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Lighted Bike Ride 4th Annual Lighted Bike Ride to benefit Mrs. Claus a Merry Cause Friday, December 17, 2021 at 6:30 PM **DONATIONS WELCOME**

YOU'RE INVITED TO A FUN-FILLED FAMILY EVENING BIKE RIDE ON DECEMBER 17th, STARTING AT TROPICAL REALTY AT 6:30PM.

WE WILL RIDE UP AND DOWN US-1 WITH A SHERIFF ESCORT RETURNING TO TROPICAL REALTY. (102901 OVERSEAS HWY.)

DECORATE YOUR BIKE, WEAR UGLY SWEATERS... WHATEVER FESTIVE ATTIRE YOU WISH.

THIS IS OUR 22nd YEAR AND THE 4th ANNUAL LIGHTED BIKE RIDE. WE ADOPT KIDS AND THEIR FAMILIES TO MAKE THEIR CHRISTMAS WISHES COME TRUE.

FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO FACEBOOK EVENT: LIGHTED BIKE RIDE-KEY LARGO



THE FEAST OF THE SEVEN FISHES- or -FESTA DEI SETTE PESCI

there is food involved. Sometimes lots say it is still evolving. of food. But what are we really celebrating and how did it get started? I asked a lot of people who should know about it but came up with guesses. I figured that I've been celebrating it for 73 years maybe it's time to get some facts. What I clearly know is that it is part of the immigrant heritage for many of us. But who and

where did it really start? Foremost, it is the Christmas Eve Vigil (La Vigilia) dinner and is celebrated mainly by those whose roots go back to Southern Italy. While it is not called a feast in Italy, they prefer to call it a festival as in a Grand Meal – there is a lot of food that takes hours to make and even more hours to eat. Like what we had at Thanksgiving would be the appetizer. This Southern Italy tradition is in anticipation of the birth of Jesus. Italian immigrants brought this celebration to the United States by way of New York's Little Italy in the 1800's. It combined elements of our Italian

As with any Italian feast or festival history and today's trends. Which is to to the United States and other coun-

In the Catholic faith, Friday is traditionally a day to fast by avoiding red meat and eating fish. (That was changed in the 1960's by the Pope, but the desire to hold onto the roots of some of us held the tradition.) Except that we were allowed to break the fast after sunset on December 24th. Hence, States than Italy; however, we are a meal of biblical proportions.

This Southern Italy tradition was started on the coastline known for its seafood. And seafood was preferred both because of its abundance and it was more affordable in the south, which was a poorer region of Italy. With the Unification of Italy in 1861 the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies (roughly Naples to Bari and south to the island of Sicily) was absorbed into what we know as the Italy of today. With the Kingdom gone, funds were reallocated from the south to the industrial North. What was the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, southern Italy, became impoverished. Between 1880 and the 1924's about four-million Italians from the region emmigrated

tries and brought many traditions with them. In New York's Little Italy it was called La Cena della Vigila or something close to that. Because of their native southern Italy, this feast is actually more popular in the United responsible for the resurgence of the fest in Italy. A tradition that we exported.

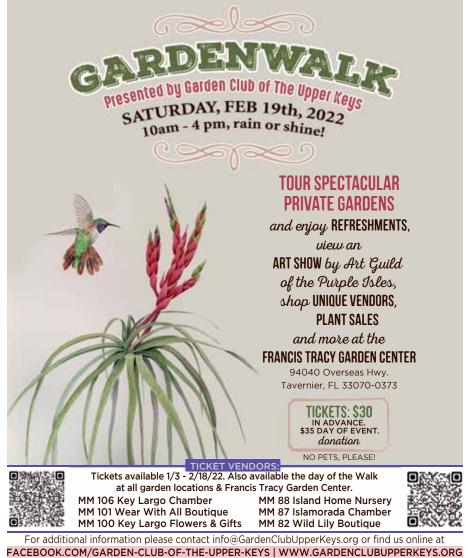
But what's with the SEVEN fish? Because nobody really has proof of the meaning, and even fewer agree on what the number seven actually represents, it's open for discussion. It may refer to the seven sacraments of the church: Anointing of the Sick. Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Holy Orders, and Matrimony. Or perhaps it's from the seven deadly sins from Pope Gregory in 590AD: pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath, and sloth. Or perhaps the seven hills of Rome: Aventine, Capitoline, Caelian, Esquiline, Palatine, Quirinal, and, Viminal. Or the seven kings of Rome:

Romulus, Numa Pompilius, Tullus Hostilius, Ancus Marcius, Lucius Tarquinius Priscus, Servius Tullius, and Lucius Tarquinius Superbus. Or perhaps the seven virtues: chastity, charity, diligence, humility, kindness, patience, and temperance. Or the seven days God took to create the Heavens and Earth. Or it could be that seven fishes were in season and on sale that day way back when.

Few people agree on what the seven fishes should be. But for my mom who didn't particularly like to prepare fish except to do one fish every Friday of my childhood, she said she would burn one seven different ways for us. My dad did this meal, but the kids didn't eat the sardines. And we would argue that clams aren't fish and neither is eel. I mean, really, why eat the bait?

In any case, the most important part of the celebration is food, family, and friends being together as we were growing up and now, hopefully, we are surrounded by family and friends at





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