



ORDER
Sons and
Daughters
of Italy
IN AMERICA

A Message From the President, Antonio Meucci Lodge #213



*December 2025
Issue 10*

Winter has finally arrived. The days are shorter, and the weather is definitely much colder. The hustle and bustle of the holiday season has begun as people started their Christmas shopping, decorating their homes with bright colorful lights and setting up their Christmas Tree. Did you know Christmas Lights symbolize Hope, Warmth, and Joy. Something we all need in our lives. It's also a special time of the year when we get to spend time with our love ones. It's a time when we prepare certain delicacies for Christmas Eve dinner, and of courses there is a lot of baking that is being done. Christmas Eve dinner is traditionally called the Feast of the Seven Fishes, which is an Italian-American `tradition that includes a large meal with at least Seven different seafood dishes, known as "La Vigilia". This Feast is deeply rooted in the Catholic tradition of abstaining from meat on Christmas Eve thus focusing on the Fish. The specific number of Seven is a symbolic choice, representing the religious significance of the number Seven in Catholicism. As for the baking the most common sweets we generally enjoy eating during the holiday season are Panettone, Pandora, Torrone and let's not forget the Struffoli. However you decide to celebrate the Christmas Season enjoy it.

Another time-honored tradition that many Italians love to do is set up the Presepio in their homes. Well the Lodge also set up



ORDER
Sons and
Daughters
of Italy
IN AMERICA

A Message From the President,

Antonio Meucci Lodge #213

one. Our beautiful display is in the curio cabinet which is in the front entranceway of the Lodge. I need to thank Sister Rita Maria Mioli-Carolini for not only setting up the Presepio, but for donating all the lovely figures and accessories. It looks beautiful and it brings back so many fond memories of seeing the Nativity scene displayed in Churches. Thank you so much Sister Rita.

On Sunday November 2nd, at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church we celebrated our annual Memorial Mass. It was a lovely Mass celebrated in both English and Italian. It was also a time where we got to pay respect to all our beloved deceased Brothers and Sisters of the Lodge. It just so happened that the Mass on November 2nd, fell on the actual day of All Souls Day. We also recognized the passing of 6 of our long time members. Unfortunately, there were not that many of our members in attendance that day. Afterwards we went back to the Lodge for some lunch and got to spend some quality time with our dear Brothers and Sisters. I would like to personally thank Sister Rita Cestone for coordinating the Mass, Brother Vito Tassone for being the Lector, and to Sister Pamela Danza for hosting the luncheon. A special thank you also goes out to the singer Mary Francis Grace. She was absolutely amazing.

I'm so excited to report that one of our new members Brother Carlo & Sister Lina Cannavo's daughter Emma Cannavo won the *John Dabbene Italian Essay Contest* for District IV. Emma had only 2



ORDER
Sons and
Daughters
of Italy
IN AMERICA

A Message From the President, *Antonio Meucci Lodge #213*

days to write her Essay, and she did it. The subject was *What My Italian Heritage Means To Me*. Emma wrote about her Father Carlo. What a beautiful warm and touching essay she wrote about him. I also need to mention that Emma is the Granddaughter of Sister Rita Maria Mioli-Carolini. Emma received \$200, and an Award Certificate at our last General Meeting which was presented to her by Co-Chair of the CSJ Brother Mario Cermele. Congratulations Emma.

Also at our November General Meeting, one of our members Sister Maria Theresa Quaranta spoke about her second book she wrote which is a Christmas book for Children called Festeggiamo Il Natale Con Mariiii!!!. Thank you Maria, I can't wait to read it.

I'm happy to announce that the Sons of Italy Foundation Scholarships applications for the 2026-2027 academic year are now open to receive applications. In addition to the National Leadership Scholarships, for Undergraduates and Graduates students, the OSDIA has partnered with the *Swiss School of Management (SSM)* campus in Rome, which includes *Two Full Tuition Scholarships* for a Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Business Administration. This is a once in a life-time opportunity for a bright, young Italian-American student to receive a World Class education. I encourage our members' Children or Grandchildren to look into these opportunities and perhaps apply. You can go on the *website* for all the particulars. Please note the deadline to apply is by February



ORDER
Sons and
Daughters
of Italy
IN AMERICA

A Message From the President, Antonio Meucci Lodge #213

27, 2026. The website to view both Scholarship applications is OSDIA.org/sons-of-Italy-foundation. You just don't know, they could be a winner

On Friday November 14th we had our *Pocketbook Bingo* event. Needless to say, it was another successful fundraiser for the Lodge. The event was Sold Out, with a wait list of people just waiting to attend. I need to personally thank Chairperson Sister Cathy Grisanti and her amazing committee for doing such an outstanding job as usual. We received so many compliments and people are already asking about the next one in April. Congratulations to Sister Lydia Tedesco who won the 50/50 raffle. I know you were very happy that night. Special thanks to all the gentlemen who came to help, my heartfelt thanks goes out to you guys. To our Bingo caller Brother Mario Cermele assisted by Brother Gino DiMiceli you guys did a great job not only calling the numbers but with trying to control all the women in the room, and some of the men that came to play. The prizes were absolutely fantastic, and I know Sister Jackie Sierra was also very happy with the Grand Prize of a gigantic Candy Cane with \$500, attached to it. The Lodge made a profit of over \$13,000.

As we move into December the next event we do every year is our annual *Children's Christmas Party* for our members Children and Grandchildren from infancy to 9 years old. The Christmas party will be on December 7th, so if you haven't made your reservations as of



ORDER
Sons and
Daughters
of Italy
IN AMERICA

A Message From the President,

Antonio Meucci Lodge #213

yet, please do so ASAP, so the Elves can do their shopping. Sister Pamela Danza and Myself personally look forward to this event every year, especially when we see the children come all dressed up in their holiday outfits to enjoy the festivities we have planned, and seeing their excitement when Santa arrives. As in the past, the *“Antonio Meucci Theater Playhouse”* will put on our version of a Christmas theme show. Of course it always has an Italian twist to it featuring some of our children, and members of the Lodge, but more importantly back by popular demand is Brother Dominick D’Ambrosio our featured Actor. So if you have nothing to do that day come get into the Holiday Spirit and come watch the show.

The Antonio Meucci Lodge will be starting the New Year off with a bang with another round of events for 2026. The first event we will have is *Comedy Night* Chaired by Brother Mario Cermele on Friday January 9th, 2026 which is back by popular demand. So mark your calendar and save the date so you can attend. More information to follow.

I would like to send Get Well wishes to all our members and friends not feeling well especially Sisters Heidi Banziger, Nina Marie Chillemi, Betty Corvino, Ashley DiMatteo, Maryann Pellegrini, Vincenza Puja, Teresa Riverso, Tina Salerno, Brothers Tony Amato, Umberto Amato, Vince Roselli, Charlie Tota and Anthony Vaccaro. May you all experience good help real soon.



ORDER
Sons and
Daughters
of Italy
IN AMERICA

A Message From the President, Antonio Meucci Lodge #213

I would also like to express my deepest sympathies to Past First Lady Madeline Matteucci on the passing of her dear departed husband NYS Past President Carlo Matteucci. Brother Carlo and Sister Madeline were dear friends to many of us here at the Lodge, and was always very supported of everything we did. Carlo's motto was always "*stay focused, stay committed, stay together today for a better tomorrow*". Definitely words to live by. So glad I got to spend some time with him this past June at the NYS Convention. May you rest in the Arms of the Lord Brother Carlo as you will be sorely missed.

To all our members celebrating December Birthdays Buon Compleanno. I would also like to send belated birthday wishes to Sister Rosa Lippolis. Heard she celebrated her milestone Birthday in grand style in London, England. Welcome back Rosa.

Wishing all our December couples a very Buon Anniversario, especially to Sister Caroline and Joe Baviello who celebrated 32 years of marriage. What a way to celebrate traveling through Italy with your children Christina and Joseph. Glad you had a fantastic time since it was your first time there. I hope everyone had a wonderful time celebrating your anniversaries, and your day was filled with joy, happiness, and most of all love.

I would like to send Congratulations wishes to Sister Rosemary Reo, on Rosemary's daughter Jessica who just signed her National letter of intent with LeMoyne College to play



ORDER
Sons and
Daughters
of Italy
IN AMERICA

A Message From the President,

Antonio Meucci Lodge #213

Division 1 Lacrosse. So proud of you Jessica. Jessica's grandfather is Brother Vince Roselli, her Aunt is Sister Dina Roselli, and Grand Niece to Brother Charles Tota. Hopefully, after college you will become a member of the Lodge to carry on the rich tradition of the Reo, Roselli and Tota families

I also need to send a special Thank You to Sister Franca Capicotto who donated to the Lodge regalia and memorabilia belonging to her late husband Past Venerable Antonio Capicotto. As you know Brother Tony has a long rich history tied to the Lodge. I was very impressed to see the heavy Gold Regalia that said Venerable on it. Those of us who have been in the Order for a long time know that the word Venerable got changed to the word President. We will treasure these mementos and showcase them very proudly, as another reminder of our long history of the Antonio Meucci Lodge existence.

December is a very special and magical time of the year in Italy as they celebrate a number of significant Festas and Saint days all across the region. It all starts on December 4th when Italy celebrates St. Barbara. That day is significant as St Barbara is the patron Saint of the Italian Navy, and is especially celebrated in Paterno, Sicily. On December 6th, Italy celebrates St. Nicholas Day which in Italy is the patron Saint of the poor, with traditions like children leaving out letters and shoes for gifts like candy. It has also been said that in some areas of Italy unmarried women may



ORDER
Sons and
Daughters
of Italy
IN AMERICA

A Message From the President,

Antonio Meucci Lodge #213

perform special rituals to find a spouse. This tradition is primarily celebrated in Bari, Puglia and Molfetta. On December 7th, St. Ambrogio is celebrated primarily in Milan. The Feast day basically kicks off the City's Christmas Season and includes many religious services and cultural events. December 8th is when we celebrate the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. This Feast day celebrates the Immaculate Conception of the blessed Virgin Mary, 9 months before the Feast of the Nativity of Mary. On December 13th they celebrate the Feast of Santa Lucia. St Lucy in Italy is a figure like Father Christmas who brings gifts to children which is also celebrated in the south of Italy like Sicily. Then of course on December 24th, Christmas Eve is celebrated which is called Vigilia di Natale. Also on Christmas Eve Italians celebrate Babbo Natale when he brings gifts for children under the Christmas Tree either by calling him Santa Claus or Babbo Natale. This day is then followed by Christmas Day on December 25th. It's a very religious day for Christians as we celebrate the birth of Jesus and it's also seen as the salvation and a foundation for the Christian faith. On December 26th we celebrate the Feast of Santo Stefano. This day in Italy is a public holiday that honors St. Stephen as the first Christian martyr and one of the first deacon of the Church. On December 31st, New Year's Eve Italians celebrate St. Sylvester which is known as La Festa di Silvestro. The holiday honors Pope Sylvester I, who died on that day 335 AD, and his legacy is celebrated with feasting, fireworks and Church services. Then on January 6th, Italians across the region celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany with a National public holiday.



ORDER
Sons and
Daughters
of Italy
IN AMERICA

A Message From the President,

Antonio Meucci Lodge #213

Epiphany marks the end of the Christmas period and commemorates the 12th day of Christmas when the 3 Wise Men arrived at the manger bearing gifts for baby Jesus.

In closing, Brother Frank and I would like to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas, and a Safe, Healthy and Happy New Year. These are special days we should enjoy with family and friends and reflect on just how blessed we are to share time with our love ones. I also would like to mention that our Lodge is very fortunate that we can give back. In December we are making the following donations to two worthy charities. We recently presented a check in the amount of \$2,500.00 to an organization called *Friends of Karen*. Friends of Karen is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that provides comprehensive support to families with a child diagnosed with life threatening illness such as Cancer. Founded in 1978, the organization offers emotional, financial, and advocacy support at no cost to the families in the New York Tri-State area. The other organization we will make is a \$1,000.00 donation is to *Rosary Hill*, in Hawthorne NY. Rosary Hill is also a 501(c)3 organization, and was established in the 1900's, almost 125 years ago. It's a free skilled nursing facility operated by the Dominican Sisters for people with incurable Cancer who cannot afford care. On a personal note, I volunteer there on Saturdays to help the nuns with these patients, so we can provide comfort and dignity in their final days of life. It's a very rewarding experience and something I enjoy doing. If anyone



ORDER
Sons and
Daughters
of Italy
IN AMERICA

A Message From the President, Antonio Meucci Lodge #213

would like to make personal donations this Holiday Season you may want to consider these two worthy organizations. It's very humbling to know you can give back to those less fortunate than ourselves, and as the saying goes "*it's better to give than to receive*". The act of generosity and selflessness lead to a deeper sense of joy, fulfillment, and psychological wellbeing than simply accumulating things for oneself.

To all my Brothers and Sisters may you always remember our motto **Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.**

Sempre Avanti,
President Camille