

VareseNews

Bread and fruit; from school canteens, to those of the poor

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In the first three months of 2013, 187 kg of bread and 284 kg of fruit were collected from school canteens. These were the surplus rations or leftovers of the children of **5 primary schools** and the European School, **in Varese**. The food was collected for “recycling” in the canteens of those in need, by the association **Amici del Gulliver** (Friends of Gulliver), who were given the task in the spring of 2012 by the Fondazione Banco Alimentare (the Italian Food Bank Foundation), for the “Siticibo” (“Foodsites”) project.

For ten years (thanks to the “law of the good Samaritan”), an attempt has been made to eliminate waste from the dinner table, in order to help those most in need. For three years, this virtuous circle has also involved the **Medea, Morandi, Pascoli, Parini and Sacco Primary Schools**: the bread and fruit left over are collected by Gulliver volunteers, who first check that hygiene norms have been respected, and then load them all onto a van provided by the Food Bank and take them to the **canteen of the monks, at the Brunella Church, and to the canteen run by the nuns, in Via Bernardino Luini**.

In one year, the **Friends of Gulliver have extended their collection round**; in addition to the state schools, they also go to the canteens of **a number of companies**, such as BTicino, and to the warehouses of some **supermarkets**. In this latter case, **they also collect hot food**, still wrapped; at the beginning of the year, **2610 first courses, 985 second courses and 492 side dishes** were collected. “Around the world, a third of all food is wasted,” said **Don Michele Barban, who runs the Friends of Gulliver**. “These are occasions when we can take care of those who are suffering and in need. Both interest and sensitivity have grown. Next summer, we are counting on extending the collection round further, **to Cassinetta**, and to the Whirlpool canteen, thanks also to the collaboration with the Rainoldi Association, who will also benefit.”

There are currently about 15 volunteers that Gulliver makes available, although it would be better if there were more; the food is collected primarily to help workers who are being transferred, have been made redundant, or are unemployed, but also pensioners. The commitment enables people to have recognised the abilities they have acquired, which they can use in the world of employment. Consequently, people are being sought who can give a few hours of their time every day. Two trips are made: one in the morning, to the company and supermarket canteens, and one in the afternoon, to the schools.

As we mentioned, the recipients include **the canteen run by nuns, in Via Bernardino**

Luini, and the canteen of the Brunella Church. Although the monks will be leaving the church very soon, all of the parish's initiatives, from the canteen for the poor, to the shower service, to the wardrobe service, will continue normally. **The parishioners and volunteers will be supported by the Caritas organisation.**

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