



MCCV News

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Serious allegations of corruption lead to premature general election in Malta

On 1 May 2017 during a Labour Day Mass Meeting held in Valletta Malta's Prime Minister Dr Joseph Muscat called a snap general election to be held on 3 June, giving in to mounting pressure over serious allegations that his wife Michelle Muscat is personally embroiled in the Panama Papers scandal.

"Everybody knows about the attacks made in the past few days on me and my family. I have nothing to fear because I am clean," Dr Muscat told a large crowd at the meeting in Valletta.

Egrant's ultimate beneficial owner

Dr Muscat has been fighting fresh allegations that his wife is the ultimate beneficial owner (UBO) of Egrant Inc., a third Panama-registered offshore company, that was set up some days after the last election in 2013. The other two companies that were set up at about the same time are Hearnville Inc. and Tillgate Inc.—companies owned by Minister Konrad Mizzi and Muscat's chief of staff Keith Schembri respectively. Malta-based auditing firm Nexia BT owned by Brian Tonna set up all three companies. Nexia BT was then the representative in Malta of Panama-based Mossack Fonseca law firm.

Panama Papers

Minister Mizzi was the only minister from an EU member state identified in the Panama Papers. The Prime Minister was subsequently severely criticised for failing to take decisive action against Mizzi and Schembri and instead preferred to protect them.

The Panama Papers affair involved a massive data leak from the Mossack Fonseca law firm that revealed secretive offshore entities used by many of the world's wealthy to stash assets and in some cases evade taxes and launder money.



Prime Minister Dr Joseph Muscat and Mrs Michelle Muscat

While having an offshore company is not of itself illegal, it is often associated with money laundering and other illicit schemes.

A delegation of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) from that parliament's Panama tax inquiry committee had visited Malta earlier this year. Keith Schembri and the Nexia BT accountants, who set up the offshore accounts, refused to meet with them.

The latest scandal erupted on 20 April 2017 when the prominent Maltese journalist and blogger, Daphne Caruana Galizia, posted on her blog that she was aware of a declaration of trust which shows that shares in Egrant Inc. were held by Mossack Fonseca nominees for "Mrs Michelle Muscat". Mrs Muscat has strongly denied the accusation.

The leaked cache of papers, more commonly known as the Panama Papers, did not show the owners of Egrant Inc., but instead revealed links to a Malta-based auditing firm Nexia BT owned by Brian Tonna.

Further allegations of corruption

Mrs Caruana Galizia in her blog alleged that large sums of money had been moved between bank accounts in Azerbaijan and accounts held by Egrant Inc. and the offshore firms belonging to the Prime Minister's chief of staff Keith Schembri and Minister without portfolio Konrad Mizzi. The relevant money transfers between these accounts were allegedly conducted by Pilatus Bank.

The blogger's allegation of Mrs Muscat's being the beneficial owner of Egrant Inc. was based on information provided to the blogger by a whistleblower, a Russian woman, who had been employed at Pilatus Bank as Executive Assistant to the Chairman. The whistleblower claimed she had seen and scanned a copy of a Declaration of Trust document for Egrant Inc., which had Mrs. Muscat's name on it as the ultimate beneficial owner.

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Serious allegations of corruption lead to premature general election in Malta

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Pilatus Bank

Late on 20 April 2017, the day when the Egrant scandal erupted on Caruana Galizia's blogsite, the bank's chairman, an Iranian business-man, Seyed Ali Sadr Hasheminejad, and the bank's Risk Manager were captured on video by reporters of Net TV, the station owned by the Nationalist Party, carting three suitcases from the bank's premises in suspicious circumstances that evening.

What caused most consternation among many political observers in Malta was video footage of the Police Commissioner Lawrence Cutajar, who rather than ordering the preservation of any possible evidence at Pilatus Bank, was located at a rabbit restaurant in Mgarr, apparently totally oblivious to what was going on at the bank's premises at Ta' Xbiex. The Police Commissioner refused to answer the reporter's questions about what action the police were taking about the situation. This was just after Prime Minister Muscat had called a press conference to deny the allegations made about him.

The police turned up at the Pilatus Bank premises 12 hours later, well after the bank owner left the island allegedly on a plane bound for Azerbaijan, preventing any inspection or investigation of any documents that may have been removed from the bank's premises.

Pilatus Bank was granted a licence on 3 January 2014 to act as a credit institution in terms of the Banking Act by the Malta Financial Services Authority (MFSA). On 24 April 2017 the MFSA defended its decision to grant such a licence to the bank, stating that the application for the licence was processed and assessed in full compliance with applicable legal requirements and in accordance with the its authorisation procedures for the granting of a credit institution licence.

The alleged shady dealings sparked large demonstrations in Malta in late April with thousands taking to the streets in a national protest against corruption.

Magisterial enquiry

Late on 20 April Dr Muscat called a media conference in which he announced that he requested the conduct of a magisterial inquiry into the Egrant allegations. Magistrate Aaron Bugeja was appointed to lead the inquiry into whether there is evidence linking Egrant Inc. with the prime minister and his wife. The inquiry is unlikely to conclude before the election.

"My duty is not just to protect myself and my family but also to safeguard my country, and I will not tolerate a situation where jobs are lost because of uncertainty," said the Prime Minister, who called the snap election a full year before the scheduled end of his first term.

The Nationalist Party leader, Dr Simon Busuttil, on several occasions called for Muscat to step down. However, Dr Muscat told Maltese media that he would step down from office if the inquiry revealed any ties. "I am confident the inquiry will not find anything, because I know there is nothing to find," he said.

Criminal investigation ordered

On 4 May the inquiring magistrate Aaron Bugeja found that there are grounds for the initiation of a criminal investigation of Keith Schembri and Brian Tonna for alleged kickbacks they received on the sale of Maltese passports, and money-laundering. The transactions in question took place between their accounts at Pilatus Bank. Magistrate Bugeja stated that another magistrate would be appointed to lead the inquiry. Magistrate Natasha Galea Sciberras was selected by lot to conduct the criminal inquiry.

On 5 May the Malta Independent newspaper revealed that evidence from a source, who worked closely with Pilatus Bank until a few months ago, suggested that an investigation into Pilatus Bank conducted by the Financial Intelligence Analysis Unit (FIAU), a government agency established under the *Prevention of Money Laundering Act*, on dubious accounts held by Pilatus Bank for Politically Exposed Persons (PEPs) in Malta and Azerbaijan resulted in a damning report kept secret by the authorities privy to such reports. The MFSA produced the report together with FIAU, and it was then given to the Attorney General, Dr Peter Grech, who also chairs the FIAU, in order to investigate.

According to Leader of the Opposition Dr Simon Busuttil, the Attorney General had seen the FIAU report on Pilatus Bank and did not do anything about it. He called for the Attorney General to provide an explanation to the public for his inaction.

Strengthening Malta's institutions

Addressing a press conference on 5 May at Senglea, on the fourth day of the PN's electoral campaign titled 'I Choose Malta', Dr Busuttil highlighted the failure of Malta's institutions to take action to investigate and stamp out corruption. One of the proposals he announced related to the strengthening of the country's institutions.

He said that under the proposal the decision for the appointment of persons in positions of trust will be decided by a two-thirds majority vote in Parliament. He pledged a "radical change" in the constitution so that the structure and organs of the country, "work autonomously and be of service to the people rather than the Government or the Prime Minister."

'Forza Nazzjonali' coalition

On 27 April the Nationalist Party and the Democratic Party, led by former Labour MP Dr Marlene Farrugia, announced an agreement to form a coalition as *Forza Nazzjonali* (National Force), working together to give Malta a new government that was clean and honest.

In the meantime, on 29 April the resignation of the Labour Party Whip Dr Godfrey Farrugia provided some insight into the state of affairs within the Party. In an open letter to the Prime Minister he stated that "The people's confidence towards the Labour ideal should never have been betrayed and used to push the agenda of the few who, it is clear, do not have the national interest at heart."

On 13 May Dr Godfrey Farrugia resigned from the Labour Party and joined the Democratic Party. In another open letter to the Prime Minister, he gave as the reason for his resignation the fact that he felt that "the Party had retained its name but lost its soul."

Damaging to Malta's reputation

The Labour Party was elected with a strong majority in 2013, obtaining 36,000 votes more than the Nationalist Party, but the government's tenure has been damaged with allegations of corruption emanating from the publication of the Panama Papers over a year ago and secret close dealings with Azerbaijan, a country well known for its corrupt government.

The prime minister claims that his government has delivered what he calls "an economic miracle", with the first national budget surplus in 35 years, record low unemployment and steady economic growth, and deserves to be re-elected.

However, the timing of the latest allegations of corruption leading to the snap election and of the magisterial inquiry now under way is especially damaging to Malta's reputation, given the fact that Malta currently holds the rotating presidency of the EU until 1 July. ♦

[Sources: timesofmalta.com and independent.com.mt]



President's Perspective

A grave political situation in Malta

I recently returned to Australia from a four week visit to Malta, my country of birth. I saw significant changes to the country since my last visit there seven years ago. You could not miss the substantial development in buildings, beautification of the island, roads and commercial premises.

Much of this beautification process was financed from funds derived from the European Union, such as, the renovations of the bastions around the Grand Harbour and other historical buildings in Malta and Gozo. Private investments have fuelled a wave of high rise development which undoubtedly has adversely impacted the landscape in some areas of Malta.

Restaurants are plentiful and mostly run by foreign-owned businesses. The meals are of high quality and extremely attractive to many overseas visitors.

Tourism continues to be the largest industry with two million tourists visiting the Maltese islands last year. The country's central location in the Mediterranean, centuries of remarkable history spanning from Neolithic times and the numerous places of interest throughout the islands continue to attract tourists from all over the world. With its temperate climate and the warm hospitality of the Maltese people, to say nothing of its superb beaches, it's not hard to see why Malta is such an attractive holiday destination.

During my stay I was feasted by my many relatives, who saw to it that I visited every corner of the island, bringing back several happy memories of my early years in Malta before migrating with my family to Australia more than sixty years ago.

Early general elections amid corruption allegations

Malta could be considered a heaven on earth were it not for the current political and constitutional crisis.

Before I continue, I wish to state that, while the MCCV is a non-political organisation and has always strived to stay neutral in Maltese partisan politics, it would be remiss of me and the MCCV not to inform our community members about the grave political situation in our beloved country. The situation is extremely serious and these exceptional circumstances, in my view, warrant a departure from not commenting on Maltese politics.

Malta will be going to the polls on Saturday 3 June. Prime Minister Dr Joseph Muscat announced an obviously planned snap election more than one year before it was due. It was his response to mounting pressure resulting from serious allegations of corruption implicating his wife in the ownership of a company called Egrant, one of three companies set up in Panama some days after the Government came to power in March 2013. The other two were owned by Minister Konrad Mizzi and the Prime Minister's chief of staff Keith Schembri, both of whom had also established trusts in New Zealand.

The Prime Minister requested a Magisterial Inquiry into the Egrant allegations and Magistrate Aaron Bugeja, as the duty magistrate at the time, was appointed to conduct the inquiry. Leader of the Opposition Dr Busuttil, prominent journalist and blogger Mrs Caruana Galizia and the Russian whistleblower, who is a former employee of Pilatus Bank, have all given evidence to the inquiry, which is still in progress.

Based on information supplied to him by the Leader of the Opposition, Magistrate Bugeja found that there was sufficient

evidence against Keith Schembri and Brian Tonna to warrant the conduct of a criminal investigation, which is now being undertaken by another magistrate.

What is of real concern is the fact that several institutions have failed to do their constitutional duty, starting with the Police Commissioner and the Attorney General. They have both been accused of dereliction of duties by the Leader of the Opposition as they both sat on the Financial Intelligence Analysis Unit (FIAU) reports for a year and taken no action to investigate and prosecute the matters raised in the reports against Keith Schembri and his accountant Brian Tonna in relation to kickbacks relating to the Individual Investor Programme (IIP), also known as the sale of passports, as evidenced by suspicious transactions in Pilatus Bank.

The Police Commissioner also failed in his duty to order the preservation of any possible evidence at Pilatus Bank, before the bank's chairman accompanied by the bank's Risk Manager had an opportunity to allegedly remove documents from the bank's premises under cover of darkness.

There is no doubt that Malta's reputation has suffered greatly from these serious allegations of corruption, which have engulfed the government, not just within the European Union but throughout the world. The future of Malta's financial services industry is at risk.

The staggering level of alleged corruption in the highest ranks within the Maltese Government is unprecedented and alarming. The allegations of corruption recently exposed by the journalist Caruana Galizia are astounding. Her courage and perseverance in following through with her investigation of the alleged corruption in the government are simply to be admired.

It was also courageous of the former Labour MP Dr Godfrey Farrugia to express his sincere views on the government, stating in an open letter of resignation from Party Whip addressed to the prime minister: "The people's confidence towards the Labour ideal should never have been betrayed and used to push the agenda of the few who, it is clear, do not have the national interest at heart." In another open letter to the prime minister on his subsequent resignation from the Labour Party, he stated that he felt that "the Party had retained its name but lost its soul."

If the prime minister believes that a win at the forthcoming elections will mean that a majority of the Maltese electors condone the alleged misconduct of his inner circle, I believe that he is badly mistaken as its effect will linger much longer after the election.

It is hoped that the investigating magistrates will abide by their oath of office and strongly uphold the rule of law.

Reports in the daily newspapers in Malta have shattered many right-minded people who cannot accept that those responsible for this alleged corruption had stooped to levels not previously experienced. Unless the alleged corruption is fully eradicated, it will continue to fester.

It is often said that the Virgin Mary had always intervened in situations of crisis in Malta, such as, the invading Ottoman Empire during the Great Siege of 1565, or the attack on the *Ohio* with badly needed supplies during WWII. May Our Lady, with our prayers and cry for help, again come to our aid and rid our beloved Malta of the scourge of corruption which has paralysed it.

I trust that the majority of voters will put Malta first.

Victor Borg

MCCV President

Initial reaction by the independent media in Malta to snap election announcement

A [Malta Independent editorial](#) published on 2 May suggested that current favourable polls were possibly one of the reasons for the Prime Minister to call an early election: “The polls, both those which were published and other polls we would know nothing about, showed that Labour still enjoys an advantage over the PN. But they also show that the PN is catching up fast, so much so that one version of the polls could be interpreted to say the two parties were within margin of error distance from each other. If that is the case, maybe Dr Muscat wanted to grasp the advantage before it dwindles away.”

The same Editorial concluded that “Whatever the reasons for such a premature election that has surprised if not shocked the entire country (and the Labour grass roots in particular) this is now in the past. The decision has been taken and the date set. As we now watch the complex and cumbersome electoral process set in motion, let us hope the country is mature enough to take a general election, even if a premature one, in its stride.”

In [another editorial](#) published on 3 May, the same newspaper stated that “the election wasn’t called because the economy will be suffering or because investors have stopped pumping in

money into the economy. The election was called purely because of the whistleblower who dared challenge a network of friends that were using a private bank for dubious transactions.” Rather than step down until the Magisterial Inquiry is completed and then called an election, Dr Muscat “ignited a campaign so that the inquiry takes a back seat in peoples’ minds, knowing that heads will heat up with election fever.”

The Editorial concluded that “this is not the way in which a Prime Minister should behave and if the people of this nation are going to remain helpless in front of such behaviour than they sure deserve another five years of scandals and political turmoil over personal gain vs national interest.”

The [Times Of Malta Editorial](#) of 2 May called the early election “a recipe for disaster” and “possibly the worst decision the Prime Minister could have made, to call an election a year early, when the country is in the midst of an institutional crisis.” The editorial claimed that “the Prime Minister consulted opinion polls and found them favourable enough to go for an election. They are findings based on the thinking of an electorate that does not know what to think, or what to believe, of the incredible allegations being made. These people are now expected to vote. They cannot do that in an informed way.”

The Editorial highlighted a potential problem with a Labour electoral victory: “The magisterial inquiry will not go away, nor will the immensely serious allegations made. A negative outcome from the inquiry would mean the new government would be weakened very early in its legislature. That would create more instability than there is now. It would be back to 1981, when the very legitimacy of the government was in question and the crisis lasted the whole legislature. This time there would be a popular vote for the government to fall back upon. But the decision of an uninformed electorate would be questioned.”

The Editorial concluded that “If the inquiring magistrate finds no solid proof at law to sustain the ‘packet’ of allegations made, serious doubts will still loom over the ‘new’ administration, especially if the ‘main actors’ remain, because, in the court of politics, reasonable doubt works in favour of the law-abiding people not the accused politicians/political appointees. Dr Muscat, had one real option to take, to step aside, but he did not. Now the country will have to face the consequences of that decision. We can only hope the electorate will be wiser.” 💧

[Sources: timesofmalta.com and independent.com.mt]

Lawyers group fears rule of law breakdown in Malta

A group of Maltese lawyers calling themselves *Advocates for the rule of law* took out full-page adverts in *The Sunday Times of Malta* on 14 May 2017 drawing attention to the failure of some of the nation’s top institutional posts.

The principle of “rule of law” means is that all people and institutions (whether the Prime Minister or a citizen) are subject to and accountable to law that is fairly applied and enforced.

The legal practitioners involved in the group are from different backgrounds who have at different times voted for different parties. ‘Advocates for the rule of law’ is non-affiliated and has no ties to any particular party. They consider themselves as a lobby group for

constitutional reform which is prepared to contribute to public discussion in order to achieve this aim. The issues that they are tackling impact all sectors of society and go beyond the concerns of mere legal practice.

In an interview published in the newspaper, a group representative said that the lawyers wanted to highlight the situation in Malta that is verging on the dangerous. In their view the straw that broke the camel’s back happened as they watched the events unfold following the latest Panama Papers-related allegations. One by one, the responsible institutions failed to act, and as time went by, it became evident that the rot had reached the core.

The group could see the general breakdown of the rule of law in Malta represented by a regulatory failure and the

abuse of power. The lack of transparency, of accountability and the absence of proper checks and balances are a clear sign of a system meltdown. The whole operating system is in danger and in need of repair, or better, an upgrade. Their concern is not limited to current events but to the wider remit on the state of the institutions and improving the constitutional framework that keeps the country ticking.

The group’s aim is to continue to contribute to the discussion on constitutional and regulatory reform in a positive manner, even after the elections are over. A stronger regulatory framework, a stronger system of representation and governance and a stronger, informed citizen are of benefit to all the nation.

[Source: timesofmalta.com]

Żewġ saċerdoti tal-MSSP jiċċelebraw 50 sena mill-ordinazzjoni tagħhom

Minn Paul Vella

Dan l-aħħar, żewġ patrijiet tas-Socjetà Missjunarja ta' San Pawl f'Melbourne, Fr Denis Carabott, mssp u Fr Tarcisio Micallef, mssp iċċelebraw 50 sena mill-ordinazzjoni tagħhom.

Għal din l-okkażjoni, il-Kunsill tal-Komunità Maltija tal-Victoria organizza Quddiesa fil-kappella ta' San Pawl, f'Parkville u wara sar riċeviment fis-sala prinċipali taċ-Ċentru.

Il-quddiesa kienet ikkonċelebrata minn dawn iż-żewġ Patrijiet, flimkien ma' Fr Ivano Burdian mssp (Provinċjal f'Parkville), Fr Edwin Agius mssp, Fr Emmanuel Adami mssp u s-Superjur Ġenerali tas-Socjetà, Fr Mark Grima mssp.

Madwar 100 ruh attendew għal din il-quddiesa. L-omelija sabiha saret minn Fr Mark Grima.

Wara l-quddiesa kulhadd telgħa fis-Sala taċ-Ċentru għal diskorsi u riċeviment.

Fost dawk preżenti kien hemm is-Sur Eddie Micallef, Chairperson tal-Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (ECCV); Fr Mark Grima mssp, Superjur Ġenerali; Fr Ivano Burdian mssp, Provinċjal f'Parkville; Fr Edwin Agius, mssp; Fr Emmanuel Adami mssp; Fr Frank Buhagiar, Kappillan tal-Parroċċa ta' St Andrews, Werribee; il-Kanonku, Fr Emmanuel Bonello, Kappillan tal-Parroċċa ta' San Ġużepp Haddiem, North Reservoir; u Dun Karm Borg. Preżenti wkoll kien hemm ex-Presidenti tal-MCCV, Prof. Maurice Cauchi u s-Sinjura Edwidge Borg.

MC tal-lejla kien is-Sur George Saliba. Is-Segretarju tal-MCCV, is-Sur Andrew Gatt, qara messagg mill-Kummissarju Għoli għal Malta fl-Awstralja, l-Eċċellenza Tiegħu is-Sur Charles Muscat.

Kelliem tal-lejla kien il-President tal-MCCV, is-Sur Victor Borg li tana hafna tagħrif fuq iż-żewġ patrijiet.

L-ewwel tkellem fuq **Fr Denis Carabott** li twieled f'Hal Għaxaq fit-3 ta' Mejju 1942. Wara li spiċċa l-edukazzjoni sekondarja huwa għamel żmien apprendista fil-Malta Drydocks. Fl-1958 huwa ingħaqad mal-MSSP u gie ordnat Saċerdot mill-Isqof Mikiel Gonzi fil-11 ta' Marzu, 1967.

Fl-1970 Fr Denis wasal fl-Awstralja u serva ma' Fr Pius Zammit. Huwa kien jiehu ħsieb il-Maltin tas-Southern Suburbs. Bejn l-1980 u l-1989 kien Kappillan North Sunshine u fi żmien hemmhekk nbena l-community centre. Fl-1981 mar Ruma fejn studja t-Teologija. Fl-1991 mar il-Perù u fl-1999 irritorna f'Parkville sal-2003 meta mar lura North Sunshine bħala Viċi Kappillan fejn għadu hemm sal-lum.



Photo: Paul Vella



Photo: Paul Vella



Photo: Paul Vella

Il-President Victor Borg imbagħad tkellem fuq **Fr Tarcisio Micallef** li twieled f'Birkirkara. Wara li kien hadem ma' Gio. Batta Delia tal-ghamara huwa hass il-vokazzjoni u dahal ma' l-MSSP fl-1960 fejn wara seba' snin studju huwa gie ordnat Saċerdot mill-Isqof Mikiel Gonzi fl-1967. Huwa kien l-ewwel wiehed li fl-1973 mar fid-Dar il-ġdida tal-MSSP f'Żebbuġ, Għawdex, għaliex kienu ttrasferew in-Novizzjat f'din id-dar. Minn hemm gie trasferit bħala Direttur tal-Istitut ta' San Ġużepp, Santa Venera (1976).

Is-Superjur kien talbu biex imur l-Awstralja biex ikun wiehed minn dawk li jifih l-Missjoni l-ġdida fl-Indoneżja, imma din qatt ma nneixet minhabba l-problema tal-Viza. Huwa baqa' l-Awstralja u wara li wasal Melbourne fejn għamel sena u nofs f'Wantirna, huwa gie trasferit għall-Parroċċa ta' St Joachim, Lidcombe, Perth.

Fl-1982 lahaq il-Vigarju tal-Missjoni tal-Awstralja u allura kellu jinzel Melbourne, pozzizzjoni li żamm għal disa' snin sa 1991. Fl-1994 reġa gie elett għal din il-pozizzjoni sal-1997. Imbagħad fl-1998 gie trasferit għal

Sydney fid-dar li kienu waqqgħu u bnew mill-ġdid. Huwa għadu hemm sal-lum, 19-il sena wara.

Wara d-diskors tas-Sur Victor Borg, tkellmu Fr Tarcisio Micallef u Fr Denis Carabott fejn indirizzaw lil dawk preżenti u komplew jagħtuna aktar tagħrif fuq il-hidma pastorali tagħhom.

Fit-tmiem tad-diskorsi, il-President, Victor Borg, għamel preżentazzjoni f'isem l-MCCV lil Fr Tarcisio Micallef, filwaqt li l-Viċi President tal-MCCV, Dr Edwin Borg-Manché għamel preżentazzjoni lil Fr Denis Carabott.

Il-President u s-Segretarju tar-Reskeon Maltese Association Seniors Group ukoll għamlu preżentazzjoni lil Fr Tarcisio u Fr Denis f'isem il-membri tal-Grupp.

Wara dan kulhadd ha parti f'riċeviment fejn kien hemm ikel u xorb.

Irrid insemmi wkoll li s-Sibt ta' wara, 25 ta' Marzu, giet iċċelebrata Quddiesa oħra u riċeviment fil-Parroċċa ta' St. Bernadette, North Sunshine, jejn numru kbir attendew. ♦

Maltese contingent participates in ANZAC Day March in Melbourne



Photo: ABC TV taken by Lewis Zammit

Aclaimed as one of the most important national days of Australia, ANZAC Day commemorates the landing of Australian and New Zealand armed forces at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915 during the First World War. ANZAC stands for Australian New Zealand Army Corps. ANZAC Day is celebrated throughout Australia with great reverence through an ANZAC Day Dawn Service, ANZAC Day Parade and other traditional ceremonies.

The ANZAC Day March followed the ANZAC Day Dawn Service at the Shrine of Remembrance on 25 April 2017. The parade started at 9 am from the corner of Swanston Street and Flinders Street, and wound its way through the streets of Melbourne, down St Kilda Road and finished at the Shrine of Remembrance. Veterans led the parade while serving personnel and descendants of veterans followed them in procession.

Mr Joseph Stafrace, President of the Maltese Ex-Services Association Inc

(Malta GC Returned Services League Sub-Branch) led a Maltese contingent that participated in the ANZAC Day March in Melbourne. The group included relatives of deceased Maltese veterans who served in theatres of war in the First and Second World Wars.

For the Maltese group the event ended at the Shelter of Peace monument (located on the side of the Shrine of Remembrance) dedicated to Malta's significant contribution to the war effort.



Photo: Andrew Gatt

ANZAC Day commemorated in Malta

To commemorate Australian and New Zealand service men and women who served their country during times of conflict and crises, a service was held on Tuesday 25 April 2017 at the Pietà Military Cemetery in Malta on the anniversary of the Gallipoli landings at ANZAC Cove in World War I.

Several dignitaries, including the President of Malta Her Excellency Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca and the Australian High Commissioner Her Excellency Julianne Hince as well as members of the diplomatic corps were in attendance. The Maltese Community Council of Victoria was represented at the service by our President Mr Victor Borg.

In her speech for the occasion the Australian High Commissioner referred to commemorative services that take place across Australia at dawn on ANZAC Day - the time of the original Gallipoli landing in 1915. Former and current servicemen and servicewomen march in every Australian city and most towns, ending in commemorative ceremonies like this one, when Australians reflect on the nature of duty and sacrifice in war.

Ms Hince said that "ANZAC Day goes beyond the anniversary of Gallipoli. It is the day on which we remember all Australians who served and died in war and on operational service."

She paid tribute to "the deep bond that grew between Malta and Australia that was forged in war. In addition to the many Maltese serving with the Allies in World War I, including 800 volunteers who supported the Gallipoli campaign, almost 60,000 sick and wounded Allied servicemen were evacuated from the Dardanelles and cared for here. Thousands of them were Australians and New Zealanders."

Ms Hince said that many of the wounded and sick did not recover and were buried in Malta. Among these are 204 members of the Australian Imperial Force and 72 members of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force.

In the Second World War, Malta played a vital role as an Allied naval and air base. Ships of the Royal Australian Navy escorted supply convoys and intercepted enemy shipping. In the air, pilots from the Royal Australian Air Force and Royal New Zealand Air Force formed part of the island's fighter defence. 24 Australian aircrew and seven New Zealand aircrew killed in the conflict are buried here.

Ms Hince referred to the many occasions she visited "the always immaculately kept Commonwealth War Graves." She said that she is "immensely sad to see how youthful most of the soldiers were. Teenagers, some; or in their early twenties - the same age as two of my own sons. I can only imagine the



Photo - DOI - Jeremy Wonnacott

dreadful misery these young men experienced as soldiers at war, and the unbearable loss of the families who grieved their deaths.."

She referred to the case of one young man lies at rest a few metres from where she was standing, as an example.

"Private Stanley Thurlow came from Scone in New South Wales, a tiny farming hamlet, known for breeding fine racehorses, 270 kilometres north of Sydney. A painter before he enlisted on 22 August 1914, he embarked for overseas service with the 1st Australian Light Horse Regiment, from Sydney, on the 20th of October, 1914.

While serving at Gallipoli, he was wounded in action in an attack on Turkish positions on the 7th of August, 1915. Evacuated to Malta for medical treatment, he arrived on the island on August 12. He died on the 21st of August at St Elmo Hospital, and was buried here.

Today we remember him, his courage, his devotion to duty, his sacrifice."

Ms Hince said that many of her colleagues present "come from nations who also lost thousands of young men in war. We grieve your loss too."

ANZAC Day is not a glorification of war; it is an occasion to reflect on the spirit of Anzac, with its qualities of courage, devotion to duty, mateship, and sacrifice.

More than 100,000 Australians have died in service to our nation. On ANZAC day, we honour these service men and women, and remember the many thousands of others who have served, and continue to do so, on operations today. They bear the true cost of war.

Lest we forget.

A reception was held after the service at the Australian High Commissioner's residence at San Pawl tat-Targa, Naxxar. 💧



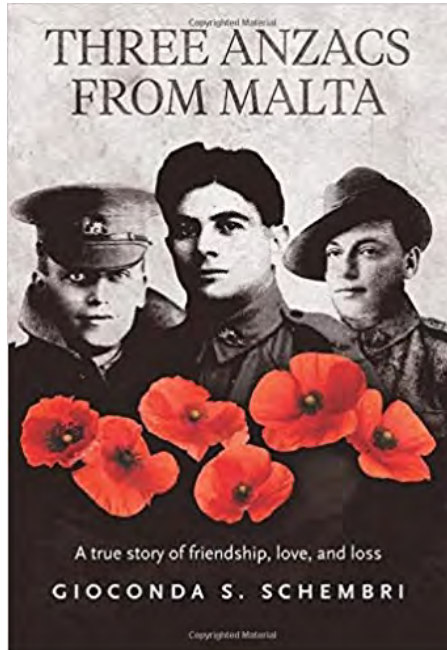
Mrs Josephine Zammit Cordina with the Australian High Commissioner. Also seen in the background is MCCV President Mr Victor Borg (far left) and former Malta Consul General in Victoria Mr Charles Mifsud (far right) Photo: Aust. High Commission, Malta

Three ANZACs from Malta — a book about a true story of friendship, love and loss

Barely in their early twenties, Charles, Waldemar and Anthony leave behind all they hold dear, to pursue their dreams for a bigger and brighter future in a faraway land. Educated, charming, and adventurous, they soon settle in their adoptive home, securing steady jobs, forging new friendships, and finding love. But their carefree days end abruptly when the sombre clouds of a global war darken their world.

What unfolds is one of the deadliest conflicts humankind had ever seen, one that would destroy a whole generation of youth. From the tiny Mediterranean island of Malta to the vast Australian continent, and from the unforgiving slopes of Gallipoli, all the way to the muddy trenches in Flanders, 'Three Anzacs from Malta' follows these young men as they carve out their destinies amidst unprecedented bloodshed and suffering.

This is a timeless story about migration, the heartache of separated families, loss, and war. But this book is mainly a tribute to the tenacity of the human spirit in the face of enormous adversity,



as well as a celebration of the virtues that transcend borders and time: courage, friendship, and love.💧

More information at: <https://www.facebook.com/Three-Anzacs-from-Malta-745516378963095/?fref=fb&pnref=story>



Dr Gioconda S. Schembri née Mifsud was born in Malta. After graduating as a Doctor of Laws from the University of Malta, she joined the public service and served for three years at the Malta High Commission in Canberra as First Secretary, as well as Acting High Commissioner for several months.

Gioconda migrated to Australia in 2002, where she has worked with the Maltese Community Council of Victoria, the Australian public service, the Consulate of Malta, and as a freelance translator of the Maltese language. Her interests are varied and include history, theatre, music, literature, international politics, travel, and crafts. She lives in Melbourne with her husband, Darren, and son, Thomas.

75th Anniversary of George Cross Award commemorated

On Saturday 22 April 2017 the Maltese Ex-Services Association (Malta-George Cross RSL Sub-Branch) commemorated the 75th anniversary of the award of the George Cross to the people of Malta on 15 April 1942. The week's delay in holding the commemoration was due to the day falling on the Easter weekend.

Fr Loni Borg mssp celebrated mass for the occasion at 11.00 am at St Paul's Chapel in Parkville. It was followed with a commemoration ceremony at the George Cross monument outside the Chapel.



Photo: Andrew Gatt



Photo: Andrew Gatt

MHA Monthly Event—Feb 2017

The Demise of the French and the Arrival of the British

The president of the Maltese Historical Association, Joseph Borg, gave our first talk for 2017 at 7:30 pm on 21st February at the Maltese Community Centre in Parkville. His topic was The Demise of the French and the Arrival of the British (1798 – 1815).

Touched on by Robert Blythe in his October 2016 lecture on Sir Alexander Ball, this was a particularly turbulent period in Maltese History. In 1798, the Knights under Grandmaster Hompesch surrendered to Napoleon, who left a strong garrison of 3000 men on Malta. Napoleon went on to conquer Egypt but his fleet, including his flagship, L'Orient, carrying looted Maltese treasure, was destroyed by the British under Nelson and Ball in the Battle of the Nile at Aboukir Bay.

Meanwhile the Maltese soon rebelled against the French and, declaring allegiance to the King of the Two Sicilies, eventually forced them to retreat to Valletta. The French were blockaded there, with the help of the Portuguese and the British. A plot to open the gates of Valletta from the inside was thwarted and over 40 insurgents, including Dun Michael Xerri, were executed in the palace square. The Portuguese and the British left, the latter being preoccupied with other sea battles in the Mediterranean, and it was left to the Maltese to maintain the blockade.

Starvation set in on the island, both for the Maltese and the besieged French. French relief forces were mostly unsuccessful but Alexander Ball organised food and troops from Sicily to support the Maltese. Eventually the starving French were forced to surrender but key players, including Ball, representing the King of Sicily, and the Maltese were excluded from the negotiations. However, Ball did

secure a share of the prize money for the Maltese who had served on the blockade.

Russia also had designs on Malta and had formed an alliance with Napoleon. Now the Tsar tried to lay a claim under a pre-existing Convention with the British and the Two Sicilies. He was unsuccessful. A stalemate between the British and French led to the Preliminary Treaty of Peace, which included returning Malta to the Knights

The Maltese objected strongly, prepared to submit only to the British or demand independence, even if it meant death! Smaller groups of Maltese favoured the Knights, some even the French. The tenth article of the Treaty of Amiens included a compromise offer. Both the French and British would withdraw from Malta and it would become neutral, guaranteed by the signatories of the treaty. The Knights would be restored but without the British or French langues and with the creation of a Maltese langue. The Maltese felt betrayed and they drew up

a “Declaration of Rights of the Inhabitants of the Islands of Malta and Gozo”.

Meanwhile Britain, realising Malta's strategic importance, secretly halted her withdrawal, facilitated by the breakdown of the Treaty of Amiens by the French, objections from Russia, and the delay in appointing a Grandmaster of the Order. The Maltese demonstrated their objections to the Knights so strongly that a visiting representative of the Order left in disgust. A number of different proposals, including independence, were put forward but Britain had made up her mind to possess Malta and ensure British naval supremacy in the Mediterranean.

The defeat of the French by Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar, the Treaty of Paris, and the Congress of Vienna ensured that Malta would become an important part of the British Empire, and commit her to the roles she would play in world history over the next 150 years. ♦



Il-Festi tal-Ġimgħa l-Kbira f'Melbourne

Minn Paul Vella

F'Melbourne il-Festi tal-Ġimgħa l-Kbira jiġu ċelebrati fil-parroċċi tas-subborgi u l-ibliet kollha. Ahna attendejna f'aktar minn lokalità wahda.

F'Hamis ix-Xirka attendejna l-Knisja ta' San Ġużepp Haddiem, North Reservoir, fejn il-Kappillan hu l-Kanonku Fr Manny Bonello, mix-Xagħra, Ghawdex. Il-Knisja kienet imballata bil-parruċċani għal dan il-jum speċjali.

Matul il-Quddies, bħalma jsir f'postijiet ohra sar il-hasil tar-riglejn l-Appostli. Din id-darba rajna kemm irġiel u nisa jagħmluha ta' Appostli u nfatti, anki tfal, bniet u subien.

Wara li spiċċat il-Quddies, is-Sagrament ġie meħud f'Kappella ta' ripost fejn Fr Manny ipprepara is-Sepulkru, iva mhux b'mod kbir kif isir f'Malta u f'Ghawdex, imma almenu dejjem nippruwaw inżommu t-tradizzjoni Maltija.

Hafna minn dawk preżenti marru jqattgħu ftit hin quddiem Ġesù Sagramentat.

Nhar il-Ġimgħa l-Kbira attendejna l-Kappella ta' San Pawl hdejn iċ-Ċentru Malti ta' Parkville. Numru sabiħ attendew għal dan il-Jum Imqaddes. Prim Ċelebrant kien Fr Lonnie Borg, mssp, u kon-Ċelebranti kienu Fr Edwin Agius u Fr Ivano Burdian, it-tnejn tas-Socjetà Missjunarja ta' San Pawl.

Fr Lonnie għamel Omelija sabiħa



Photo: Paul Vella

għall-okkażjoni. L-ewwel u t-tieni qari saru minn Gejtu Deguara u Paul Borg.

Il-Passju nqara minn Fr Edwin Agius (narratur), Fr Lonnie Borg (Ġesù) u Paul Vella (poplu).

Wara inżamm l-Adorazzjoni tas-Salib fejn dawk preżenti kollha marru jbusu s-Salib. Jiehu hsieb kien hemm Alfred Asciak.

Infakkru wkoll li nhar il-Ġimgħa l-Kbira, il-Bacchus Marsh Good Friday Association jorganizzaw il-Liturġija u l-Purċissjoni tal-Ġimgħa l-Kbira bis-sett ta' għaxar statwi sbieħ (ara ritratt fuq). Għal din attendew hafna nies u kien hemm hafna mill-Komunità Maltija.

Is-Sibt, 15 ta' April, ergajna attendejna fil-Kappella ta' San Pawl. Sibt il-Għid fis-7 pm, biex niċċelebraw is-Sahra fil-Lejl Qaddis tal-Qawmien tal-Mulej mill-Imwiet. F'din il-Quddies u ċ-Ċerimonja kien hemm il-Mixegħla tad-Dawl, il-Liturġija tal-Kelma, il-Liturġija tal-Magħmudija u l-Liturġija Ewkaristika.

Saċerdoti kienu Fr Edwin Agius, Fr Lonnie Borg u Fr Ivano Burdian, kollha tas-Socjetà Missjunarja ta' San Pawl.

Bdejna biċ-ċerimonja barra l-Kappella fejn ġie mbieriek in-nar (ara ritratt taht) u ntxteghel il-Blandun u dhalna bih fil-Kappella. Hemm beda l-qari li sar minn Giorgina Scillio, Marcelle Bonavia, Gejtu Deguara, Joe Stafrace u Paul Vella. L-Omelija sabiħa saret minn Fr Edwin Agius, mssp.

Wara l-Glorja inkixfu n-niċċa tal-Bambina u n-naħa l-oħra fejn kien hemm l-istampa ta' Kristu Rxoxxt minn drapp vjola li kien jgħattihom.

Aktar tard saret il-Liturġija tal-Magħmudija u fl-aħħar l-Ewkaristija..

Kienet Quddies u ċerimonja sabiħa li għaliha attendew madwar 100 mill-Komunità Maltija.

Wara kulhadd telgħa fil-foyer taċ-Ċentru fejn kien hemm kikkra te jew kafè u ammont kbir ta' helu u kejkijiet li ġiebu magħhom dawk li attendew.

Grazzi lis-Saċerdoti li hađu sehem u grazzi wkoll lil Alfred Asciak li dejjem ikun hemm biex ižejjien il-Kappella għall-okkażjoni. 💧



Photo: Paul Vella

Reskeon Seniors on a day trip to Mornington

By Paul Vella

A group of 57 members of Reskeon Maltese Association Seniors Group travelled to Mornington to spend a day at this beautiful beach resort.

We were watching the weather forecast all week, saying rain and rain. But three days before the forecast changed to nice warm day with some clouds. The day was an excellent one, hotter than expected.

All members enjoyed the day. Some went to the Pier, others went for lunch at the Grand Hotel or for Fish and Chips at Top Catch, while others brought lunch with them and occupied a large table in the park.

Once again thanks to all members for being punctual in the morning to board the coach and when it was time to go home.

I said it before and I will say it again: we feel our members are the best one can ever ask for. Congratulations to the President, Salvina Vella, for organising this outing. 💧



Photo: Paul Vella

BBQ tal-Grupp Letteratura Maltija f'Bulla

Minn Paul Vella

Nhar il-Hadd, 26 ta' Marzu, il-kumitat tal-Grupp Letteratura Maltija tal-Victoria organizza BBQ b'xejn għall-membri kollha. Bhas-soltu dan inżamm fuq il-propjetà tal-membri tagħna Frank u Draga Bonett li joqghodu f'Bulla.

Madwar 40 membru kienu preżenti li jaslu mall-11 ta' filghodu. Minn dawk li waslu l-ewwel kienu il-mużiċisti: Joe Gauci (kitarra), Alfred Xuereb (synthesiser), Joe Camilleri (perkussjoni) u Manuel Casha (kitarra). Dawn mill-ewwel bdew jarmaw l-istrumenti tagħhom.

Il-membri mill-ewwel hadu posthom fuq l-imwejjed li Frank u Draga kienu ga ppreparaw ghalina. It-tisjir taz-zalzett u l-laħam kien f'idejn Joe Lofaro u Charles Attard.

Fl-istess hin is-Segretarja Soċjali, Salvina Vella, flimkien ma' Rose Lofaro, Doris Sammut, Rosemary Attard u Draga Bonett offrew l-għajjuna tagħhom u bdew jippreparaw is-salads u affarijiet oħra. Matul dan kollu l-mużiċisti kienu ga bdew iduqu.

F'qasir hin beda jqtassam l-ikel u kulhadd kiel u xeħa' u kien hemm biżżejjed għal min ried aktar. Kien hemm laħam u zalzett, basal u hafna



Photo: Paul Vella

salads differenti, imbid aħmar u abjad, xorb minerali u matul il-jum kollu kien hemm te u kafe' u hafna ħelu bħal biskuttini tal-lewz (Lora Gauci), keġks (Mary Xuereb), pudina (Marie Louise Anastasi) u galletti (Rose Muscat) barra affarijiet oħra provduti mill-Kumitat bħal għażla ta' frott, dullejgħ bettiegħ u għeneb.

Wara l-ikel kellna madwar siegħa u nofs mużika li kulhadd ha gost biha.

Imbagħad kien wasal il-hin għal qari ta' xogħol originali u jew xogħol ta' awturi oħra. Hafna mill-membri kellhom xi xogħol biex jaqraw u dan dam għal xi siegħa.

Matul il-jum il-tqajna ma' Tara, in-neputija (granddaughter) ta' Frank u Draga Bonett, it-tifla tat-tifla tagħhom,

Melita u żewgħa. Tara tieħu sehem f'hafna kompetizzjonijiet taż-żwiemel u rebħet hafna kompetizzjoni u wrietna ż-żigarelli tas-suċċessi tagħha f'dan l-isport.

Aktar tard saret preżentazzjoni lil Frank u Draga Bonett bħala ringrazzjament li ta' kull sena jilqgħuna fuq il-propjetà tagħhom. Nirringrazzjaw ukoll lill-mużiċisti li ta' kull sena jallegrawna bil-mużika tagħhom. Grazzi lill-membri li giebu magħhom xi ħelu u affarijiet oħra. Grazzi wkoll lil Joe Lofaro u Charles Attard li kellhom it-tisjir tal-BBQ f'idejhom. Grazzi speċjali lis-Segretarja għall-Affarijiet Soċjali, Salvina Vella, li hadet ħsieb kollox għal hafna preparamenti. 💧

New statue of Our Lady of Sorrows at Parkville

By Paul Vella

The feast of Our Lady of Sorrows was celebrated in at least four different places in Melbourne.

We attended the one celebrated in the Chapel of St Paul, Parkville, run by the Missionary Society of St Paul.

Usually our friend Alfred Asciak decorated the chapel displaying a picture of Our Lady of Sorrows. This year, Reskeon Maltese Association Seniors Group's committee and members agreed to purchase a statue of Our Lady of Sorrows and donated it to the Fathers of the MSSP, after President Salvina Vella and Secretary Paul Vella made arrangements with Fr Edwin Agius mssp.

The statue was displayed at the chapel (see photo right) during the

Mass, which was celebrated by Fr Lonnie Borg mssp who also delivered a the Homily for the occasion.

Before the Mass, Fr Lonnie told the congregation present that the statue that was donated by Reskeon and that the *bradella* was made by Reskeon member Victor Pulis. Fr Lonnie then blessed the statue.

Readers during the Mass were Joseph Borg and Rita Pullicino.

During Mass we sang *Għanja lid-Duluri* by the late *ghannej il-Budaj* and *Taht is-Salib* by Michael Chetcuti.

Before Mass, Lina Borg recited *Visit to the Blessed Sacrament*, while Tony Buhagiar recited the Rosary. 💧



Photo: Paul Vella

Paul Zerafa jaqta' xagħru għal-Leukaemia Foundation

Minn Paul Vella

Naħseb tistaqsu: Min hu Paul Zerafa? Paul huwa t-tifel tal-membri tal-Grupp Letteratura Maltija tal-Victoria li joqgħodu Queensland, Nazzarene u Maria Zerafa.

Paul huwa *haematology scientist* fil-Princess Alexandra Hospital (PAH).

Huwa qiegħed jiehū sehem fil-*Leukaemia Foundation's World's Greatest Shave* fejn individwi jaqtgħu xagħarhom biex jiġbru fondi biex jgħinu l-Leukaemia Foundation. Minhabba li x-xogħol tiegħu għandu x'jaqşam mall-*cancer diagnosis*, huwa jittama li dan li se jagħmel jgħin għall-*cancer research*.

Paul qal li din il-kawża hija ferm għall-qalbu u jinsab kuntent ħafna li se jkun parti minnha.

Missieru, Nazzarene, qalli li Paul ilu ma jaqta' xagħru għal dawn l-aħħar 12-il sena. Qtuġh ix-xagħar sar nhar il-Ġimgħa, 17 ta' Marzu, fil-



fojer tal-Princess Alexandra Hospital, fejn jaħdem.

Meta kellimtu l-aħħar, Nazzarene qalli li Paul ġa kien ġabar madwar \$6800 għal dan il-għan. It-target kien għal \$7200.

Ma nafx jekk għadx fadal żmien biex wiehed jagħmel donazzjoni imma

tistgħu tippruvaw billi tmorru f'dan is-sit tal-paġna ta' Paul <https://goo.gl/KuM06D>

Jiena, flimkien mall-kumitat u l-membri kollha ta' Grupp Letteratura Maltija tal-Victoria, nifraħ lil Paul Zerafa għall-ħsieb nobbli tiegħu. 💧

Reskeon Seniors celebrate Mother's Day

By Paul Vella

A number of Maltese associations in Melbourne, especially, seniors groups, organise special lunches for Mother's Day. One of the largest and most active seniors groups, Reskeon Maltese Association Seniors Group, organised their Mother's Day Luncheon on Thursday, 4th May, for their members, at the Firenze Receptions, McBryde Street, Fawkner. Around 140 members and friends attended.

Most members arrived at around 11 am and when they entered the hall they were served with pre-lunch drinks and hors d'ouvres.

Secretary Paul Vella, MC for the day, welcomed guests and members and invited them to stand for the Maltese and Australian National Anthems.

After Champagne was poured into the glasses, all male members were asked to be upstanding to offer a toast for all the Mothers on the occasion of Mother's Day.

The entree of fish and rice and salad was then served. After this a pasta plate of tortellini with carbonara sauce and Strozzapreti with Bolognese sauce on each plate which was followed by the main meal of a choice of chicken Kiev or veal scaloppini. Later on members and guests were served a fruit platter and cassata ice-cream. This was followed by coffee and continental cakes.

The music on the day was in the hands of DJ Dominic who kept all those present dancing on the floor most of the day.

Distinguished guests present were the Honorary Life Members, Dr Clemente Zammit and Mrs Mary Zammit; Life Member and Ex-Co-Ordinator of the Reskeon Seniors Group, Mr Caesar Vella and Mrs Phyllis Vella; Honorary Treasurer of the MCCV and our Hon. Auditor, Mr Paul Borg and Mrs Pauline Borg as well as Fr Edwin Agius, mssp, Rector at Parkville.

Later in the day, President Salvina Vella gave her message for the occasion of Mother's Day, wishing a good day to all Mums with their families and asked to remember and pray for all those mothers who were no longer with us. She wished all members to enjoy the day with their Mums and, as Mums themselves, to enjoy the day with their families.



Photo: Paul Vella



Photo: Paul Vella

The MC then read a list of members who were celebrating their birthdays around this time, as well those celebrating their wedding anniversaries. We had a special Wedding Anniversary of members Paul and Frances Schembri, who were celebrating their 50th and it's Reskeon's custom they were presented with a flower arrangement.

Then there was the presentation of trophies for the winner and runners-up of the Ladies' Bocce Competition which finished two weeks before this event. President Salvina Vella presented the trophies. This year's winner was Cathy Gatt; First Runner-up, Agostina Sultana; Second Runner-up, Carmen Topolcsanyi (pictured above). All participants in the competition were asked to join them for a group photo. Salvina Vella thanked Cathy Gatt for her role in organising this competition.

Then the raffle took place and Paul on behalf of the committee thanked all those who donated some of the gifts for

the raffle.

MC Paul Vella said that although it may not be proper coming from him, as her husband, he thanked President, Salvina Vella, who was responsible for the success of this function which she organised almost single-handedly. We thank all members for being present and enjoying the day together as one big family.

Thanks to all those members who found the time to approach committee members to pay their compliments for this well-organised function which, as always, was heavily subsidised by Reskeon Maltese Association Seniors Group and members only had to pay half the cost.

Thanks also to the management and waiting staff of Firenze Receptions for the way they looked after us like they do in all our functions. 💧



News from the Vatican

Pope Francis speaks out

Compiled by Rev. Charles Borg-Manché from Vatican Radio sources

Canonisation of two children saints at Fatima

May 13. The highlight of Pope Francis' apostolic visit to Fatima in Portugal was the canonisation Mass, during which the two shepherd children, Blessed Francisco and Blessed Giacinta, were declared saints. This event coincided with the centenary of the apparitions of Our Lady at Fatima in 1917.

The Marto siblings, Francisco and Jacinta, aged 9 and 7, and their 10-year-old cousin, Lucia, reported that on March 13, 1917, the Virgin Mary made the first of six appearances to them while they grazed their sheep. They said she confided in them three secrets — foretelling apocalyptic visions of hell, war, communism and the death of a pope — and urged them to pray for peace and a conversion away from sin.

Francisco and Jacinta died two years after the visions during Europe's Spanish flu pandemic. Lucia is on track for possible beatification, but her process could not start until after her 2005 death.

Pope's Homily

During his homily the Pope said, "we can take as our examples Saint Francisco and Saint Jacinta, whom the Virgin Mary introduced into the immense ocean of God's light and taught to adore him."

"[There] appeared in heaven a woman clothed with the sun". So the seer of Patmos tells us in the Book of Revelation (12:1), adding that she was about to give birth to a son. Then, in the Gospel, we hear Jesus say to his disciple, "Here is your mother" (Jn 19:27). We have a Mother! "So beautiful a Lady", as the seers of Fatima said to one another as they returned home on that blessed day of 13 March a hundred years ago. That evening, Jacinta could not restrain herself and told the secret to her mother: "Today I saw Our Lady". They had seen the Mother of Heaven. Many others sought to share that vision, but... they did not see her.

Our Lady foretold, and warned us about, a way of life that is godless and indeed profanes God in his creatures. Such a life — frequently proposed and imposed — risks leading to hell. Mary came to remind us that God's light dwells within us and protects us, for, as we heard in the first reading, "the child [of the woman] was snatched away and taken to God" (Rev 12:5). In Lucia's account, the three chosen children found themselves surrounded by God's light as it radiated from Our Lady. She enveloped them in the mantle of Light that God had given her. According to the belief and experience of many pilgrims, if not of all, Fatima is more than anything this mantle of



Light that protects us, here as in almost no other place on earth. We need but take refuge under the protection of the Virgin Mary and to ask her, as the Salve Regina teaches: "show unto us... Jesus".

Dear pilgrims, we have a Mother. Clinging to her like children, we live in the hope that rests on Jesus. As we heard in the second reading, "those who receive the abundance of the grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ" (Rom 5:17). When Jesus ascended to heaven, he brought to the Heavenly Father our humanity, which he assumed in the womb of the Virgin Mary and will never forsake. Like an anchor, let us fix our hope on that humanity, seated in heaven at the right hand of the Father (cf. Eph 2:6). May this hope guide our lives! It is a hope that sustains us always, to our dying breath.

Confirmed in this hope, we have gathered here to give thanks for the countless graces bestowed over these past hundred years. All of them passed beneath the mantle of light that Our Lady has spread over the four corners of the earth, beginning with this land of Portugal, so rich in hope. We can take as our examples Saint Francisco and Saint Jacinta, whom the Virgin Mary introduced into the immense ocean of God's light and taught to adore him. That was the source of their strength in overcoming opposition and suffering. God's presence became constant in their lives, as is evident from their insistent prayers for sinners and their desire to remain ever near "the hidden Jesus" in the tabernacle.

In her Memoirs (III, 6), Sister Lucia quotes Jacinta who had just been granted a vision: "Do you not see all those streets, all those paths and fields full of people crying out for food, yet have nothing to eat? And the Holy Father in a church, praying before the Immaculate Heart of Mary? And all those people praying with him?" Thank you,

brothers and sisters, for being here with me! I could not fail to come here to venerate the Virgin Mary and to entrust to her all her sons and daughters. Under her mantle they are not lost; from her embrace will come the hope and the peace that they require, and that I implore for all my brothers and sisters in baptism and in our human family, especially the sick and the disabled, prisoners and the unemployed, the poor and the abandoned. Dear brothers and sisters, let us pray to God with the hope that others will hear us; and let us speak to others with the certainty that God will help us.

Indeed, God created us to be a source of hope for others, a true and attainable hope, in accordance with each person's state of life. In "asking" and "demanding" of each of us the fulfillment of the duties of our proper state (Letters of Sister Lucia, 28 February 1943), God effects a general mobilization against the indifference that chills the heart and worsens our myopia. We do not want to be a stillborn hope! Life can survive only because of the generosity of other lives. "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (Jn 12:24). The Lord, who always goes before us, said this and did this. Whenever we experience the cross, he has already experienced it before us. We do not mount the cross to find Jesus. Instead it was he who, in his self-abasement, descended even to the cross, in order to find us, to dispel the darkness of evil within us, and to bring us back to the light.

With Mary's protection, may we be for our world sentinels of the dawn, contemplating the true face of Jesus the Saviour, resplendent at Easter. Thus may we rediscover the young and beautiful face of the Church, which shines forth when she is missionary, welcoming, free, faithful, poor in means and rich in love. ♦



Hu Hsieb Saħħtek

Professur Maurice Cauchi



Il-Gluten u l-mard tal-imsaren

Ugħiegħ ta' żaqq huwa komuni ħafna. Ħafna drabi jkun hemm ukoll dijarea u sintomi oħra.

Dana jista' jkun ġej minn kawżi differenti, però' haġa li saret komuni daż-żmien hija dak li jissejjaħ *Coeliac disease* jew *gluten sensitivity*.

Naħseb li sal-lum kulhadd sema' b'din il-kundizzjoni għaliex saret komuni ħafna: x'aktarx li aktar minn persuna minn kull mija jbatu biha.

Il-*gluten* insibuh f'ikel magħġun minn qamħ u ċereali oħra. Dawk in-nies li ma jistgħux jiddigerixxu dan il-*gluten*, jiġifieri li jkunu sensitivi għal dan (jiġifieri li għandhom *gluten sensitivity*), malli jieklu prodotti li fihom il-*gluten* jibdwew jesperjenzaw sintomi ta' uġiegħ fl-imsaren, gass (magħruf bħala *bloating*) u sintomi oħrajn.

Għaliex jiġri dan? Kif ikel li jkun fih il-*gluten* jasal fl-imsaren, il-ġisem irreaġixxi kontra tiegħu u jibda attakk li jagħmel ħsara lil-imsaren. Difatti jekk wiehed jeżamina l-imsaren taħt il-mikroskopju jara li dawn m'humex normali. Għalhekk it-tabib jittawwal mill-istonku l-isfel – teknika imsejja gastrokopija (jew *gastroscopy*) – biex jara jekk il-kisja tal-musrana hiex normali jew le.

Meta l-imsaren ma jibqgħux aktar normali, allura ma jkunux jistgħu jassorbu dawk is-sustanzi li l-ġisem jeħtieġ biex jiffunzjona b'mod normali. Per eżempju, nuqqas ta' ħadid jgħib anemia, nuqqas ta' proteini u vitamini

jaffettwaw is-saħħa ta' dak li jkun.

L-aħbar tajba hi li meta nagħrfu x'inhi il-kawża tal-problema, hemm mezz ħafif biex neħilsu minnha, għaliex jekk neliminaw il-*gluten* mid-dieta, allura l-imsaren jirpiljaw u jergħu għan-normal. Għalhekk ikun jeħtieġ li tibda dieta stretta li ma jkunx fiha l-*gluten*.

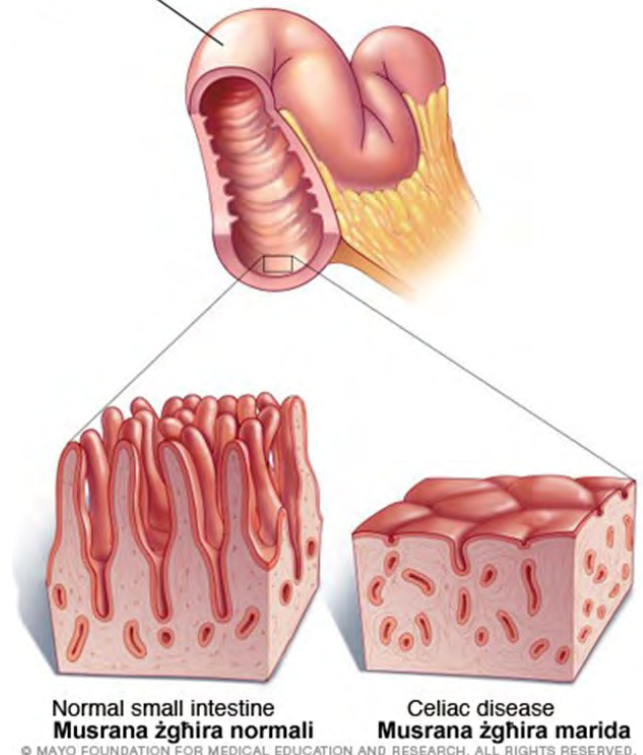
Jiġifieri, l-aktar haġa importanti hi li ssir d-dijanjosi sewwa, għax mhux kull uġiegħ ta' żaqq jew dijarea jkun ġej mill-*gluten*.

Daż-żmien saret haġa faċli biex issib ikel li ma jkunx fih *gluten*. Tista' tgħid li kważi kull restorant jipprovdi menu li jinkludi platti ta' ikel mingħajr *gluten*. Imma din id-dieta trid tkun permanenti, għaliex jekk terġa' tiekol ikel bil-*gluten*, is-sintomi jirritornaw.

Allura wiehed isaqsi: ta' min jibda dieta bla *gluten*, sewwa jekk għandek allergija għall-*gluten* u sewwa jekk ma għandekx? Le, din m'hix idea tajba, għaliex dieta bla *gluten* għandha l-problema tagħha, barra mill-fatt li jkollok aktar spiża u inkonvenjenza.

Jekk taħseb li qed tbatu minn uġiegħ ta' żaqq kull darba li tiekol ikel li fih il-*gluten*, l-aħjar haġa li tista' tagħmel hu li tara t-tabib

Musrana żghira
Small intestine



Normal small intestine
Musrana żghira normali

Celiac disease
Musrana żghira marida

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tiegħek biex jagħmel id-dijanjosi neċessarja u jagħtik parir dwar l-aħjar kura u dieta għall-kundizzjoni tas-saħħa tiegħek. 💧

Jekk għandek xi mistoqsijiet dwar is-saħħa jew tixtieq aktar informazzjoni dwar kundizzjonijiet ta' saħħa, ibgħat imejl lil: pro@mccv.org.au.

MCCV Carers Group members socialise at a lunch in Braybrook



On Friday 19 May the MCCV Carers Group held its monthly meeting at a luncheon held at Braybrook Hotel.

The MCCV has for some years conducted a Carers Group from its premises at Sunshine, west of Melbourne, where many Maltese reside. The running of the program is funded by the MCCV from income derived from community activities it holds throughout the year.

The monthly sessions provide an opportunity for the carers of Maltese aged or otherwise disabled people to create a support network to call upon. At these sessions, they often exchange information about welfare services that they have been able to access for their charges from the MCCV and other welfare organisations.

Outings are organised for the group, such as, trips to Ballarat and the city of Geelong, and going out to lunch, where the carers and their charges can socialise with others in similar life circumstances.

The carers are regularly in contact with welfare staff at the MCCV, who make every attempt assist them in dealing with issues that arise from time to time. 💧

MCCV News

The *MCCV News* is published by the Maltese Community Council of Victoria every two months to inform the Maltese community about activities, news and information that would be of interest.

DISCLAIMER

Although funding for some MCCV welfare services is provided by the Australian Government, the material contained in the *MCCV News* does not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Australian Government.

Community Events Calendar

For up-to-date and more detailed information, visit our website at www.mccv.org.au/community-events

May 2017

Wed 27 May @ 6.00 pm	Farewell Party for Fr Emmanuel Adami mssp	St Paul's Chapel & Maltese Centre
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June 2017

Wed 7 June @ 7.00 pm	MCCV Council Meeting	Maltese Community Centre, Parkville
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Maltese Community Council of Victoria
and the Missionary Society of St Paul



will be holding a

Farewell Party for Fr Emmanuel Adami mssp

Mass will be concelebrated with the participation of MSSP Provincial Fr Mark Grima mssp

Venue: Mass at **St Paul's Chapel** followed by a reception at the **Maltese Community Centre**, 477 Royal Parade, Parkville

Date: **Saturday 27th May 2017**

Time: **6.00 pm** (Mass followed by Farewell Party)

Donation: **\$10 per person**

Dress: **Smart casual**

For further information contact the Maltese Community Centre on (03) **9387 8922**



MALTESE COMMUNITY CENTRE

477 Royal Parade, Parkville

**OUR CANTEN SERVES MALTESE FOOD
EVERY FRIDAY— BINGO NIGHT
WE OPEN AT 5.00 PM TO SERVE FOOD
BINGO HEADS DOWN AT 7.00 PM
EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT**

Għandek aptit ta' ravjulata?

**Come along and enjoy our friendly atmosphere
We would love to see you
and bring your friends along with you!**



MCCV Ladies Auxiliary

Bingo Sessions

at the Maltese Community Centre in Parkville
every Tuesday between 11.00am and 2.30pm.

A small group of women enjoy spending time together playing bingo, having lunch and also celebrating special events.

In 2017 The first bingo session will be held on Tuesday 7th February.

Everyone is welcome.

For more information please ring the Maltese Centre on **9387 8922**.