



Planning the Tradition: 125 Years in New York

The 125-year history of the feast of San Vincenzo Martire di Craco in New York City is marked by traditions some of which have been lost over time. This anniversary will attempt to bring at least one part of the event back – the procession.

Below is the scene from October 1937 with the processional statue used then. The procession route and event details at that time are described on page 2.

The scale of this year’s procession will be smaller but no less heartfelt.

Make your plans to attend and live the tradition with your Cracotan cousins. ■



Southern Italy’s Hidden Gems Draw Global Spotlight

Recently, MSN published an online [article](#) that overviewed the interest in tourism in Southern Italy.

For the region this represents economic and cultural boosts. Farm tourism and heritage tours are driving local economies, with arrivals to Molise and Basilicata outpacing national growth.

Craco’s unique appeal was highlighted referencing the abandoned hilltop town’s preserved skyline that made it a film location and a symbol of southern Italy’s layered history. Even going so far as to reference, “[The Italian hilltop town that slid off its mountain — and became a movie star.](#)”

The article included the following about the photo above and the town, “Aerial view, The general view of the historic center of Craco on April 26, 2024, in Craco, Italy. Craco is a municipality in the Province of Matera. The historic center of Craco has been affected by a phenomenon of depopulation due to the consequences of a landslide since 1963. Old Craco became a real ghost town after the earthquake of November 1980. These events contributed to making the ancient town of Craco, which has become a tourist destination, as well as a

coveted film set. (Photo by Ivan Romano/Getty Images)...Craco, a medieval hilltop town in the Basilicata region of Italy, was abandoned following a series of landslides and earthquakes. These natural disasters rendered the town unsafe for habitation, forcing residents to leave their homes.”

The article went on to say, “Many of Craco's former residents still live within sight of the abandoned town. This proximity underscores the emotional and historical connection between the displaced community and their former homes.”

However, it continues with, “The Town dates to 1000A.D. and was included in the World Monuments Fund’s watch list in 2010. It was abandoned towards the end of the 20th century due to continuing landslides, believed to be caused by faulty infrastructure and natural disasters, which rendered the old town uninhabitable. The town is now a tourist attraction and popular location for film production. ...The town's skyline remains intact, and its empty streets provide visitors with an immersive view into Italy's past. This preservation offers a rare opportunity to experience a historical environment largely unchanged since its abandonment.” ■



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San Vincenzo Processions in New York City

Although we know from a New York Times article that the feast day celebration for San Vincenzo started in 1901, it describes the event taking place outside the Church of the Most Precious Blood on a bandstand. However, subsequent photographs show a processional statue along with a bandstand erected for the event.

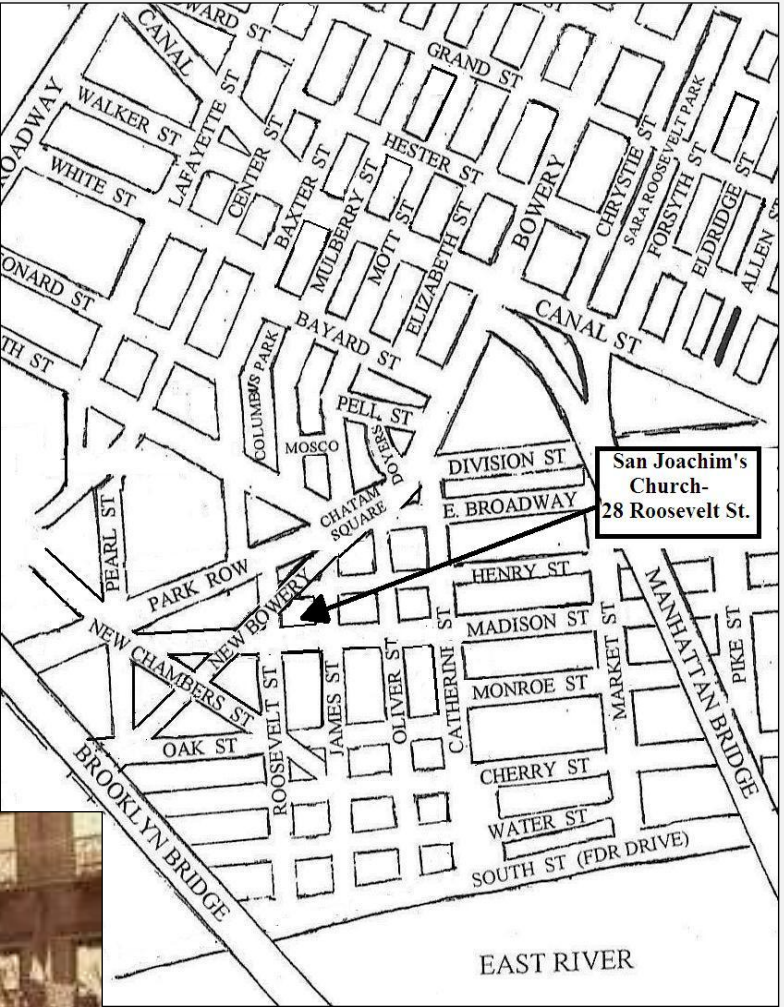
Additional information supports the use of both elements as part of the historic celebration which will be brought back this year, for the first time since the 1940s, although it will be a street band rather than a bandstand.

The procession route through the Lower East Side is not known but a logical route would have been like those followed by other processions that were sponsored by St. Joachim’s societies and are described in contemporary newspaper stories as:
“...upon the ringing of the church bell the statue was carried into the street where after a firecracker salute and music by a band, the procession moved into Baxter Street. It proceeded through Bayard, Hester, Mott, and Mulberry Streets, returning through James Street.

Paper money was pinned on buntings of Italian and American colors wrapped around the base of the statue. Coins were gathered on trays from spectators along the route....”

Most likely a bandstand was erected as mentioned in the 1901 article and shown in the 1936 photograph. Located at the

nearest major intersection to St. Joachim’s, this bandstand was probably the staging area for the crowd after the Mass and on returning from the procession. Anyone who has seen one of these events can visualize the procession winding its way through the adjacent streets, passing other churches and major locations in the area, and returning to the bandstand where another stream of traditional Italian music played for the gathering.



Bandstand for the Feast of San Vincenzo on Saturday, October 24, 1936, at the intersection of New Chambers, Oak, and Roosevelt Streets. With permission of the New York Public Library.



Make History – Be part of the 125th San Vincenzo Feast

For 125 years, the Feast of San Vincenzo in New York City has been a cherished tradition that brings together families, friends, and visitors to celebrate faith, heritage, community, and culture. As we prepare for this historic milestone, The Craco Society is publishing a special 125th Anniversary Commemorative Journal honoring the legacy of the Feast and the generations who helped sustain it.

We invite you to be part of this once-in-a-generation publication by including a commemorative tribute, family dedication, memorial, or congratulatory message in the 125th Anniversary Commemorative Journal. It will be distributed to attendees, supporters, sponsors, and members of the community and serve as a lasting keepsake of this landmark celebration.

Your commemorative tribute or family dedication is a meaningful way to honor loved ones, celebrate your family's connection to the Feast of San Vincenzo, and help preserve the traditions, faith, and heritage that have united our community for more than 125 years.



Commemorative Tribute Options

- Full Page – \$100
- Half Page – \$50

Tribute submission forms and information are available online at: [The Society Website](#)

Your participation helps sustain this beloved tradition while honoring our ancestors, culture, and traditions. If you need assistance creating your tribute, we would be happy to do that for you. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Fred Spero by phone (774-269-6611) or

Email: memberservices@thecracosociety.org

We hope you will join us in commemorating 125 years of faith, family, and tradition by supporting the 2026 Feast of San Vincenzo Commemorative Journal.

Thank you for your consideration and your support of The Craco Society. ■

125th Anniversary Feast of San Vincenzo Committee



The historic event ribbon shown at left is from a collection of family memorabilia passed down to Society member Marilyn Augustyne by her grandparents, Paolo Benedetto and Anna Lucia Vitarella.