



The term **shrine** signifies a church or other sacred place to which the faithful make pilgrimages for a particular pious reason with the approval of the local ordinary. At shrines, more abundant means of salvation are to be provided for the faithful; the Word of God is to be carefully proclaimed; liturgical life is to be appropriately fostered especially through the celebration of the Eucharist and penance; and approved forms of popular piety are to be cultivated.

Code of Canon Law, 1230 and 1234

Le Decine del Rosario is the Italian phrase for decades of the rosary, representing the twenty decades of the rosary, for which our weekly bulletin is named.

Merry Christmas
and a very
Happy New Year
overflowing with
Love and Light,
Health, Peace and Joy.



LE DECINE DEL ROSARIO

THE SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF POMPEII

The Oldest Continuing Italian-American Catholic Church
in the City of Chicago, located in the heart of historic "Little Italy."

A Gift of Italian-American Hospitality, Embracing All Pilgrims of Faith
Founded in 1911 ✦ Established as a Shrine in 1994

My eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the sight of all the peoples.

— *Luke 2:30-31*

So What's Behind the La Befana Festival at Our Shrine?

On January 4, 2015, at the 11a.m. Eucharistic Celebration, we will once again be visited by La Befana. She is an enchanting old woman, who, through the centuries, keeps looking for the Child Jesus to bring him gifts. So as not to miss the Infant King, she brings gifts to all the children, just in case!

When I first arrived at the Shrine, I was asked to create Italian-American spiritual programs for the community. One of the first was La Befana.

The first Sunday after New Year's Day is always the feast of the Epiphany, the day of the Three Kings. Traditionally, this is when the Befana visits the children.

At first, it was tough to find a woman who would be willing to play the Befana. It demanded a costume of an old withered woman, and a good sense of humor.

Soon our prayers were answered and our first Befana was Paula D'Angelo, who at the time was also chairperson of the Shrine Board. She was terrific! Paula handed over the role to Jean Parisi Bottari, and her husband, Lionel, plays an amazing zampogna (Italian bagpipes) as he accompanies La Befana into the Shrine church playing the great Italian carol: *Tu Scendi dalle Stelle*. Together, Jean and Lionel make a great team and fill the hearts of the children with joy.

After the Mass, the children are invited into the Shrine hall, where the Befana greets them and offers each one of them gifts.

I am so grateful to the many, many Befanas of our Shrine Auxiliary, who make this reception such fun for the children and their families.

Consider being part of this event on January 4. The Befana will surely have a blessing for you.

Father Richard