

Tiro A Segno's
Cinema Italiano
invites you to a
Special Event

American Women Saints - Mother Cabrini



RSVP NOW!

Thursday, March 21, 2024 at 6:00PM
Meet the documentary filmmakers in person at Tiro

We have a special cinema event for members in March. Late last year, the Tiro A Segno Foundation provided financial support for a documentary film project by Marylou & Jerome Bongiorno entitled *American Women Saints*, a two-part series on Elizabeth Ann Seton and Frances Xavier Cabrini, produced by Bongiorno Productions in association with KTWU and distributed by NETA for PBS stations nationwide.

Thanks in part to the generosity of the Tiro A Segno Foundation, the series is complete and will air nationwide on PBS in March as part of the celebration of Women's History Month. The Tiro A Segno Foundation will appear in the series film credits as a supporter.

On March 21st, Marylou & Jerome Bongiorno will come in person to Tiro A Segno for a special Cinema Italiano - a screening of the Mother Cabrini episode of the series and a discussion with the filmmakers.

Frances Xavier Cabrini (1850-1917), known as Mother Cabrini, the first U.S. citizen to be canonized by the Catholic Church in 1946, was a remarkable Italian American. Born the youngest of thirteen children in a small town near Milan in Lombardy, Mother Cabrini founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in 1880. She had originally wanted to perform missionary work in China, but when she sought the Pope's consent, he advised her to look, "not to the East, but to the West." Arriving in New York in 1889 (one year after the founding of Tiro A Segno), she and the Missionary Sisters provided major support to Italian immigrants to the United States first in New York, and then Chicago. Within days of her arrival, Mother Cabrini organized catechism classes and schooling for children. In New York, a city seemingly filled with chaos and poverty, she provided education for Italian immigrants and established schools, orphanages, and hospitals, including Columbus Hospital (Cabrini Medical Center), often going door to door through the notorious Five Points neighborhood of Lower Manhattan to offer help. She was relentless and resourceful, finding and convincing others to give of their time, money, labor and support to back her charitable mission.

Over 34 years, and despite lifelong frail health, she made 24 transatlantic crossings, established 67 houses for those in need, recruited 1000 sisters, opened 26 schools, 9 orphanages and sanitoriums, and built 3 of the most advanced hospitals in the United States. She never ceased her tireless efforts for the immigrant poor – in fact, when she died on December 22, 1917 at 67 years of age in one of the Chicago hospitals she had founded, she was helping to prepare Christmas candy for local children. Soon after her canonization, the Church named her the patron saint of immigrants.

Marylou & Jerome Bongiorno are Emmy-nominated, award winning, husband-and-wife filmmakers who have created numerous fictional, documentary, art, and experimental films. Their works have been seen in theaters and film festivals, on national PBS, U.S., and foreign television, and in museums, schools, and cultural venues. They have been awarded grants from the Film Society of Lincoln Center, Martin Scorsese, the NEA, the NEH, and Warner Bros. Pictures. The Bongornos are frequent speakers on cinema.



The Bongiorno's film, *Little Kings*, received the \$75,000 Vague Award from Marylou's alma mater, NYU Graduate Film School, and screened in film festivals worldwide, including several in Italy. *Mother-Tongue: Italian American Sons & Mothers*, featuring Martin Scorsese, John Turturro, and Rudy Giuliani, was nominated for an Emmy Award, and screened internationally. They are also known for their *3Rs Trilogy of Documentaries on Urban America*, three films all set in their native city of Newark, all currently on national PBS - *Revolution '67* is about the 1967 civil uprising in Newark, *The Rule* is about urban school reform and a Benedictine monastery in Newark that educates inner-city children, and *Rust* tackles solutions to inner-city poverty. Marylou & Jerome screened and discussed their short fiction film *Our Return to Italy* at Tiro last September with some of their actors in attendance. Soon, they will be location scouting, for the longer version of the film, with the support of the Veneto Film Commission. Their film theme aligns with the Italian Foreign Ministry declaring 2024 as the year of Italian Roots Tourism. These are just some of the Bongiorno's films that have garnered critical acclaim.

The event will be a screening of the Mother Cabrini episode of the series with a runtime of 86 minutes and a discussion with the filmmakers. Tiro's 'Theater Snack Bar' will serve a menu of 'Cibo di Cinema' and, following the movie, there will be a discussion with the filmmakers.

So join your fellow Tiro members as we explore the life of Mother Cabrini directly with the filmmakers that created her documentary!

Please note – space is limited – first come, first served.