

Blessing stopped for safety reasons

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It was not a religious choice, but for legal and safety reasons. This is how the council of the Montessori school in Cardano al Campo defended itself against the accusation of forbidding the priest from blessing the classrooms.

One week ago, following an unexpected decision by the administration, Don Bruno Perego was forbidden to enter the school and had to bless the children on the pavement.

The town councillor Raffaele Cattaneo, also intervened in the matter, commenting controversially, "I don't think holy water can do any harm, nobody's been hospitalised because of holy water."

Today, the school administration intervened with an official bulletin. "The school administration's decision on 30/11/2010 not to allow the Christmas blessing was taken solely for legal and safety reasons," the announcement says, "and not for religious reasons."

The school claims to have decided on the basis of the already mentioned ministerial note in February 2009, which forbids any kind of worship during lesson time. For this reason, the administration had assessed the option of having the classrooms blessed outside school hours.

"Unfortunately," the announcement says, "there would have had to be adults present who were not part of the teaching staff, as it was outside school hours, to ensure the safety of the children, and the logistical organisation of the ceremony. As no adult was prepared to be there, most of the administrators decided it was not possible to grant the request. This was for the safety of the children."

In the note, the administration confirmed that it would change its position if an adult was found who would take on the responsibility for safety outside lesson times. The controversy will probably continue.

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