leading painter from Lombardy. He trained with several local masters, but his life and art were transformed by encountering the work of *Leonardo da Vinci*, who visited Milan. *Leonardo*, as a young artist in Florence, painted several pictures with the same theme as that seen in this painting: the Christ child reaching for a flower. And it seems clear that *Luini* is indebted to *Leonardo* not only for this poignant theme but for other aspects of the painting as well: the dark background, the softness of the forms, the chiaroscuro (light and dark) modeling, the sweet sentiment of the figures, the turning pose of the Child.







**MADONNA AND CHILD WITH YOUNG ST. JOHN – c. 1490**

by Sandro Botticelli (1445–1510) and Workshop,  
*Tempera on wood.*  
*The Cleveland Museum of Art in Ohio*

**2008** – Oct. 23, 42c. (Scott 4359)

*Virgin and Child with Young Saint John the Baptist* was painted by *Sandro Botticelli* (1445–1510) also known as *Alessandro Filipepi*. The original painting is a round form, called a *tondo*, which was popular during the 1440s. It was made for domestic settings instead of churches. The circular format challenged the artist to create a harmonious, balanced composition within this more difficult shape. The attribution has been a matter of debate. Few specialists have doubted that *Botticelli* executed the central passages: the delicate modeling of the faces, the graceful poses, the figures’ profound interiority, and the diaphanous veil are the artist’s hallmarks. However, someone else in *Botticelli’s* studio probably painted Mary’s blue garment, also the most heavily restored part of the painting.

**VIRGIN AND SLEEPING CHILD WITH ANGELS - 1674**

by Giovanni Battista Salvi “*Il Sassoferrato*” (1609–1685), *oil on canvas*  
*Hearst Castle , San Simeon, CA*

**2009** – Oct. 20, 44c. (Scott 4424)

Giovanni Battista Salvi “*Il Sassoferrato*” was an Italian Baroque painter best known for his devotional images. His smoothly rendered and idealized works were influenced by the paintings of various prominent artists of the Baroque and Renaissance era, particularly *Guido Reni*, *Albrecht Durer* and *Raphael*. In this *Virgin and Sleeping Child with Angels*, Mary is cradling the sleeping Christ Child tenderly in her arms. With his rosy cheeks and plump arms and legs, the Child appears as a typical, healthy baby. Mary is shown as a radiant young mother.





**AN ANGEL PLAYING THE LUTE** – c. 1480  
by *Melozzo da Forlì* (1438 – 1494), *Fresco painting*.

*Church of the Holy Apostles (Basilica dei Santi Apostoli), Rome*  
(*Pinacoteca of the Vatican Museums*)

**2010** – Oct. 21, 42c. (Scott 4477)

*Melozzo da Forlì*, original name *Melozzo degli Ambrogi* early Renaissance painter active at Urbino between 1465-75. His style was influenced by *Andrea Mantegna* and *Piero della Francesca*. He became one of the great 15<sup>th</sup> century fresco artists, noted for his skilled use of illusionistic perspective and foreshortening (a technique allowing an object in a 2-dimensional painting to appear to extend into a 3-dimensional space). About 1475 he moved to Rome and by 1480, he completed one of his most important works, *The Ascension*, a fresco for the *Holy Apostles church* in Rome. The solemn, monumental figures, strongly foreshortened (appearing 3-dimensional), testify to the full maturity of this great artist. Here *Melozzo's* fresco painting '*Angel Playing the Lute*' is an example of his skillfulness.





**CHRISTMAS 1962  
CHRISTMAS WREATH**

Wreaths are made out of evergreens. Evergreens represent continuity and survival through difficult times. The wreath's circular shape symbolizes eternal love and rebirth. Wreaths are placed on the entrance door, as a symbol of generosity, giving, and the gathering of family. This stamp was the first Christmas stamp issued by the USPS.

**Stamp:** Christmas Wreath, Scott #1205 Date of issue: 11/1/1962

**Postcard:** Christmas Wreath on door

**Postmark:** ordinary circle-date, Chicago, IL 10/7/1985

**CHRISTMAS 1964  
POINSETTIA**

The shape of the Poinsettia flower symbolises the Star of Bethlehem, with the red leaves of the poinsettia symbolising the blood of Christ.

**Stamp:** Poinsettia, Scott #1256, Date of issue: 11/9/1964

**Postcard:** antique Christmas postcard of poinsettia

**Postmark:** special pictorial cancel of Poinsettias, "Old Fashioned Christmas", Libby, MT 12/14/2000



**CHRISTMAS 1972  
SANTA CLAUS**

Santa Claus, is based on the historical figure of Saint Nicholas a 4<sup>th</sup> century bishop of Myra in Asia Minor, known for his generous gifts to the poor. Santa Claus is a legendary character, who is said to bring gifts during the late evening hours on Christmas Eve to "nice" children, and either coal or nothing to "naughty" ones.

**Stamp:** Santa Claus, "Twas the Night Before Christmas", Scott #1472  
Date of issue: 11/9/1972

**Postcard:** Santa Claus with sack of toys

**Postmark:** special pictorial cancel of a Smiling Santa's head, "Victorian Stroll Station, Troy, NY 12/5/1999

**CHRISTMAS 1982**  
**CHILDREN TRIMMING A TREE**

**Stamp:** Seasons Greetings, Children Decorating a Christmas Tree, Scott #2030,  
 Date of issue: 11/3/1982

**Postcard:** "God Jul!", children dancing around Christmas Tree

**Postmark:** special pictorial cancel, "God Jul I Juli" (Merry Christmas in July), "Nordic Fest Station", Decprah, IA 7/26/1985



**CHRISTMAS 1983**  
**SANTA CLAUS**

**Stamp:** Seasons Greetings, Santa Claus, Scott #2064  
 Date of issue: 10/28/1983

**Postcard:** Santa and Sleigh

**Postmark:** special pictorial cancel of Santa and sleigh, "Fallsburg Fall Festival Station", "It's Christmas Every Day", Lowell, MI 9/23-24/

**CHRISTMAS 1990**  
**CHRISTMAS TREE**

According to legend, the Evergreen Tree blossoms on Christmas Eve. Thus it was decorated with paper flowers and fruits. In the 1700's, the custom spread to homes all over Germany and candles were added to symbolize Jesus as the "Light of the World". Later it was introduced to other European nations and the New World.

**Stamp:** Greetings, Christmas Tree, Scott #2515  
 Date of issue: 10/18/1990

**Postcard:** "Vesele vanoce!", Christmas Tree and Child

**Postmark:** "Holiday Festival Station, Annual Holiday Festival at Orange Town Center", Orange, CT 12/7/2003







## CHRISTMAS 1991 SANTA CLAUS CHECKING LIST

**Stamp:** Santa Claus Checking His List, Scott #2582  
Date of issue: 10/17/1991

**Postcard:** antique card of Santa taking Christmas wish from girl

**Postmark:** special pictorial cancel of Santa checking his list, "Christmas City Station", Arton, AL 12/15/1998

## CHRISTMAS 1991 SANTA CLAUS AND SLEIGH

**Stamp:** Santa flying in the sky on Sleigh his sleigh is filled with gifts. Scott #2585  
Date of issue: 10/17/1991

**Postcard:** antique card of Santa and sleigh

**Postmark:** special pictorial cancel of Santa and sleigh, "Star Station", Star, NC 12/25/1991



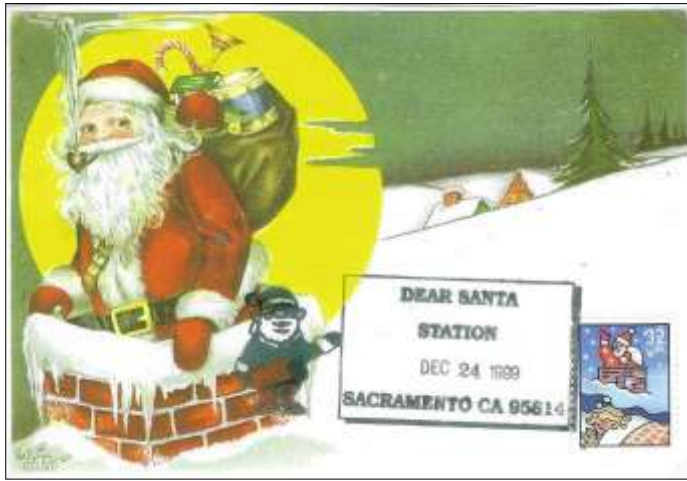
## CHRISTMAS 1991 CHRISTMAS CANDLE LIGHT

**Stamp:** "American Light Fueled by Truth and Reason", Rush lamp candle holder from the USPS" Americana issue, Scott #1610  
Date of issue: 7/2/1979

**Postcard:** antique card of little girl holding a candle

**Postmark:** special pictorial cancel of lit candle, "Old Fashioned Christmas 1991, Shopping Center Station", Hyat Lakes, MN 12/7/1991





**CHRISTMAS 1996**  
**SANTA CLAUS DOWN THE CHIMNEY**

**Stamp:** Dreaming of Santa Claus, Scott #3110  
 Date of issue: 10/8/1996

**Postcard:** antique card of Santa going down the Chimney with his bag full of toys.

**Postmark:** special pictorial cancel of Santa, "Dear Santa Station", Sacramento, CA 12/24/1999

**CHRISTMAS 1997**  
**AMERICAN HOLLY**

Seen against the whiteness of the winter snow, evergreen holly is a symbol of the birth of Christ, promising life in the midst of death.

**Stamp:** American Holly, Scott #3177  
 Issue Date: 10/30/1997

**Postcard:** antique Donnison's Christmas Postcard of Holly

**Postmark:** special pictorial cancel of "American Holly, Postage Stamp Mega Event Station", New York, NY 10/31/1997



**CHRISTMAS 2005**  
**HOLIDAY COOKIES**

**Stamp:** Santa Claus Cookie, Scott #3949, Date of Issue: 10/20/2005

**Postcard:** Santa holding in his arms a multitude of Dolls and Toys

**Postmark:** special pictorial FDOI cancel of an Angel Cookie, Minneapolis, MN 10/20/2005

















# MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

## For The

### MAXIMUM CARD STUDY UNIT of AMERICA

Founded in 1978, the Maximum Card Study Unit (MACSU) is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to the creation, collection, exchange, enjoyment, display, and study of Maximum Cards, by spreading the knowledge of Maximaphily among its members.

Membership includes a subscription to Maximaphily USA, a quarterly journal featuring news of the maximum card world and articles by members and experts in the field.

Articles featuring topical collecting typically are richly illustrated with maximum cards and share the author's insightful knowledge of the subject and his own personal and helpful experience.

The pages providing information regarding activities of individual members allows members to place free advertising for trading, buying, selling and exchanging information. Here the opportunity to make contacts with members in other countries is provided.

There are articles evaluating maximum cards according to accepted standards, pointing out good qualities and making suggestions for improvement.

Mail bid auctions are held on occasion, featuring inexpensive cards donated by members.

Every issue provides a page or two of illustrations of the most recent maximum card creations by our members. Every member gets a chance to show his cards and write an article about them.

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#### MACSU Membership Application

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(Indicate if you want your name and interests listed in an upcoming issue: YES:  NO )

Club membership is only \$12 per year and includes a quarterly journal emailed to you. You can pay your dues via PayPal. Send your PayPal payment to MAXICARDS@gmail.com