

Tuesday August 1, 1944

Dearest Hotchie: Yours of July 17 and 18 at hand and it certainly relieved me to hear that the stockings, box and cross arrived OK. The box and cross, especially the cross, I thought were very lovely. The stockings are dark, I know, but they only had that shade; indeed, that seems to be the shade in Rome and evidently is for Fall and Winter as no one wears stockings in the summer anyhow - not even anklets for the most part.

This is my first letter in three days. I have been on the road and once again in Rome. This time, tho, I was a sight-seer and had a wonderful tour. Let me tell you about it.

Frank Pellegrin and I started out in the morning. First we went to a store near St. Peter's to buy some rosaries, as we planned to have them blessed by the Pope. I bought a dozen pairs, cheap, but the only kind they had. Then we went into St. Peter's, hired a guide, and spent the next several hours being completely overwhelmed by the magnificence of the church, its art, and atmosphere.

The church is so fabulous that it would take pages and pages just to itemize the wonderful statues, paintings, altars, etc., that cram every inch of it. And, remember, the most famous artists in history spent years working on the various frescoes, mosaics, monuments, altars, etc. It certainly is a blessing that both sides spared Rome and the Vatican from bombing.

After the church, we visited the famous Sistine Chapel with its huge ceiling painted by Michelangelo, who also did the end wall with "The Last Judgment" - a picture that takes your breath away. Then down to the Papal treasury in St. Peter's - two rooms wherein repose the jewels of the church. Monstrances, censers, vestments, rings, crowns, and altar pieces of silver and gold, encrusted with diamonds, emeralds, rubies, and