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# IL CAVALIERE

OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF THE ITALIAN LEGIONS OF MERIT

## NEW FORMAT FOR 46TH ANNUAL GALA DINNER DANCE

Under patronage of the Italian Embassy in the United States, the 46th Annual Reception and Gala Dinner Dance of the American Society of the Italian Legions of Merit was held at the newly renovated Grand Hyatt Hotel in New York City on Friday, December 2, 2011. Members and their guests journeyed from across the United States to attend this black-tie affair. They arrived in the Grand Ballroom Foyer to reunite with old friends and, in some cases, to meet other members of the Society for the first time. Icy blue lighting added a wintry ambience to the hall's interior as guests mingled and tasted a variety of hors d'oeuvres and cocktails.

Moments after guests entered the Grand Ballroom, they were entertained by a fashion show featuring the stunning Fall/Winter Collection of Milan-based designer Raffaella Curiel. Models strutted down the runway and enticed the audience with coats, pants and dresses. The crowd cheered when Ms. Anita Oken and Cav. Vivian Cardia, two participants in the ASILM trip to Italy, walked down the runway modeling elegant gowns, a joyful surprise for many guests at the event. At the end of the show, Raffaella Curiel and her assistant and daughter, Gigliola Curiel, stepped on stage to receive a round of applause from the audience.

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## A TRIP TO REMEMBER

The American Society of the Italian Legions of Merit made its mark in the eternal city during its first official trip in November, 2011. While in Rome, the group of distinguished ASILM members attended meetings with high-ranking politicians, including the President of the Republic of Italy, Hon. Giorgio Napolitano, as well as enjoying a reception, tours, and an audience with Pope Benedict XVI. Indeed, it was a trip that may be appreciated for its purpose of strengthening the relations between Italy and the United States, an important mission of ASILM, and also for its historical significance as members, rather unex-

pectedly, participated in the tumultuous political period in Italy.

In spite of the long travel to Rome, each member of the delegation arrived at the Hotel Savoy in high spirits, excited to begin the program. Coordinated by the President of ASILM, Cav. di Gran Croce Dr. Lucio Caputo, the trip itinerary listed the exact timing of official meetings, tours, and dinners that would take place from Monday, November 7, to Friday, November 11. It was immediately evident that there was not a dull moment to be had on this visit.

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*The ASILM delegation with President of the Republic of Italy, Hon. Giorgio Napolitano, at a special meeting that took place at the Palazzo del Quirinale in Rome.*



A benefit of the trip was revealed on the first day of the program when members of the delegation gathered in the Veneto Room of the Hotel Savoy. They picked up their name tags, introduced each other, and mingled before the seminar commenced, discussing in great anticipation the activities that were set before them. This seminar was meant to discuss details of the program, but it also provided an opportunity for members to meet, in some cases for the first time.



*During the visit to the Banca d'Italia, the delegation participated in a seminar in the boardroom conducted by Dr. Anna Maria Tarantola, Deputy Director of the Bank. In the photo: (L to R) Dr. Giorgio De Matteis, Dr. Giannandrea Falchi, Cav. di Gan Croce, Dr. Lucio Caputo, Dr. Tarantola, Cav. di Gran Croce, Hon. Dominic Massaro, Cav. Vivian Cardia, Cav. di Gran Croce, Hon. Frank J. Guarini and Gr. Uff. RoseMarie Gallina-Santangelo.*

Shortly after the seminar, members set out to participate in their first activity of the program, a tour of Palazzo Koch, the headquarters of the Banca d'Italia and its many collections. The members were led through the building's elegant, marble interior and seated in the meeting room, where they were surrounded by portraits of former governors of the Banca d'Italia, including one of former President of the Italian Republic, H.E. Carlo Azeglio Ciampi. Dr. Giannandrea Falchi, Central Co-Director of the Secretariat Department of the bank, and Dr. Anna Maria Tarantola, the Deputy Director of the bank, greeted the delegation before Dr. Tarantola explained to them the current situation in the country. Dr. Caputo thanked her and the officials of the Banca d'Italia on behalf of the delegation for welcoming them to Palazzo Koch.

A tour conducted by Dr. Giorgio di Gennaro from the Secretariat Department took place following the meeting. He guided the delegation through Palazzo Koch, all the while discussing in great detail and with much enthusiasm the origins of the many paintings, sculptures and tapestries that filled the building's ornate interior, and offering stories of how he had acquired a multitude of these objects during his long career at the bank. The delegation was enraptured by these artworks as well as by the different types of marble that filled the rooms with vivacity and color. An

object of particular interest was the map of Rome. When the tour ended, the group joined Dr. Tarantola, Dr. Falchi and Dr. di Gennaro for a buffet luncheon provided by the Banca d'Italia. This luncheon was one of many instances during the trip when members could enjoy a memorable meal and also acquaint themselves with noteworthy authorities.

Later that evening, the ballroom of the Hotel Savoy became the setting for the ASILM reception. For weeks this reception had excited much anticipation among the most important personalities in the Roman circle. It was quite literally the talk of Rome. Many specially invited members of the diplomatic corps, ambassadors, television personalities, Parliament members, press and friends of the Society braved the rain to attend the reception and to welcome the delegation to Rome. Live piano music contributed to the pleasant and lively atmosphere of the ballroom as guests mingled late into the evening, tasting a variety of hors d'oeuvres and sampling fine wine provided by Ferrari and Fazi Battaglia.

Members began Tuesday with a guided tour of Ancient Rome. One of their first sites was the Arch of Constantine. They marveled at its grandeur and mark of human achievement, only then to walk through the most emblematic structure of the capital city, the Coliseum. Members toured the massive building on foot, taking in its magnitude as the guide explained its rich and tragic history. The delegation then visited the monument to Vittorio Emanuele II, the Roman Forum, the Circus Maximus and other ancient monuments located throughout Rome.

Afterward, the trip participants were transported to Palazzo Montecitorio, the headquarters of the Chamber of Deputies. It was in this majestic building where they met and shook hands with President of the Chamber of Deputies Hon. Gianfranco Fini. The president warmly welcomed the delegation, recalling fondly the ASILM dinner held in his honor during his last trip to New York. Dr. Caputo thanked President Fini for his hospitality and for remembering the Society, and proceeded to present him with a plaque marking the date of the meeting. Before the conclusion of the meeting, the president requested that each member sign a document celebrating the unification of Italy and gave each of them a medal to take back to the United States. A delicious "aperitivo" awaited the delegation after the meeting with President Fini.

Members also visited the American Embassy to meet with the United States Ambassador, Hon. David Thorne. Amb. Thorne greeted the delegation and expressed his gratitude for its long journey to Rome. With great enthusiasm, he delved into the current relations between the United States and Italy, emphasizing the excellent friendship between the two countries, and proceeded to answer questions. A photo-shoot with the delegation and Amb. Thorne concluded the meeting.

The delegation immediately departed for Palazzo del Quirinale, where they were to have a special audience with the President of



## ASILM

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF THE  
ITALIAN LEGIONS OF MERIT

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT...

As we are entering the new year, I would like to pause and take a moment to reflect on what has proven to be a very interesting period for the American Society of the Italian Legions of Merit. One of my main goals as President has been to focus on upgrading the Society to a more technological level, as demonstrated through the new and improved ASILM website and the reformatting of *Il Cavaliere*. The modernized website offers features previously unavailable to members through the Internet: the most up-to-date news regarding the Society, photo galleries of events, information on upcoming events and more. Consequently, members and those interested in learning about the Society are more conscious of ASILM, its ongoing mission and its activities.



Cav. di Gran Croce  
Dr. Lucio Caputo

Our efforts in making the resources of ASILM more accessible and relevant to the members of the Society has led us to computerize our mailing lists. Using email as an alternative to costly mailings to deliver news and notifications has proven to cut costs and create faster, more effective communications.

This past year, we have strived towards fostering a wider understanding of our goals abroad. With the sponsorship of former Ambassador of Italy to Washington, Min. Giulio Terzi di Sant'Agata, we organized a unique trip to Italy and invited members residing across the United States to participate. We are pleased to say that the trip was highly successful in promoting the image of the Society and its mission of improving relations between Italy and the United States to the highest Italian authorities. We look forward to organizing another trip to Italy to further advocate the Society's humanitarian and cultural goals.

A second important event this past year was the 46th Annual Gala Dinner Dance. The Gala was presented in a fresh format and took place in the modern Grand Ballroom of the Grand Hyatt Hotel. This revitalized format was designed to benefit members as it provided them with an exciting fashion show, excellent food and wine and dancing. I was pleased to see that members and their guests were sincerely enjoying themselves and later expressed their appreciation for the new venue.

In conclusion, I would like to announce that we are in the process of updating the by-laws of the Society. As was the case with the former ASILM website, *Il Cavaliere* and Society events, the current by-laws need to be revised and updated for greater clarity. We are also working on revamping the Board, appointing members whose interests lie in contributing to and participating in what is now considered to be a more modern Society respected on both sides of the Atlantic. ■



*Many distinguished guests attended the ASILM Reception in Rome.*



*An historic photo. The five former Consul Generals in New York: (L to R) Amb. Alessandro Cortese de Bosis, Amb. Giorgio Radicati, Amb. Francesco Corrias, Amb. Giulio di Lorenzo Badia and Min. Francesco M. Talo'.*



*(L to R) Mrs. Loyse Paradiso, Mr. Frank J. Desiderio, Esq., Vice President of the Senate, Emma Bonino, Cav. Berardo Paradiso and Dr. Lucio Caputo.*

and only hours before the meeting, the press reported that the (now former) Prime Minister was going to meet with the President the very same time that the delegation had scheduled its audience with him.

Recognizing the significance of the Society, however, the President chose not to cancel the audience with the delegation. On behalf of ASILM, Dr. Caputo expressed his gratitude to President Napolitano for meeting them during the country's busy political times. In his speech, the president of ASILM said "our distinguished members are great ambassadors of Italy. As you know, they play leading roles in the political, economical and cultural arenas and they have the potential to play an even more important role in the future. Mr. President, I hope you will appreciate this effort and be aware that the Society will continue its mission of improving the relations between Italy and the United States. We remember your very successful recent visit to the United States and we wish that you will come back again soon."



*(L to R) Amb. Giovanni Castellaneta, Dr. Lucio Caputo and Cav. di Gran Croce, Hon. Frank J. Guarini.*



*(L to R) Dr. Lucio Caputo, TV personality Mara Venier and former Italian Ambassador to Washington Rinaldo Petrignani.*

the Italian Republic, Hon. Giorgio Napolitano. To say that the political situation in Italy was busy during the period of the ASILM trip would be an understatement. There was much talk of Silvio Berlusconi resigning from his position as Prime Minister of Italy,



*(L to R) Cav. Vivian Cardia, Ms. Anita Oken, Mrs. Lisa Salibello and Mrs. Barbara Ann Desiderio pose in the Coliseum during the tour.*

Dr. Caputo proceeded to present the president with a plaque marking the date of their meeting. The president accepted the plaque graciously, and then gave a speech where he emphasized the significant mission of ASILM and thanked them for their visit. The delegation had a chance to speak and take pictures with the president at the end of the meeting.

As members were leaving the Palazzo del Quirinale, they were aware of a hoard of reporters and photographers standing outside of the building, all eager to capture the moment when Prime Minister Berlusconi would arrive to meet with the president. Within minutes Berlusconi's vehicle rushed past members of the delegation and into the Palazzo del Quirinale. The meeting, many members of the group admitted afterward, was truly historic and they were grateful to be a part of it. This sentiment was underscored an hour later when Berlusconi declared his resignation as Prime Minister.

Another special audience scheduled on the program was with Pope Benedict XVI in Saint Peter's Square in Vatican City. Under the considerable organization of Cav. Berardo Paradiso, the delegation



sat only feet from both the Pope's stage and Saint Peter's Basilica. The Pope waved and blessed the ASILM delegation during the ceremony. A particularly unforgettable moment was when two ASILM members, Cav. di Gran Croce, Hon. Dominic Massaro, and Cav. di Gran Croce, Hon. Frank Guarini, spoke to and shook hands with the Pope.

Soon after the audience with the Pope, the delegation visited Palazzo Giustiniani to meet with the President of the Senate, Hon. Renato Schifani. The delegation was greeted by a large group of Italian television and cameramen hoping to record this exciting meeting. Dr. Caputo presented President Schifani with the ASILM gold medal, a prestigious prize whose past recipients have included former Speaker of the House, Hon. Nancy Pelosi; former President of the United States, Hon. George W. Bush; and President of the Italian Republic, Hon. Giorgio Napolitano. Hon. Schifani accepted the medal and then presented Dr. Caputo with his own plate as he thanked him and ASILM for their continuing efforts to improve relations between Italy and the United States. The delegation was treated to an "aperitivo" and a tour of the former office of Benito Mussolini at the conclusion of the meeting.

The ASILM trip did not entirely consist of meetings. Members traveled thirty minutes outside of Rome on a private coach to spend a day in Tivoli, a town renowned for its Villa d'Este. Although the villa and garden were constructed during the Renaissance era, they remain thoroughly well-maintained. As members strolled through the garden, they appreciated its aesthetic beauty and marveled at its unique fountains, one of which functions as a musical organ.

The group explored the heart of Villa d'Este, its shops and busy streets, until it reached its final destination, La Sibilla Restaurant. The view was incomparable. While surrounded by an ancient temple, waterfalls and lush woods, members relaxed and enjoyed local Roman cuisine in one of the most highly-regarded restaurants in Tivoli.



*The delegation participated in a meeting with President of the Chamber of Deputies, Hon. Gianfranco Fini, at Palazzo Montecitorio. In the left photo, the delegation is listening to President Fini's welcoming remarks. In the right photo, ASILM board members present President Fini with a plate marking the date of the meeting.*



*The ASILM delegation poses with Ambassador David Thorne at the U.S. Embassy in Rome.*

The next day, the delegation was led once more by the same English-speaking tour guide, this time to visit the Vatican Museum and the Sistine Chapel. The guide steered them through the elegant interior, all the while discussing intriguing facts about the numerous paintings, tapestries and sculptures that adorn the museum. Members stopped to admire Michelangelo's frescoes decorating the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, a truly marvelous sight. Finally, they were taken to Saint Peter's Basilica, the largest Roman Catholic Church in the world and the home of Michelangelo's *Pieta'*.

The last official meeting scheduled on the itinerary was with Undersecretary to the Prime Minister, Hon. Gianni Letta, at Palazzo Chigi, the official residence and headquarters of the Prime Minister of Italy. In spite of Berlusconi's declaration of resignation and the search for his replacement, the undersecretary was pleased to meet with and welcome the ASILM delegation. In the official cabinet room of the prime minister, he shook hands

with each member of the group before giving a warm speech in Italian, which Dr. Caputo translated into English. A rare treat awaited members at the end of the meeting: they were invited to visit Berlusconi's office, which contained such treasures as one of the three original constitutions of Italy. This visit to Palazzo Chigi and Berlusconi's office contributed to the feeling amongst the ASILM delegation that it was participating in Italian history.

In coordination with the Accademia Italiana della Cucina, a private farewell dinner was held for the delegation at Ristorante L' Archeologia, located on Via Appia Antica. Former Consul General of Italy to New York, Minister Francesco Maria Talo', his wife, Ornella, and the former Consul General of Italy and Ambassador to Prague, Giorgio Radicati, had attended the ASILM reception only a few days before and had now rejoined the delegation to bid farewell. Members enjoyed their last meal together as they reminisced over their active role in history, and their new friendships with fellow ASILM members. ■

#### **Kimberly Fry**



*ASILM President Dr. Lucio Caputo warmly greets President Giorgio Napolitano.*



*President Giorgio Napolitano reads Il Cavaliere, shown to him by Dr. Lucio Caputo while Senator Renato Turano looks on.*



*The ASILM delegation awaits the President's arrival at the Palazzo del Quirinale.*



*The ASILM delegation attends a meeting with President of the Senate, Hon. Renato Schifani, at Palazzo Giustiniani.*



*President Renato Schifani receives the ASILM Gold Medal from Dr. Lucio Caputo.*



*In left photo: (L to R) Cav. di Gran Croce Claudio Gorelli (President of the Cav. di Gran Croce Association and diplomatic advisor to Hon. Gianni Letta) poses with Gr. Uff. RoseMarie Gallina-Santangelo, Dr. Lucio Caputo and Ms. Anita Oken during the visit to Palazzo Chigi. In right photo: the ASILM delegation poses in Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's office at Palazzo Chigi.*



*The ASILM delegation visits Villa D'Este during their day-trip to Tivoli.*



*The delegation is treated to a farewell dinner at Ristorante Archeologia on Via Appia Antica.*



## ASILM GALA (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

The evening's program continued with the playing of the national anthems of the United States and Italy, to which the audience stood with pride. Then Cav. di Gran Croce, Dr. Lucio Caputo gave some brief remarks to members of ASILM and their guests, stating, "Our Society is growing in its membership and is gaining a more prestigious status on both sides of the Atlantic" and acknowledging, "tonight we have many distinguished and important guests in attendance." He discussed the trip to Italy and its grand success, emphasizing especially the meeting with President of the Republic of Italy, Hon. Giorgio Napolitano, "who expressed his great personal interest in the Society."

Dr. Caputo welcomed a special guest at the Gala Dinner Dance, Minister Gian Lorenzo Cornado, Acting Ambassador of Italy, who traveled from Washington, D.C. to attend the event. Minister Cornado thanked Dr. Caputo before presenting his own speech. He stated: "I am deeply honored to be here with you tonight, and very proud to bring you the warm greetings of the new Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Italian Republic, Hon. Giulio Terzi di Sant'Agata, and to extend, on his behalf, his deep respect and appreciation for your association, for its representatives and for your combined and pivotal contribution to the strengthening of bonds between Italy and the United States."

An invocation was conducted by another distinguished guest at the event, Archbishop Most Reverend Francis Chullikatt, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations.

Later in the evening, Minister Natalia Quintavalle, Consul General of Italy in New York, presented Ms. Vivian Cardia with the decoration of *Cavaliere Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana*, and Mr. Francesco De Angelis with the decoration of *Cavaliere Ufficiale al Merito della Repubblica Italiana*. Cav. Cardia and Cav. Uff. De Angelis accepted these decorations with gratitude and appreciation.

Meanwhile, guests dined on a three-course gourmet meal prepared by Grand Hyatt's Chef Nicholas Rutyna. Some guests, however, could not wait to finish their meals before joining each other on the dance floor and moving to the rhythms of jazz, favorite oldies and current top 40 hits. The music, which added a lively touch to the evening, was played by Panorama Orchestra under the direction of Rino Minetti. At the end of the night, many guests left the ASILM Gala Dinner Dance with a general sentiment of merriment for participating in a memorable event. ■



### CLOCKWISE:

(L to R) Min. Gian Lorenzo Cornado (Acting Ambassador to Washington), Mrs. Martine Cornado and ASILM President Dr. Lucio Caputo.

Archbishop Most Reverend Francis Chullikatt gives the invocation at the ASILM Gala.

(L to R) Dr. Lucio Caputo, Hon. Dominic Massaro and Amb. Daniele Bodini.



During the 2011 ASILM Gala Dinner Dance, Min. Natalia Quintavalle, the Consul General of Italy in New York, welcomed guests and then presented Ms. Vivian Cardia with the decoration of Cavaliere and Mr. Francesco De Angelis with the decoration of Grande Ufficiale.

In the photo: (L to R) Cav. Vivian Cardia, Min. Natalia Quintavalle and Cav. Uff. Francesco De Angelis



Above: moments from the fashion show featuring Raffaella Curiel's Ready-to-Wear Fall/Winter Collection that opened the 46th Annual ASILM Gala. The models, some of whom were ASILM members, paraded the runway in fashions from the collection.

At left: Raffaella Curiel and her daughter and assistant, Gigliola Curiel, walked on the runway and were greeted by warm applause from guests.



*Members and their guests dancing at the 46th Annual Celebration of ASILM.*



*(L to R) Gr. Uff. RoseMarie Gallina-Santangelo, Cav. Charles Stanziale, Esq. and Mrs. Margaret Rodino-Stanziale.*



*Cav. Vivian Cardia (L) and Cav. di Gran Croce, Baronessa Mariuccia Zerilli-Marimò.*



*Consul General Min. Natalia Quintavalle with: (L to R) Consul Andrea Barbara, Deputy Consul General Laura Aghillare, and Vice Consuls Dr. Dino Sorrentino and Dr. Lucia Pasqualini.*



*(L to R) Mrs. Barbara Desiderio, Mr. Frank Desiderio, Esq., Cav. Vivian Cardia, Hon. Frank J. Guarini, Mrs. Loyse Paradiso and Cav. Berardo Paradiso.*



*(L to R) Hon. Dominic Massaro, Mrs. Carole Haarman Acunto, Mrs. Laura Savini and Comm. Stefano Acunto.*



## ITALIAN AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON GIULIO TERZI DI SANT'AGATA APPOINTED MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

On November 16, 2011, the Italian Ambassador to Washington, Cav. di Gran Croce Giulio Terzi di Sant'Agata, was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs in Rome. Min. Terzi was sworn in by the President of the Republic on November 17, 2011.

Min. Terzi was the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations before serving as Ambassador of Italy to the United States from 2009 to 2011. During this period, he was a Society supporter, having sponsored the recent trip to Italy, the 46th Annual Gala and other prominent ASILM events.

ASILM congratulates Min. Terzi and wishes him all the best in his new position. ■



## BOARD MEETING

On December 1, 2011, ASILM continued its tradition of holding its annual board meeting and the annual membership meeting, both of which took place at the Consulate General of Italy in New York. These two events were followed by a showing of a film titled *The Missing Piece: The Truth about the Man Who Stole the Mona Lisa*. The film was presented by Comm. Marco Grassi. Afterward, members attended a reception catered by SD26.

During the board meeting, Ambassador Daniele Bodini, Uff. Eugene Nardelli and Cav. Berardo Paradiso were officially appointed as new Directors to the ASILM board, thus replacing the following members whose terms had expired: Cav. Marcella Leonetti-Tyler, Comm. Beatrice Guthrie, Comm. Robert J. Barbara and Comm. Joseph Colagiovanni.

The board had made another important decision regarding the yearly membership fee. As of January 1, 2012, the annual ASILM membership fee will increase to \$500, and the annual board membership fee will increase to \$1,000. Contributions to ASILM are tax-deductible.

The \$500 membership fee applies to Regular members, Companion members, and Distinguished Associate members. Members who send in their payments will be considered active and will continue to receive electronic and postal mailings, notifications and invitations from the Society.

Members who choose not to pay the \$500 membership fee will be considered dormant. As long as members remain in the dor-

mant status, they will not have mailings, notifications, invitations or subscriptions of *Il Cavaliere* sent to their addresses. They may reverse their position at any time by sending in their membership fee.

Dormant members who wish to continue receiving *Il Cavaliere* may subscribe for an annual fee of \$100. This fee will cover the cost of mailings. ■

## PICTURES

Interested in seeing more pictures of ASILM events? Then visit the new website:

[www.asilm.org](http://www.asilm.org)

The photo gallery includes hundreds of pictures from the 46th Annual Gala Dinner Dance, the trip to Italy and much more.



## MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

On April 18, 2011, Gr. Uff. Lawrence A. Yannuzzi, M.D., a foremost authority in medical retinal diseases and a pioneer in the treatment of Age Related Macular Degeneration, received the prestigious 2011 Pisart Vision Award from Lighthouse International for his contributions in preventing and treating vision impairment. ■



*In the photo: (L to R) Consul General Alessandro Motta, Mrs. Sandrine Motta, Mrs. Mary Ellen Corrado and Cav. Daniel Corrado.*

Daniel Corrado was awarded the honor of *Cavaliere* during a reception hosted by the Consul General Alessandro Motta on Italian National Day on June 2, 2008. The event took place at the Crystal Garden at Navy Pier in Chicago. ■

*Cavalieri* who receive honors and other recognitions should send information and a portrait photograph to:

Editor, Il Cavaliere, American Society of the Italian  
Legions of Merit,  
789 P.O. Box,  
New York, NY 10150

### In Memoriam...

Cav. Vitantonio Acquafredda  
New York

Comm. Rosmino N. Barengo  
Nevada

Cav. Serafino Fontana  
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Cav. Cesare Taormina  
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