



The Father Christmas Company will be visiting the Istituto degli Innocenti on 8 December to surprise the children in our three homes with an avalanche of Christmas presents.

**Father Christmases to visit the Istituto degli Innocenti
in the company of "honorary" Father Christmas Cesare Prandelli**

Fifty-nine Father Christmases plus one exceptional Father Christmas, Italian national soccer team coach Cesare Prandelli, will be visiting the Istituto degli Innocenti in Florence, a historic institute that has been taking care of children for over six hundred years, on Friday. The holiday season for the children in the Istituto's three family homes is going to be enlivened this year by the Father Christmas Company with its full complement of gifts and Christmas carols.

The Company will be arriving at the Istituto at 11 o'clock in the company of the Milano 25 taxi (www.milano25.com) and of Cesare Prandelli, our new "honorary" Father Christmas and a former testimonial for the Tuscan Cancer Association who has been involved for some time now in activities designed to raise public awareness of children's plight.

The group will be handing out the gifts they have collected to the kids in our homes, in the presence of Istituto President Alessandra Maggi.

This will be followed by a visit to the recently inaugurated *Children of Italy* exhibition in the Museo degli Innocenti, which takes a look at the newly united country's first fifty years through the stories of children taken in by children's institutes around the country. The exhibition is open every day until 18 March 2012, from 10 am to 7 pm.

The Company will be spending the rest of the day in various venues in Florence. In the afternoon the Father Christmases will be in Piazza del Duomo, where they will be joining the "Angels of Beauty" and the children to perform a ring-a-rosies around the Christmas tree, as Mayor Matteo Renzi switches on the tree's Christmas lights.

The Father Christmas Company is a nonprofit association founded by Roberto Giacinti in Florence in 2007. Each year the Company, which comprises Florentine businessmen, managers and professional people, chooses to support projects for children and the organisations that devote their energies to caring for children's welfare.

Held up as a universal model for child care and shelter down the ages, the Istituto today is a public welfare organisation that has continued to perform its traditional mission without a break.

The Istituto operates in accordance with the goals established by the UN Convention on Children's Rights, by studying children's situations, experimenting with services and facilities for them and promoting the childhood ethic, as well safeguarding and enhancing its own monumental, historical and artistic heritage.

The Istituto's primary task still involves taking in and looking after children, updating its activities and services to changing social conditions on the basis of many centuries of solid experience. For instance, the large institute for abandoned children was replaced by family-sized homes in the 1970s.

These homes offer temporary shelter and accommodation to mothers and children from Tuscany who are directed to them by the region's social services or by the judicial authorities. The *Casa Bambini* is for children aged 0 to 6, the *Casa Madri* is for mothers with children or expecting mothers in difficulty, and the *Casa delle Rondini* is for mothers in the final stages of a process eventually leading to independence.

www.compagniadibabbonatale.com - www.istitutodegliinnocenti.it

Press office - 39 055 2037331, 263 - ufficiostampa@istitutodegliinnocenti.it