



XXXII EDITION

TO REAFFIRM AND HAND DOWN THE VALUES OF EPIPHANY

PRESS RELEASE

Rome, St. Peter Basilica, 1300 disguised background actors together with the Three Wise Men will bring three symbolic presents to Pope Francesco

On the 6th January, at 10:10 a.m., in Rome, in via della Conciliazione, the 32nd historical and folkloristic parade “VIVA LA BEFANA - TO REAFFIRM AND HAND DOWN THE VALUES OF EPIPHANY”.

One thousand three hundred disguised background actors, coming from different towns in Lazio and Umbria: Giove, Acquasparta, Amelia, Otricoli and San Gemini, will model along Via della Conciliazione up to St. Peter Basilica. Among the Three Wise Men entourage, there will be historical memory groups, flag wavers, marching bands, 20 horses, a carriage, three luxury vintage cars and the Befanas will represent, with creative scenic designs, the history, culture, traditions, products and resources of Southern Umbria.

“VIVA LA BEFANA”, one of the biggest event of *Roma Capitale*, is created and organized by Europae Fami.li.a (Free Families Associated in Europe) through a committee of “serving” volunteers and many other associations of social, cultural and sport voluntary work.

This unique parade is full of historical memories and folkloristic interpretations that are originally harmonized with symbols and cultural and social contents to enhance the festivity and the territory. These features have always raised a great curiosity and interest in thousands of the Italian spectators and tourists who participate in the event every year.

The guidelines of “VIVA LA BEFANA”, born in 1985 to reinsert the date of 6th January as a bank holiday in the civil calendar, allow all Italian districts, with their institutions, associations and families, to be the protagonists or to contribute in the preparation of the parade.

The aim of “VIVA LA BEFANA” is to celebrate Epiphany for peace, solidarity, brotherhood among people, according to the Christian tradition, without forgetting the folkloristic aspects related to the old idea of the “Befana”. Since the first edition, she has been “redesigned” in the logo of the event as a nice and comforting granny, according to the organisers’ will.

St Giovanni Paolo II’s words at the *Angelus* on the 6th of January 1993 were memorable, when he said: “Also this year, I address a friendly hello to the promoters and to participants in the event “VIVA LA BEFANA”, who through the promotion of the already popular folkloristic aspects, connected to the current liturgical celebration, aim at keeping alive the historical and religious contents typical of the festivity of Epiphany”.

Every year the parade comes from different places chosen among the Italian municipalities that applied for being the new protagonists. This change of the populations is one of the organisers’ many original “inventions” and represents the historical universality of Epiphany, Jesus’s manifestation to the people of the Earth.

On the 6th of January, background actors will arrive from Giove, Acquasparta, Amelia, Otricoli and San Gemini.

They will be officially accompanied by their Mayors, they will offer scraps of history, culture, tradition, products and resources of Southern Umbria to every single family of Rome and of the world.

A new way to fill with contents the old gift tradition, which will be renovated also through the symbolic presents created for Pope Francesco by three artisans.

The organisational features of “VIVA LA BEFANA”, which have been completely built for families by families, have filled the manifestation of new values and every year, for one day, the event is able to “become adults again younger and kids a bit less adults”.

Translated from Italian and edited by the students of the third and fourth year of the “Linguistic European High school Immacolata Institute in Rome.”

UFFICIO STAMPA – ROMA +393398604491 sito internet: www.vivalabefana.com mail: presidenza@eurofamilia.it