

Saint Anthony, instructions for use

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The Saint Anthony Bonfire is “the event” of the winter in Varese. Many people face the cold (but around the bonfire the atmosphere is hot...) and even the bad weather to enjoy the show, and maybe give to the fireman a note with the wish for the year (we remind you that Varesenews will do that too, for the ones that cannot be in Motta square).

PUT YOUR WISH HERE

The programme has been established, but it is worth reminding it to everybody; both for the day of the bonfire (that is the 16th and not the day of Saint Anthony, which is the 17th) and for the real day of the Festival.

We collected all the useful news in this article, even those (as for example the streets' closure) that we do not have at our disposal yet. So, save the link!

WHAT HAPPENS ON BONFIRE DAY

On Friday 16th the day will start with the Solemn Mass and the benediction of the votive candles at 10.30, in the church in Motta square. During the morning, the Monelli will be already in the square to build the pyre and the delicatessen counter with the inimitable “salamella” sausages, the traditional desserts and the mustazitt.

At 18.00 there will be the vespers, then at 18.30 the Solemn Mass officiated by the parish priest, Monsignor Gilberto Donnini. Then, finally, at 21.00 the focal point of the day, the lightning of the bonfire, will take place in the presence of the city authorities, in Motta square.

Otherwise, (for those who cannot be there, for the distance or impossibility) it will be in streaming on Varesenews...

It is fundamental, during this event, to know if there is some mulled wine. The answer is yes. From 17.00 to 24.00 in Motta square a huge stand for the mulled wine is promoted by the Salesian Missionary Group “Amici del Sidamo – In Missione Onlus”.

THE ANIMALS' BENEDICTION DAY

The event that will take place on Saturday 17th is the benediction of animals, preceded by the Solemn Mass at 11.00, officiated by Monsignor Franco Angesi, auxiliary bishop of Milan. Finally, at around 12.00, will take place the traditional benediction of the animals (every year, besides dogs and cats, there are also horses, hawks, owls...) and the launching of balloons. The stands will be there all day long, at 18.00 there will

be another Solemn Mass, officiated by Luigi Stucchi, auxiliary bishop of Milan and in the end, at 21.00, the conclusion with the concert of the juvenile orchestra Paul Harris from Milan and the Coro della Camera choir of Varese, directed by Giovanni Mazza.

A "MICCA" FOR SAINT ANTHONY

Saint Anthony is the protector of animals but also of bread-makers; for this reason, an old fundraising tradition has been proposed again. Initially, it consisted in the distribution of the bread to the poor people. Now, the bakers (and similar) will be the protagonists of a fundraising which involves Angeli Urbani. During all the month of January, in many pastry shops, bakeries, pizzerias and other shops in Varese, there will be little money boxes where we can leave, if we want, a little offering. (The article.)

#FALOVARESE2015: A PHOTO CONTEST TO LIGHT NEXT YEAR'S BONFIRE

This year too, as last year, a photo contest organised by the Monelli della Motta will decide who will light the bonfire. Together with the authorities, also the winner of the contest organised on Facebook and Instagram –and promoted on the Facebook page of the bonfire during these days- will hold the torch. Participating is simple, all you have to do is take pictures of the bonfire and publish them on Facebook or Instagram with the hashtags #falovarese2015 and #playxvarese3. The most voted one will "win" a ringside place for the lighting in 2016.

OTHER SAINT ANTHONY'S BONFIRES

The most famous, attended and important Saint Anthony's bonfire is with no doubts the one in Varese, in Motta square. But it is not the only one. Many parishes celebrate the animals' Saint in this way. For example, on Saturday 17th January in Leggiuno there will be a Mass with the benediction of animals at 18.00, dinner in the oratory at 20.00 and a big bonfire at 22.00. While on Sunday 18th January, the traditional Saint Anthony bonfire with the benediction of animals will take place in Borgo di Mustonate. Choral Concert at 15.00, benediction of animals at 16.00, torchlight procession at 17.30 and bonfire with the accompaniment of the Edelweiss choir. Following, a big dinner with risotto.

If you want to suggest other Saint Anthony bonfire (not the Gioebia, it is something else!), use the comments. In Viggiù there will be big celebrations for Saint Anthony too, with many initiatives in the community of Baraggia; there will not be a bonfire but the benediction of animals and even fireworks. The details are in the article.

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