



gennaio 2025



Preghiamo

NEWS SOURCE FOR THE ITALIAN APOSTOLATE OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

A Reflection on Candlemas: THE FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD REV. LOUIS J. SCURTI

As we celebrate the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, there are so many aspects of this feast that we ought to pause and consider. The Gospel of Luke (2:22-40) tells us that the child, the Infant Jesus, just forty days old, is brought to the temple. We reflect upon how tiny an infant of forty is! How protective the parents of such an infant must be!



Mosaic from the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary, Lourdes.

[Photo Credit: Fr. Lawrence Lew, O.P.](#)



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A REFLECTION ON CANDLEMAS, CONTINUED...

We consider Mary, the Blessed Mother, and all the thoughts she kept in her heart regarding the great joy and mystery of Jesus' birth. Don't forget that she was told by an angel, a messenger of God, that she would bear the child who would save all people. News of great joy! And yet, the experience was rough and trying. Because of the census, she was forced to travel on a donkey, looking for a place to have the child. When she and St. Joseph finally arrived in Bethlehem, she gave birth not in the clean home of a friend or relative but in a stable. Contemplating God's will, perhaps Mary asked, why must Jesus, the cause of salvation, be born here and not in a nice, soft bed?

And the trials continued. Herod was out to destroy all first-born children, whom he viewed as a threat. Soon, Joseph and Mary would flee with the Infant Jesus to safety in Egypt. But before they could flee, and despite the risks, they traveled to the Temple in Jerusalem to fulfill Jewish law which required that the mother be purified, and the infant be presented, forty days after birth.



The Presentation of the Lord, Giovanni Bellini (1430-1516)

When Mary entered the Temple with Joseph, the earthly father and protector of the Infant Jesus, she was greeted again with news of great joy, but also news of a great trial to come! This child, her child, she was told, will be the cause of the rise and fall of many. This child whom she and Joseph cared for, carried in their arms, whose clothes they changed, who perhaps cried as they stood there in the Temple, as infants often do, this child is the Savior! But wait, Mary, there is more. A sword shall pierce your heart. You will suffer. What thoughts must have gone through the minds and hearts of Mary and Joseph?

We also reflect upon Simeon - the holy man who delivered this news to Mary and Joseph. This old man who was waiting for death but was told by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had first seen salvation sent into the world - the Messiah! Imagine the stirring that Simeon felt within himself when the Holy Family entered the Temple looking, at first, like any other family in Jerusalem. But then, the Holy Spirit nudges Simeon, enlightens him, and he realizes - this is the One! This child is the Messiah!

A REFLECTION ON CANDLEMAS, CONTINUED...

Today the Church also reads the letter to the Hebrews (2:14-18) which reminds us that Jesus, the God-Man, the Messiah, was born like one of us - sharing in the same "blood and flesh"! This is a beautiful letter filled with both theology and with practical aspects of who Jesus Christ is - the One sent by God to be the new high priest, to be the Word in the flesh. Jesus did not come to save the angels- He came for us! He identifies with us. Do we stop and think that Baby Jesus needed to be changed, like all babies? Perhaps His diapers were washed in the Jordan and put back on Him when they were dry. Maybe He had colic, like some children do. It was no accident that God the Father sent His Word, Jesus, to walk this earth and to be with us in the flesh.

And yet, Jesus is not "just another child". He comes to the Temple, forty days after the Incarnation, because He has a mission! And here we turn to the other reading for today from Malachi (3:1-4). The word "Malachi" means the "messenger of God". And what does the messenger tell us? He tells us that the day will come when the power of God will come down and purify the Temple, the priests, and all the people.

And they're waiting and waiting perhaps for some magnificent knight on a shining horse but nothing like that happens. Instead, the babe of Bethlehem, the Light of the World, enters to purify not only the Temple of Jerusalem but the temple of His Church on earth!

It is fitting that the Presentation of Our Lord, who is the Light of the World, be celebrated with the lighting of candles, as the church has done for centuries. But sadly, this magnificent feast day, which we call Candlemas, is often forgotten! All too often, when we think of February 2nd what comes to mind is the secular holiday of Groundhog's Day. Just consider all the news reports from Pennsylvania, Staten Island, and beyond, focusing on the sun, the groundhog, and his shadow.



Photo Credit: Fr. Lawrence Lew, O.P.

Whether or not the groundhog sees his shadow in the sunlight, does not matter. What matters is not the sun, but the Son. We have God the Son, the second person of the Blessed Trinity, within us!

On this day, we light candles to remind us of the babe of Bethlehem, the Light of the World, who entered the Temple and purified it. We light candles to remind ourselves that we too must bring the light of Jesus Christ into our homes, into our Church and into our world.

Happy Candlemas Day!

[CLICK HERE](#) to view Fr. Scurti's Candlemas Homily!

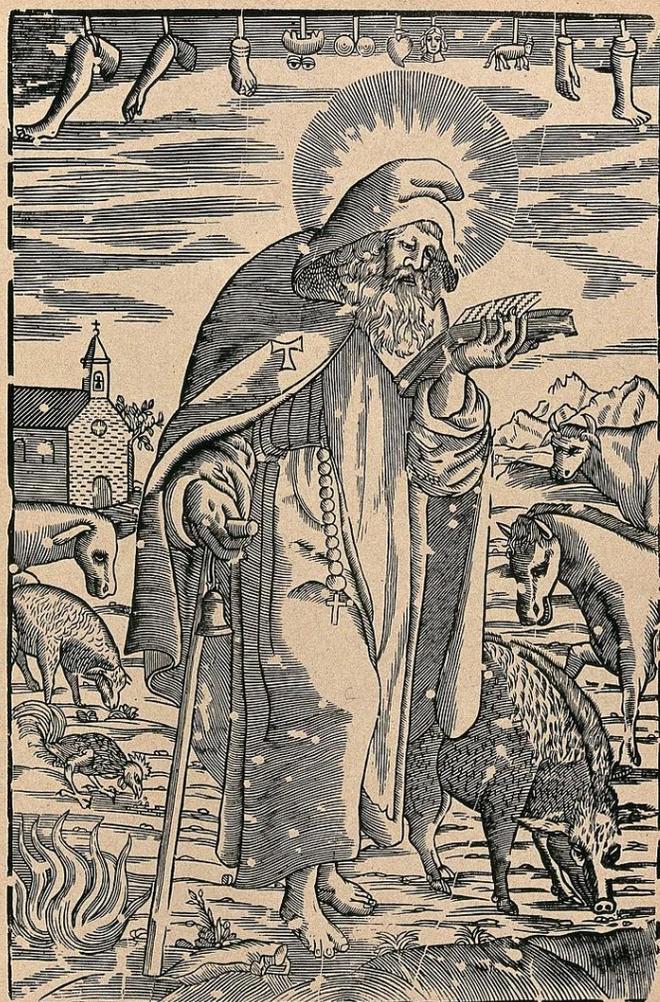
ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Born in Jersey City, the Reverend Louis J. Scurti was ordained a Catholic priest in 1973. He served as the director of the Catholic Campus Ministry at William Paterson University (WPU) for over three decades. During that time, he oversaw the construction of the Jesus Christ - Prince of Peace Chapel on the WPU campus and hosted the television program, *The Word: Alive and Well*, which aired on forty cable networks throughout the country. Fr. Scurti holds several advanced degrees including a master's in fine arts from Montclair State University and a Ph.D. in Marriage & Family Therapy from Seton Hall University. He is a visual artist as well as a licensed marriage and family therapist. Since retiring in 2011, Fr. Scurti has assisted at multiple parishes in New York, New Jersey, and Florida, including St. Anthony of Padua in Manhattan and St. Frances Xavier Cabrini on Roosevelt Island. He continues to evangelize through his preaching ministry, [Friends of the Word](#).

Learn a New Devotion!

PRAYER TO ST. ANTHONY ABBOT ORAZIONE A SANT'ANTONIO ABATE

FEAST DAY: JANUARY 17TH

**PATRON SAINT OF ANIMALS, THOSE SUFFERING FROM
SKIN DISEASES, FARMERS, BUTCHERS, THE POOR,
GRAVEDIGGERS, BASKET MAKERS, BRUSH MAKERS,
GLOVE MAKERS, WEAVERS, SHEARERS, BUTCHERS,
SAUSAGE MAKERS, AND CONFECTIONERS.**



SANT ANTONI ABAT.

Most glorious St. Anthony, shining example of penitence and Christian fortitude, ardent with zeal for the salvation of souls and with love for your neighbor, You who obtained from God the special virtue of freeing the air, the earth, fire, and animals from every disease and every evil influence, grant that by a holy life we may imitate your heroic virtues, and while on earth be blessed through your patronage to receive all that is needed for our food and work, our bodies and souls. Amen.

Gloriosissimo S. Antonio, esempio luminoso di penitenza e di forza cristiana, ardente di zelo per la salvezza delle anime e di carità per il bene del prossimo, Voi che otteneste da Dio la speciale virtù di liberare l'aria, la terra, il fuoco e gli animali da ogni morbo e da ogni malefica influenza, fate che con una santa vita imitiamo le vostre eroiche virtù e che anche quaggiù in terra sperimentiamo il vostro velle patrocino, ricevendo copiosissime le vostre benedizioni su tutto ciò che serve per la nostra alimentazione e pei nostri lavori, sui corpi e sulle anime nostre. Amen.

RECIPE - RICETTA

Lasagne di Carnevale

(Lasagne alla Napoletana)

Each region of Italy has its own traditional Carnevale foods, both savory and sweet. In Napoli, and the surrounding areas, it is typical to prepare a decadent lasagna using a classic ragù, rich ricotta, sheets of fresh pasta, tiny *polpettine* (meatballs), and various other meats and cheeses such as Parmigiano Reggiano, Pecorino Romano, provola, mozzarella, salami, prosciutto cotto, and sausage. Sometimes slices of hard-boiled eggs are also added. The recipe below is one of many. Each family has their own way of preparing this wonderful, satisfying dish. **Buon Carnevale a tutti!**

For the ragù :

Lean pork, cut into 3 large chunks, 10.5 ounces/300 grams
 Lean pork ribs, 4
 Sweet sausages, 4
 Olive oil, 4 tablespoons
 Sweet onion, 1 large or 2 medium, finely sliced
 Red wine, preferably from the Aliano grape, a specialty of Campania, 1 cup
 Tomato puree, about 53 ounces/1.5 kilos
 Tomato double concentrate, 3.5 ounces/100 grams
 Fresh basil, 1 bunch
 Salt

For the meatballs:

Italian bread, as needed
 ground beef or pork or a combination, 7 ounces/200 grams
 egg, 1
 Parmesan cheese, grated, 1 to 2 tablespoons
 fresh flat-leaf parsley, finely minced, 2 tablespoons
 freshly grated nutmeg, 1/4 teaspoon
 Garlic, 1 clove, finely minced
 Salt and black pepper
 All purpose flour
 olive oil

Other Ingredients:

Ricotta cheese, 14 ounces/400 grams
 Fresh egg pasta lasagna sheets, 17.6 ounces/500 grams
 Parmesan cheese, grated
 Pecorino cheese, grated
 Provola, mozzarella, or fiordilatte fresco, cut into small cubes, 10.5 ounces/300 grams
 Salami, any type, optional
 Hard-boiled eggs, 3 sliced, optional



Photo Credit: Wikimedia Commons

PREPARATION

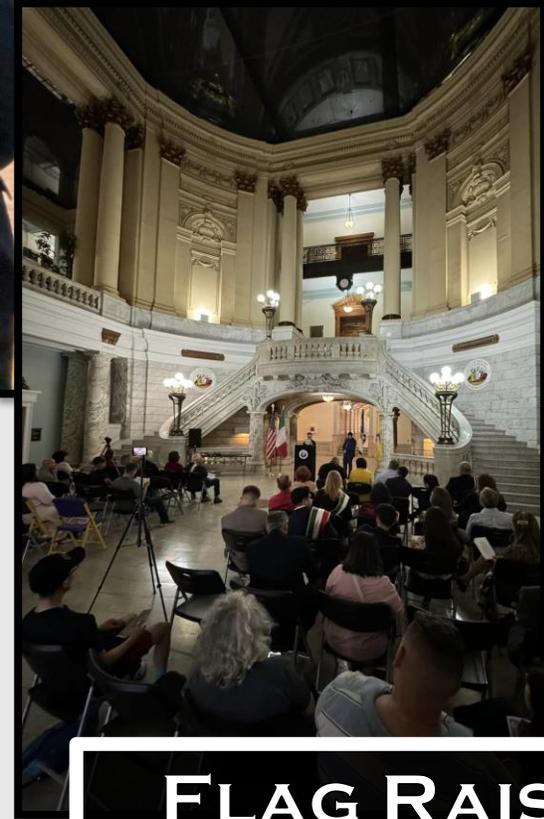
Ragù : In a large saucepan brown the meat, ribs and sausages on all sides in the olive oil. Add the onion, lower the heat, add 1/4 cup of the wine, cover and simmer until the wine is absorbed. Repeat adding 1/4 cup of wine at a time, until all the wine is absorbed into the meats, then add the tomato puree, tomato concentrate, a few of the basil leaves finely minced, and season with salt. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat to its lowest, cover, and simmer for 4 to 6 hours, adding a bit of water if needed.

Meatballs: Tear the bread into tiny pieces and put in a bowl with the beef or pork, egg, onion, Parmesan, parsley, nutmeg, salt and pepper to taste and mix until combined. Form walnut sized meatballs, about 1 inch in diameter, and lightly coat them with flour. Heat a little oil in a large non-stick skillet and brown the meatballs on all sides, turning as necessary. Add to the ragù at the last half hour of cooking.

To assemble: Preheat the oven to 320 F/160 C. Whisk the ricotta with 1 cup of the ragù and 8 to 10 small basil leaves.

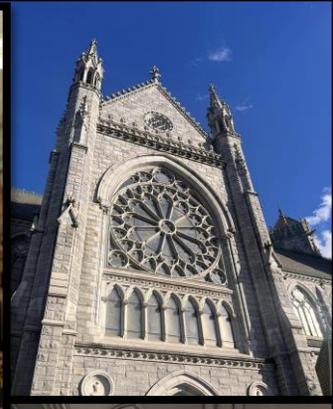
Boil the lasagna sheets so they are very al dente. Spread some ragù on the bottom of a baking pan and top with a layer of lasagna, leaving lots hanging over edge so you can fold it over the top. Spread with layer of ragù, then some ricotta-ragù mixture, and a generous amount of grated Parmesan and pecorino and another layer of lasagna. Top the second layer of pasta with some of the sauce, basil leaves, and the meatballs plus some of the provola and one of the sausages from the ragù thinly sliced or some salami and eggs, if using. Repeat, alternating layers with just the ricotta and ragù with those with meatballs and cheeses. Be sure to sprinkle lots of Parmesan and pecorino cheeses on every layer, plus scatter every other layer with basil leaves.

Fold up the over hanging lasagna and top with more pasta sheets, if needed. Spread with ragù and lots of Parmesan. Bake for about 30 minutes, finishing on high so the top browns at the edges. Let rest for 30 minutes before slicing. Serve topped with more ragù and grated cheeses.



FLAG RAISING NEWARK



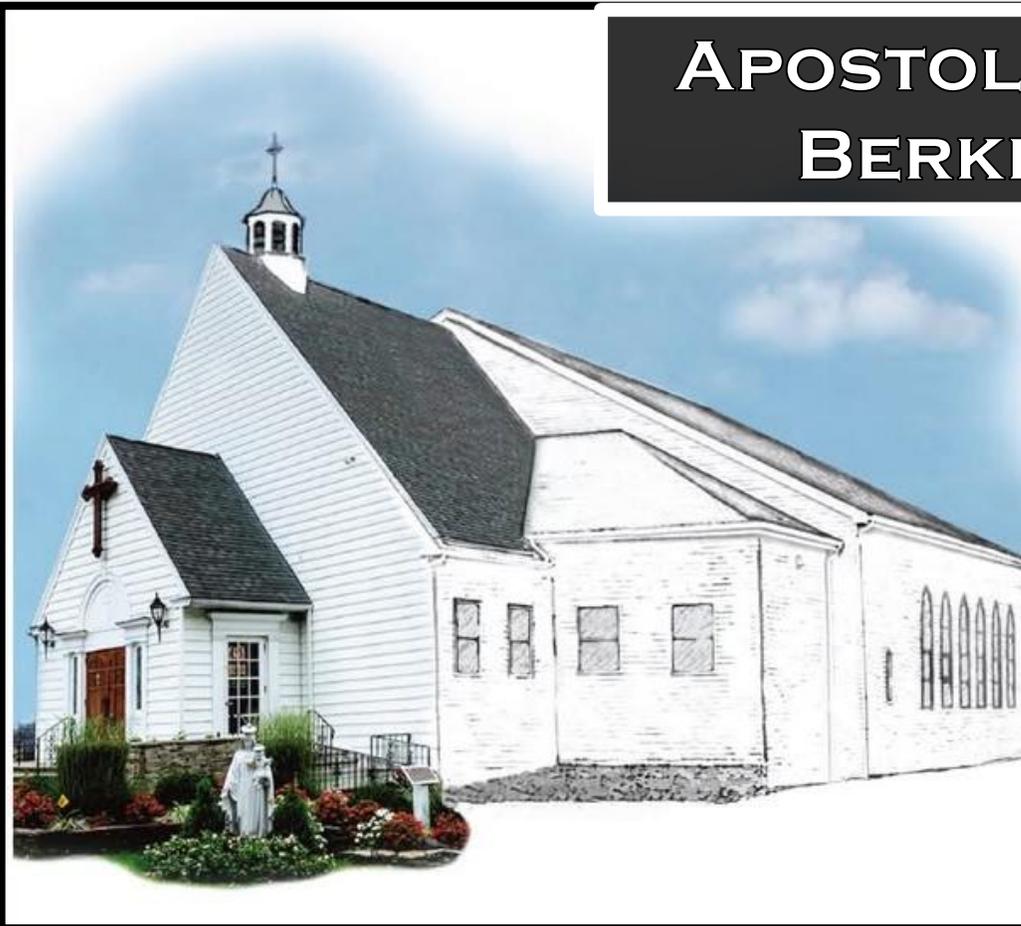


ITALIAN MASS AT THE BASILICA NEWARK

ITALIAN ORGANIZATIONS MASS NEWARK



APOSTOLATO MEETING BERKELEY HEIGHTS





**MOTHER CABRINI
HOMECOMING
NEWARK**

BLESSING OF THE PRESEPIO NEWARK



APOSTOLATO ITALIANO

ALL ARE WELCOME

NEW MEMBERS

ARE NEEDED!

(Food will be ordered)



6:30 General Discussion

7:00 Spiritual Reflection
by Br. Jonathan Maria, CFR

Monday, January 27, 2025
Annunciation RC Church
50 W Midland Ave
Paramus, NJ 07652



APOSTOLATO ITALIANO



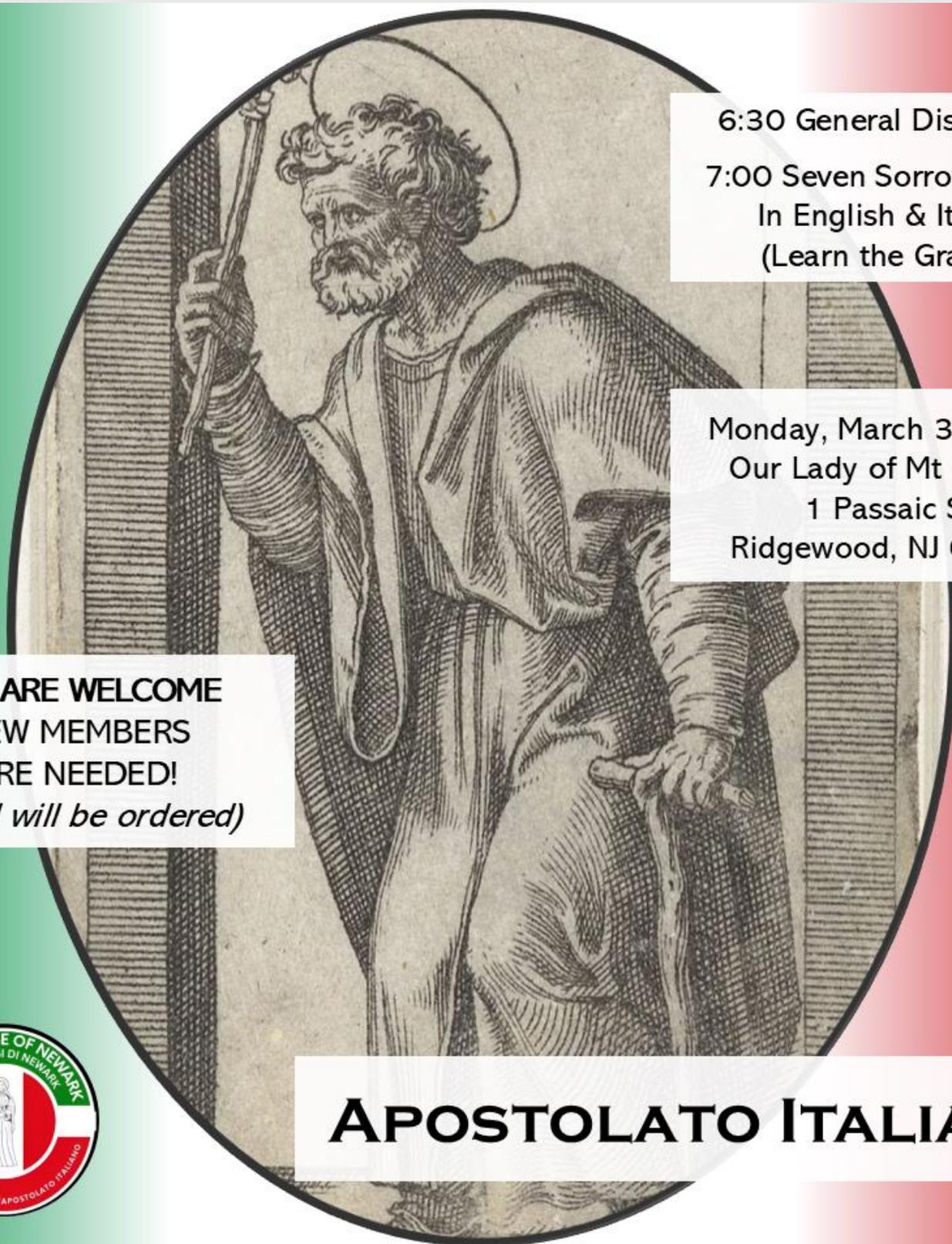
**ALL ARE WELCOME
NEW MEMBERS
ARE NEEDED!**
(Food will be ordered)

6:30 General Discussion

7:00 Italian Group Rosary
(L'indulgenza plenaria)

Monday, February 24, 2025
St. Rocco Society Chapel
110 Main Street
Fort Lee, NJ 07024





6:30 General Discussion

7:00 Seven Sorrow Prayer
In English & Italian
(Learn the Graces)

Monday, March 31, 2025
Our Lady of Mt Carmel
1 Passaic St
Ridgewood, NJ 07450

**ALL ARE WELCOME
NEW MEMBERS
ARE NEEDED!**
(Food will be ordered)

APOSTOLATO ITALIANO





LA TAVOLATA DI SAN GIUSEPPE

Saturday, March 22, 2025 at 6PM
St. Joseph's School Gymnasium
Lodi, New Jersey

Cost: \$35

Buy tickets by emailing
saintjosephsocietylodinj@yahoo.com





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