



**END-OF-YEAR MESSAGE OF
H.R.H. VITTORIO EMANUELE
DUKE OF SAVOY
PRINCE OF NAPLES**

GENEVA – 31 DECEMBER 2021

Dear Italians,

At the end of 2020, as I shared some thoughts with you while offering the traditional greetings of my House, I expressed the hope that the pandemic emergency could be overcome by looking beyond factions and partisan interests, rediscovering the patriotic spirit that has allowed our Italy to overcome the most difficult trials of its history.

Thanks also to the sense of responsibility of the political forces, the past year has seen the birth of a government of national unity under the leadership of Mario Draghi, at last a competent and experienced figure of high international standing.

In recent days, the pandemic has unfortunately taken us by surprise with a distressing and sudden spike in contagions, but thanks to the vaccination campaign that has been conducted in our country and made possible by the extraordinary self-sacrifice of our doctors, nurses, health workers, Armed Forces, Police Forces and volunteers, we can now look with greater confidence at the invisible danger that looms over our homes and loved ones.

General Francesco Paolo Figliuolo is a magnificent Soldier, a representative of the best tradition of the Alpine Corps, whose motto "*Di qui non si passa!*" (There's no way through here!) reflects the generous, faithful and proud spirit of sacrifice of the Italian Army. He is a reassuring and comforting figure to all those who were expecting a definite change of pace in the management of the health emergency. Gen. Figliuolo is the symbol of Italy fighting with the weapons of perseverance and hard work. On behalf of the House of Savoy, I wish him all the best for the continuation of his work.

Unfortunately, Covid-19 is not only claiming lives in hospitals. The virus has brought with it and amplified a series of very serious pandemics to which we must direct our attention. I am thinking of the tragedy of poverty, which is progressively increasing and affects millions of Italian families, and of the thousands of companies and small businesses that have been forced to close over the last year: it is a tragic but silent world that only emerges in everyday life and which must now spur us on to work to ensure that no one is left behind.

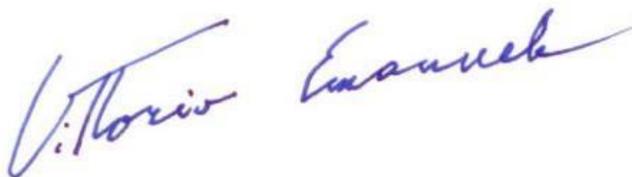
I assure you that in their own small way the Dynastic Orders of my House and in particular the Order of Saints Maurice and Lazarus, which will celebrate its 450th anniversary in 2022, will be faithful to its mission of charity and to the magisterium of the Roman Pontiff and will continue to provide its support so that the social pandemics of our time may be addressed and dealt with in a tangible way.

This too, I believe, is what being a patriot is about.

In conclusion, the wishes of my House, whose historical legacy I have the task of safeguarding, cannot but start again on this occasion from an appeal to preserve as a precious treasure, the unity of purpose that has made our country great, especially in the most complex moments of its history, when the sense of resignation was overwhelmed by the bursting vitality of that courage that is the sublime of heroism. As we mark the 100th anniversary of the burial of the Unknown Soldier in the Vittoriano in Rome, which we commemorated last November (1921-2021), I think back to that unsung Italian hero who, wearing the grey-green uniform in the Great War, from the Stelvio to the Adriatic, gave what was most precious to restore and give us dignity and hope: his own life. Let us draw nourishment from this example, let us cherish its proud memory, in order to look to the future.

May the spirit of the Piave be alive in us so that we can face the hard months that lie ahead.

I wish You and Your families all the best for a new year filled with hope.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Vittorio Emanuele". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.