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Italian Heritage Month Kick-Off From The 2023 Queen Isabella

Italian Heritage Month has kicked off. Italian heritage festivities started in San Francisco this past weekend. As this year's 2023 Queen Isabella, I get the honor and privilege to share my Italian heritage with everyone during all the upcoming festivities.

The festivities began with La Madonna del Lume Memorial Mass on Saturday, September 30th. The mass was held in the Fisherman's & Seamen Memorial Chapel on Pier 45 and was followed by a boat ride on the Red & White Fleet ferry. Madonna del Lume is a Sicilian tradition that honors the "Lady of the Light" and the fisherman and seamen lost at sea. The ferry sails out to the Golden Gate Bridge, stopping underneath for a prayer service. Once stopped, a moment of silence was held, and the 2023 Madonna del Lume Queen, Brianna Dorio Wraa, and I threw flower reefs off the ferry. After the reefs were thrown overboard, other passengers threw flowers overboard.

The next day Madonna del Lume festivities continued with the 88th annual La Madonna del Lume High Mass and parade. The High Mass was held at Saints Peter and Paul, where the 2023 Madonna del Lume Queen was crowned. Following the mass, there was a parade procession from Saints Peter and Paul down Columbus Avenue to the Fisherman's & Seaman Memorial Chapel for another prayer service, and then Father Tho Bui blessed the boats at Pier 45.

In the evening after the parade, the 3rd annual Lighting the Tricolore San Francisco Italian Heritage Block Party kicked off the start of Italian Heritage Month in San Francisco. The Block Party was held at the San Francisco Italian Athletic Club and on Stockton Street. The Block Party featured games, face painting, a photo booth, Torani Italian soda, GIO gelato, and most importantly delicious Italian food. Before the block was lit up there were speeches from San Francisco supervisors, Consul General Sergio Strozzi, the 2023 Madonna del Lume Queen, and me. Consul General Sergio Strozzi and the supervisors led us in a countdown in Italian, and the San Francisco Italian Athletic Club and Saints Peter and Paul Church became lit up in the Italian Tricolore.







