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A mass to make Mike's "abductors" repent

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Don Mauro Pozzi, the parish priest of the village of Dagnente, near Arona, spoke once more to the abductors of the body of Mike Bongiorno. Throughout the day, he stayed close to the cemetery, which lies on a hill outside Arona, waiting for news. He spoke to the relatives, in an attempt to comfort them, and condemned the deed harshly. This morning, during a mass in the little church that stands beside the cemetery, he invited the parishioners also to pray for those who had committed the theft, so that they would "examine their consciences". With him were inhabitants of Dagnente, for whom Mike had become a local, one of them.

In the meantime, the investigations continue, to find the thieves' tracks. The hill, from which there is a lovely view of the town of Verbano, has been combed by the Forensic Science Department from Parma, who arrived yesterday afternoon. The carabinieri of Arona and Novara are also involved in the investigations. The work of the forensic scientists was stopped this afternoon, and **at about 3.30 p.m., the cemetery was reopened.**

There continues to be a strong fear that the people who stole the body (it is likely that more than one was involved) did so for money. Until now, no one has come forward, either to provide useful information, or to demand a ransom.

The precedent – Exactly ten years ago, in March 2001, the coffin of Enrico Cuccia was stolen from the cemetery of Meina, a few kilometres from Arona. The thieves demanded a ransom. The coffin had been hidden in a hayloft in Valle di Susa. The film "L'ultimo crodino" was based on this occurrence.

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