

The Day of Memory and Commitment against mafia in Messina: why?

“Being manufacturers of bridges is a mental dress, an ethical behaviour, a cultural educational path; it concerns the consciousness and the values of each and every individual. But it is also a social and choral work, it asks and it assumes reciprocity. If the bridge is buildt simultaneously from both its ends, the point of junction will be closer and safer, the work will be more stable and long-lasting”

Don Luigi Ciotti

Messina will be the city osting the 21st Day of Memory and Commitment in remembrance of the innocent victims of mafias on the 21st March 2016.



As every year, on the first day of spring - symbol of rebirth -, the network of Libera, local authorities and realities from the third sector, as well as schools and many citizens will rally around the sorrow of the many families of the victims in order to remember all those people who died by the hands of mafias, as well as to create a responsible shared form of Memory in the country which can generate daily engagement and mafia from remembrance.

Messina is a unique city: it is the city which brings together, through the Mediterranean sea, Africa and Europe.



Libera. Associazioni, nomi e numeri contro le mafie

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These waters are those where the myth of Colapesce is originated, a myth of a humble fisherman from Messina who sacrificed himself to hold the weight of Sicily which was sinking into the abyss.

As Colapesce myth, many artists, thinkers and intellectuals, since the Middle Age, found in Messina their will to explore knowledge and discovery. This city is, in fact, the place where Ignazio Di Loyola founded an university, one of the first ones in Italy.

Messina is wounded by a mafioso presence that has rooted over many decades, a place that paid with an enormous amount of blood. Here mafias have been able to exploit the potential that this territory has for connection, poisoning the economy and politics, destroying the land and stealing the future to many young people forced to abandon their birth place.

Messina, a city, a harbour. Messina, port of Sicily. City of long good-byes like the ones given to the many young people leaving, driven away by corruption, mafias and white collars that today take our breaths away and destroy the dreams of freedom that many honest people have.

Messina, city destroyed by the earthquake of 1908 and the bombed 2.805 times during the Second World War.

Messina, city by the sea that, with all Sicily, owes its strong identity to the sea.

Messina, city also full of positivity. Full of many smart young people sharing the same profound desire to be there, to matter, to influence, to stay in their land to enrich and improve it; and with the will to build a bring on the future starting from their present and from the places of their lives.

A bridge of memory is the only possible bridge. Ponte (*Italian for "bridge"*) derives from the Latin *pontem*, meaning passage, union.

It is in this union that we identify the starting point to build, from the 21st of March, a big social and choral work that aims at uniting the memory of the innocent victims of mafias in the 900 places all over Italy that will shout a



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strong message of commitment. Each place will commemorate an innocent victim of mafia, giving each name the deserved dignity. It is from community memory that commitment and social justice arise.

During the 21st March, in the places of memory, we will be called to demolish walls and to build networks, to seek for links and witness truth. We will be a Brigade of Memory and Commitment, the first day of spring as well as the other 365 days of the year.

This is the only bridge we want!



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