

## *The History of the Nativity of Peace*

In 2002, through the request of the Federation, the Nativity received its name in honor of the attacks on the Twin Towers of New York.

Thanks to the Region of Campania, this 8<sup>th</sup> Century artistic style Neapolitan Nativity manufactured, prepared and exhibited by Master Ferrigno of Naples, was amply visited by the Italian Community of New York, Connecticut, New Jersey and other visitors and tourists from nearby States on the occasion of the Christmas holiday 2004, 2005 and 2006.

The Nativity, donated by the Region of Campania, was displayed for the first time by the Region's office in New York City in 2003 and garnered appreciation and interest from critics and non-critics alike.

In 2004, the Nativity was put on display by the Church of Mt. Carmel, located at 627 East 187 Street in the Little Italy section of the Bronx. The Pastor, Monsignor John Ruvo, was amazed and satisfied by the beauty of the shepherds and of the artistic rendering typical of the Neapolitan art of the 8<sup>th</sup> Century. Many years ago, a Nativity from Capodimonte, rendered in the 8<sup>th</sup> century Neapolitan style was also displayed in this same church. The Nativity was on display from December 6<sup>th</sup> to January 10<sup>th</sup>, the day in which the Federation of the Associations of Campania offered a Mass in thanks for the thousands of faithful that visited the Nativity and for the Campani leaders that gave the opportunity to the Campana community of New York to have such a beautiful Nativity. It has been decided that a Holy Mass be celebrated annually for these same intentions.

In 2005, the Nativity was put on display by the Saint Cono of Treggiano Society of Brooklyn, New York giving the elderly and those who were not able to visit the Church of the Carmine in the Bronx, the opportunity to visit and admire the Nativity. The Nativity was on display from the month of November until the month of March, 2006. The reason for such a lengthy exposition was the overwhelming amount of requests to visit the Nativity. Even students from Williamsburg area schools came to visit the Nativity. Holy Mass was offered at the beginning of March in order to coincide with the Feast of Saint Pio of Pietrelcina.

In 2006, the Nativity was redisplayed in the Westchester Italian Cultural Center, located at 1 Generoso Pope Place, Tuckahoe, New York, a predominantly residential area of Westchester County. The reason for displaying the Nativity in a Cultural Center was because of a request by non-Catholic personalities interested in Neapolitan art and culture. What better location is there to display a Nativity to non-Catholics than a Cultural Center? As a result, enabling everyone to admire the Nativity and giving the Westchester Italian Community Center the opportunity to display it in its own building. For the occasion, the Westchester Italian Community Center held a reception along with the Federation, and then gave the public the opportunity to be able to admire the Nativity up to the end of January 2007. The annual Holy Mass was celebrated at the church of Saint Benedict.

During the year 2007, the Nativity was displayed in the State of New Jersey, mainly to give the Italian of southern New Jersey the opportunity to visit and admire this Neapolitan jewel. The Nativity was displayed at the Casa Colombo of Jersey City, located in the Garibaldi Center, from October 27<sup>th</sup> through the end of January 2008. His Excellency Nicholas DiMarzio, Archbishop of the Diocese of Brooklyn and Queens, inaugurated the Nativity and celebrated Mass for the occasion at Holy Rosary Church. The annual Holy Mass was celebrated at the closing of the Nativity.

In 2008, the Nativity was displayed in the city of Morristown in Pennsylvania and hosted by the Holy Savior Society and the Campania Regional Association in Pennsylvania. The Nativity was displayed for over two months giving the Italian and Campana communities of the Philadelphia area and surrounding areas the opportunity to visit the Nativity. The Nativity was displayed in the Church of the Holy Savior, where a Mass in thanks was celebrated on January 10, 2009.

In 2009, thanks to the sponsorship of the Andrettese Society of New York, the Nativity was on display at the Italian American Museum from December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009 to January 31, 2010. The Nativity exhibit was a great success.