



Maltese eNewsletter

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THE JOURNAL OF THE MALTESE DIASPORA



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maltabiennale.art 2024

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March - May 2024



Sir Anthony Mamo
First President
of Malta



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Claire Giangravé

VATICAN CITY (RNS) — Maltese Archbishop Charles Scicluna, a papal ally and an influential prelate at the Vatican, said in an interview published Sunday (Jan. 7) that the Catholic Church should reconsider its ban on married priests.

"If it were up to me, I would revise the requirement that priests have to be celibate," Scicluna told the Times of Malta. "Experience has shown me this is something we need to seriously think about," he added, stating that he has "spoken openly" on the subject at the Vatican. "But the decision doesn't depend on me," he said.

Scicluna occupies an influential role at the Vatican as adjunct secretary of the Holy See's Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith. Under the leadership of the newly appointed prefect, Cardinal Victor Manuel Fernandez, the Vatican's doctrinal department has allowed for trans people to be baptized and act as godparents and recently greenlit the blessing of gay and "irregular" couples if performed in a way that cannot be confused with marriage.

The question of allowing married priests, was a central part of the discussions on the Amazonian

Archbishop Charles Scicluna - High-ranking Vatican official says priests should be allowed to marry

region during the 2019 summit of bishops at the Vatican. At the time, the argument supported ordaining married men to administer to the remote and secluded areas of the Amazon. Despite the general support for a married priesthood among the bishops at the time, Pope Francis has so far not made a decision on the issue.

Priestly celibacy is not considered official doctrine of the church, meaning a pope could overturn the rule.

During the synod on the Amazon, influential conservative prelates, including Cardinal Robert Sarah, spoke firmly against allowing priests to marry.

In 2020, Sarah co-published a book with Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI called "From the Depths of Our Hearts: Priesthood, Celibacy and the Crisis of the Catholic Church," which sought to underline the importance of celibacy.

"Why should we lose a young man who would have made a fine priest, just because he wanted to get married? And we did lose good priests just because they chose marriage," he said.

"This is probably the first time I'm saying it publicly and it will sound heretical to some people," he added.

Scicluna noted that in the first millennium of the church's history, celibacy was not a requirement, and he said the Catholic institution should learn from the Eastern Rite churches, where married priests are allowed. While celibacy continues to have an important role in the church, the archbishop said, it should once again become optional for those who wish to live their faith that way.

HIGH COMMISSIONER MEETS THE PRESIDENT



On the 10th January 2024 Dr. George Vella, President of Malta had the pleasure of welcoming H.E. Mario Farrugia Borg, High Commissioner of Malta for [#Australia](#), who is currently in Malta. During their meeting they talked at length about the President's visit to Australia in October 2023 where he had the opportunity to meet the Maltese communities in Victoria, Adelaide, Canberra, and New South Wales. They also discussed the very strong relations between the two countries and the cooperation for strengthening peace and dialogue in the two respective regions.

Vietnam-Malta cooperation



The Vietnam-Malta ties have experienced positive developments since the establishment of diplomatic relations, Vietnamese Ambassador to Italy and Malta Duong Hai Hung has affirmed. Talking to the Vietnam News Agency on the occasion of the nations celebrating their 50th diplomatic anniversary (January 14, 1974 - 2024), the diplomat listed numerous

important cooperation pacts they have signed together, such as agreements involving visa exemption for diplomatic passport holders and double taxation avoidance, and a memorandum of understanding on international adoption-related administrative procedures. These have created legal frameworks for increasing bilateral collaboration, he noted.

Their joint works in many areas like economy, trade, investment, education, tourism, and people-to-people exchange, which remain modest now, are positively developing, said Hung.

According to him, Vietnam and Malta have great potential for cooperation based on a number of favourable factors.

First, both countries share a traditional friendship, with Malta being one of the Western European countries that early recognised and established diplomatic relations with Vietnam.

Second, they are politically stable, with dynamic economic development, and strong recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic, plus great potential for sound development. Malta holds a strategic position as a hub for goods transit and a safe international payment system between Europe and Africa.

Its strengths in finance, banking, insurance, and international maritime are conducive to experience exchange and cooperation with Vietnam. Malta's government and businesses highly value Vietnam's socio-economic achievements, especially its large markets and economic position.

Third, the sides share many similarities in conditions and development orientations. They are maritime nations and members of regional blocs with high connectivity, namely ASEAN and the EU. They also attach importance to promoting international integration, connectivity, and international trade.

Fourth, there are currently more favourable conditions to promote their effective ties as many cooperation frameworks have been or are being completed, such as the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA), the EU-Vietnam Investment Protection Agreement (EVIPA), and the ASEAN-EU Air Transport Agreement (AE CATA).

Fifth, the two countries share concerns, stances, and interests on many international issues such as regional and global peace, multilateralism, international law and rule-based order, maritime security, and climate change. They have collaborated effectively on both bilateral and multilateral fronts via mechanisms such as the ASEAN-EU cooperation, the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), and the United Nations General Assembly.

The ambassador recommended both sides continue to value and nurture the foundation of their bilateral cooperation, and enhance contacts and exchanges at all levels and channels, especially high-level ones through mutual visits and at multilateral forums. It is crucial to promote parliament-to-parliament and people-to-people diplomacy, fostering close cooperation and mutual support at multilateral and international forums.





Festa Ċitru 2024 held at The President's Kitchen Garden

Festa Ċitru was held on Sunday, 14 January, at The President's Kitchen Garden in Attard. As is tradition, oranges and lemons picked from the Presidential Palace gardens and products made from oranges were sold during the event.

The President of Malta George Vella and Mrs Miriam Vella officially launched the fifteenth edition of Festa Ċitru during an activity with students from the Attard primary school and the Victoria Gozo primary school in the citrus orchard of Sant'Anton Palace, which has around six hundred citrus trees, the majority of which are orange trees.

Preparations for Festa Ċitru are also underway in the Kitchen of Sant'Anton Palace as a number of cakes and other confectionery made from oranges are currently being baked to be sold during this event, the proceeds of which will all go to The Malta Community Chest Fund.

This year, olive oil pressed from olives harvested from olive trees in The President's Kitchen Garden was also for sale.

In a few words to the students who enthusiastically helped picking the oranges, President George Vella encouraged them to appreciate the work of the gardeners who take care of the citrus trees throughout the year and who are currently picking oranges for Festa Ċitru. The President also reminded the students that Festa Ċitru is another event held throughout the year to raise much-needed funds for The Malta Community Chest Fund to buy medicines, among other things, and to be able to continue helping people in need.



ID-DAR TAL-PROVIDENZA
Homes of Persons with Disabilities

I would like to publicly thank and congratulate the Klabb Ghannejja Maltin of St. Albans Victoria on their generous donation of \$230 made to the Friends of Providence House NSW on behalf of Id-Dar Tal-Providenza Malta. An example that other Maltese associations may embrace. Once again thank you and God bless.

Anyone who may wish to make a donation can do so at any Commonwealth Bank of Australia.

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P.S: Anyone wishing to join us on our Fund-Raising Tour taking in the Greek Islands Cruise, Tour of Sicily and Malta, departing Sydney on 15th May 2024, please call Jim Borg, Co-Ordinator on 0418 825

591. Thanks again and best regards

Rita O'Dwyer - Secretary for the Friends of Providence House NSW





St Elmo's fort, Valletta

Move over, Venice: Malta is launching its first biennale this spring. The event has already caused a stir in the art world, attracting submissions from more than 2,500 artists from 75 countries. The final selection has yet to be made, but organisers have promised that "several artists of international fame" will be exhibiting. Under the theme White Sea Olive Groves, the

artworks will investigate modern Maltese and Mediterranean identity. The contemporary art will be shown in ancient settings, many of them Unesco-listed (the whole of [Valletta, the capital](#), is a world heritage site, with 320 historic monuments). Several venues are being turned into exhibition spaces for the first time, including the Grand Master's Palace in Valletta, the Armoury in the old city of Birgu and the megalithic temples of Ġgantija on Gozo.

maltabiennale.art is a Heritage Malta initiative through MUŻA, the Malta National Community Art Museum, in partnership with Arts Council Malta. The biennale is also presented in cooperation with the Ministries for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade, National Heritage, the Arts and Local Government, and Gozo, as well as with Visit Malta, Spazju Kreattiv, Malta Libraries, and the Valletta Cultural Agency. The biennale will unfold across Malta and Gozo, mainly within Heritage Malta's historic sites, many of which have been declared by UNESCO as being World Heritage Sites, including Valletta, the capital, and Gozo's Ġgantija.

maltabiennale.art will be opening its doors from the 11th of March 2024 until May 2024 and will be officially inaugurated by the President of Malta, his Excellency Dr. George Vella.

REFLECTION - CHARLES GAUCI Bishop of Darwin



Last Sunday on the Feast of the Epiphany, I was reflecting on some of my fond memories of my childhood. My grandmother lived within only a few minutes walk from two of her sisters.

The three celebrations – Christmas, New Year and the Epiphany were occasions for celebration.

We would have lunch in our individual families and then get together in the evening.

My grandmother Maria being the eldest had the Christmas gathering, Auntie Chetta next

in age had New Year's Day and Auntie Melda being the youngest had the Epiphany Day.

I remember looking forward to these occasions as a boy. This was not just because of the abundance of great food. These gatherings were fun and I was fond of these members of my family. We were and still are a close family. Many of those who used to gather have now gone to God. However, the bond remains strong even though we live many thousands of kilometres on different continents.

As I fondly remember, I was strengthened in my commitment to try my best to deepen bonds with my family including the two next generations to do this despite living in large distances apart. Thank God for the gift of technology. I was blessed with a united family. So many do not have this experience. Years ago I heard the Lord calling me to share what I have been given with many. I have been so blessed ever since. My 'family' keeps getting larger...

#Australian Bungalow in Malta

Update: January 2024



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Over the past few months, Din l-Art Helwa has made significant progress with the restoration of the

century-old Australian Bungalow.

The timber structure with a corrugated roof had been brought to Malta to help train Maltese and Gozitan emigrants heading to Australia. You may recall from our earlier article that the elements making up the Bungalow had to be assessed, with some requiring replacement, others treatment, and some complete replacement. DLH is also planning to re-assemble the Bungalow at Ta' Qali, which will be much more accessible for the public.

Following the dismantling of the portico surrounding the Bungalow during the second half of 2023, the corrugated metal roofing, the gutters and drain pipes and the outside cladding of the walls were carefully taken up. The parts that were too deteriorated or rusted were noted for substitution. All other pieces were numbered and taken to the contractors' workshops for professional restoration.

During the month of December, the roof trusses of the Bungalow were disconnected from the supporting walls and carried by special transport to Ta' Qali in an area close to the final location where the building will be reassembled

and re-built.

A few days later the walls were also disconnected and large panels were transported to Ta' Qali.

The base platform beams and members are now being dismantled and removed from Ghammieri. Unfortunately most of these are rotten due to the many years exposed to the wet and humid ground and will be substituted.

In the next few days, the new timber foundation platform will be constructed over the concrete posts prepared by DLH some time ago in collaboration with Ambjent Malta who were at the time responsible for the management of Ta' Qali Park.

The erection of the wall panels will follow with the installation of the roof trusses above them tying the structure in place. These will be followed by the erection of the surrounding portico on three sides.

The erection/ construction work should be completed by the middle of 2024.

The main sponsor of this important project is the Melita Foundation, however, more funds are required to complete the work. Anyone wishing to make a donation can visit our website on [Donation | Din l-Art Helwa - National Trust of Malta \(dinlarthelwa.org\)](#).



SELMUN PALACE AT MELLIEHA TO BE RESTORED TO ITS FORMER GLORY

The Finance Ministry has issued a tender for the restoration of Selmun Palace in the limits of Mellieha, at an estimated cost of €575,255. The tender offers close at 9.30 a.m. on 31 January, and they will start being opened half an hour later.

Selmun Palace was built in the 18th century through the *Monte della Redenzione degli Schiavi*, a charitable organisation set up by Grandmaster Alof de Wignacourt to pay the Ottomans and Barbarians for slaves to be given their freedom.

The land was bequeathed to the organisation by the Noble Caterina Vitale, and used to be rented to the Knights of St John as a relaxation area, including for the hunting of rabbits.

Despite its history, this villa has not received much attention other than being amalgamated into a hotel that was built adjacent to it by

Selmun Palace hotel Company Ltd; a branch of Air Malta which held custody of the villa. Yet, in 2011, this project was dropped due to the airline's restructuring strategy through which it decided to focus solely on aviation and travel. In January of the next year, the Planning Authority (which was still the Malta Environment and Planning Authority back then) scheduled the villa as a Grade 1 national monument as per Government Notice 22, but it did not receive any attention, despite promises by the government over the years. Tourism Minister Clayton Bartolo welcomed the news, adding he is confident the work will continue to preserve its history and identity

I thank all those who sent a small donation towards the production of this journal

If you would like to contribute these are the details

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Personalities in Mackay - Queensland

Emmanuel 'Casey' Zarb

National Road Transport Museum

Inducted into the Shell Rimula Wall of Fame in 2023.



Emmanuel Zarb, commonly known as Casey Zarb immigrated from Malta at the age of 11. He and his family settled in the Pioneer Valley outside Mackay, Queensland, on a family cane farm. Casey married Marjorie Wardrop and they settled in Syned St, Mackay, where they started raising their family. Casey and one of his brothers purchased a few businesses together over several years and in 1958 the opportunity arose to start a new business with Mackay/Pioneer Valley Sugar Industry. Casey purchased several trucks and trailers to start transportation of whole stick cane to the mills. On the 1st of July, 1966 he formed the company now commonly known as Zarb Road Transport. Casey developed a working relationship with the Mackay Sugar Industry where he assisted in the improvements and development of changes to the transportation of sugar cane into billets. The opportunity arose for Casey to expand the business to transporting raw sugar and molasses from two of the five local sugar mills, alongside two other local Mackay transport companies. Over the years, and with changes to vehicle designs, Zarb Road Transport (ZRT) worked with Mackay Sugar to change the transportation, operation and increase of pay load and productivity of both milling and transportation. One such development was the Roll on/Roll off system that was trialed for Marian Mill in the Mt. Martin and Owen's Creek areas with machine harvest cane being transported in the mill. As part of this trial ZRT manufactured their own tram trucks at McLennan Street, about 700 in number and also purchased the bins that went with them. The trial of Roll on/Roll off road transport was successful and as a result the company secured the contract for all of both whole-stick and chopped cane to the mill, previously hauled by the Queensland Railways. With the closure of three of the local Mackay mills, ZRT increased their fleet size. They also improved the vehicle design to help comply with the change in requirements in operations that were necessary to assist the remaining mills transition to a 24-hour a day, 7 days a week operation. During the drier periods of the early 1990s, Casey also branched out into the transportation of molasses as stock feed to the Western Queensland communities. Casey managed the business for a period of years before handing the business to his son David Zarb, who is currently still managing the business. Casey

died in 2018.



Maltese in Mackay are still proud their Maltese Culture

THE MALTA GARDEN

MACKAY – QUEENSLAND - AUSTRALIA



The Malta Garden is the first of five themed gardens and precincts within the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens that pay homage to the cultural heritage of Mackay. Immigrants from the islands of Malta in the Mediterranean came to Australia in their thousands after Australian Federation in 1901, to seek a better life. Many settled in the then small city of Mackay primarily to work in the sugar industry, harvesting sugar cane by hand. Today, Mackay boasts the largest population of Maltese immigrants and descendants in an Australian regional centre.

The garden features several iconic and interpretative themes to represent Malta. A stylized aqueduct or viaduct - a system of bridges and channels primarily used to transport water, is represented here in stone and metal and is based on several impressive solid stone structures that can still be seen today in Malta built in both Roman and recent history. A sand bocce court represents a vanishing style of the popular ball game that was traditionally played on sand, which many people around the world today play on grass.

Malta has experienced thousands of years of trade and invasion and flora from around the world has been brought to and flourished in the sunny, dry climate. This garden features plants that originate in arid and semi-arid climes, or are drought tolerant, that will grow in Mackay's wetter climate. Some of these plants include:

- Carob Tree – *Ceratonia silaqua* – used today as a coffee or chocolate substitute, this tree from northern Africa and the Mediterranean also has special significance in biblical and modern day agricultural uses in Malta.
- Ruby Saltbush - *Enchylaena tomentosa var. tomentosa* – the orange fruited form of this Australian native succulent has silver leaves and is taller than coastal varieties. Ruby Saltbush often grows in harsh locations such as intertidal zones and mangrove fringes as well as inland salt lakes and marshes. Like many plants important to the peoples of Malta – the small fruit is edible.
- Desert Rose - *Adenium obesum* - a perennial succulent from Arabia's semi-arid regions and tropical Africa that has a distinctive fleshy, bottle-shaped trunk and beautiful flowers. Desert Rose is related to Frangipani and Oleander and makes an excellent pot plant.
- Bismarck Palm – *Bismarckia nobilis* – a striking palm from Madagascar with large silver-grey fan shaped leaves. This palm suits dryer, exposed conditions in warm climates.



HAMRUN CLUB SYDNEY 100 Jackson, St Marsden Park, NSW

The Hamrun Club was established in 1979 and is located in Marsden Park. It has been servicing the Maltese community for 44 years with Live shows, Dinner Balls, Functions ect. The club also celebrates the feast of San Gejtanu in August each year with a Mass Prosesion and a Brass Band following the procession of the Statue and the people following the statue. We organise many outings around NSW for our members, mostly elderly above 70. We open every Sunday, with Saturdays open when we have events and functions. We are a liscensed Bistro and Bar



Sir Anthony J. Mamo

THE FIRST RESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA (1974 – 1976)

Sir Anthony Mamo was born at Birkirkara on 9th January 1909. He was educated at the Archbishop's Seminary and later at the Royal University of Malta where, in 1931, he graduated as Bachelor of Arts (B.A) and in 1934, as Doctor of Laws (LL.D). As the first student in the course he was awarded the Government "Travelling Scholarship" and the "Bugeja Scholarship".

Sir Anthony had been in private practice as an advocate for just over a year when he made the Public Service his career. In October 1936, he was appointed member of the Commission which, under the chairmanship of Judge Harding, was entrusted with the task of preparing a Revised Edition of all the Laws of Malta. This task took six years to complete.

In the meantime, the Second World War broke out and, although the Commission's work was carried on, Sir Anthony like so many others, gave his services for refugee work and the welfare of those hit by war.

In 1942 Dr Mamo entered the Attorney-General's Office as one of the Crown Counsel. Here he occupied in succession all the grades, until he himself became Attorney-General in 1955.

In 1947 Malta was once again granted a Constitution with a Maltese Government responsible for internal affairs and Sir Anthony served under four Prime Ministers - Sir Paul Boffa, Dr Enrico Mizzi, Dr Giorgio Borg Olivier and Mr. Dom Mintoff - as chief legal adviser to

them personally and their Cabinets. In this capacity he accompanied all Ministerial delegations for discussions and negotiations with the British Government.

From 1943 Sir Anthony was Professor of Criminal Law at the Malta University up to 1957 when he was appointed Chief Justice and President of the Court of Appeal. In 1964 Sir Anthony became the first President of the New Constitutional Court and in 1967 he became also the first President of the new Court of Criminal Appeals.

Sir Anthony was awarded the O.B.E in 1957 and a Knighthood in 1959. In 1955 he was appointed Honorary Q.C. for Malta. Towards the end of June, 1962, when Admiral Sir Guy Grantham ended his term as governor, the Queen, acting on the advice of the Prime Minister, G. Borg Olivier, appointed Sir Anthony, Acting Governor pending the arrival of the new Governor, Sir Maurice Dorman. Since then, Sir Anthony acted on several occasions, first, as Governor's Deputy, and later, under the Malta Independence Constitution, as Acting Governor-General. On 3rd July, 1971 Sir Anthony was appointed first Maltese Governor-General.

He held office as the first President of Malta between 13th December, 1974 and 26th December, 1976. Sir Anthony was for many years President of the Council and Pro-Chancellor of the University and in recognition of his services, he was awarded the Honary Degree of Doctor of Literature (D.Litt).

During his career, Sir Anthony has represented Malta at various international congresses and conferences.

Both he and Lady Mamo have sat on many committees and participated in various activities concerned with social welfare and in recognition of their services, Sir Anthony was appointed Knight of the Venerable Order of St. John and Lady Mamo was appointed Commander of the same Order. Sir Anthony Mamo passed away on 1st May 2008.



Indians top Malta's 106,000 Foreign Workers

There were a total of 68,755 third country national workers

registered as working in Malta in July of last year. India is the most dominant country within Malta's foreign workforce, ahead of Italy (11,566) people, the Philippines (9,560), Nepal (8,157), and the United Kingdom (5,144).

Data published in the House of Representatives shows that Malta's number of registered foreign workers from outside the EU grew from 63,400 in January 2023, to 68,755 in July 2023.

India – 13,158	Italy – 11,566	Philippines – 9,560	Nepal – 8,157
United Kingdom – 5,144	Serbia – 4,106	Colombia – 3,149	Albania – 3,418
Turkiye – 2,779	Romania – 2,610	Bulgaria – 2,576	Pakistan – 2,146
Spain – 2,070	France – 2,030	Germany – 1,839	Hungary – 1,817
Poland - 1,777	North Macedonia – 1,456	Sweden – 1,344	Bangladesh – 1,249
Libya - 1,001			

However, Malta has foreign workers from all around the world, from as far-away places as Vanuatu, Turkmenistan, Yemen, Malawi, and Bhutan.

As of July 2023, the Maltese economy employed 37,224 EU, EEA and EFTA nationals and 68,775 third-country nationals, for a combined total of 105,999. This means the number of foreign workers has continued to rise significantly, up by almost 30,000 people from the 77,825 that were registered in 2021.

Migration does not actually lead to job losses for locals. Many jobs are not being taken by the Maltese, and therefore, people are needed to fulfil these job positions.

I have been receiving this journal for over 5 years. I love it because it's FREE, NON-POLITICAL and BILINGUAL and full of culture and history of Malta.
#This is the first time I am writing to you to say 'thank you. Rita May - Canada

Karba ta' Qalb Mugugha

6 Jannar 2024 ħallietni ommi
18 Jannar 2020 ħallietni binti.
Ma niehdu xejn magħna.
Nispiċċaw taħt l-art
għall-ksieħ u l-bard.

Kiefra l-firda
għal min jibqa'
ħsibijiet u tifikiriet
Xi stajt għamilt aktar?
Xi stajt għamilt aħjar?

Il-memorji jibqa'.
Naħseb fikom
aktar minn qabel.
Kif jista' jkun
ma narakomx?

Nixtieq ingibkom lura
nkomplu fejn ħallejna
l-istorja fuq din l-art
bla xkiel, bla mard.
Ġenna tal-Art

Inħallu f'idejn Alla
Ma nafux kif u meta.
Skont il-pjan t'Alla
b'riħ jew b'riefnu
minn hawn irridu nsiefru

Waħda ta' kull wieħed
Importanti li nishru
biex inkunu ta' ġid u
lil Alla nżommu qrib.

Nitolbu għal xulxin sa ma
niġi ningħaqad magħkom
nibqa' nħaddan valuri sodi,
valuri nobbli bħal tagħkom!



Maria Gauci
Malta
Jannar 2024



A bronze monument was built, dedicated to Christine Gauci, a soldier in the army who lost her life tragically while diving at Mgarr ix-Xini in 2020. It was placed in front of the house where Christine used to live in Rabat, Gozo. Mary Gauci, Christine's mother, has decided to transform the home into a shelter, Dar Christine, which offers therapy to those who are victims of domestic violence and abuse. She said that, thanks to the monument, she feels her daughter is still alive. Sculptor Charlot Spiteri Magri made the monument dedicated to Christine.

Mary Gauci said that just as she lost her daughter there are those who lose their children because of the fighting between couples, where unfortunately children are innocently caught in the middle. She said that at Dar Christine there will also be help for parents who pass through these situations.



MALTESE PRIEST NAMED MEMBER OF AN INTERNATIONAL ECUMENICAL COMMISSION

The Holy See has named Mgr Professor Hector Scerri to be a member of the Joint International Commission for the Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church.

Mgr Hector Scerri, 58, has been a Consultor to the Dicastery for the Promotion of Christian Unity, at the Vatican, since 2014. He is a professor of dogmatic theology and ecumenism at the Faculty of Theology, University of Malta, and

the head of the Ecumenical Commission of the Archdiocese of Malta and of the Doctrinal Commission of the Maltese Episcopal Conference.

The Joint International Commission which has been meeting regularly since 1980, seeks to promote theological dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church. It is currently co-chaired by Cardinal Kurt Koch, Prefect of the Dicastery for the Promotion of Christian Unity and Metropolitan Job of Pisidia, on behalf of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.



Heritage Malta's largest restoration project was inaugurated on Friday [TVMNews]

Four and a half years of continuous work, from planning and research, until the last portrait and artifact were in place. On Friday Heritage Malta will be inaugurating its largest restoration project yet; the Grandmaster's Palace in Valletta.

One of the changes has been to the location of the Armoury, which is

now in its original place, after the hall was used as many years as Malta's Parliament.

The Armoury was in fact at the heart of this extensive restoration project to the tune of €40 million. With almost 7,000 artifacts, the armoury at the Grandmaster's Palace is among the largest collections of its kind in the world.

Speaking to TVMNews, Architect David Zahra explained the extensive works carried out in this hall.

"As a hall first and foremost we had to remove everything that had been done when it was used as the Parliament, and also when it served as a hall when Malta held the Presidency of the European Union. We then conducted a number of archaeological excavations in an attempt to determine whether the original flooring is still here. In fact we found small areas with stone slabs which were used before. We then studied the walls, we know that there were three decorative schemes, and we retained the most recent one done in the 20th century."

Architect Zahra explained that though the audiovisual halls, visitors will be embarking on a voyage along the 450 years of the palace's history, from the time of the Knights of St John to date. The same system will be used in the Armoury, where there will be interactive videos explaining how particular weapons were used.

"For a long time the armoury was downstairs, beneath us... as part of this project we moved it upstairs, in its place. Apart from the armoury we restored several other areas within the palace so that the visitor now has a holistic experience which starts at the visitors' centre, and then go up a flight of stairs built for the benefit of the public, and see the armoury."

The Armoury Hall contains different kinds of cannons, including one known as the 'falkunett', as well as cannonballs shot by the Ottomans, and which were retained to lay the foundations of fortifications.



Do you remember these beds? How times change!

Mortuary Ritual of 4th Millennium BC Malta: the Zebbug Period Chambered Tomb from the Brochtorff Circle at Xaghra (Gozo)

Kappa Vision Facebook

phases of collective burial, exchange and symbolic processes in the central Mediterranean and the origins of Maltese insularity."

[Source: <https://www.cambridge.org/.../15E5EB0DE311532055C3CF5772C...>]

THE BIZARRE SOCIAL HISTORY OF BEDS

By Professor Brian Fagan, University of California, Santa Barbara.

Even though we spend one-third of our lives in bed, they're more of an afterthought. I certainly didn't think much about beds until I found myself talking about their history with the executives of a mattress company. These humble artifacts, I learned, had a big story to tell – one that's 77,000 years old.

FROM PUBLIC TO PRIVATE

During the 19th century, beds and bedrooms gradually became private spheres. A major impetus was rapid urbanization during the Industrial Revolution. In cities, compact row houses were constructed with small rooms, each with a specific purpose, one of which was sleeping.

Another reason was religion. The Victorian era was a devout age, and Evangelical Christianity was pervasive by the 1830s. Such beliefs placed great emphasis on marriage and family, and by 1875, Architect magazine had published an essay declaring that a bedroom used for anything other than sleeping was unwholesome and immoral. Bedrooms reserved for adults and children became commonplace in affluent 19th century homes. Husbands and wives sometimes even had separate bedrooms, perhaps connected by a door, each with their own adjoining dressing rooms.

Read the full article here:

<https://theconversation.com/the-bizarre-social-history-of->

Photo Copyright © / Jean-Paul Borg. For all my latest photos, please visit and like Kappa Vision on Facebook and kappavision_gram on Instagram.

But did you know that Malta may have been one of the first places in the world where a bed as we know it today was used?

In an article written by an independent news agency and published by the Associated Press (AP), a professor from the University of California writes that the raised frame with a mattress on top of it - or simply 'a bed' - was first used thousands of years ago in Malta and Egypt

"The structure of the bed has remained remarkably consistent: We know that raised frames with mattresses were being used in Malta and Egypt by 3000 B.C., which means that people have been using them for over 5,000 years," Professor Brian Fagan writes.

Fagan was basing his information on findings by an Anglo-Maltese team in Gozo which were published by the Cambridge University Press in 1995 (The Prehistoric Society). The team had discovered a Żebbug period chambered tomb in the south-east corner of the Brochtorff Circle in Xaghra, Gozo.

In the study, the tomb is described as "a unique find from the Maltese islands and rare within the southern central Mediterranean." They also highlight the "significance of the tomb for the formative

MALTESE
eNEWSLETTER

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BMX International Fest - 2023 Xmas Edition

Joe Bajada

Recently the Malta BMX Association organized successfully the BMX Fest - Xmas Edition 2023 International BMX competition, where several participants took part including foreign professional riders.

In this festival, the Colombian David Aldan won in Group A. Gianni Zahra and Brandon Grech finished behind him respectively. Group B was won by Chalane Catania who was followed by Joshua Bonnett and the Serbian Gary Nedimovic.

Joshua Bonnett was chosen as the most prominent rider of the year and was presented with the trophy by former assistant police commissioner Alfred Abela. At the end of the festival, the trophies and medals were presented to the winners by John Zammit, president and founder of the Malta BMX Association.

The Malta BMX Association would like to thank several main sponsors and those who also provided the trophies and medals to the winners, as well as the entire crew, current members, as well as the past members and sponsors who continuously gave and they continued to give their support on a voluntary basis because without their help it would not have been possible for the Association to continue its work for the last 38 years. The Malta BMX Association would also like to thank the public who attended these competitions as well as the local media for all their support.

More information on the activities of BMX Malta can be obtained from the website of the same Association or from the Facebook page: Malta BMX.



Gladiator 2 film set open to the public on January 21



The set of the sequel to *Gladiator*, which will open to the public later this month. Photo: SJP

Film buffs will be able to enjoy a day on the set of *Gladiator 2* in Fort Ricasoli as it opens to the public later this month.

The rare event set for January 21 was announced by the Malta Film Commission/Screen Malta on Wednesday.

Filming of Ridley Scott's highly anticipated production has been underway in Malta for several months but was interrupted by an actors' strike. The film is due

to make it to cinemas at the end of this year.

Visitors will be welcomed to Fort Ricasoli, the main venue of the filming, on January 21 between 8am and 5pm.

The film set includes a reproduction of the Colosseum and other iconic Roman Empire buildings. The building of another film set, in parts of the countryside off Miżieb, started in the past few weeks.

Gladiator 2 follows the original *Gladiator* film, released 24 years ago, starring Russell Crowe as Maximus, a former general forced into becoming a gladiator under the rule of the self-appointed Roman emperor Commodus, played by Joaquin Phoenix.

The film was a massive hit and won an Oscar for Best Picture, and Crowe took home the prize for Best Actor.

Irish actor Paul Mescal will star in the sequel alongside A-lister Denzel Washington and prominent actors Pedro Pascal, Connie Nielsen and Derek Jacobi. Hundreds of Maltese extras are also taking part.

Through the Malta Film Commission, the government has committed itself to paying a record-breaking €46.7 million to the subsidiary company of Paramount Studios for the production of the epic film.



Dear budding chefs,

If you know someone who is **aged between 13 and 16 years old**, then this event is for you! Embark on a captivating journey including cooking, learning, and celebrating the diverse flavors of Malta's culinary heritage!

From **12 to 14 February, between 8:30am and 14:30pm**, a hands-on workshop in the historic setting of the Inquisitor's kitchen in Birgu will be offering students a comprehensive exploration of food's role in history, menu planning, nutritional analysis, and essential kitchen skills. From savoury foods to traditional desserts, each day we will unveil a distinct menu, crafted with care to accommodate various

dietary preferences. As a token of participation, all attendees will receive a certificate to commemorate their culinary adventure.

Visit our website for more info [Cooking adventures from past to present - Heritage Malta](#)



Registration for the 2024 Maltese Language classes is now open

ACT:

MAA Maltese Language classes:
johnvass54@gmail.com

MACKAY:

MacKay Maltese Language classes:
veronica.gauci@bigpond.com

NSW:

Dwejret il-Malti – Blacktown:
dwejretilmalti@gmail.com

Maltese Language School of NSW:
mls@mccnsw.org.au

Skola Maltija Sydney:
skolamaltijasydney@yahoo.com.au

VIC:

Maltese Language Classes MCCV
<https://mccv.org.au/services/language/>

FEDERATION OF MALTESE LANGUAGE SCHOOLS:
malteselanguageschools@yahoo.com

BAND REHEARSAL STARTS BACK NEXT WEEK!



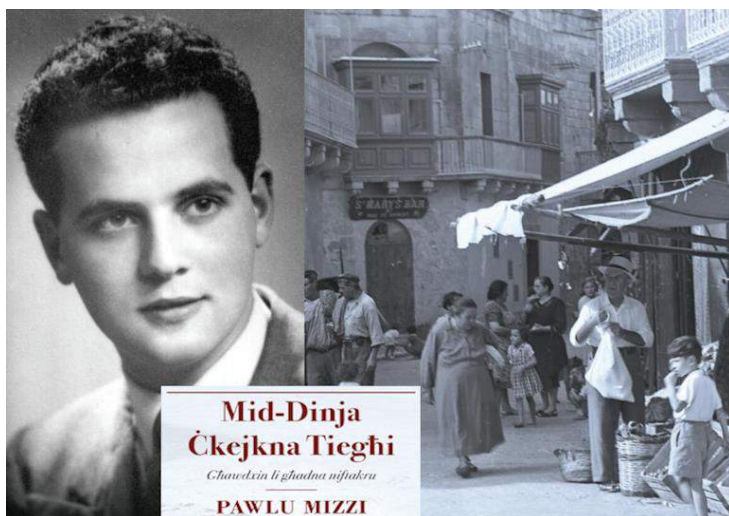
Wednesday 17 January
 7.30pm - 9.30pm
 Polish Hall
 6 Helene St, Ardeer

**Maltese
 Community
 of
 Victoria**

My weekly expectation is THE MALTESE JOURNAL – I have a wonderful collection of most of the editions. I treasure them and read them again and again especially when I am lonely and want to lift my spirits in this troubled world.

Rita Mifsud - Australia

Klabb Kotba Maltin - book 'Mid-Dinja Ckejkna Tieghi: Il-Kitbiet ta' Pawlu Mizzi.



Klabb Kotba Maltin has recently published the book 'Mid-Dinja Ckejkna Tieghi: Il-Kitbiet ta' Pawlu Mizzi.', a publication of Pawlu Mizzi, the founder of Klabb Kotba Maltin who died four years ago..

The book is based on a simple style, a dialect which gives identity and the moral and spiritual qualities that make every Gozitan human. In the publication, Pawlu Mizzi introduces to readers a number of profiles of Gozitans who distinguished themselves in local public life and others who were close to the author.

Anthropologist Mark Anthony Falzon says that the book introduces an air of social realism as the author, among others, attacks 'the structure of power and the elite who feed them'. Prof. Falzon believes that change comes along

through individuals who remain a part of the system, however they seek to change it from the inside without breaking the framework. The book was edited by Servio Grech together with Francesco Pio Attard.



Doninu Malta: Empowering Lives, Inspiring Hope

In the heart of our noble mission, Doninu Malta stands united as a beacon of compassion and change. As a non-profit organization dedicated to uplifting those in need, our journey is fueled by the unwavering commitment to make a positive impact in every life we touch.

Our Shared Journey of Compassion

Together, we embark on a shared journey to create a world where empathy triumphs, and every individual is empowered to overcome challenges. Doninu Malta believes in the transformative power of collective action,

where small acts of kindness ripple into waves of positive change.

Impact Beyond Boundaries

From providing essential resources to fostering community connections, Doninu Malta extends its arms to embrace the vulnerable and marginalized. Our commitment knows no boundaries, as we strive to create a ripple effect that transcends geographical limitations.

Unveiling Hope, One Initiative at a Time

Join us in celebrating the stories of resilience and triumph. Doninu Malta unveils hope through carefully crafted initiatives that address the unique needs of each community we serve. Together, we cultivate an environment where dreams flourish and possibilities abound.

Your Support, Our Strength

As we navigate the path ahead, we extend our gratitude to each supporter who has contributed to our cause. Your unwavering support is the bedrock upon which we build bridges of hope. Together, we amplify our impact and transform lives.

Connect, Collaborate, Change

Let us forge ahead with a shared vision, where collaboration knows no borders. Doninu Malta invites you to join hands in creating a world where compassion and generosity are universal languages.

Together, We Are Doninu Malta - A Force for Good

Thank you for being an integral part of our mission. Together, we are the architects of change, crafting a legacy of compassion that transcends generations.

Mr. Pierre Calleja- Journalist / Editor

Operations Manager / Coordinator

DONINU MALTA / DMM (Commercial)

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Maltese Diaspora is a great supporter and
Ambassador of DONINU - MALTA**

Malta's List of Domestic Violence and Femicide



The issue of femicide and domestic violence in Malta has been brought to the forefront again following the murder of Chantelle Chetcuti, allegedly by her former partner.

However, this case is not the first of its kind and several women have been murdered in Malta over the years at the hands of someone they cared for.

A list initially compiled by Yosanne Vella and Josanne Cassar shows, in stark black and white, over 30 murders that occurred at the hands of a husband, partner, son, nephew, or brother in Malta and Gozo.

1978: Mary Saliba Stabbed to death at her Paola home by her husband, who reported the murder to the police before jumping off a roof

1981: Rita Casaletto Drowned in her residence in Żabbar by her husband. She was found by her daughter.

1983: Angela Debono Stabbed to death by her husband in her bed following a row that ensued because she refused to call a doctor.

1987: Gemma Fonk Stabbed to death in her bed by her husband, who originally claimed she had been killed by an intruder.

1993: Diane Gerada Stabbed to death by her husband at their home in Marsaxlokk. Grazio Gerada, her husband, was given just four years imprisonment due to the court finding that she had provoked him.

1993: Sylvia King Burnt alive in her car in Rabat after being kidnapped by Joseph Harrington, the husband of a victim of domestic abuse that Sylvia King was assisting.

1999: Jane Vella Pushed off of a cliff in Munxar, Gozo, by her husband, Ronnie Vella.

1999: Maria Buhagiar Shot by her brother in Mosta following an argument over burnt toast and a jersey that needed fixing.

2001: Vanessa Grech and her 17-month old daughter Ailey

Stabbed to death by Alfred Azzopardi after she threatened to tell his wife about their secret relationship.

2002: Rachel Muscat Stabbed by her boyfriend Nureddin Bazen after she tried to break up with him at his residence in Ġhaxaq.

2002: Pauline Tanti Stabbed by her husband on the doorstep of his mother's residence. The husband committed suicide shortly after.

2003: Josette Scicluna Stabbed by her ex-boyfriend at her house in San Ġwann. She was stabbed 49 times, and the murder was witnessed by her daughter.

2004: Patricia Attard Shot dead by her ex-husband Carmel Vella.

2005: Doris Schembri Stabbed to death while bedridden in St Luke's Hospital. Her estranged ex-husband, Anthony Schembri, had walked through the hospital hallway, entered her room, and stabbed her to death. Her body was found on the floor.

2008: Charlene Farrugia

Killed by John Paul Charles Woods, who hid her body inside a cave in the bastions outside Valletta.

2009: Lyudmila Nykytiuk

Fell into an empty elevator shaft after an argument with her husband where he accused her of infidelity. She was later found dead in the shaft with an injury to her eye.

2009: Theresa Vella

Stabbed to death in Cospicua by her daughter's ex-boyfriend after she intervened to stop him assaulting her daughter.

2009: Catherine Agius Murdered by her ex-husband as she got off of a public bus in Tarxien.

2010: Christine Sammut Shot dead in her car by her ex-partner Kenneth Gafa.

2011: Irena Abadzheva Stabbed 40 times by her ex-partner Mustafa Kosurgeli in her apartment in Buġibba. He is still on the run and is being sought by Europol.

2011: Karen Cheadle Drowned in her apartment in Mellieħa. Her partner, John Agius, committed suicide on a tree outside his house in Mgarr.

2012: Yvette Gajda Stabbed 60 times by her partner Nandor Marton in their house in St Paul's Bay. She was stabbed with a pair of scissors.

2012: Margaret Mifsud Strangled by her ex-partner Nizar El Gadi in her car and later found at White Rocks.

2012: Meryem Bugeja Found with several blows to head. She was pregnant with twins at the time, and her body was discovered at her home in Mgarr. Her husband was released due to lack of evidence proving her had committed the crime.

2015: Silvana Muscat Stabbed five times, she was found dead in bed at her residence in St Paul's Bay. Her husband, Hamid Nour Eddine G Ibrahim, is still on the run. At the time, Ibrahim was under a court order not to contact his wife.

2016: Caroline Magri Throat allegedly slashed by her ex-partner. She was found dead at her residence in Ta' Giorni. Her ex-partner had previously stalked her, and is suspected to be behind her murder.

2016: Eleanor Mangion Murdered in Swieqi by hatchet blows to the head. Her husband dumped her body in a warehouse in Qormi. They had a daughter of 9 years together, and were undergoing separation procedures.

2018: Maria Carmela Fenech and Antonia Micallef Sisters stabbed to death in Gharghur by Maria's son.

2018: Shannon Mak Her body was found dumped in the street with her throat slashed in Santa Venera. Her ex-partner, who is the main suspect, attacked her after she dropped him off home.

2018: Lourdes Agius Strangled to death. The mother-of-six was found dead at her house in Paola. Her partner, Michael Emmanuel, was the father of at least two of her children.

2019: Marija Lourdes and Angele Bonnici Murdered with a mallet by their son/brother Joseph Bonnici at their Ghaxaq home.

2020: Chantelle Chetcuti Stabbed in the head. The mother-of-two was stabbed by Justin Borg, her former partner of over a decade and the father of her two daughters.

2022: Paulina Dembska The 29-year-old Polish woman's body was found in Sliema's Independence Gardens. Shortly before her body was found, her suspected murderer, a 20-year-old from Żejtun, had entered Ballutta Church, where he caused a scene, overturning chairs while referring to what he had just done to his victim.

Rita Ellul The second murder and femicide to shock the nation was the murder of Rita Ellul, a 49-year-old mother of three and grandmother of one, who was strangled to death in her own home on 26 February. She was found dead on her bed in Triq Dun Frangisk Mizzi, Ghajnsielem at around noon

Bernice Cassar Bernice Cassar, a 42-year-old mother of two, was brutally shot and killed on 22 November in Paola. She became the third femicide victim of the year. Her estranged husband Roderick Cassar is being charged with her murder. He pleaded not guilty.

Some argue that journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia, murdered by a car bomb in 2017, is a femicide. However, her murder was also an attack on democracy and an assassination of one of the government's harshest critics

Lisa Marie Zahra, could also be included. She was just 15 years old when she was found dead at the bottom of Dingli cliffs in March 2014. Her former drama teacher, Erin Tanti pleaded guilty to murdering her and was handed a 20-year prison sentence back in 2019.

Trans sex worker, **Sion Grech** was another victim, stabbed to death in 2005, at just 20 years old.



THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE - VALLETTA



Royal Opera House Interior



Royal Opera House Dinner Dance



Royal Opera House - Valletta



Bombed during WW2

Located majestically at the entrance to Valletta, the Royal Opera House used to stand on Strada Reale (Kingsway, now called Republic Street), flanked by South Street and Ordnance Street. The project was entrusted to Edward Middleton Barry, the architect of Convent Garden Theatre, London, who designed the Royal Opera House in the Neo-Baroque style which had become fashionable in Europe and ensured the popularity of this building with the Maltese public*. The project started in 1860, although it was delayed when

alterations had to be carried out to Barry's plans as these did not take into consideration the slope of the site, thus a high podium had to be added to the Kingsway facade, making the ending result even grander.

Construction got going in 1862 with the demolition of the Casa della Giornata to make way for the theatre which was to occupy the site measuring 206 feet by 112 feet. Construction was supervised by Maltese architect Salvatore Fenech who had supervised the construction of the Valletta Market. The cost of the theatre was to have been around 30,000 pounds, but the finished building eventually cost between 44,000 and 60,000 pounds, an enormous sum which drew sharp criticism from many.

The Royal Opera House was completed in 1866 and inaugurated that same year with the opera of Vincenzo Bellini "I Puritani". The overall capacity was 1,090 people sitting and about 200 standing. It is almost impossible to image the glitter and elegance of the audience, both local and foreign, who were present at its opening ceremony that October evening in 1866.

Tragedy struck when on 25th May 1873 a fire broke out inside the Opera House, completely destroying its lavish interiors. Fortunately, the façade and exterior were left almost intact, and soon reconstruction was underway to restore it to its former glory. On 11th October 1877, exactly eleven years and two days after its first grand opening, the Opera House opened its doors once again, this time to Giuseppe Verdi's Aida.

During its years of existence, the Royal Opera House was the focal point of Maltese cultural life and classical music. Some of the most famous opera singers of the time, like Gianna Pederzini, Antonio Scotti or Mariano Stabile, actually performed in Valletta's Opera House in its earliest years. The Royal Opera also housed some of the world's most important musical pieces, like those composed by Bizet, Verdi and Donizetti.

Sadly, the Royal Opera House was to become the symbol of destruction during the Second World War. In 1942, after weeks of fierce air raids by the German Luftwaffe, the Royal Opera House was bombed repeatedly until part of the ceiling and a corner collapsed inward on the evening of Tuesday, 7 April 1942 leaving behind a huge pile of smoking rubble. For safety reasons, the Opera House was finally dismantled about a decade later, though Mr. Edwin Abela, the architect who carried out the demolition, insists that at the time, the Opera House could have been repaired. The stones were numbered and stored, most in a field near the Addolorata Cemetery, however they were eventually dispersed and in spite of repeated electoral promises, the reconstruction of the Opera House was destined not to be.