

CasArcobaleno: A Lasallian experience on the peripheries of Naples (Italy)

It was after the Chapter for the unification of the two Italian Districts, when the new District of Italy was born in June 2003, that a process of discernment began, thanks to which it was possible to initiate the first religious community in Scampia, on the northern outskirts of the city of Naples, to devote itself to the poor and marginalised.



In 2007, Brothers Raffaele Lievore and Enrico Muller of the District of Italy, together with Brother Martin Salvador of the then District of Valencia-Palma, began their educational mission here.

"The educational space, granted on loan for use by the Municipality of Naples, was named *CasArcobaleno* (Rainbow Home) so that it could be part of the realisation of God's dream, which is to make a home, and of his desire for a lasting covenant with every child and every person", says Brother Enrico, one of the historical initiators of the project.



CasArcobaleno is a Lasallian educational space, run by the *Cooperativa Occhi Aperti*, (Open Eyes Cooperative) founded by the Brothers and some Neapolitan educators, where since 2007 a second chance school project called "IO VALGO" (I AM WORTH IT) has been running. "This project allows some young adolescents

who have been referred and sent by their schools to become protagonists of an educational and formative journey so that they can take back control of their lives and be accompanied in building a fully human future", continues Br. Enrico.

But *CasArcobaleno* is also a place for children and young people who attend school and who every afternoon experience it as a space for meeting, playing, studying, family time and peace. Even before it was inaugurated, *CasArcobaleno* had already begun to welcome volunteers. The first was a Scout group from Milan, founded by Brother Michele Carena.

CasArcobaleno is also an art workshop, where, since 2009, thanks to Ms Antonella Prota Giurleo, the Scampia International Art Symposium has been held, hosting almost a dozen artists every year who are “ready to live a week dedicated to art in order to sow beauty in people’s hearts and throughout the neighbourhood”, states Br. Enrico.

Within the orange and purple walls, we have experienced, as Pope Leo says in *Dilexi Te*, that “Christian love works miracles and knows no limits. It makes what was apparently impossible happen”. (DT 120). This Home has welcomed Lasallians from all over the world, parishes, missionary groups and Scouts, but also state schools, and “everyone is able to grasp the depth of the experiences that can be lived here to be seeds of peace: experiences of service to Neapolitan children and young people, as well as to the Roma community”, says the Brother, enthusiastic about all that has been done and will still be done in this structure. “Moments of community, where relationships are lived without masks, with sobriety and simplicity, for a more just world and in communion; spaces of faith so that the Gospel may be shared and God may be present alongside each person for an inclusive Church”.



CasArcobaleno, among buildings up to 13 storeys high, despite its small size, helps us to encounter a different God, the God who becomes flesh in the small and the poor, the God of promises who “a bruised reed he shall not break, and a smoldering wick he shall not quench” (Isaiah 42:3) so that everyone, even if wounded, “may come to salvation” as De La Salle declares, that is, so that they may feel

welcomed, accompanied, loved and able to resume their journey with confidence and hope, no longer alone.

"We can say, then", concludes Br. Enrico Muller, "that *CasArcobaleno* is in reality a well where those who are thirsty can come and quench their thirst at the source of water that is God, who has promised us life and life in abundance for 'all, all, all' always".

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