The ICS cultural Committee has been very busy this past month with two cultural events: One on January 17 at the Lohrfink auditorium in collaboration with the Department of Italian of Georgetown University and US-Italy Global Affairs Forum on “Days of remembrance of the Victims of the Holocaust”, and the other on January 19 (see my article inside this issue for more details) on “Making time in Western Thought: An introduction to Calendar Studies and Liturgical Calculations”. The two subjects were of great interest to our membership, but also, we are happy to say, attracted a considerable number of non-members. In February we will sponsor the Carnevale in collaboration with Le D.I.V.E. Traditionally this is a family event which sees parents and children involved in having fun and dressing up in the various traditional and non-traditional costumes that reveal what we may want to be in our imagination. Children will be entertained in a Carnival workshop and adults and teenagers will engage in a fun quiz on Italian traditions and culture. There will be many prizes, including those to the winners of the two contests of this year’s party: best costume, and best Carnival dessert.

After some 15 years at the helm of this organization in three different tenure periods since September 1996 and some more than 100 messages, this is the last time I am addressing you as the ICS president. I would like to thank the Board of Directors, the personnel at the Embassy of Italy, who continue to work with us to facilitate our cultural mission, and you, the members of our organization. I have been with you for so long in great part because of the inspiration and encouragement Dr. Maria Wilmeth provided me with some 27 years ago, when she recruited me to the Society. I know I am leaving our organization in very capable hands, with the energetic and resourceful Francesca Casazza as Executive Director and the new president who will address you in the March issue of Poche Parole. All the very best to all of you and your families!

Luigi De Luca
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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS
Single: Margaret Coan, Evelyn Oyler

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WE ARE SOCIAL!
Follow us on Instagram: @italian.cultural.society
Like our page on Facebook: The Italian Cultural Society of Washington D.C.
SPECIAL EVENT - FESTA DI CARNEVALE

On Saturday, February 22nd from 4PM to 6:30PM the Italian Cultural Society will host the traditional Festa di Carnevale at the Chevy Chase Village Hall, at 5906 Connecticut Ave, Chevy Chase MD 20815. Children will be entertained with a Carnival-themed Arts and Crafts workshop with maestra Fiorenza offered by Le D.I.V.E., while older kids and adults will compete in teams on a challenging Kahoot quiz on Italian traditions and culture. You will learn more about Carnevale traditions from our students and will enjoy Aperitivo and Carnevale specialties offered by Trattoria Mamma Lena.

SPECIAL FRAMORE GOURMET PRIZES FOR CONTESTS’ WINNERS!
1. Carnevale Costume Contest: dress up with your best Carnevale costume for a chance to win!
2. Traditional Dessert Contest: bring a typical Carnevale dessert, the best will win the prize!

RSVP at www.italianculturalsociety.org/carnevale-2020

Get dressed in your favorite costume and join us for a very special Festa di Carnevale!

For children:
• Arts and Crafts workshop with maestra Fiorenza, kindly offered by Le D.I.V.E.

For adults and older children:
• Kahoot quiz game in teams: test your knowledge on italian culture and learn with us!

For all together:
• Brief Children’s Recital
• Merenda and Aperitivo with Spritz!
• Dolci Carnevaleseki kindly offered by Mamma Lena Trattoria Napoletana

Join our CONTESTS and win a special gourmet prize kindly offered by Framore!
1. Carnevale Costume Contest
2. Traditional Dessert Contest: bring a traditional Dessert of Carnevale for a chance to win!

RSVP - (required) at www.italianculturalsociety.org/carnevale-2020

With the support of MAPACI—Italians in DC
“Making time in Western Thought: An Introduction to Calendar Studies and Liturgical Calculations” was the subject of Sister Maria Theotokos Adams’ presentation on Sunday January 19, 2020 at our Rugby Avenue venue.

Sr. Theotokos is pursuing her doctorate in Church History and Liturgical Time at the Catholic University of America. During her talk she addressed the mathematical/astronomical issues of calculating time (as opposed to merely recording it), as well as the development of particular liturgical pressures in early Christian history which accelerated the work. Determining the correct time/date for Easter had been a difficult task as early as recorded in late second century CE, when Eastern and Western Mediterranean Christians had a history of differences and disagreements. Before, and at least until, the late 2nd century there had been a difference in dating the celebration of the Christian Passover/Easter between Western churches and those of Asia Minor. The churches in Asia Minor celebrated it on the 14th day of the Jewish month of Nisan, according to the Gospel of John, the day before Jewish Passover, regardless of the day of the week it fell on. This is because the Crucifixion of Christ had occurred on the day before Passover. At the time, the West celebrated Easter on the Sunday following the Jewish 14th of Nisan. (According to Wikipedia, Nisan usually falls in March–April on the Gregorian calendar. Karaite Jews interpret it as referring to the month in which barley was ripe. The equivalent in the Gregorian calendar is March–April, i.e. the first month with 30 days in the season of spring).

For most of Christian history we had lived under the Julian Calendar, so called because it had been developed under the auspices of Julius (Augustus) Caesar, who introduced two additional months in the year 45 BC called July and August in his name. In the previous version of the calendar, September, October, November and December were respectively the 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th month as suggested by the meaning of the Latin numerals septem, octo, novem and decem for seven, eight, nine and ten.

However, even this Roman improvement did not quite allow a coincidence between the solar actual time and the Roman calendar time that was off by 10 days by the time the next reform of the calendar was undertaken by order of Pope Gregory the XIII. Sister Theotokos pointed out that the shift between the calendar civic year with respect to the equinoxes was a total of 10 days. To adjust for this change that year, October 4 1582 was followed by October 15, with the consequent loss of 10 days, which disappeared from the calendar! This change, while followed in countries with a Catholic faith, such as Italy, Spain, Portugal, France and Romania, was not adopted by Northern European Protestant countries, like England, Ireland, Scandinavia etc., which switched to the Gregorian calendar only two centuries later, in 1752! The executor of the Gregorian calendar reform was a mathematician from Ciro’ (province of Crotone in Calabria), Luigi Lilio, who also introduced the addition of a “leap day” to February every four years.

It may be of interest here to also mention that other calendars had been proposed and followed in other countries. E.g. in Iran, the mathematician Omar Khayyam figured out a lunar- based calendar that did not need any leap-year adjustment and was satisfactory for observation-based calendrical calculations. It had been in use until 1925 when it was replaced by another calendar more appropriate for modern day commerce. The Jewish calendar is a combined solar/lunar calendar, which attempts to have its years coincide with the tropical year and its months coincide with the synodic months.
Sister Theotokos pointed out that an exhaustive treatment of the subject would require much more time than available. She entertained questions, which the audience kept asking for an additional 40 minutes, after her 50 minute talk. It was an illuminating talk: Thank you, Sister Theotokos!

**TRAVEL AND STUDY IN ITALY**

Right before the January Social Meeting with Sister Theotokos, we hosted an info session on travel and study in Italy and we introduced some of the language schools and travel agencies that we recommend. We also connected via Skype with Emanuela Raggio of Beautiful Liguria for an insightful presentation of her travel agency and the intimate trips that she organizes based on your specific requests.

Then we connected with Francesca Memoli, director of Accademia Italiana language school in Salerno for a look into the daily life at the school, with morning courses and afternoon activities and trips to discover the beautiful surroundings (Amalfi coast, Positano, Paestum, Capri, Ischia, and more!).

If you're interested in traveling around Italy and explore its beauty as an insider, visit our website at [www.italianculturalsociety.org/coursestrips/](http://www.italianculturalsociety.org/coursestrips/) to read our suggestions for a perfect stay and a customized experience!

If what you’re looking for is a combination of studying and practicing the language while exploring the culture and the surroundings, visit our website at: [www.italianculturalsociety.org/study-abroad/](http://www.italianculturalsociety.org/study-abroad/) for a list of selected language schools that we know and trust!
To honor the Victims of the Holocaust, The Italian Cultural Society, in collaboration with US-Italy Global Affairs Forum and The Department of Italian of Georgetown University, presented the Heartstrings Duo performing the monologue “Ci hanno divisi” - words and music from Auschwitz (“We have been separated” – In Italian with English surtitles). The theatrical performance was preceded by brief video interviews, testimonials and an interesting analysis presented by journalist Antonella Ciancio. The event took place on January, Friday 17th at 7:00PM at the Lohrfink Auditorium inside the Rafik Hariri Building at Georgetown University.

The focus of the event was a touching monologue written by Maurizio Galati and performed by Tiziana Risolo, with music composed by Maurizio Colonna and performed by Music Director Felicia Toscano, accompanied by guitarists Gianpiero Antonazzo and Luigi Picardi.

“Ci hanno divisi” appears to be a monologue, but is actually a choral narration, which tells the dramatic tragedy of the Holocaust through the voice of a dying woman. The apparent “accident” of an SS trapped in a gas chamber together with the other Auschwitz prisoners, shows how nothing could justify the scientific organization of the extermination. The SS guard, in his desperate and useless attempt to get out of the gas chamber, cannot find any real evidence of a diversity with the fellow prisoners: Jewish people, homeless, homosexual, political opponents to the Nazi regime.

Actress Tiziana Risolo and Musician Felicia Toscano come from the same hometown in Italy, Taranto, but only met in 2018 after moving to Washington DC. Together they formed the Heartstrings Duo. Tiziana played leading roles in some of the main theatrical performances across Italy. Felicia is a renowned guitarist and conductor. She is a professor at the Conservatory of Santa Cecilia in Rome and has won numerous awards in international guitar competition. On stage the duo Heartstrings performed an extract of ‘Eva and the Verb’ by Carlo Terron during The International Women’s Day organized by Le D.I.V.E. Last March 8th at the Scottish Rite Temple in Washington D.C.

With over 100 people attending, the event was highly appreciated in its depth and profoundness. The audience was moved by the great interpretation of the actress in her difficult role. At ICS we are always excited to collaborate with such talented artists: Tiziana, Felicia, Gianpiero and Luigi with this performance exceeded the highest expectations. Thank you for such a memorable evening!
REPORT OF THE ITALIAN LANGUAGE PROGRAM
BY FRANCESCA CASAZZA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On January 25th, we attended the 2020 Multilingual Education Fair of DC, promoting the Italian language together with Casa Italiana. This fair is part of the DC Language Immersion Project, a non-profit founded by the Italian Dott.ssa Vanessa Bertelli.

This Winter term, 42 courses for adults, and 12 kids courses began in Bethesda and two courses for adults and three for children began in Fairfax. Among the kids’ classes, Laboratorio Musicale in Italiano for kids 3-6 years old and 6-8 years old, with Maestro Felicia Toscano, are a blast!

Fifteen more courses should start in February (Winter Session 2 – see our schedule), including Cooking classes. New expert ladies are teaching the cooking classes, and this year, we are open to new houses to host the classes: whoever offers to host the class doesn’t pay. Additionally, we are introducing a new Italian Art Course. Classes will focus on fundamental concepts of drawing “Ornato e Natura Morta” as well as composition and perspective, which will help students build a strong foundation to be able to create realistic drawings. The program will also focus on masterpieces of great Italian artists. Call us for information.

I would like to draw your attention to our Courses + Trips: Discover Abruzzo just started and Discover Veneto is almost finished. We can repeat these courses on request.

Please visit our website at www.italianculturalsociety.org/coursestrips/ to learn about the courses and the unique, personalized trips that we recommend, and see our Study abroad webpage, with recommendations also for summer camps for teens in Italy. Registration for Summer camps in Bethesda started in January. We are offering a significant discount for enrollment before April 1st.

See you all at the Festa di Carnevale, on February 22nd!
Immaginate di avere un appartamento con due camere da letto, due bagni, una cucina, una sala da pranzo, un salotto e un balcone con vista sul mare. E questo appartamento è pieno di tutte le vostre cose. I vostri libri, i vostri mobili, le vostre foto di famiglia e tutto ciò che volete avere accanto. Ma l’appartamento non sta mai nello stesso posto. La scorsa settimana vi godete la vista di un piccolo villaggio croato, e tra due mesi comodamente seduti nel vostro salotto avrete davanti agli occhi l’isola di Ortigia a Siracusa, e in due mesi confortabilmente seduti nel vostro salotto avrete davanti agli occhi l’isola di Ascension Island in the South Atlantic, il luogo dove Napoleone Bonaparte morì in esilio. Se tutto questo non vi è nuovo, probabilmente avete un appartamento su ‘The World’, la più grande nave residenziale privata del mondo.


Forse la cosa più interessante di The World, secondo me, è il fatto che passa l’anno intero a girare lentamente per il mondo. Ogni anno la nave segue una rotta diversa. Un gruppo di residenti, il capitano e altri ufficiali decidono dove andare con due anni di anticipo. A differenza di una crociera, il percorso non è scelto per motivi commerciali. Così The World può andare in molti luoghi in cui le altre navi passeggeri non possono.

Imagine having an apartment with two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a kitchen, a dining room, a living room, and a balcony with a view of the sea. And this apartment is full of all your things. Your books, your furniture, your family photos and everything that you want to have nearby. But the apartment never stays in the same place. Last week you enjoyed the view of a little Croatian village, today you see the island of Ortigia in Syracuse, and in two months comfortably seated in your living room you will have before you Ascension Island in the South Atlantic, the place where Napoleon Bonaparte died in exile. If all this isn’t new to you, you probably have an apartment on ‘The World’, the biggest private residential ship in the world.

I don’t know how many private ships there are in the world, but this one is truly big. The World is 196 meters long. In case you don’t know how long that is, the Costa Concordia, the ship that sank near the coast of Giglio in 2012, was 290 meters long. But the Concordia had over 3,500 passengers and The World only has a maximum of 300. Instead of 1,800 cabins like a cruise ship, The World has 165 apartments, or residences as the owners prefer to call them. The residences go from studios to three bedrooms. Like a cruise ship, The World has a pool, a gym, a spa, a choice of restaurants and bars, etc., but it is quieter and much less crowded. In fact, it is probably too quiet for those who love to go on cruises.

Perhaps the most interesting thing about the The World, to me, is the fact that it spends the whole year going slowly around the world. Every year the ship follows a different route. A group of residents, the captain, and other officers decide where to go for the following two years. Unlike a cruise ship, the route isn’t chosen for commercial reasons. So The World can go to many places in which other passenger ships can’t.
It can also stay in a port for more than a day. At times it remains from three to five days. Other times, usually in the South Pacific or in Micronesia or in some other exotic place, the itinerary for a week or two says “Captain’s Choice”.

A friend of my husband owns a studio apartment on The World which we were able to use for two weeks last summer. He pays the same whether the apartment is occupied or not. So for us it was free. We embarked on the ship when it was in Venice for five nights. It was very hot while we were there and there were too many tourists (like us) but it was still wonderful and we went to an orchestra concert at La Fenice. We ate many fantastic meals including at a restaurant on the island of Mazzorbo. I have to say that because the residents of The World own their apartments they only pay for the meals that they order in one of the restaurants on board, unlike a cruise ship where the food is already included in the price. So there is no reason to eat on the ship when it is in a port like Venice where it is possible to find the best food in the world. It wasn’t always true in the next ports.

For the next eight days we went slowly along the Croatian coast. The ship stopped in Rijeka, a Hapsburg city that in the past was part of Italy. We also went to Hvar, Makarska, and Dubrovnik before spending a day at sea while circumnavigating the heel of the boot to Sicily.

Next time (in the March issue of the Poche Parole), three days in Sicily...
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LOCAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

From Italy to Brazil Guitar Performance: Friday Feb 7th at 7-10PM at ART-4-US @GalleryB, 7700 Wisconsin Ave, Suite E, Bethesda MD 20814
Nessuna Più - Parole e Musica by Heartstrings Duo: Friday Feb 21st at 6:30PM at ART-4-US @GalleryB, 7700 Wisconsin Ave, Suite E, Bethesda MD 20814
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