

DON MILANI

On the mountainside of Monte Giovi, few kilometers far from Vicchio, rises the little village of Barbiana.

In 1954 don Lorenzo Milani was sent to the village as the new prior. There he would live his last 14 years of life as man, priest and mentor.

Up there in Barbiana, where there was no school, don Milani started one of the most remarkable teaching experiences of our country. He founded a “full time” school where the poor kids of the country were taught all kinds of basic subjects and practical works. The main collective work “*Letter to a teacher*” reported this experience in the form of an exposure to the discriminatory school system of the time. This brought on a large pedagogical debate and motivated thousands of students and teachers who sought for a new way of schooling. Indeed, from the 60s on, the school of Barbiana is a model and promoter of basic values for sovereign citizens that can exercise critical thinking, principles of equity and solidarity against despotism and discrimination.

Barbiana, even after recent renovation works, has remained a poor and harsh place that preserves the memory of that great social experience.

In 2001 Vicchio founds the “*don Lorenzo Milani and Barbiana center of documentation*”, an institution which promotes events that delve into the cultural heritage of Barbiana in order to renew its value in the present time.

The institution is based in the local library: Biblioteca Comunale di Vicchio, piazza Don Lorenzo Milani, 6 - Telefono 055.8448251

Link: www.istituzionedonmilani.org email: info@istituzionedonmilani.org

Since 2002 Vicchio has been promoting, in cooperation with other towns, the annual “march to Barbiana” to recall its past and enjoy the atmosphere.

Links:

www.barbiana.it

www.donlorenzomilani.it

www.marciadibarbiana.it