



AGATA SMERALDA - Brazil

Support to the Shelter for single mothers, Salvador Bahia.

Agata Smeralda is named after the first baby hosted by the Spedale degli Innocenti in Florence, on February 5th 1445.

Agata Smeralda is, nowadays, a project that operates in the Brazilian favelas. Its aim is to help street children.

More recently, some solidarity projects were realized in Albania, Ivory Coast, India, Sri Lanka, Jerusalem, Congo, Nigeria and Haiti. There are 10.000 children in Brazil who are welcomed by missionaries and lay people in 160 shelters located in Bahia. Thanks to the support of "long-distance adoption", these children can have a healthy balanced diet, they can benefit from adequate health care and have access to quality schooling.

There are 124 schools which are part of the literacy project: six shelters for juvenile girls taken off the street, a shelter for single mothers sent by the Juvenile Court of Salvador Bahia, three healthcare centers, some job placement centers in which more than 2800 young men can learn how to work in enterprises and specialized companies, a community center where more than 700 young men can attend several professional training courses, including courses on art-culture-education at the favela of Alto do Peru. The project also offers for some young people who are able and willing to learn, the opportunity to attend the university with scholarships.

The City of Florence gives support to the Family Shelter for single mothers at Itapúa. It is one of the structures supported by the Agata Smeralda project in Salvador Bahia, which is twinned with Florence. Moreover, the center, which works with the Juvenile Court, hosts single mothers and their babies and helps them when pregnant and after the childbirth. There are two supervisors who take care of single mothers and help them to cope with health, psychological and emotional issues. The girls are then accompanied, where possible, in a process of reintegration and autonomy through the recovery of family, personal and community relationships.