



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **“REAL LITTLE ITALY” IN NYC RAISES THE GIGLIO IN BELMONT AT OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL CHURCH Saturday, June 15**

***Wednesday, May 15, 2013—***

The ancient religious tradition of raising or “dancing” the giglio will once again be celebrated in the Real Little Italy in the Bronx as part of the neighborhood’s celebration of the Feast of St. Anthony. The five-day feast (held in the evenings from Wednesday, June 12 through Sunday, June 16) will have live music, carnival games, rides and tastes of some of the best Italian food this side of Italy.

The giglio is a custom, hand-made wooden structure, measuring 60 feet high and weighing several tons. It artfully depicts images of revered saints and is the centerpiece of a traditional procession in Italian neighborhoods throughout the world. This will be the second year that Belmont’s own giglio will be built and carried through the Bronx neighborhood by over 100 men, who use long poles through the base to rest the structure on their shoulders. This year’s giglio will be decorated with silk flowers, plaques and paintings depicting St. Paulinus (of Nola, Italy, for whom the practice was first offered), St. Anthony, St. Jude, and Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

Upon the structure stands an official giglio band playing the traditional music associated with the celebration along with other Italian and American favorites. Traditionally the lifters (or paranza in Italian) participate in the procession out of a desire to pay homage to their church and the saints as well as in the spirit of camaraderie and friendship with their fellow lifters. The official procession will start on Saturday, June 15 at 4:00pm.

On that same Saturday preceding the giglio procession, In SCENA! Italian Theater Festival NY will present a performance of the one-woman show *Solo Anna* at the Enrico Fermi Center at the Belmont Public Library starting at 2:30pm. The show explores the fascinating life and career of Academy Award® Winner Anna Magnani, on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her death. The show, produced by Franco D'Alessandro, directed by Eva Minemar and starring acclaimed Italian actress Lidia Vitale, is part of the Italian Government's celebration of the Year of Italian Culture.

"In the weeks leading up to the Feast and the dancing of the giglio, the neighborhood will be hosting a number of events designed to raise awareness and generate excitement for the giglio. We're looking to recruit more guys to help us as lifters this year," says Frank Franz, Belmont District Management Association Chairman. "That's why we'll be inviting potential paranza or lifters to a special Belmont Giglio "Guy's Night Out" fundraiser on Friday, May 31, from 7:00 to 10:00pm, at Pasquale's Rigoletto Restaurant on Arthur Avenue." The Italian buffet with pasta and other Italian dishes will include wine, soft drinks and hand-rolled cigars for the per person price of \$75, with a portion of the proceeds going towards the giglio fund.

Other pre-giglio events include the following:

- On Saturday, June 8, from noon until 4:00pm, we'll have the giglio band playing throughout the neighborhood and distributing St. Anthony bread to raise funds for the church.
- On the Feast of St. Anthony, June 13, we will host of screening of a film about his life preceded by a procession of the St. Anthony statue beginning at 7:00pm.

The authentic culture found in the vibrant community of the Real Little Italy in the Bronx and Arthur Avenue sustains a thriving business district that includes world-class restaurants and high-quality shops and specialty stores carrying superb handmade, local and imported items. The giglio and the Feast of St. Anthony are produced in support Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church following centuries-old traditions that still resonate with a deep religious and cultural significance for many Italians and Italian Americans who continue to live in the Real Little Italy of the Bronx or regularly come to visit the neighborhood today. (SEE TIMETABLE OF ALL EVENTS INCLUDED.)

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