

Letter from Melbourne n.3 Starting Over in a New Place

Zumba Charity Event for the Tchukudu Kids of Eastern Congo

Meditation for All

Sermoneta

Two Popes in Rome an Extraordinary Event

Il Vademecum del Pensionato Felico (Parte Secondo)

Contribute to your Gazette

Mensile - No. 4 2013 - Reg. Trib. N. 574 dell'8/10/1990

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Pellegrino, che venghi a vede Roma

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Armando Bettozzi

Armando Roma spod spod spous spod s





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Contribute to your Gazette

by the Editorial Committee

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Typewritten electronic contributions for the FAO CASA Gazette are welcome. These can be in English, French, Italian or Spanish articles, poems, drawings, photographs, etc. in fact anything interesting that staff members and/or their families in Rome or the field may like to contribute. No anonymous material will be accepted, and the Editor reserves the right to choose and/or reject material that is not in keeping with the ethics of the Organization. Send contributions electronically to the Editor at FAO-STAFF-Coop@fao.org or leave signed copies with the COOP Office on the ground floor of Building E. The deadline for editorial material is due on the 1st of the month preceding the date of issue.

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Volleyball Women Ms A. Laurenza 55344			
	Volleyball Women	Ms A. Laurenza	55344

All activities are for Staff Coop Members only





Letter from Melbourne #3 – Starting Over in a New Place

by Peter Steele

New country – new stories, and much to learn about people who initially seem much like people whom you already know – except these are people who talk to you in the street – you the stranger - go out of their way to be helpful and friendly, and typically live really big lives. Space dominates, and this is a seriously big empty country. It is transparent to a fault and has enjoyed some unusual beginnings. It was Christmastime, however, and time for family and friends.

Christmas Down Under

People always carry their beliefs and customs with them, and it comes as no surprise that the celebration of the Christian festival of Christmas in Australia follows the pattern of industrial countries the world over - it's just that it's summer here, and you can do your celebrating outside in the garden, at the local park or on the beach; seas are cold, but inviting when the air temperature is 30°C or more. Many people share barbeques. The mixed Nordic winter traditions prevail, of course, with a decorated tree in the garden, on the patio or in a pot in the living room. There is Father Christmas for the kids and that exchange of gifts between friends and family. And too, the religious services on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day are an important part of the celebrations for many people. Churches tend to be packed.

Like many others, we took in the 7.00 pm carol service on Christmas Eve at St Paul's Anglican Cathedral in Federation Square in the heart of the city – 90 minutes of carols and nine lessons each in a different language that celebrated the origins of so many Melbourne people – German, Italian, Russian, Tamil, Farsi and others. Queuing up outside as the service finished was a large crowd of people of Chinese origin - waiting for their dedicated language Christmas service.

The streets of the central city were dark – Melbourne is generally dark at night with few street lights – and, also, there were few Christmas lights that typically festoon the main commercial areas of most European cities. The city authorities, however, had thoughtfully provided a 'Christmas Decorations' map that enabled you to wander from point to point to enjoy the



St Paul's Anglican Cathedral. Built with local sandstone to an early English Gothic design that dates back to 1200 AD, it looks what it is – a transplant from England. The wide open streets and the buildings that are increasingly crowding the skyline above the cathedral contrast with those origins. Christmas crowds waiting entrance.

decorations.

Most people started in Christmas Square (aka 'City Square' for 11 months of the year) where Father Christmas in his maze surrounded by a magic forest played host to the kids. There were lots of kids around – we saw a three year old in front of Father Christmas who was large, bulging, white





<u>Christmas Town Hall Melbourne</u>. A gift-wrapped civic centre for all during the day, and a sound and light Christmas festive show in the warm evenings that ran for 5-10 minutes and attracted large crowds of sightseers.

whiskers and more crying her eyes out with dutiful parents hanging on - you could only guess the situation.

The city had a sound and light Jingle Bells' display made up of 800 bells along Bourke Street. There was also a dramatic light projection that encompassed the Town Hall and involved all kinds of creatures, trains, soldiers and more that marched across the façade of the building or climbed the colonnades. A giant owl flew in and perched on the clock tower and blinked with large round cartoon eyes at the crowds that spilled over the tram lines in the street below. The traffic wardens kept moving the crowds back to let the trams through.

Bourke Street is where you find the leading department stores – Meyers and David Jones – located next to each other and with Christmas windows to attract the crowds. There was a line of several hundred people most with kids in tow shuffling slowly past the displays. Stand on the seats or walls of the flower gardens that that have replaced the traffic in this part of Bourke Street and

you could see into the windows over the heads of the crowd; not a proposition that would satisfy most kids of course.

Leave the crowds and the casual Christmas decorations and head back to the Metro to exit the city on the evening before Christmas – and you walk the dark relatively empty streets of a city centre that has few permanent residents. Everyone lives in the suburbs. There was life around Flinders Street Station.

Australia Day

You live in Australia – you celebrate Australia Day; a month after Christmas. It represents a beginning for modern Australia.

The first sighting of the continent is generally attributable to the Dutchman Abel Tasman who really only detected the island now called Tasmania that sits 700 km off the Victorian coast in the SE of the country. He called it Van Diemen's Land after his boss in the Dutch East India Company. It is almost certain, however, that other European

(continued on page 8)







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(continued from page 6)

mariners had been here and landed before notwithstanding lack of corroboration – there have been too many artifacts found.

It was the Englishman James Cook, however, who really put the place on the map – and this despite the original inhabitants who already knew it was here – but had simply failed to inform the rest of the world. Cook first sighted the country in April 1770 and subsequently went on to chart almost 3,000 km of coastline along the eastern seaboard. It was only as an after-thought as he was leaving the region that Cook claimed the country – well, the east coast really – for Great Britain.

Cook's optimistic description of the country – he hit a period of prolonged rains - and his extensive botanical collection literally opened the country to the world, such that less than 20 years later and without any further exploration of the country, the British collected a fleet of eleven ships packed them full with >1,500 people – about half of whom were prisoners of the Crown – and set out to establish a penal colony in Port Jackson, now part of Sydney Harbour. Imagine the audacity of a 24,000 km voyage

to the far side of the globe – eight months afloat into what was literally the unknown. Such was the impact of the loss of the American colonies to the British.

The ships arrived 26 January 1778 – a day that subsequently became celebrated as 'First Landing Day', then 'Foundation Day' and subsequently 'Anniversary Day' before becoming today's 'Australia Day'. It represents the first real holiday in the annual lexicon after the Christmas-New Year period - and unusual in world terms - highlights a country established on the basis of a prison and celebrating it as such. But, live here for a spell, and that quirky aspect of the national psychic is easily seen – but it took almost 100 years after the last convict boats arrived in 1868 - to shift from national shame to national pride; and >20% of modern Australians now claim direct descendant from these earliest of settlers.

For the week or 10 days beforehand, local communities tend to promote Australia Day – television, newspapers, e-messages, advertisements, etc. – as a quiet day in which to appreciate family, community and country – with a day away from work, a picnic at the beach, an opportunity to watch sports or



<u>Christmas decorations.</u> Swanson Street Melbourne in the heart of the Central Business District. Looking south towards the Yarrow River and Flinders Street station. Christmas Square just to the LHS outside the photo.





<u>Australia Day & Beach.</u> Most days in summer are warm – hot even when the temperature reaches 40°C, but the seas around Melbourne are always cold. This is Lorne on the Great Ocean Road SW of the city.

attend some other civic event and frequently ending the day with a spectacular firework display. This is mid-Summer, remember, and early evening can be pleasant and warm (after the heat of the day). The kids walk around with little Australian flags painted on their cheeks, others fly flags from their cars – one each side on little plastic flag staffs clipped to the rear windows – and others have real flag poles in their front gardens with large size flags flying. Like much else here, of course, flags and plastic flag poles are Chinese made.

And, to celebrate the original inhabitants of the country, the Australian Aboriginal Flag is typically flown alongside the better known national flag in the main centres and on the main civic buildings as recognition of changing social status in the modern country – but this has been a long time coming. Just 30 years back this red, black and yellow patterned flag represented divisiveness, and it challenged the state. Critique of the 'Day of Invasion' or 'Day of Mourning' is, however, no longer as prevalent as before – but much depends on

context and who is doing the talking – and you still come across it.

Australian prime ministers

You would need a skin as thick as that of a rhino to want to be elected a politician in Australia. A hostile press, an aggressive opposition and freedom for parliamentarians to say just about what they like about each other or people outside comes within parliamentary privileges that provides complete freedom from prosecution. This extends to the media which is able to publish and 'be damned' for anything that is said by Members or Senators in Parliament. This results in critique beyond question for just about everything that is said and done by the national managers, and weariness on the part of the public for all things political. What does it all mean, and how does it impact upon my life? And, should you want to experience the Federal Parliament in action – with all the cut and thrust of the Westminster model - then you can watch events unfold at

http://www.aph.gov.au/News_and_Events/Watch Parliament. Sometimes it's highly



entertaining. You may need an Australian dictionary for some of the words and phrases.

One of the more interesting exchanges of recent times has come to be known as the 'Misogyny speech' wherein the current Prime Minister Julia Gillard lambasted the Opposition Leader Tony Abbot cutting through, she said, the feigned moral outrage of her opponent to highlight the hypocrisy, twisted messages and disingenuousness of his leadership with some classic one-liners:

'The Leader of the Opposition says that people who hold sexist views and who are misogynists are not appropriate for high office. Well, I hope that the Leader of the Opposition has got a piece of paper and is writing out his resignation'.

The debate went viral worldwide with headlines throughout the mainly English speaking world, and you can still enjoy this vitriolic exchange courtesy of YouTube at a number of sites including that of ABC news: http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-10-10/international-reaction-to-gillard-

speech/4305294. It was good for Australian politics and for women politicians – women in positions of leadership – everywhere.

Julia Gillard has the distinction of being the first woman to hold the position of Australian Prime Minister. She is one of only 27 Prime Ministers since the country gained full independence from the mother country – Great Britain; and the first foreign born holder of office in almost 100 years. Julia Gillard was born in Wales.

Humour across the country

And if all that sounds rather serious and daunting, the Herald Sun newspaper recently reported a 'Crossed wires' story as follows: A caller rang Samsung Electronics. Caller: 'Can you give me the telephone number for Jack?'

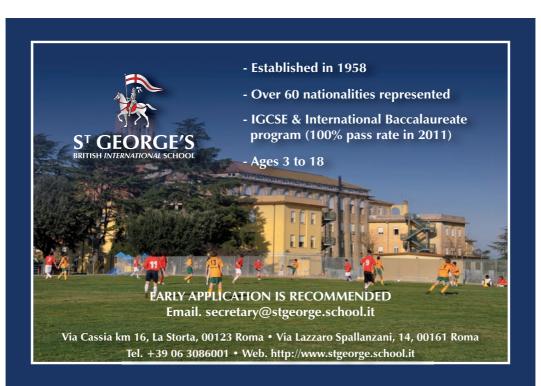
The operator replied: 'I'm sorry, sir, but Jack who?'

Caller: 'On page one of the User Guide it states: 'Unplug the fax from the AC wall socket and telephone jack before cleaning it". Operator: 'Sir,' I think it means the plug on the wall'



<u>Australian Aboriginal Flag.</u> The symbolic representation of the colours is obvious: black for the people, red for the land, and the sun – the giver of life. Design dates from the early 1970s and is copyrighted to the original artist.







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Charity Event for the Tchukudu Kids of Eastern Congo

17.30-19.00 hrs, 10 April 2013, St Stephen's School Auditorium

As requested by a number of participants at last year's Zumbathon charity event held on 2 May 2012 at the FAO Cafeteria (with about 70 FAO/WFP/IFAD staff members and families), another session is scheduled to take place on 10 April 2013 from 17.30 to 19.00 hrs at the St Stephen's School Auditorium. This is a joint project by the **Zumba Group** and the faculty and parents of **St. Stephens School in Rome**.

WHO ARE THE TCHUKUDU KIDS?

They are 16 orphans, all victims of the on-going fighting which has devastated the North Kivu region of Eastern Congo for the past two decades. After their orphanage in the war-torn area of Masisi was looted and burned down, the children were brought to the relative safety of Goma, and were living in a small wooden house on the outskirts of the city for the past five years.

On 19 January 2013, right before the kids were to be evicted from their temporary abode, the children were able to move in to the newly built home especially made for them through a joint project by the Zumba group and the faculty and parents from St. Stephens School in Rome. A dream come true for these children considering the numerous problems encountered while the home was being built, i.e. fierce fighting between rebels and government soldiers.









We still, however, need to finish their home – most specifically to build a bathroom and a kitchen. This Zumbathon is therefore aimed specifically for this project.

The photos attached show the happiness and expression of gratitude from the kids.

WHAT IS ZUMBA FITNESS?

Zumba is composed of easy-to-follow fast and slow dance movements that tone muscles and burn hundreds of calories. It's an integration of steps from all styles of Latin dance (Salsa, Cha Cha, Cumbia, Lambada, Mambo, Samba, Bachata, Merengue, Reggaeton), Bollywood, Hip Hop, Rock & Roll and Belly Dancing and many other types of dances - combined with a few aerobic steps. Zumba is suitable for all ages and abilities.

Zumba Fitness is one of the many activities offered by the FAO Staff Coop. Use your passion to dance and sign up for this event. Please invite your friends and colleagues and join us!

This is a non-profit initiative and all proceeds will go towards this project. Donation: €10

Advance tickets may be bought from Marlyn (53820), Irene (54786), Carole (55096), Juliet (55575), or you can donate on the day itself.

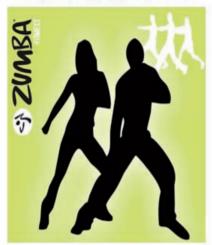
<u>About the instructor</u>:



Marlyn Manuel is a member of the Zumba® Instructor Network (ZIN) and is licensed to teach Zumba Fitness and Zumba Gold (for active older adults). She has been teaching Zumba as a hobby since 2008 in FAO through the FAO Staff Coop.

Come to the Zumba Fitness Charity Event for the Tchukudu Orphans of Eastern Congo!

St Stephen's School (Outdoor court), Via Aventina 3 10 April 2013, 17.30-19.00 hrs



Use your passion to dance and sign up for this event.

Zumba uses easy-to-follow fast and slow dance moves (all styles of Latin dance and more!) - combined with a few aerobic steps.

Please invite your family, friends and colleagues and join us!

This is a non-profit initiative by the Zumba Group of the FAO Staff
Coop and all proceeds will go towards the completion of the home
for the 16 Tchukudu orphans, all victims of the
on-going fighting which has devastated the North Kivu region of
Eastern Congo for the past two decades.

Donation: €10

For tickets please contact: Marlyn (53820); Irene (54786); Carole (55096); Juliet (55575)

(The Zumba Group is one of the many activities offered by the FAO Staff Coop)









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Meditation for All

The longing for peace and stability has somehow never died from the human consciousness even though it seems to be more distant than ever before. As the levels of tension go up and the tolerance levels go down, no amounts of 'quick fixes' such as holidays, shopping therapy or TV seem to be hitting the mark. Stress and anxiety have become the norm. A quiet, calm mind has become a rare or momentary experience and can even be a surprise when it comes as an The unexpected gift. feeling 'something missing' is now starkly visible and can no longer be denied or ignored.

Maybe it is this very condition that is inspiring more and more people to turn towards meditation and the inner, intangible resources to re-establish healthy, positive principles. A lot of scientific research has been conducted on the positive effects of meditation on health and general well-being. Large institutions around the world are introducing meditation to their employees as a means to reduce stress and find a balanced way of life.

Meditation can help us to discover our inner resources in order to build our personal resilience, thereby reducing the debilitating impact of stress and negative thinking on our mind, physical health and relationships at work. It can help to increase our capacity to express and apply our qualities and talents in a natural and fully empowered way by nurturing a positive self image and self respect.

Our inner resources are our mind and intellect. We can use these to increase our concentration, will power and capacity to discern. As we nurture and occupy ourselves with building this kind of protection, the negative impact of stress is reduced and the impression left

by events or difficult situations is minimized.

There are many varieties of meditation. Meditation can be integrated into everyday life. It can be done with open eyes and does not require us to be in any specific physical position/posture.

We are using our mind mainly to observe our thoughts and to choose them. We are giving attention to consciously creating feelings and thoughts that have a positive charge. We are accumulating will-power, determination and inner stamina to say 'no' to thoughts that bring us down or drain our energy. We are then able to nurture ourselves with the peace, inner strength and contentment that is naturally generated.

By doing a little meditation every day, it soon becomes a natural and easy habit. It gives us the power to choose creative thinking rather than automated thinking, response rather than reaction, peace, love and harmony rather than stress, conflict and chaos.

At FAO, there are a number of meditation and reflection groups (*)that offer an hour each week as an opportunity to take some 'time in' and replenish the spirit with peace and energy. This time offers moments where we can be reassured of our true identity and nature as peaceful beings. These moments provide the means to integrate this innate peace once again into our day, our work and relationships.

For more information on the Positive Thinking for Peaceful Living group, please contact Radha Gupta (ext. 55554). The content of the meetings are based on the study and practice of Raja Yoga Meditation as taught by the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (www.bkwsu.org). This group comes under the umbrella of the (*)FAO Staff Coop Human Values Group which includes activities such as Buddhist Philosophy and Meditation, Pranic Healing, Musicoterapia, Anthroposophy, Adventures of Self Discovery.

Below is an article by Mike George, an author and experienced meditator.

MEDITATION Getting Started and Keeping Going by MIKE GEORGE

During the last twenty years a steadily number of people experimented with meditation as a way to either relieve the stresses and strains of modern life or to enhance their natural wisdom. However, it seems very few persevere and build the practice of meditation into their life in a disciplined way. And of those few even fewer would probably say meditation was easy, and if they did there's a good chance they would probably not be meditating, more likely daydreaming or simply losing their attention in a candle flame or the sound of a distant bell.

Every year many if not most of those who attempt to meditate will give up almost instantly, thinking either "This is not for me", or more commonly, "I can't do this". There are a number of reasons for this, not least 'high expectations'. We live in a world where we learn that we can travel anywhere and have almost anything we want almost instantly; a world in which we are able to achieve, acquire and accumulate experiences fast. In the push button era we are the 'expectant generation'. And when we sit and attempt to meditate there is likely to be an expectation in the background that we will have some kind of instant result or success. Perhaps some pre-read literature fills us with an expectation that we will see an amazing light and become

enlightened, or there will be a feeling of such a deep and profound peace that we would never 'desire' anything else ever again or that an 'ascended master' will make contact, whisper deep esoteric secrets in our inner ear, and resolve our earthly sufferings. And then, when nothing much happens, otherwise known as a non-event, we are easily disappointed, disillusioned and discouraged from further practice.

In addition, because our attention is focussed on what is happening within, we are more likely to see and feel not such positive thoughts and not such harmonious feelings, and to notice how easily distracted we are. All serve to discourage us even further.

And so it is with high expectations that we sit and 'do' our meditation, which is often the second obstacle. Perhaps we have not yet quite gasped that meditation is not something that you 'do', it is a way to 'be'. It is a way to create a state of being, prior to action. And to most of us who are addicted to action, if not fully paid up members of 'rushaholics anonymous', this means we will never really get started, and we will likely wonder to ourselves, "Come on, why is nothing happening when I 'do' my meditation?"

The third and perhaps main reason why meditation is not so easy for most is that in our impatience for light, peace and a transcendent state we miss the two essential steps prior to meditating. Step one is relaxation and step two is concentration.

Relaxation

Consciously relaxing your body and giving it permission to be still, ensures it is less likely to interrupt, distract your attention and re-occupy your awareness. We have the habit of being 'body conscious' most of our day-to-day life, and this only serves to limit our

consciousness, confine our awareness and keep us focussed only on the ever fluctuating input from the senses. For many meditators the very reason they practice is to free themselves from the habit of losing one's consciousness in the form that we occupy, and thereby restoring mastery of the body and its senses. Consciously relaxing the mind also serves to give the mind permission to be quiet. It won't because we are habituated to being mentally busy and it won't just stop. But by giving it permission to be still and to rest awhile, we are acknowledging that we are not our minds. By talking to your mind this sense of separation will eventually become helpful in any meditative practice.

Concentration

The idea of concentration sounds easy but for most of us it's not. If you try gently concentrating your attention, without tension, on anything, you will find it drifts after only a count of 6 or 7... if you even get that far! And without the ability to hold your concentration meditation cannot begin. The practice of concentration can happen anywhere and anytime that you choose. It could be upon an external object or on an idea, it could be on a sound or simply your breathing. Not be mistaken for meditation, increased concentration also enhances effectiveness in other areas of life.

The balance between relaxation and concentration is called equipoise. Your attention and awareness are relaxed and yet gently concentrated, with the emphasis on 'gently'. Then meditation can begin.

Cultivation of Self Awareness

The simplest definition of meditation is the cultivation of self awareness. And that is also the aim, although it is an aim without achievement, like a journey with no destination, yet you still know where you are going, which is no where! The quality of your life begins with the quality of your thoughts and decisions. The effectiveness of your actions and interactions within your relationships with others begins with the quality of your thoughts and decisions. Without self awareness you cannot see what you are doing well and not so well at the levels of your own thoughts and feelings. In fact, the vast majority of people cannot even see that it is 'the self' and not someone else who creates their thoughts and feelings! When you fall under the illusion that others are responsible for what you think and feel, and therefore for what you do, you will create a stressful life as you become dependent on external sources of stimulation in order to 'feel' OK. As your self awareness expands through the practice of meditation you will gradually learn to lessen your dependence on external 'things' for your feelings and begin to generate your own. Meditation reconnects you to you! Which really means 'restores' awareness your true nature, which is calm, contented, yet dynamic and alive. Within your true nature is the pulse of your heart, your spiritual heart, which is the intention to connect, to give, which is the 'pulse of love'.

You begin to see exactly what you are doing within your consciousness that is disturbing your calm, killing your contentment and suppressing your aliveness. You will start to see what you have become attached to in the world and how that attachment is creating your sorrows and your fears. You will start to notice the never ending queue of desires and cravings that can never be satisfied but keep you in a state that swings between anxiety and frustration. You will become aware of your dependency on others, your judgments of others, your apparent inability to accept certain others, all of which sabotage your ability to connect and build mutually enriching relationships i.e. to be loving. You will begin to see the quality of your

intentions, and in which areas of your life you have become selfish, revealing why you may be creating feelings of 'stuckness' and even the self perception of 'victim'. And you will start to see how cheaply you sell your attention to so many superficial things in life, and how they drain energy and weaken resolve.

When you practice meditation you will see all these things if you remain open and if you want to see them. But when you read a list like this you are just as likely to think, "Why would I want to see all that?" And who could blame you because they all seem so negative and dark. But the reason is simple. They are disturbing your peace, distorting your capacity to give and receive love and they are killing your happiness. Each of these inner phenomena are like clouds that block the sun. They block out the light, warmth and beauty of your true nature. Behind such clouds, at the core of your deeply you are peaceful, immensely loving, infinitely wise and profoundly contented.

Once your awareness is relaxed, and your attention is gently concentrated, your meditation begins with watching, observing, witnessing the clouds in your consciousness. Not becoming lost in the patterns described above. Not hooking onto them and being dragged along by them. Simply watching. And as you do, you will start to 'see through' them and they will gradually cease to have power over you. You will cease to empower them and you will slowly but surely stop losing your attention and energy in what are unnatural aberrations within your consciousness. And then, into your awareness will come your true nature, which is clear, light, loving, peaceful and content. And when you allow those aspects of your true nature to inform and shape your thoughts, feelings and actions, even in the most challenging situations, then both the process and outcomes of day-to-day life become very

different.

Patience, practice and perseverance are, as always, the keys to developing and deepening your meditation practice. And what might begin as an exercise in a chair for ten minutes a day will, in time, blossom into a capacity to be in the highest state of being anywhere, anytime. You cannot read books and go to seminars in order to learn to do this. Ultimately only you can teach yourself as the learning does not come from outside from inside in but out.

Meditation in Summary: Expect nothing in particular to happen just be interested in seeing whatever arises within consciousness, within the field of your awareness. Never compare your 'insperience' with anyone else and share only with another who is genuinely interested. Remember meditation is not an achievement. There is no arrival. No two meditation 'insperiences' can ever be the same, so never try to repeat them.

Meditation in Practice: Sit somewhere quiet. Relax. Concentrate attention. Watch what arises in consciousness. Do not hook onto anything that arises. Keep observing. Invoke your true nature which is peaceful, loving and content. Don't attempt to hold on to it. Keep watching what arises. Notice when you are distracted, come back, and start again.

Meditation in Action: Meditation is the art of doing nothing and yet paradoxically you are doing the most profound act which is to restore your true state of being. Contemplate exactly what this means. Feed your contemplations with the experiences and wisdom of others as well as your own. But don't attempt to imitate or even revere others' reflections/experiences. They too were once a novice. Carve your own path ■

Sermoneta

Sermoneta is a beautiful town in the province of Latina, a few km from the Via Appia and approximately 60 km from Rome, it is situated on a hill at 257 metres above sea level and dominates the Pianura Pontina (Pontina lowlands) Its good fortune began at the end of the Thirteenth Century, when in the city the dynasty of noble Caetani family began and they built their impressive castle. Sermoneta became the centre of a vast feudal system and flourished both artistically and culturally. During the centuries many illustrious people and regal visitors and popes sojourned as guests in the imposing Castello Caetanii.

Today, Sermoneta still preserves intact this immense historic, artistic and cultural heritage, indeed it has become one of the most important turistic localities in the vicinity of Rome. With its quiet tranquillity, its tortuous streets and alleys and its monuments it is the ideal place for a holiday or a brief visit, especially for those who wish to take a trip back in time to olden days.

The following excerpts are from a Google search and you can read more if you wish on Sermoneta at: www.comunedisermoneta.it



Caetani Castle

The Caetani Castle rises majestically over the town of Sermoneta and dominates the entire Pianura Pontina (Pontina Lowlands). It was constructed at the beginning of 1200 by the Annibaldi Family, and was later in the course of time enriched with defence structures which made it practically invincible. It survived assaults and wars and hosted famous visitors such as Frederick(Federico) III in 1452, Charles V in 1536, Lucrezia Borgia was the "padrona" when Pope Alessandro VI Borgia drove out the Caetani Family) and this was followed by moments of festive peace.



Abbey of Valvisciolo

The Abbey of Valvisciolo (L'Abbazia di Valvisciolo) is situated in the territory of Sermoneta at the foot of Monte Corvino, at less than 100 metres above sea level; the mountains protect it from the winds from the north; from the wide square the scenery expands in the direction as far as where the Pianura Pontina reaches the sea. It is dedicated to the martyr, Saint Stephen. (Santo Stefano). The history of this monument is complex, also because the name conceals part of the mystery of Valvisciolo. Valvisciolo can also mean the Valley of the Usignolo Songbird

(vallis lusciniae) or Valley of Visciole (wild cherries).





Built in the Twelfth Century, it is said on the ruins of a temple dedicated to the goddess Cibele, the Cathedral was constructed with the basic foundation of a basilica with Roman form and dedicated to Santa Maria Assunta. In the Thirteenth Century it was given the Gothic aspect which is still evident today. Probably thanks to the interventions of architect-monks from Cisterna and Fossanova. The front of the church is typically Roman

architectural style, and one can see the imposing and solemn bell tower on the left corner of the facade.



Church of Saint Joseph

This Church is situated at the entrance of the town and is dedicated to Saint Joseph, who is the patron saint of Sermoneta. It dates back to 1520 but was only completed in 1733 when the beautiful facade and flight of steps were completed.



Church of Saint Michael Archangel

The construction of this Church enclosed by the houses dates back to the second half of the Twelfth Century. A small portico leads directly into the central navata, flanked by the lateral ones.



Church and Ex-Convent of Saint Francis (San Francesco)

This Church is situated less than a kilometre away from the town of Sermoneta to which it is directly connected by the Via San Francesco.



Loggia of the Merchants

The Loggia of the Merchants was constructed in 1446 as ordered by Onorato Caetani to house the Municipality or Comune, for business meetings and assemblies of the people.



Two Popes in Rome for the first time ... an extraordinary event Vatican City - Resignation of Pope Benedict XVI... It happened already in the past-Some research and history

by Edith Mahabir



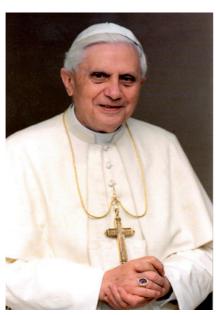
esignation of the Pope: Pope Benedict XVI made the shock **V**announcement on 11 February 2013 that he was resigning effective 28 February. On 28 February 2013 – he indeed left in a helicopter for the Papal Residence in Castel Gandolfo where he will live until his private apartment will be ready in Casa Santa Maria.

On Monday 4 March 2013: Most of the living cardinals of the Catholic Church (170) arrived in Rome for the College of Cardinals or Conclave to discuss and set the date for the election of a new Pope. The date set was 12 March. Of them only 117 will participate in the voting since those over 80 years are excluded. A two-thirds majority of

77 votes are needed to elect the new Pope.

Pope Benedict XVI resigned effectively on 28 February 2013. The 85-year-old pope is resigning "because of advanced age," Benedict told the cardinals of the Catholic Church on Monday. "Strength of mind and body are necessary, strength which in the last few months has deteriorated in me to the extent that I have had to recognize my incapacity to adequately fulfil the ministry entrusted to me," the pope told the cardinals, according to the Vatican.

There is so much being written about the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI. The most basic question asked is



Pope Benedetto XVI

whether a pope may resign. There is now no dispute about the legal possibility of a resignation. Canon Law is very clear: "If it should happen that the Roman Pontiff resigns his office, it is required that he make his resignation freely, and that it be duly manifested, but not that it be accepted by anyone."

Historically, the clearest example of papal resignation was that of Celestine V in 1294 after being pope for only five months. That was more than 700 years ago. There is no question about the due manifestation of the resignation of Pope Benedict. Essentially, the manifestation requirement means that the resignation must be communicated to the cardinals. But Pope Benedict did more than that. His manifestation was all over media, and the entire world immediately learned about it.

As to the freedom of his act, the imaginative allegations, spread around by rumormongers, about pressure having pushed him to resignation are

largely being ignored. In fact there is near universal praise for his action. As one prominent theologian wrote, "There is potentially great significance in Benedict's action, and it may be that his resignation will be his greatest contribution to ecclesiology. He has so subordinated his person to the office that he could renounce it. His frank admission that he no longer had the strength of mind and body needed for the ministry of St. Peter not only humanizes the pope himself but helps bring the papacy back within the church.

As a writer put it: "Pope Benedict spoke from his heart on Feb. 11. The statement was characteristically The humble. naturally pope is introverted; the shoes of the fisherman have not always fit him comfortably. To be sure, he suffers in comparison to his charismatic predecessor. But there is something more: Five years old when the Nazis came to power in his native Germany, the pope witnessed first hand the destructive power of a cult of personality. One can easily see why, given this experience, the pope can become visibly uncomfortable when the crowds chant his name."

But the wisdom of a pope's resignation has been a matter of debate and it must have been an excruciating decision for Benedict XVI to resign. There was the view, for instance, that because of the "mystique of the papacy that so identified the pope with Christ," to resign would mean to betray Christ. It is reported that Paul VI would not think of resigning because "he cannot come down from his cross."

But another theologian makes this observation: "Benedict's action also

suggests the thought that if a pope can resign for reasons of health or of age, he might resign for other reasons too. There could come a pope who agrees with what John Henry Newman wrote in 1870, during the longest pontificate in church history: 'It is not good for a pope to live 20 years. It is an anomaly and bears no good fruit; he becomes a god, has no one to contradict him, does not know facts, does cruel things without meaning it.' In other words, even though no term limits may be assigned to the papal office, a pope can have his own term limits in mind, and say to himself, and to the church, 'Basta!' If papal resignations were to become something normal (that is, more frequent than every 700 years), then there might be less reluctance to elect someone younger and still energetic without worrying that he will fall victim to the tendency Newman feared."

Incidentally, the Society of Jesus has had to deal with the resignation of its highest ranking superior. The superior general of the order, like the pope, has no term limit, but the law of the society has provisions on how to handle a general's resignation. When Father General Pedro Arrupe wanted to resign for reasons of failing health, he acceded to the wish of the pope that he stay in office. But on his return trip from his visit to Asia, he was stricken by a completely disabling stroke. Hence, the society elected a new superior general, Hans Kolvenbach, Peter whose resignation, after 25 years in office, was consented to by Pope Benedict XVI.

As for the pope, he needs nobody's approval for his resignation to be effective. Nor can anybody stop him. As announced by him, his resignation took effect last Feb. 28.

Now that Benedict XVI has resigned, what is he? We must distinguish between what belongs to him as a person and what belonged to him as pope. He remains a bishop and cardinal but he no longer has the primacy powers of the bishop of Rome, such as being the "vicar of Peter, head of the college of bishops, patriarch of the West, primate (chief bishop) of the bishops of Italy, metropolitan of the dioceses surrounding Rome or head of Vatican City State."

Until the college of cardinals elect his successor (within the month), we have no pope. Meanwhile, who manages the house?

The law on what happens during the interregnum is all provided for in the rules established in the 1996 constitution "Universi Dominici Gregis" ("Of the Lord's Whole Flock") of John Paul II, as modified by Benedict in 2007. I don't suppose we should expect an internecine war in the Vatican.

Francis I (Francesco I) – The New Pope - Who is he?

The Conclave began on 12 March and lasted three days culminating in the election of 76 year old José Mario Bergoglio from Argentina who chose the name of Francis I (Francesco I). San Francesco is the patron saint of Italy. He is the first pontiff from the Americas and from outside Europe in more than a millennium. He chose the name of Francis I, associating himself with the humble Thirteenth century Monk and preacher who lived a life of poverty. He is known to be a seasoned, popular and humble pastor and it is expected that he will draw followers to the faith He is the



Pope Francesco I

266th Pope chosen after five ballots in the three-day Conclave – a record.

In his first appearance on the Loggia of St. Peter's Basilica to the world and the many thousands in the crowd gathered in St Peter's Square, he shyly waved and greeted them with the now famous salutation: "Brothers and sisters ... Good evening! Which prompted wild cheers from the crowd .. he continued "You know that the work of the Conclave is to give a Bishop to Rome and it seems that they went to find him from the end of the earth, and here we are ... thank you for the welcome".

He has been the Archbishop of Buenos Aires for a long time. He is the son of middle class Italian immigrants who denied himself the luxuries that previous Buenos Aires cardinals enjoyed. He often took the bus and public transport to work, cooked his own meals and often visited the slums surrounding Buenos Aires. He considers social outreach to be the essential business of the Church as opposed to doctrinal battles. In 2012 in one of his speeches accused fellow church officials of hypocrisy for forgetting that Jesus bathed lepers and ate with prostitutes ...

On a personal note he had a lung removed due to an infection as a teenager and it is said that he is now beginning to feel the effects of that in his senior age.

According to his official biographer, Sergio Rubin "In his lifetime of teaching and leading priests in Latin America, which has the largest share of Catholics in the world, he has shown a keen political sensibility as well as the kind of self-effacing humility the fellow cardinals value highly".

In choosing to call himself Francis I, the new Pope associates himself with San Francesco who had been born into a wealthy family but later renounced his wealth and founded the Franciscan order or friars, he was known to wander throughout the countryside preaching to the people in a very simple language. His sanctity was such that he was canonized just two years after his death in 1226.

Francis I seems to already have won a place in the hearts of not only Roman Catholics but also of the entire Roman community and visiting tourists — Catholics and non judging from the crowds which spontaneously gather in the Piazza on Sundays to follow the Mass on the maxi-screens and wait for the ritual Angelus and Blessing



Come raggiungere Il tanto agognato "Benessere"

Il benessere economico costa in termini di impegno fisico e mentale....

Se si vuole aumentare il reddito bisogna lavorare duro.

Fatica e stress possono costare molto in termini di salute.

E quindi gran parte del denaro guadagnato faticosamente si è costretti ad investirlo per ritrovare il benessere fisico.... E' un circolo vizioso che sembra spezzarsi solo quando si smette di rincorrere affannosamente gli impegni quotidiani che si susseguono vorticosamente.

Chi è libero da impegni di lavoro

ha tutto il tempo per dedicarsi al proprio benessere fisico ed alla cura della propria persona. Ma chi è costretto a ritmi di lavoro forsennati non puó far altro che cercare il recupero energetico e mentale

nel breve spazio di un week end.

Il benessere nasce dal desiderio di vivere una vita in perfetto equilibrio psico-fisico. Ci sono luoghi, a pochi passi da Roma, in cui vivere può diventare un'attività molto piacevole.

COME RILASSARSI DURANTE IL TEMPO LIBERO

Per chi lavora consiglio di cercare di liberare il week end da tutto ció che si accumula durante i giorni di lavoro e si rimanda al fine settimana, sovraccaricandolo cosí di spese da fare, lavatrici da smaltire, panni da stirare.... Se ci si organizza per dedicare due ore al giorno a tutto questo, con scadenza settimanale, si puó finalmente affrontare il lieto fine di un week end all'insegna dello sport, della salute e del



benessere. A pochi passi da Roma si possono trascorrere dei fine settimana salutari in cui vacanza e sport si fondono in un'atmosfera di benessere, relax e natura, coccolati dai benefici delle SpA e delle Beautry Farms. Fiuggi è la meta ideale per chi è in cerca di relax e benessere. La ridente località, situata ai piedi dei Monti Ernici, è attrezzata per accogliere chi vuole prendersi cura di se ed affrontare un percorso di remise en forme a 360° attraverso aria salubre, sport e relax, acque termali. Questo piccolo centro é la località ideale per chi voglia trascorrere brevi pause settimanali rigeneranti, ma anche per chi dispone di piu' tempo libero per vivere una vacanza in perfetto equilibrio psico-fisico in un territorio naturale ed incontaminato, dove la natura si incontra anche a tavola. L'innegabile matrice

contadina della cucina ciociara, si esprime in piatti essenziali e semplici, quelli che sapevano preparare le donne dei tempi passati. Qui si difende la buona e saporita cucina di casa, legata ai prodotti della terra, alle migliori usanze della tradizione culinaria laziale, alle ricette preparate con passione dalle nostre nonne.

LO SPORT E' BENESSERE

Fiuggi dispone di numerosi impianti sportivi come il campo da golf a 18 buche, che è stato uno dei primi Golf pubblici realizzati in Italia. Sin dagli anni '20 era frequentato da personaggi famosi provenienti da tutta Europa. Per chi voglia praticare sport ci sono piscine, campi da tennis, un maneggio ed un Centro Sportivo Comunale di circa 17 ettari comprendente campi di calcio, campi sportivi per calciotto, struttura coperta polivalente, Club-House, servizi ausiliari, impianti per l'atletica, pista ciclo pedonale per allenamenti di circa 2 km, piscina olimpionica con tribune. Il 23 Giugno del 2013, la DIGA (Diplomatic and International Golf Association) organizzerà un torneo di Golf a Fiuggi, in cui parteciperanno Ambasciatori e colleghi della FAO. Vorremmo cogliere l'occasione per estendere la possibilità a colleghi e in particolare ai gruppi di Atletica ed il Cycling group di partecipare a gare da disputare seguendo percorsi suggestivi attraverso borghi, rocche, palazzi artistici testimoni di antiche storie, in un territorio che offre ai visitatori un ambiente naturale e incontaminato, ideale per la corsa e le escursioni sia con bici da strada che mountain bike

(http://www.laziobike.it/index.php). E vorremmo offrire ai nostri soci una serata in musica che organizzeremo per l'occasione.



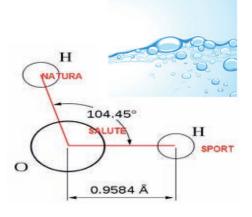
L'ACQUA E' FONTE DI BENESSERE Il nome attuale di Fiuggi, sembra derivi dal latino fluvius, cioè fiume. Il destino di questo territorio è strettamente legato alla sua ricchezza idrica. Fiuggi è famosa per le sue acque depurative (Terme di Fiuggi SPA (http://www.termedifiuggi.com) e le strutture presenti sul territorio per vacanzieri alla ricerca del benessere attraverso bagni dagli effetti rigeneranti.

L'acqua è meraviglia, è benessere. Bastano TRE atomi per comporre questo elemento magico, che purifica, rigenera. TRE è il numero perfetto... come TRE sono le parole che bastano per garantire una vacanza improntata al benessere: NATURA-SALUTE-SPORT

Vicino Roma c'è un altro famoso centro termale di origine antichissima presso il quale si trovano i resti delle terme imperiali fatte costruire dall'imperatore Augusto. Sono le Acque

Albule di tipo sulfureo, ipotermale, dalle qualità curative, che scaturiscono dai due laghi Regina e Colonnelle, a nord della via Tiburtina, e giungono alle **Terme di Tivoli** http://www.termediroma.org/

Altro importante località termale è **SATURNIA**, piccola frazione dell'entroterra collinare della Maremma grossetana, che sorge sulla vetta di una collina dominante le rinomate sorgenti termali situate al centro dell'omonimo comprensorio turistico termale. Le acque sulfuree a 37 gradi e mezzo hanno rinomate proprietà terapeutiche. Notevole è comunque il contatto con la natura, al tempo stesso aspra come la Maremma con la sua vegetazione dai colori che si declinano in tutte le sfumature del verde fino ad arrivare al giallo, al rosa, al marrone bruno....





carburante non solo per il corpo ma anche per l'anima. Immergersi nel verde, vivere a stretto contatto con piante, fiori ed aria ricca di ossigeno, aiuta a ritrovare benessere fisico e spirituale, perché assicura una buone dose di energia e carica positiva che allontano stress e cattivo umore.

BENESSERE TRA I FIORI

Non è un caso che siano stati gli studiosi di psiche d'oltremanica ad evidenziare l'influenza della natura sul buonumore. Non è forse il Regno Unito la patria del giardinaggio? Gli inglesi che hanno uno speciale rapporto con la natura spendono fortune per Rochester, in GranBretagna, che hanno pubblicato sulla rivista Journal of Environmental mantenere

LA NATURA E' LA MIGLIORE FONTE DI BENESSERE

La vita più salutare possibile è quella all'aria aperta, immersa tra i sapori e i profumi della natura. Una buona dose di "verde" è l'ingrediente essenziale del benessere e del buon umore. La conferma arriva anche un gruppo di psicologi dell'Università di Psychology uno studio sui benefici effetti della natura che risulta essere perfetto







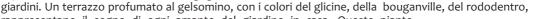
bello e rigoglioso il proprio giardino. La cura della terra, del prato e dei fiori è una passione coltivata anche da Miss Marple, il personaggio di Agatha Christie. Nel centro di Londra, alla prima tiepida giornata di sole, le famiglie più benestanti escono portando con se sedie tavoli e vettovaglie per mangiare sui verdi tappeti erbosi che decorano le belle villette dei britannici. il giardino è il luogo della serenità e del passatempo. Nell'immaginario collettivo un giardino inglese è molto strutturato ed ordinato ma nella realtà è molto naturale. In effetti il designer di un giardino all'inglese ha il compito di accostare le varie piante in maniera tale da creare un paesaggio assolutamente naturale. Elementi fondamentali del giardino inglese sono i giochi d'acqua, i ruscelli, i laghetti, le cascate, ponticelli che contribuiscono a dare

questa sensazione di naturalezza. Il clima umido e le frequenti piogge dell'isola favoriscono la crescita di

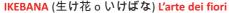
un prato dal verde acceso e intenso che gli inglesi amano curare falciandolo periodicamente. I fiori sono un altro elemento fondamentale del giardino all'inglese. Perché un fiore colorato può riempire di luce e di allegria una mattina uggiosa.

L'INCANTO DELLA BELLA STAGIONE INIZIA **SUL TERRAZZO**

Siamo pronti a rilassarci e godere delle piacevoli fioriture e colori che le piante ci regaleranno? Attrezziamoci per riempire il nostro balcone con piante rampicanti dal fogliame rigoglioso e fioriture ricche, che da sempre costituiscono elemento decorativo capace di trasformare i balconi in rigogliosi



rappresentano il sogno di ogni amante del giardino in casa. Queste piante garantiscono colore e bellezza ad ogni balcone ma allo stesso tempo sono molto più delicate e sensibili soprattutto alle basse temperature. Per avvicinarsi all'arte del giardinaggio esistono manuali di vario tipo. Ma per cominciare è bene scegliere una guida semplice che riporti una raccolta dettagliata con le proprietà delle piante.



L'arte giapponese della disposizione dei fiori recisi, è l'Ikebana la cui traduzione letterale è "fiori viventi". Tutti gli elementi utilizzati nella costruzione dell'ikebana devono essere strettamente di natura organica, siano essi rami, foglie, erbe, o fiori. Nelle composizioni dell'Ikebana rami e fiori sono disposti secondo un

> sistema ternario, quasi sempre a formare un triangolo. Il ramo più lungo, più importante, è

considerato qualche cosa che si avvicina al cielo, il ramo più corto rappresenta la terra e il ramo intermedio l'uomo. Così come queste tre forze si devono armonizzare per formare l'universo, anche i fiori e i rami si devono equilibrare nello spazio senza alcuno sforzo apparente. Il piacere di praticare l'Ikebana sta nella ricerca di un'armonia nella composizione dei fiori. L'arte dei fiori può essere anche indicata come Kadō, cioè "via dei fiori", intendendo cammino di elevazione spirituale secondo i principi dello Zen. Ogni lavoro deve essere svolto con calma, cercando di rilassarsi e lasciare che la mente percorra il cammino dei fiori fino ad arrivare in un luogo tranquillo dove visualizzare l'Ikebana. E' un percorso che la mente compie verso il bello, da visualizzare e poi tradurre in una composizione elegante e raffinata, in cui la massa statica possa rendere l'idea del movimento.



Piante da Giardino









FAO Staff Coop Special Services INPS Consultant –Ms. M. Ribeiro Dos Santos Fridays 14.30 to 17.30 hrs

The INPS Consultant is available every Friday in Room E-014 to assist FAO and WFP staff with:

INPS, the burocratic issues connected with INPS-related matters and also mediation between the Iistituto Previdenza Sociale and staff being assisted. Immigration matters and procedures concerning family members and domestic workers, providing assistance on orientation and compilation of forms and documents for: requests for Italian citizenship, renewal of permesso di soggiorno for long periods, follow-up with the Questura and/or other institutions as appropriate.

Mediation in family related disputes or civil controversies. Using her professional skills and experience to assist parties to reach consensus and find solutions to their problems and issues as an external third party. In civil disputes create the bridge between parties with a view to avoiding

excessively long controversies, etc. but allowing common sense to prevail.

Inps - Prevede le consulenze generalI, svolgimentI burocraticI dove necessari, e rapporto di mediazione tra ente e assistito.

Immigrazione - Assistenza, orientamento e compilazione modulistica per: Cittadinanza italiana, rinnovo permesso soggiorno e/o soggiorno per lungo periodo, solleciti presso Questura, Prefettura e altri enti.

Mediazione familiare e controversia civile -Questa figura professionale va impiegata nel contesto familiare con la finalità di raggiungere il buon senso fra le parti, un aiuto concreto per ritrovare le soluzioni alle problematiche con una visone al di fuori dei protagonisti coinvolti.

Nei caso di problematica in materia CIVILE, è quello di creare un ponte fra le parti, al fine di evitare controversie interminabili, dove, magari, il buon senso può fare da PROTAGONISTA ASSOLUTO.



CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR GAZETTE

Dear Readers,

A new era has begun and as international civil servants our main concern is and will be to continuously fight with all our forces against hunger and poverty. We are one family, one body. However like the cells of a body we are scattered all over the world, we live different experiences in various parts of the globe. Space physically separates us, probably we will never meet but we have a means of communication to know each other, to share our hopes, our lives, our thoughts, our experiences; it is the "FAO Casa Gazette". The Editorial Committee of the FAO Casa Gazette would really appreciate receiving from all of you articles (typewritten electronically), poems, short stories, pictures, drawings and paintings.

You do not need to be a journalist, you do not need to be a professional writer, you only need the goodwill and the desire to share an experience which could awake curiosity, emotions, minds, which could warm hearts, which could enrich each other. The "space" which separates us will continue to exist but for a little moment we will all feel closeness.

Is there is anything that you would like to communicate? You may be living under difficult conditions but for sure you know and meet interesting and unique people. You have the opportunity to show us interesting places and lifestyles where probably the majority of us will never visit. If you feel you want to share an experience with your colleagues through the FAO Casa Gazette, we would only be too happy to publish it? Our only request is that your contribution should not contain offensive statements towards member countries or religious beliefs and cultures of any population(s), nor harsh criticism of our Organizations. This is because the FAO Staff Coop is a social, cultural and sports entity and not political.

We look forward to meeting you on the pages of the FAO Casa Gazette and extend to you and your families best wishes for 2013 ■

Editorial Committee FAO Casa Gazette

Salame di Cioccolato

Ingredienti:

180 gr. di biscotti secchi

1 barattolo di Nutella da 220 gr.

40 gr. di nocciole tostate

50 gr. di frutta candita

Cacao amaro

Zucchero a velo



Procedimento

Sbriciolate i biscotti secchi (noi abbiamo utilizzato gli Oro Saiwa) e spezzetate le nocciole in maniera molto grossolana (utilizzate il minipimer). Raccogliete il tutto in un recipiente, quindi unite la frutta candita, tagliata a cubetti e infine la Nutella.

Impastate il composto fino a farlo diventare perfettamente omogeneo.

Fatto questo ponetelo su un foglio di carta da forno con la quale gli darete la forma di un salame. Una volta che gli avrete dato la forma, srotolatelo dalla carta forno e cospargetelo con un pò di cacao amaro.

Riavvolgetelo nella carta da forno e mettetelo a riposare in frigorifero per almeno 4 ore.

Una volta rassodato, tiratelo fuori dal frigo, eliminate la carta da forno e cospargetelo con lo zucchero a velo.

Il salame è ora pronto per essere servito a fette, come fosse un salame vero.

