MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

10 YEARS

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An Independent Journal for Maltese Living Abroad

IL-MILIED IT-TAJJEB

ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S GEETINGS FROM THE BISHOPS OF MALTA

Photo - **Ian Noel Pace**

The Bishops of Malta welcomed and conveyed their Christmas and New Year greetings to

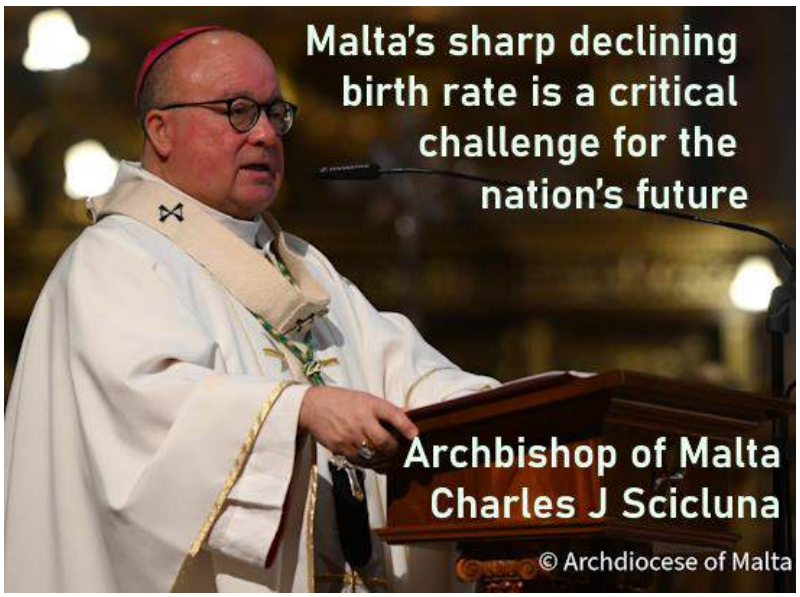
President Myriam Spiteri Debono and Mr. Spiteri Debono, Prime Minister Robert Abela and Mrs. Abela, Speaker of the House Anġlu Farrugia, Leader of the Opposition Bernard Grech and Mrs. Grech, members of parliament and representatives of the highest authorities State Authorities and Constituted Bodies at the Archbishop's Palace in Valletta.

Archbishop Charles Scicluna wished them a year full of peace and hope in light of the incidents of violence that are taking place in various countries around the world, stressing the need for us to always show respect for one another, regardless of cultures and beliefs, and explained how the Church in Malta is working to welcome foreign Christians among us and help them feel appreciated.

The bishops also thanked the authorities for their work in society, particularly in relation to the security of the country, as well as in many areas of social assistance, including the assistance provided by the State so that the Church in Malta can take care of 42 children in its homes, at a cost of €200 per day.

During a Christmas Together in Castille Square, the Archbishop wished everyone "that we work to receive from God his gift of mercy and peace. The peace that he gives us is when we live a good life, when we take care of each other, forgive each other and have mercy on each other.

The world is in great need of peace. Our continent, Europe, is going through difficult times of conflict. The Middle East, so many parts of the world, are experiencing moments of violence, of war and are leaving innocent victims... One asks: "How can we work more for peace? Peace begins in my heart but also in your heart."



Giulia Magri

Archbishop Charles Scicluna marked the 50th anniversary of Malta becoming a Republic by addressing the country's declining fertility rate and questioned who would "represent Malta's identity and fly our national colours" when his generation dies.

Delivering a homily at St John's Co-Cathedral, Scicluna recalled how in 1964, the year Malta gained Independence, Malta's birth rate was 2.74. In 1974, when Malta became a Republic, it was 2.08.

Now, in 2024, Malta has the lowest fertility rate in the EU, with a birth rate of 1.08. Experts forecast that the already low fertility rate will continue to shrink in the years to come.

"Malta's current birth rate is so low, that it is below replacement level," Scicluna said.

"We need to think about the roots and causes of this downward trend, and in the interest of our heritage and the preservation of our ethnicity, we need to be proactive in promoting the blessing of offspring to our families." He prayed to God to grant Malta the "blessing of new births in our beloved and sweet land".

Mgr. Scicluna noted how this year's budget has tried to address the issue and encourage young couples to plan their future and fulfil their "natural vocation" to become mothers and fathers of the country's future generations.

This year's budget - among other measures - includes a €1,500 one-time payment for the third and every subsequent child, a boost in marriage tax credit and a €250 increase in child allowance. Scicluna said measures such as providing fair wages and affordable housing would encourage families to thrive and grow.

"**For what would the Republic have achieved if it makes economic progress and reforms its institutions but does not provide for the gift of future generations," he asked.**

"Who will be there to represent Malta's identity and fly our national colours when our generation fades away? Who will be there to proudly declare this island as a sweet homeland that cherishes its identity and serves as a haven for the life and love and its people?"

He concluded his homily by appealing to the people to pray that the future descendants will be there when the time comes "for us to hand over the baton".

Scicluna also expressed gratitude for the country's achievements over the past 50 years and paid tribute to contributions by politicians, public servants, judiciary, army and law enforcement.

Fr. Fred Farrugia

Bringing Jesus back to Christmas Adelaide - Australia

Father Fred Farrugia a Maltese-Australian priest, isn't one to turn his back on a creative challenge. In the lead-up to Christmas, the Adelaide Hills parish priest spent months meticulously restoring a nativity set to its former glory. **Katie Spain / The Southern Cross**

Fr Fred Farrugia with the nativity set he spent months repairing and painting ahead of Christmas. Picture: Ben Macmahon The set was originally donated to St Michael's College Chapel, Henley Beach, by the Oswald and Taylor families during the 1960s.

During advent, the figures would be carefully taken from their wrapping and set up in the church to tell the story of the birth of Christ with Baby Jesus being placed in the manger during midnight Mass. Soon after the feast of the Epiphany, the crib would be dismantled, the individual pieces gently re-wrapped and placed in storage ready for next Christmas.

Fr Fred Farrugia painstakingly restoring the nativity set statues.

The set found itself homeless during chapel renovations and the figures, including Joseph, Mary and an angel, ended up in disrepair and gathering dust in a parishioner's garage. Two decades later, in 2023, Fr Fred was contacted with a query about how to appropriately dispose of statues that have been blessed but are no longer wanted.When he looked at the badly damaged set, he saw potential.

"It was a disaster. They were broken and scratched," Fr Fred said.

"But it's a beautiful set. I had never seen this kind before."

Originally from Malta, Fr Fred devotes Monday afternoons to painting and carpentry. He paints using acrylics, with Dolly, his little West Highland White Terrier, watching on.

"Some of them took a long time to fix but thank God, nothing was lost," he said.

"All the pieces were there but they had a lot of scratches and breaks. I used plaster to fix them then painted them."

This isn't Fr Fred's first foray into ambitious creative projects. He also renovated Stations of the Cross and made a miniature replica of his church back at home in Malta. The tiny church is full of intricate detail and takes pride of place in his home.

"When I first came to South Australia I was based in Noarlunga," Fr Fred said.

"It was a bit difficult until I got used to life in Australia so that's when I started making it."

Fr Fred hopes the new-look nativity scene will bring joy to parishioners. It will be on display at St Matthew's in Bridgewater this Christmas.

"We haven't fully recovered from COVID and people not being able to go to church," he said. "Some families didn't come back. My message for this time of year is let's bring Jesus back to Christmas. We lose that when it all becomes too commercial."

Been a while since I've been in contact with you, hope you're in the best of health.

Thank you for continuing to produce the Maltese journal. You must love to spend a lot of hours researching and finding interesting articles for all of us to enjoy. I'm writing to thank you for this and take this opportunity to wish you land Josie a blessed Christmas and a happy and healthy new year. Regards **Raymond Grima - Adelaide, South Australia**

MALTESE LIVING ABROAD
Malta in the World

KOMPOŻIZZJONI TAL-KUNSILL GĦALL-MALTIN LI JGĦIXU BARRA MINN MALTA

Il-Kunsill għall-Maltin li Jgħixu Barra minn Malta ġie mwaqqaf permezz tal-Att XX tal-2011 u beda jiffunzjona fis-sena 2012, meta ġie maħtur l-ewwel Kunsill.

Il-Kunsill huwa mmexxi mill-Ministru responsabbli għall-Affarijiet Barranin bħala Chairperson, flimkien ma' 15-il membru u segretarju.

Il-membri kollha jridu jkunu ta' nazzjonalità Maltija.

Fil-każ ta' ħamsa minnhom, dawn jistgħu jkunu jgħixu kemm f'Malta kif ukoll barra minn Malta.

Irid ikollhom għarfien u esperjenza speċjali tal-bżonnijiet u l-interessi ta' Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta. Jeħtieġ ukoll li dawn ikunu jaħdmu jew kienu jaħdmu f'organizzazzjonijiet mhux governattivi u li l-għan prinċipali tagħhom hu li jmexxu 'l quddiem il-benesseri ta' Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta.

L-għaxar membri l-oħra jintgħażlu minn fost persuni ta' nazzjonalità Maltija li jkunu membri ta' komunitajiet Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta, u huma mqassma hekk:

- Żewġ membri mill-Istat ta' Victoria mill-Commonwealth tal-Awstralja;
- Żewġ membri mill-Istat ta' New South Wales mill-Commonwealth tal-Awstralja;
- Żewġ membri mill-Istati Uniti tal-Amerika;
- Membru wieħed mir-Renju Unit;
- Membru wieħed minn stat ieħor mill-Commonwealth tal-Awstralja (minbarra Victoria u New South Wales);
- Membru wieħed minn Stati Membri tal-Unjoni Ewropea (ħlief Malta); u
- Membru wieħed mill-Kanada.

Il-ħatra tal-membri ssir mill-Prim Ministru. Fil-każ tal-ewwel ħames membri, din issir wara konsultazzjoni mal-Kap tal-Oppożizzjoni.

Il-ħatra hija għal tliet snin, iżda tista' tiġġedded għal tliet snin oħra wara li jintemm l-ewwel perjodu tal-ħatra.

In-numru ta' membri tal-Kunsill mistenni li jiżdied biex ikun rappreżentattiv aktar tal-Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta, meta jiġi fis-seħħ l-Att kif ġie emendat u approvata mill-Parlament .

Il-Kunsill preżenti huwa magħmul hekk:

Is-Sa Judith Buhagiar u s-Sa Amie Cardona mill-Istat ta' Victoria mill-Commonwealth tal-Awstralja;

Is-Sa Miriam Friggieri u Dott. Antoine Mangion mill-Istat ta' New South Wales mill-Commonwealth tal-Awstralja;

Is-Sa Alexandra Micallef minn stat ieħor mill-Commonwealth tal-Awstralja;

Il-Prof. Sandro Galea u s-Sa Mona Nicholas mill-Istati Uniti tal-Amerika;

Is-Sa Sarah Meli mill-Kanada;

Dott. Edgar Brincat mir-Renju Unit; u

Is-Sa Alison Micallef mill-Unjoni Ewropea.

Il-ħames membri l-oħra huma:

Comm. Major James N. Casha; Is-Sur Luke Incorvaja; Dott. Loredana Gatt; Is-Sa Giselle Sherri-Migliore; Is-Sur Antoine Scicluna.

Għall-aktar tagħrif wieħed jista' jaċċessa: https://malteselivingabroad.gov.mt/council-for-maltese-living-abroad/

Dr. BARRY YORK (MEILAK) FROM AUSTRALIA SHARES ONE OF HIS STORIES WITH US

My late uncle Joe Meilak (1904-1988), my dad's brother, emigrated to Melbourne from Malta a century ago, in December 1924. He worked on the waterfront for 44 years and nominated my parents and me as assisted migrants in 1954.

On a visit to Melbourne in November, my wife and daughter and I were able to visit the former house of Uncle Joe and his Australian wife Daisy in Hawke Street, West Melbourne. It was the first accommodation in Australia for mum and dad and me.

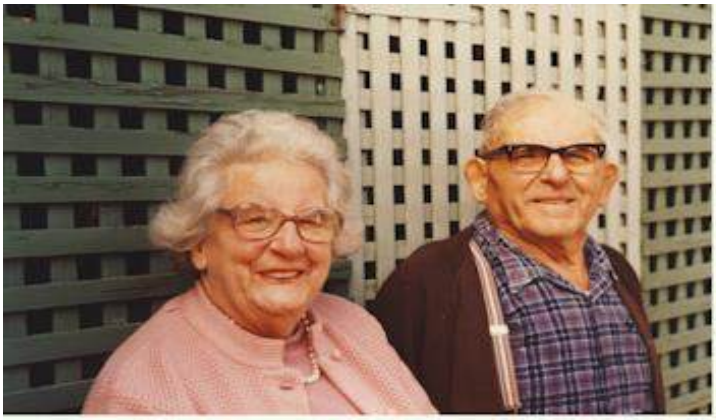
Joe and Daisy put up quite a few new arrivals there. Earlier this year, I wrote to the current owners and they kindly arranged for us to visit.

It's hard to believe that in such a small space in 1954 there were ten of us: Daisy and Joe and their three adult children, plus mum, dad and me, plus a Maltese wharfie mate of Joe's (known as Kurun) and another new arrival, a cousin named Lou Meilak.

Joe and Daisy were wonderful people: members of the working class 'battler' generation from whom we can learn so much in terms of human values.

I'm pleased that I recorded oral history interviews with them both in 1984. I am forever grateful for their sponsorship of my parents and me, and for their kindness and generosity in providing our initial accommodation in Australia.

Postscript: *Also while in Melbourne, I was awarded the prestigious Hazel de Berg Award for Excellence in Oral History at the biennial conference of the Oral History Association of Australia.*



High Commission of Malta in Australia

Message from
H.E. Mario Farrugia Borg
High Commissioner
of Malta to Australia

Time waits for no-one, and the busier the lives that we lead, the more it seems to us as if time is constantly challenging us by going faster than the previous year! And here we are again, thinking holidays, presents, travel, food and all things that we associate with the festive season!

It was a busy year for us in Canberra as well as for our Consulates in Melbourne and Sydney. Personally, I undertook a number of official trips in a number of Australian cities and overseas, and such trips make me realise every time the huge vastness of the Australian continent! Meetings with the Maltese diaspora are of utmost importance, and our Consuls General and me all ensure regular contact.

This is a time when one reflects on another year gone by, and unfortunately, throughout last year, the world has been in much turmoil. Wars once again threaten humanity, and the phrase “never again” seems to be nothing more than just that – a phrase, maybe even an empty one. The Russian invasion of Ukraine seems to be without an ending in sight. The Israeli war on Hamas has expanded on various fronts. Ironically, in the land which hosted the birth of the Holy Child, peace has for so many years been elusive. And right now so many horrors are emerging in Syria as the world discovers what the Syrian people had to go through under the regime which has just been brought down.

Let us therefore spare a thought for so many people going through unimaginable suffering, before we think of our presents and parties. Let us pray for those who do not dream of “white Christmases” and “silent nights”. And let us also not forget the real reason behind Christmas, the birth of the Saviour in the forgotten, sleepy town of Betlehem. Peace on Earth to People of Goodwill. Because only here lies our hope for peace.

A huge thank you to Frank Scicluna for keeping the Maltese Journal going. Joanne and I, together with my team at the High Commission, would like to wish readers a blessed Christmas and a prosperous, healthy and happy New Year 2025.

MALTESE CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Dear Frank, Thank you for giving us this opportunity. On behalf of the Maltese Cultural Association of NSW members of the committee (my colleagues). Firstly we thank you for this Newsletter and secondly we wish you & your loved ones and ALL your readers, a Very Happy & Holy Christmas and may 2025 be a Year of Peace, Love, Respect and God's Blessings,

Charles N. Mifsud. MQR OAM JP. Hon.President

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE
THE DISCOVERY OF THE MAN'S DIGNITY

Msgr. George Frendo O.P. Archbishop Emeritus of Tirana-Durres

If Christmas is the mystery which reveals the true face of God, it is also the mystery which reveals the true face of man. It celebrates man because it emphasizes the irreplaceable dignity of man for whom God adopted humanity and its frailty. In the Christmas liturgy we read an exquisite invocation from St. Leo the Great: "O Christian, be aware of your dignity". One could change this expression to make it read thus: "O man, be aware of your dignity". Christmas manifests the dignity of man, of each and every man. This dignity is revealed in a child, the God in search of man who has become man, a baby, totally dependent on others. Luke writes about the birth of Christ as taking place away from home and in unusual circumstances.

It happens in a cave and in extreme poverty while a population census is going on. In a census, man is but a number, one immersed in and lost among the masses. Who could be aware of what had taken place in that cave in Bethlehem? Jesus was born in a census. He is just a number. On the other hand, he is born into a small but friendly community of two persons, Mary and Joseph. Mary is the new Ark. She carried within her, not the rolls of the law, like the Ark built by Moses, but the author of a new covenant. She is the symbol of all those who, with faith and simplicity, receive Christ who has loved the Church, his spouse. She is the symbol of all the men who truly love their wives and dedicate themselves wholehearted to the well-being of their children.

The presence of the shepherds, an emarginated group, anticipate Christ's prayer: "I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to mere children" (Mt 11, 25). The child Jesus is not revealed to Herod or the High Priests, but to the Bethlehem shepherds who left behind them their sheep, their only "treasure", to accept the invitation to meet Jesus, the God who made the first step to reconcile man with God. Thus, the cave at Bethlehem became the first Church where Jesus is adored in Spirit and Truth by people who had nothing to offer but themselves. By becoming one of us, the Word Incarnate has revealed to us our dignity.**To the Editor and readers of the Maltese Journal - May the glory of our Savior's birth fill your heart with peace and love this Christmas and throughout the approaching New Year 2025.**

I really wish that this journal keeps on going so that Maltese living abroad will still cherish the culture and heritage of the Maltese islands. A real blessed happy Christmas to all the readers.

Ramona Portelli, Malta

KONSULAT ĠENERALI TA' MALTA

CONSULATE GENERAL OF MALTA

Lawrence Buhagiar
Consul-General of the Republic of Malta in Sydney
9th December 2024

Dear Frank, As the year draws to a close and the holiday season approaches, it is with great warmth and gratitude that I extend my heartfelt Christmas wishes to all the readers of *The Maltese Journal*. This festive time of year serves as an opportunity to reflect on the blessings we have, to appreciate the connections we've made, and to embrace the spirit of goodwill that unites us all.

Over the years, I've had the opportunity to witness firsthand the deep-rooted connection that Maltese descendants in Australia continue to maintain with their heritage, culture, and traditions. From participating in cultural events to celebrating national milestones, the sense of pride in Malta's rich history has always been a source of inspiration to me.

It has been an incredible privilege and honour to serve as Consul General of the Republic of Malta in Sydney for nearly seven years. Since my appointment in May 2018, I have had the distinct pleasure of fostering ties between Malta and the Maltese Australian community, further strengthening the bonds of friendship and cooperation that exist between Malta and Australia. I also served as the Dean of the Consular Corps in Sydney, thus as Head of the Corps, I represented other Consuls General with the Australian Authorities including the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Home Affairs Ministry, Local Government and Business Institutions.

As Consul General, I have worked tirelessly with my dedicated team to assist Maltese citizens, promote Malta's interests in Australia, and ensure that the needs of the Maltese community here are met. It has been a rewarding experience to collaborate with various organizations, government bodies, and individuals who share the goal of further enhancing the relationship between our two nations.

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas, I am reminded of the importance of family, community, and solidarity. Christmas is a time of peace and reflection, and I encourage you all to take a moment to cherish the love and joy that surrounds you. While this holiday season may present challenges for some, it is also a time for compassion and reaching out to those in need. In the spirit of the season, let us all strive to make the world a little brighter through acts of kindness and generosity.

Looking ahead to the New Year, it is time for my wife and I to say goodbye as my posting as Consul-General comes to an end. In January, Rosieanne and I shall be joining the rest of our family in New Zealand as new migrants however we look forward to visit Australia in the near future.

On behalf of my family and my colleagues at the Consulate, I wish each of you a very Merry Christmas and a New Year filled with good health, happiness, and success.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Lawrence Buhagiar Consul-General of the Republic of Malta in Sydney

MESSAGE FROM CANADA

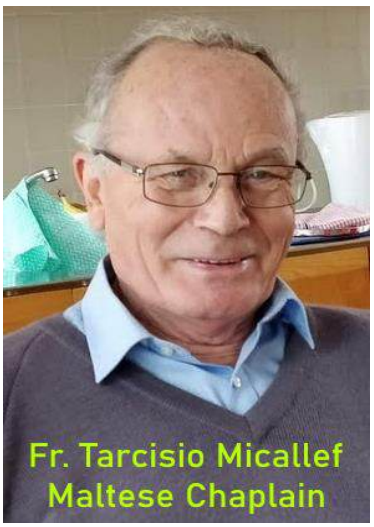
The same as in other countries the Maltese community (first generation) is shrinking, and many associations are struggling to survive. Thank God, we still have some enthusiastic Maltese Canadians who are doing their utmost to keep the culture and the heritage of the Maltese Islands alive and transmitted to our younger generation. I can tell you this that this journal is of immense importance to keep us, and the young ones, interested in what are forefathers brought with them in the 50s and 60s when they migrated to Canada and settled in this beautiful country. **A. M. Galea**

I have fond childhood memories of my first 12 Christmas as a boy in Malta . Mum cooking Christmas puddings and Christmas cakes . The crib and Christmas tree going up in the house. The statue of baby Jesus in one of our windows and the windows of many other people. The playing of Maltese bagpipes in the novena before Christmas at church in the early morning. The M.U.S. E.U.M society with Christmas carols and processions with baby Jesus in the streets. A number of family gatherings for an evening meals with extended family over Christmas, New Year and the feast of the Epiphany were also part of the celebrations . We brought some of those traditions with us here in Adelaide when we migrated in 1965 . This included midnight mass at Lockleys.

Christmas decorations in house and celebrations either family.In all these celebrations there was no doubt that Christmas was about the birth of Jesus in my family most of the people in Malta.

This amazing mystery of God being born as human being among us is at the heart of Christmas. It is great to celebrate with loved ones. The folklore surrounding Christmas is beautiful. However, the most important thing about Christmas is God saying you matter absolutely to me, and I love you unconditionally. Let us also love one another other ....not just when it is easy but also when it is not so easy .. Wishing you all a joyful and holy Christmas

As the Chaplain for the Maltese Community in the Archdiocese of Sydney, I meet allot of Maltese Australians and others who practice their faith and celebrate Christmas with Christian Values.



I am very grateful to all those who support our Chaplaincy at De Piro House Stanley Street Sydney especially those who attend the Sunday Mass in Maltese and all those who for many years gone by celebrate the feast of Maria Bambina at St Mary's Cathedral. It is important that we as a community appreciate one another and support our organized events the year.

My sincere thanks on behalf of the community goes to Mr Frank Scicluna the editor of the Maltes Journal who informs the readers about our culture and heritage together with all the other important information which keeps the readers adjourned about all the events. On behalf of the Missionary Society of St Paul's Chaplaincy in Sydney, I would like to convey our wishes to each member of our community and beyond a very Happy Christmas with the blessings of Baby Jesus`. As we celebrate his birth, we remember Our Lady His Mother and St Joseph who cared for baby Jesus` through their journey to Betlehem and through his life.

My wishes go to everyone that we will look after one anther like St Joseph. Best wishes to those elderly who reside in Nursing Care Facilities or at home and their carers, to all the youths may they find God's shining star as their beacon, to all the children who anxiously wait for Christmas, and to all the families so we will all celebrate the memorial of the Birth of Jesus` with love peace and joy with Chistian Values. May the New Year 2025 bring us world peace and inner joy, prosperity, and good health. Il-Milied it-tajjeb u Sena gdida 2025 it-tajba lil kulhadd.

Rev Fr Tarcisio Micallef MSSP

Chaplain for the Maltese Community In the archdiocese of Sydney

MALTESE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF NSW

To the Editor and readers of the MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

In the midst of the festive season, we take time to reflect on the past year as 2024 draws to a close. We reflect on the many good works and services that our Council provides. We think of our dear friends, family members and our vibrant Maltese community. We remember too, those that have departed our world and live on in our hearts.

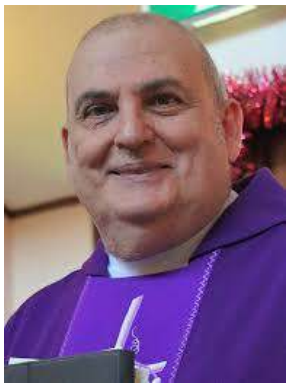
We look forward to the year ahead where our wish is for continued harmony and unity between the many Maltese associations, both young and old, and to build on our common love and passion for our unique Maltese heritage, language and culture. We hope for younger generations of Maltese descendants to maintain our many traditions for many years to come. **On behalf of the Maltese Community Council of NSW, we wish the Maltese Community a very happy, Holy and safe Christmas.**

May the spirit of Christmas bring family and friends together and fill your hearts and homes with peace and love. We look forward to continuing our work supporting and advocating for the Maltese Community in the New Year ahead.

May God Bless you all **Best wishes from the MCC President and Committee**

FR. LONNIE BORG

F'dawn il-jiem aħna nawguraw il-festi tajba u nagħtu rigali lil xulxin b'sens ta' rispett, imhabba u gratitudni. Imma x'inhu l-bidu ta' dan kollu? Bla dubju ta' xejn aħna nafu dan kollu lil Alla li tant ħabbna li tana lil Ibnu l-waħdini għas -salvazzjoni tagħna lkoll. Fil-quddiesa tal-Milied ċelebrata f'nofs il -lejl nisimgħu l-profeta Isaija jħabbrilna "il-poplu li kien miexi fid-dlam ra dawl kbir, in nies li jogħqodu f'art id-dlam, dawl kbir idda fuqhom". (IS 9:2-3).



CRIB BUILT BY FR. LONNIE BORG

Iva, Ġesu bil-migja tiegħu fostna, rebaħ id-dlam tad – dnub, tas – supervja u l-egoiżmu tagħna u dawwalna bid-dawl ta' l-imħabba t' Alla. Dak li deher impossibli f'għajnejna, Alla għamlu possibli, billi "l-Verb ħa l-ġisem u għammar fostna" (GW1:14)

Nistedinkom tharsu lejn il-presepju, zommu din drawwa hajja. Xtaqt li minn hawn nirriflettu fuq il-grotta ta' Betlehem, l-istalla li fiha twieled l- Iben t'Alla magħmul bniedem, Ġesù ta' Nazaret.

L-istalla tfakkarna fil-fatt li l-familja ta' Nazaret, malli waslet Betlehem, ma sabitx post fil-lukanda. Il-Vanġelu jgħidilna, "ġie f'daru u niesu ma laqgħuhx" (Ġw 1:11). Il-Mulej jitwieled f'għar. Tarbija li tibki imma ma timponix ruħha. Ma tkissirx u lanqas

tneħħi l-libertà tiegħi u tiegħek. L-imħabba ta' Ġesù Bambin hija proposta libera li lanqas ir-rispost tiegħi ma tkisser. Il-mistoqsija li nixtieq naqsam magħkom hija din: x'risposta se nagħtuh 'il-Mulej

f'dan il-Milied? Jalla kull min hu Nisrani jkollu l-opportunità jersaq lejn il-Qrar u t- Tqarbin b'sinjal li laqa' 'l-Mulej fil-qalb tiegħu
Dan hu l-awguri li nixtieq lilkom u lill-għeziez kollha tagħkom li nifthu qalbna għall-Mulej li ġie biex jiltaqa' magħna u li xandru din l-aħbar ma' kulħadd speċjalment ma' dawk kollha li għaddejjin minn żmien difficli. Nieħu ukoll din l-okkazzjoni biex nawgurawlkom ilkoll sena mseddqa bil- barka tal – Mulej Ġesu – **Fr. Lonnie Borg mssp – Melbourne, Australia**

Dear Friends, I am one of the readers of the Maltese Journal that I receive from Frank, I want to take this opportunity to wish all my fellow readers and their Families a Merry Christmas and a wonderful year ahead God Bless. **BEST REGARDS IVAN COTTER (FROM AUSTRALIA).**

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JOHN MANGION FROM ADELAIDE – AUSTRALIA

THANK YOU, FRANK I thank you for sending me your journal for Maltese Living Abroad -THE MALTESE E- NEWSLETTER. In the edition number 542, I read with great interest about the

Maltese Community Council of South Australia, the award of the George Cross to the Island of Malta during World War 2 and the ANZAC and the GEORGE CROSS monuments at Prospect Garden, SA. These monuments are hardly visited by the members of the Maltese community because since the dissolution of the RSL Maltese Branch many Maltese forgot or don't know about them. You may find these monuments near the North Adelaide Football ground at Menzies Street, Prospect, SA

As Maltes-Australian citizen I am proud of my contribution I gave to the Maltese community for these last 70 years. I was also involved in the Malta United soccer team in the 50s and 70s. The club used to be situated at Waymouth Street, Adelaide and the late Salvu Zammit and his partner used to provide the players with coffee and pastizzi. They were the only ones who used to sell pastizzi in Adelaie. I was also a committee member of several associations in South Australia and especially on the committee of the Malta Anzac Memorial which was built at the Botanic Gardens Floriana Malta by the late Mr Nicholas Bonello, former High Commissioner for Malta in Australia.

The Maltese eNewsletter brings back a lot of nice memories about Malta and the Maltese communities in Australia and other countries too. Mr Scicluna spends a lot of time preparing this journal which reaches readers not only in Australia but in many parts of the world.

I admire Frank for his ability and intelligence to publish such a magnificent journal for us to enjoy and learn about the culture and history and heritage of the Maltese Islands on a voluntary basis. Please, keep going. I take this opportunity to wish you and your family and all the readers of this beautiful journal a happy and holy Christmas and a new year 2025 full of peace love and blessings.

I sincerely thank all those who sent a donation

WE NEED HELP TO CONTINUE PRODUCING THE MALTESE JOURNAL

My bank details are Bank Commonwealth (Australia)
BSB - 065106 ACC - 00502597
Name - Frank Scicluna

FROM MALTA

Gheziez huti Maltin tad-diaspora. Resqin lejn Milied u Sena gdida 2025. Kemm nixtieq narakom u nkellimtkom. Nixtieq narakom mieghi fill-Genna. Huti zommu maghqudin flimkien b'hekk iberikna Alla. Dan hu zmien ta' paci u mahfra. Inzommu l-fidi u t-tradizzjonijie sbieh li gibna minn Malta u wkoll nghadduhom lit-tfal u neputijiet, hbieb u anki ghaliex le? lin -nies li ma humiex Maltin. B'hekk inkunu missjunarji ferriha li gejna minn Malta. Nawguralkom il-festi t-tajba b'doza nisranija halli nkunu missjunarji kull fejn ninsabu.

Jiena nberikkom minn Malta. **Father Carmel Adami – Malta**

As we approach Christmas in 2024 in Cringila one reflects on a year full of improvements and introducing new programs supporting the Wider Community.

The committee closely working with the volunteers must be commended as they prepared meals for around 150 on a weekly basis. This is not a small job but rather takes the kitchen all week, in buying the food and preparation in advance to eliminates pressure on the day.

The Committee of the Cringila Centre main aim is to support the Community and why the Monday Seniors Day continues to cost only $8.00 for a Three Course Meals. The Centre recently introduced a Community Garden and a 3 D printing room with the view of attracting the younger generation.

It is pleasing and when possible grandkids attend the Centre and when asked them if they enjoyed themselves always tell us that they love coming over. The Centre introduced 2 beautiful Murals in the last 7 months and it is with great pleasure to announce that Museums & Galleries of NSW registered Cringila as a Museum of Art.

The Centre holding it's last day for 2024 on the 9 December and will re-open on Monday 3 February 2025. On the last day of the year the NSW Minister for Planning Mr. Paul Scully presented 2 Awards on behalf of the Premier of NSW Chris Minns.

In conclusion we like to wish readers of the Maltese Journal a happy Christmas and a New Year, and thank Mr. Frank Scicluna for his dedication in producing this Journal.

Louis Parnis – President, George Cross Falcons Community Centre, CRINGILA NSW

A Christmas Message from the Members and Committee of the Maltese Own Band Philharmonic Society Inc. Victoria, Australia

Dear editor and readers of *The Maltese Journal* As the festive season fills the air with joy and anticipation, we, the members and committee of the Maltese Own Band, extend our warmest greetings to you and your loved ones.

Christmas is a time of celebration, reflection, and togetherness—a season that echoes the values of community and unity that lie at the heart of our band's mission. Through music, we strive to bring people together, uplift spirits, and preserve the rich heritage of our Maltese culture. This year, as we gather with family and friends, we are reminded of how truly fortunate we are to be part of such a vibrant and supportive community.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude to *The Maltese Journal* and its readers for your unwavering support throughout the year. Your encouragement and enthusiasm inspire us to continue sharing our passion for music and our beloved Maltese culture.

May your Christmas be filled with peace, love, and laughter, and may the New Year bring you health, happiness, and countless blessings. From all of us at the Maltese Own Band, Merry Christmas and a harmonious New Year! T**he Members and Committee of the Maltese Own Band**

Dear Frank, Grazzi tal Gurnal li nircievi u li fih hafna tgharif ghalija u ghal Maltin bhali li jigu ghal laqa li jien ili nghamel spiritwalment ,iva ghax jien tal Museum,u ili hawn min 1961 u dejjem insibu ta ghajnuna specialment biex inzommu il lingwa Maltija ,ghax jien bil Malti inkellimom u xi ahbarijiet ta interess ghal dawk li jigu ghal laqa ta kull xahar.
Il Bambin jghatik ghomor u sahha biex tkompli dan ix xoghol.
Min qalbi nixtieqlek Milied Hieni u Qaddis u Sena Gdida bil Barka t'Alla

Il-Paci Mieghek Miriam Belli ....(Melb.) 2024

LINDA PEEK - AUTHOR - Wishing you a happy and safe Christmas.

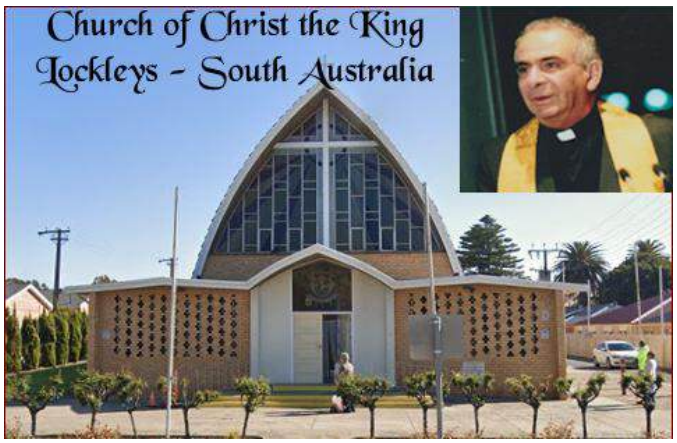
My book was launched at the Maltese High Commission in Canberra on 8 March and at the Lascaris War Rooms in Valetta at the end of May. Since then I've spoken at a number of public libraries, Maltese Community groups and book clubs around the country. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Maltese community for their continued support. The book makes a great Christmas gift.

Order your copy here: https://www.amazon.com.au/Malta-Childhood-Under-Siege-Linda/dp/0645876100/
We're currently looking for investors so we can turn this powerful story of Malta during World War II into a movie. If you would like to invest in this project you can get in touch with me here: linda@peek.ws
Full details on the book: https://woodlandspublishing.au/malta-a-childhood-under-siege/
Malta: A Childhood Under Siege by Linda Peek

THE FRIENDS OF PROVIDENCE HOUSE N.S.W. would like to wish the editor and readers of the Maltese Journal a safe and Happy Christmas, and a prosperous and Happy New Year.

If anyone wishes to make a donation, you can do so directly to our account with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia BSB 062-416 Account No. 1019 9448. Please include your name as a reference on the deposit. For acknowledgement of your donation, please send an email to foph@bigpond.com.
We would also like to remind you that the Concert in aid of Providence House will be held on Sunday 23rd February 2025. For more information or tickets, please call Jim Borg on 0418 825 591. The Committee would like to thank you for your support and generosity. Il-Friends of Providence House N.S.W. jixtiequ jawguraw lill-editur u l-qarrejja tal-Gurnal Malti il-Milied it-tajjeb u Sena gdiida mimlija risq u hena.
Jekk xi hadt jixtieq jaghti donazjoni, tistghu taghmlu dan direttament fil-Commonwealth Bank, BSB 062-416 Account No. 1019 9448, u niezlu isimkom u kunjomkom bhala referenza. Biex tircievu ricevuta, ibghatu email lil foph@bigpond.com. Nixtiequ nfakkrukom li l-Kuncert li se jittella b'risq id-Dar tal-Providenza se jkun nhar il-Hadd 23 ta'Frar 2025. Ghal aktar informazjoni jew ghal biljetti, cemplu lil Jim Borg fuq 0418 825 591. Il-Kumitat jirringrazjakom tas-sapport u tal-generozita taghkom. Rita O'Dwyer – Secretary

At this time of the year, it can get quite stressful for many of us, who work or volunteer. There are many end of year celebrations to attend either with groups or our family, and we find our selves running here and there. Let's try to make time to stop and reflect on the true meaning of Christmas and remember those that are less fortunate than us. I wish all our Maltese community members in Australia, a very peaceful and joyful Christmas and many blessings for the New Year ahead.
Marie-Louise Marisa Previtera OAM, JP



THE RETIRED MALTESE CHAPLAIN
Fr. Gabriel Stephen Micallef OFM

I think that in Adelaide, in South Australia there are individuals who know how to the Maltese celebrate Christmas in Australia much better than me. It was the late Fr. Peter Paul Mejlaq OFM who built the first crib in the garden of the house of the Franciscan Friars on Henley Beach Road which was next to the Lockleys Church, The church is dedicated to Christ the King. This was the church built mainly by the Maltese Migrants in the 40s and 50s and was also the church and the centre of the Maltese community. The Friars were given a historic house next to the church with a very large and beautiful garden where the first Franciscan fathers lived for many years. It is worth mentioning the pioneers- Fr. Giles Ferriggi, Fr.. Pietru Pawl Mejlaq and Fr. Sebastjan Camilleri. Father Egidju (Giles) was in charge of building of the Church and was the first parish priest of this parish, he also built the school of "St. Francis" adjacent to the Church. Fr. Peter Paul was the Maltese Chaplain. There were many Maltese who were baptised, confirmed or married or had their funeral Mass in this church. With the arrival of the members of the MUSEUM, the devotion to Baby Jesus began to spread. P. Pietru Pawl with the help of some Maltese volunteers built a hut in a corner of the garden. Here he made the shepherds and other small statues or *pasture* as we Maltese know them, while the members of the Museum took care of organizing on Christmas eve the procession with the Child Jesus, with some children carrying the lanterns. The Franciscan Sisters of the Heart of Jesus whose convent was nearby took care of the singing of the Christmas carols. A Christmas used to be held in the garden of the convent and a child used to deliver the sermon during Mass.

This devotion was still maintained until a few years ago especially when the I, the last Maltese Champlain went back to Malta to retire. Some nearby parishes introduced this custom that has been carried out to this day and is attended by many Catholics, mostly Italians.

I wish all readers of this Journal and all Maltese emigrants and their families a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year 2025. THANK YOU, FRANK

MALTESE SENIOR CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED
49 LeHunt Street Kilburn south Austraia 5084
P.O. Box, Kilburn South Australia 5084

Hello, my name is Godwin Gauci.

I am the president of the Maltese Senior Citizens Association of SA you might have seen me and the committee on an earlier issue of the Maltese e-Newsletter. It is almost the end of the year and at this time we celebrate the birth of Jesus. So on that note and on behalf of the committee and members of the association it gives me great pleasure to wish you all and your families and friends a joyful and blessed Christmas Season.

Happy Christmas

Il-Milied it-Tajjeb

CONFRATERNITY OF THE KNIGHTS OF ST. PETER & ST. PAUL

Headquarters: Melbourne, Victoria Australia.
http://www.knightsofstpeterandstpaul.com/

Presentation of donation to VincentCare Ozanam House.
Photo from left: Deputy Grand Master Chevalier Mario Sabatini, Team Leader at VincentCare Louise Augustinus receiving the donation from Dame Domenica Sabatini and Grand Master Chevalier Peter Paul Portelli.

Christmas is a time of giving, especially to the poor and the homeless. The Confraternity of the Knights of St. Peter & St. Paul is a charitable organization with chapters in many countries, including Malta and Gozo. This week, the Grand Chapter of Melbourne visited VincentCare's Ozanam House in North Melbourne to meet and spend some time with the poor and the homeless.

The Confraternity made a donation to help them get a feed for Christmas.

This year the Confraternity in Melbourne made donations to the Children's Hospital, Peter MacCallum Cancer Hospital, the Catholic mission of Bishop Giovanni Cefai in Peru, Vincent 5 Orphanage in Vietnam and a donation to a victim of a house fire.

The Grand Chapter of Malta based in Nadur Gozo also made a donation to the missions of Fr. Mario Cassar in Kenya and Fr. Raymond Portelli in Peru.

At Christmastime, the knights of the Confraternity in Gozo distribute Christmas Hampers to the needy on the island. On behalf of the Confraternity of the Knights of St. Peter & St. Paul, I wish the Editor of the Maltese Journal Chevalier Frank Scicluna the readers of the Maltese E-Newsletter a blessed and Merry Christmas and a safe and healthy New Year.

With every good wish. Chevalier Peter Paul Portelli Grand Master CKSPP.

MALTESE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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MALTESE GUILD OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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MALTESE CHAPLAINCY FESTITIVIES GROUP

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ST. CATHERINE SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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MALTESE RADIO EBIfm

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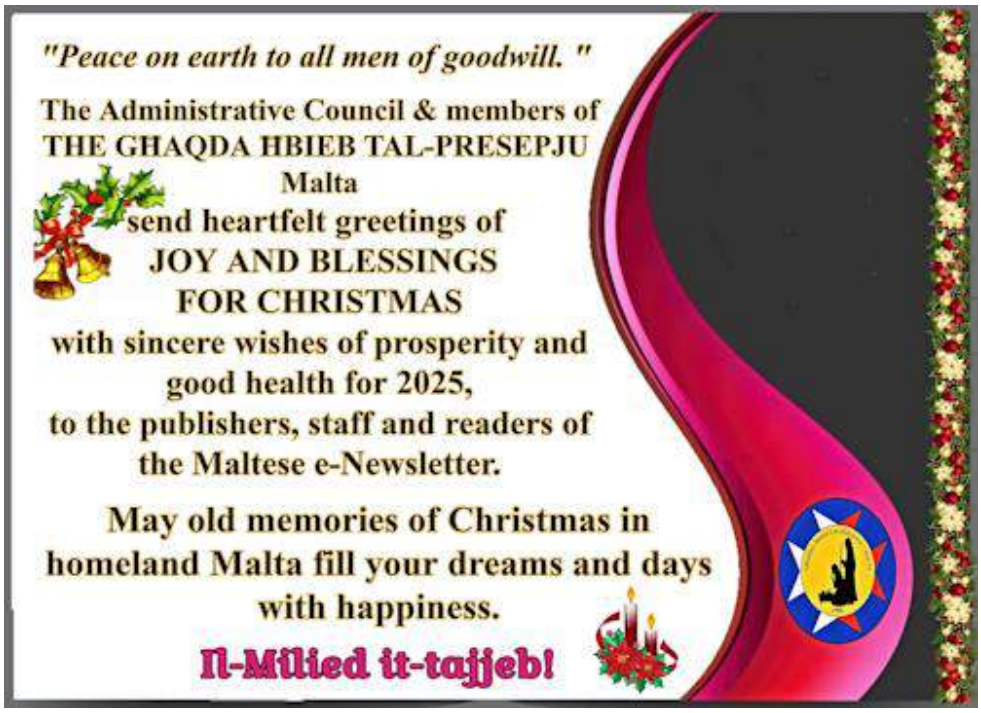
MALTESE AGED CARE ASSOCIATION OF SA (MACASA)



OUR JOURNAL

IS THE FRIEND

OF EVERYONE

WITHOUT ANY EXCEPTION

THE SECRET OF

OUR SUCCESS

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
L-Università ta' Malta

ID-DIPARTIMENT TAL-MALTI
MALTESE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
www.um.edu.mt/

Since 2005 the department has been entrusted with teaching Maltese as a foreign language.

Learning Maltese is more than just a boost to your CV, more than a means of communicating with your Maltese partner, relatives, friends, and work mates! It brings you closer to the Maltese way of thinking. It helps you venture beyond popular tourist areas, making your own linguistic way around an island rich in history and folklore. Learning Maltese helps you belong to a living culture, literature, and society. It will also reveal surprising links between Maltese and other languages - perhaps, even a shared history with your own mother tongue.

The study-units offered each semester are determined at the discretion of the Department. Places are available on a first come, first served basis. The study-units will only be offered if there is an adequate number of participants. Applications for certain units may close earlier should the maximum number of applications be reached.

Unless it is indicated otherwise, applications towards the Maltese as a Foreign Language study-units MAL0011, MAL0012 and MAL0013 may be submitted up to 31 January 2025. Applications may be submitted through the online application portal.

In case of queries concerning the study-unit application form, kindly contact Admissions on admissions@um.edu.mt.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

Christmastime is almost here and the island of Gozo has put on its best dress for this festive season. Victoria, Gozo's City, and home to Townhouse 17 Boutique B&B, is the leading locality that always steps up for the occasion. Indeed, the City is lit for the festive season with its main attractions being the decorations at Republic Street and the Villa Rundle Gardens,

The shimmering Christmas lights decorating the island's main streets add to the usually cheerful ambience of an island whose name means 'joy' in Spanish and we truly think that Christmastime is an ideal time to spend a holiday on the island of Gozo.

Beyond the decorations and twinkling lights, there's a whole programme of events planned for the upcoming month or so. Here's what we believe are the highlights of Christmas in Gozo 2024.

CHRISTMAS PARADE

The Christmas Parade is an annual event that usually draws the crowds to Victoria. We're expecting a big celebration this year to make up for the two-year wait for the parade due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Hundreds of dancers dance to the joyful tunes of marching bands as kids get the chance to take photos with their favourite Christmas characters on Christmas-themed floats.

Date: 21st December 2024, 8pm

Location: Republic Street, Victoria

GOZO CHRISTMAS MARKET

Just like past Christmases, the beautifully decorated Villa Rundle Garden is hosting a Christmas market that features local artisans and artists. This is the ideal place to purchase a genuine Gozo product and enjoy a glass of mulled wine to the tune of Christmas carols playing in the background.

Dates open: 1, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22 December

Location: Villa Rundle Gardens, Victoria

A Villa Rundle Christmas tree backdropped by the beautifully lit Gozo Cittadella

BETHLEHEM F'GĦAJNSIELEM

This is a life-sized crib spread over 20,000sqm of fields situated adjacent to the popular Għajnsielem Square. This nativity village is always open but is usually animated on a handful of dates throughout December and at the start of January, when more than 150 actors give you a glimpse of life in Judea of 2000 years ago. You'll also get to see and pet animals that are synonymous with the Christmas crib. There will also be several workshops open and plenty an opportunity to enjoy a warm glass of mulled wine or a Gozitan snack from the bakery. In 2017, CNN placed Bethlehem f'Għajnsielem as one of the world's top Christmas attractions – a real feat given that Gozo is a tiny island.

Location: Ta' Passi Fields, Għajnsielem

CHRISTMAS CONCERTS

If you love Christmas songs, then you're in for a treat if you book a stay in Gozo throughout this festive period. There are over 25 Christmas concerts planned between now and the end of the programme at the start of January 2025 with the main ones being Christmas it's Time, Carolling Christmas Concert, Feel the Magic of Christmas, and the Leone Grand Christmas Concert. The four main concerts mentioned are happening in Victoria, so they're just a short walk away from Townhouse 17. The full programme of events for Christmas in Gozo 2024

CHRISTMAS MIDNIGHT MASS IN GOZO

The Christmas highlight for many locals is the midnight mass that is held in each village church on the island. The vigil usually starts at about 11.30pm on Christmas eve and is accompanied by live music to celebrate the birth of Baby Jesus. In Victoria, midnight mass is magnificently celebrated at St. George's Basilica and the Gozo Cathedral, but you need to be early to secure a chair as these services are usually very popular. There are also other churches around TH that celebrate midnight mass with St. Francis Church, just up the road from our B&B, a worthy mention. During the midnight mass it is an old local tradition for a parish child, usually about 10 years old, to deliver the Christmas message to the congregation.

THE MOST POPULAR MALTESE-AUSTRALIAN JOURNAL IN GOZO

I always look forward to receiving this journal every week in my inbox and as soon as I receive it I read it from the first page to the last. I love to read the activities of the Maltese associations in Australia, Canada and USA. I have relatives in Melbourne Australia and in Toronto Canada. I am always surprised to read that the Maltese living abroad are so keen to keep the language, traditions and culture of our country. Keep it up. **Joseph Agius – Gozo, Malta**

Waqt il-kunċert tal-Milied ii sar ilbieraħ mill-Chorus Urbanus fil-Bażilika ta' San Gorġ taħt il-Patroċinju tal-President tar-Repubblika u li matulu saret ġabra b'risq il-Community Chest Fund. Indaqqu u tkantaw diversi għanjiet sbieħ tal-Milied taħt id-Direzzjoni ta.' Mro Dr John Galea. Ippreżenta Francesco Pio Attard waqt li l-Kav. Joe M Attard gie mistieden biex jaqra l-poeżija tal-Milied lli ktibeb għal din is-sena. Attendenza numeruża li kienet tinkludi diversi barranin li jgħixu Għawdex kienu preżenti fosthom l-Arċipriet tal-Parroċċa Mons Joseph Curmi. Għamel indirizz ta. merħba fil-bidu tal-Kunċert il-President tal-Kor.

Caritas MALTA

L-IMAM FI ŻJARA FIĊ-ĊENTRU TERAPEWTIKU TA' SAN BLAS

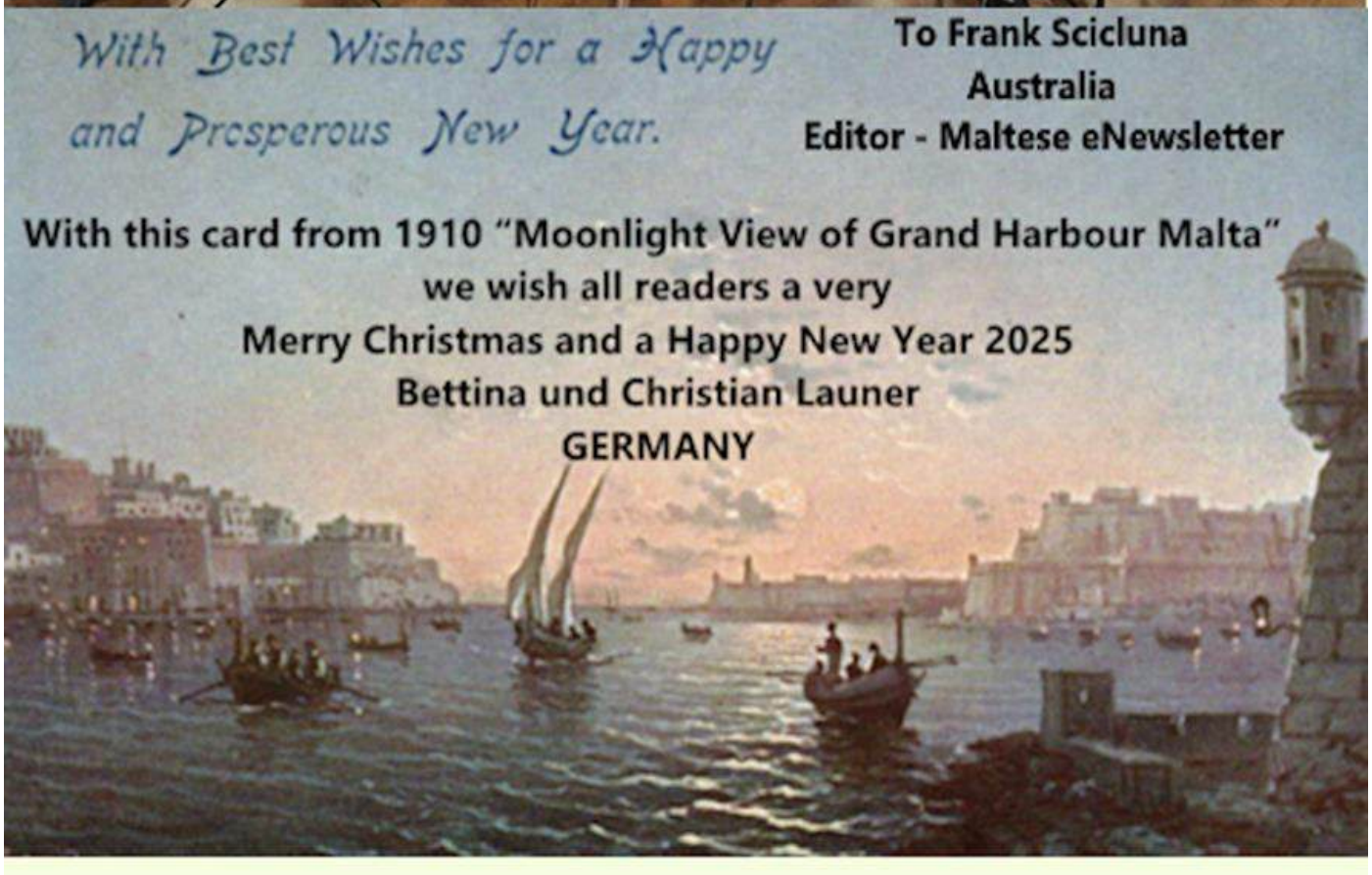
Nhar it-Tnejn, 9 ta' Diċembru, l-Imam Laiq Ahmed Atif flimkien mal-Komunità Ahmadiyya Musulmana għal darb'oħra wrew ġest ta' solidarjetà u mħabba lejn residenti li bħalissa qed jagħmlu programm ta' riabilitazzjoni fi ħdan iċ-ċentri terapewtiċi ta' Caritas Malta inkluż il programm tan-nisa.

Matul din iż-żjara, l-Imam Atif ippreżenta ħlewwiet tradizzjonali ta' dan iż-żminijiet ta' festi għaċ-ċentri terapewtiċi kollha ta' Caritas Malta. L-Imam Atif qasam ukoll il-messaġġ tiegħu mar-residenti u ħeġġiġhom biex ikunu determinati u impenjati biex jagħmlu dan il-programm ta' rijabilitazzjoni b'suċċess kbir. Huwa qal li biex din il-ħolma ssir realtà, huwa importanti ħafna li jużaw il-kapaċitajiet kollha tagħhom. Spjega: "Jekk xi ħadd huwa bil-għatx ħafna u jixrob qatra ilma, tista' qatra ilma ttaffi għatx kbir? L-għatx jista' jittaffa biss jekk persuna tixrob skutella sħiħa ilma. Bl-istess mod, sforz żgħir mhux biżżejjed biex tilħqu d-destinazzjoni tagħkom; madankollu, għandkom taħdmu ħafna sa fejn tista' tasal il-kapaċità u l-abbiltà tagħkom."

Huwa kompla jgħid: "Tħallux lil dawk li jbiegħu d-droga jeqirdu ħajjitkom u l-ħolm tal-familji u t-tfal tagħkom. Għalhekk, dawk li jiġbdukom jew jinfluwenzawkom b'xi mod lejn id-droga huma sulfarina li permezz tagħha tista' tixgħel nar qawwi, imma dawk li jużaw id-droga huma l-fjamma kbira, li tispiċċa tagħmel ħsara lilkom infuskom, lill-familji tagħkom u lil dawk li l aktar iħobbukom."

Il-Koordinatur Kliniku ta' servizzi ta' riabilitazzjoni fi ħdan Caritas Malta, is-Sur Ian Diacono, akkumpanja lil Iman Atif matul din iż-żjara. Esprima l-apprezzament tiegħu għall-ħbiberija li żviluppat bejn il-Komunità Ahmadiyya Musulmana u Caritas Malta u wkoll irrikonoxxa s sapport li din il-Komunità tagħti lil Caritas matul is-sena. B'apprezzament irrikonoxxa li din hija t-tmien sena ta' żjara tal-Komunità Ahmadiyya Musulmana. Ir-residenti wkoll urew l-apprezzament tagħhom għar-rigali li rċevew u anki esprimew kemm tfisser għalihom żjara bħal din, u messaġġ ta' kuraġġ, imħabba u solidarjetà.

MMG
Concert Band of Victoria
The Committee and theMMG Concert Band of Victoria
wish all the readers a very Happy Christmas


With Best Wishes for a Happy
and Prosperous New Year.
To Frank Scicluna
Australia
Editor - Maltese eNewsletter
With this card from 1910 "Moonlight View of Grand Harbour Malta"
we wish all readers a very
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2025
Bettina und Christian Launer
GERMANY

Celebrating Success: Maltese Students Shine in NSW Short Film Competition

Students from Skola Maltija Sydney's online primary class have proudly received second place in this year's NSW Federation of Community Language Schools (NSW FCLS) Short Film Competition. The theme, *My Community Language School / L-Iskola tal-Kommunita' Tiegħi,* encouraged students to creatively showcase their cultural pride and linguistic skills through film.

The winning short film, featuring our young students and their teachers, highlighted the students' dedication and passion for their heritage. The film was judged on creativity, use of the Maltese language (with English subtitles), and the portrayal of cultural elements.

Photo source: NSW Federation of Community Language Schools

Skola Maltija Sydney students - Claudia Berghold, Jasmine Thind, Anaya Thind, Natalie Berghold and President of the NSW FCLS, Lucia Johns.

The achievement was celebrated on 23 November 2024 at the NSW FCLS Gala Dinner, held at Bankstown Sports Club. Students, Anaya Thind, Jasmine Thind, Natalie Berghold and Claudia Berghold were presented with their award at the prestigious event, supported by their parents, Skola Maltija Sydney teachers and committee members.

The event was attended by over 500 teachers from member schools of the NSW FCLS, the Federal Minister for Education, Jason Clare, Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, Tony Bourke, NSW Opposition Leader, Mark Speakman, and other distinguished guests. Premier of NSW, Chris Minns, made a special address via video.

The film is a source of inspiration and pride, reflecting the vibrant Maltese culture in Australia and the students' enthusiasm for language learning. This accomplishment highlights the importance of programs that connect young learners with their heritage, fostering a sense of belonging and pride in their cultural identity.

Congratulations to the students and teachers for their outstanding effort and success! We also congratulate the two other award winners, the Balakairali Malayalam School (first place), and Marco Polo - The Italian School of Sydney (third place).

View the award-winning entry on the Skola Maltija Facebook page. **Annemarie Thind - PRO**

For more details about Skola Maltija Sydney's classes for adults and children, visit the Facebook page or email skolamaltijasydney@yahoo.com.au. 2025 classes will commence in the week beginning 10 February.

THIS JOURNAL PROMOTES THE TEACHING OF THE MALTESE LANGUAGE IN AUSTRALIA AND SUPPORTS ALL THE MALTESE SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS

ITALIANS, INDIANS LARGEST GROUPS GRADUATING AT TERTIARY LEVEL

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

Italians and Indians made up the bulk of foreign students who graduated at tertiary level from Maltese institutions in 2023, official figures show.

The National Statistics Office last week said 5,833 students graduated at tertiary level in 2023 with a quarter of them being foreigners. From the 1,526 foreign students, 428 were Italians and 424 were Indians.

A breakdown of the statistics by citizenship shows that 4,307 graduates were Maltese, 694 came from other EU countries and 832 hailed from non-EU countries.

Italian graduates in 2023 increased by 2.9% over the previous year, making them by far the largest cohort of EU students to obtain a tertiary degree in Malta. Interestingly, the number of Italian graduates stood at just 143 in 2021.

The second largest cohort of EU graduates came from Germany with 115 students obtaining a tertiary degree in Malta. However, this represented a decrease of 42.8% over the previous year but was still substantially higher than 2021 when only 14 German students graduated in Malta.

Indians were by far the largest cohort of non-EU nationals to obtain a tertiary degree in Malta. In 2023, 424 Indians graduated, representing a 165% increase over the previous year when just 160 obtained a tertiary degree. The next largest cohort was British students with 37 graduating from Maltese tertiary institutions in 2023, an increase of 10 over the previous year. American students came a close third with 34 obtaining a tertiary degree in Malta. This represented an increase of 20 students over 2022.

The NSO figures also show that most foreign nationals irrespective of whether they hail from the EU or not, graduated at tertiary level in 'health and welfare' areas of study. A relative majority of Maltese graduates obtained degrees in 'business, administration and law'.

While 31.6% of Maltese obtained tertiary level qualifications in 'business, administration and law', 13.3% did so in 'health and welfare' and 13.1% in 'education'. By contrast, 46.1% EU nationals who graduated from Maltese institutions did so in 'health and welfare', followed by 21% in 'business, administration and law'. Among non-EU nationals, 55.2% graduated at tertiary level in 'health and welfare', followed by 27.3% in 'business, administration and law'.

The statistics took into consideration students who attended formal education programmes at tertiary level delivered in Malta, whether online or face-to-face, with a minimum duration of one semester of full-time study, or equivalent in part-time.

The largest share of tertiary graduates (52.5%) attained a qualification at ISCED Level 6 (Bachelor's degree or equivalent). This was followed by 34.9% of total tertiary graduates who attained a qualification at ISCED Level 7 (Master's or equivalent).

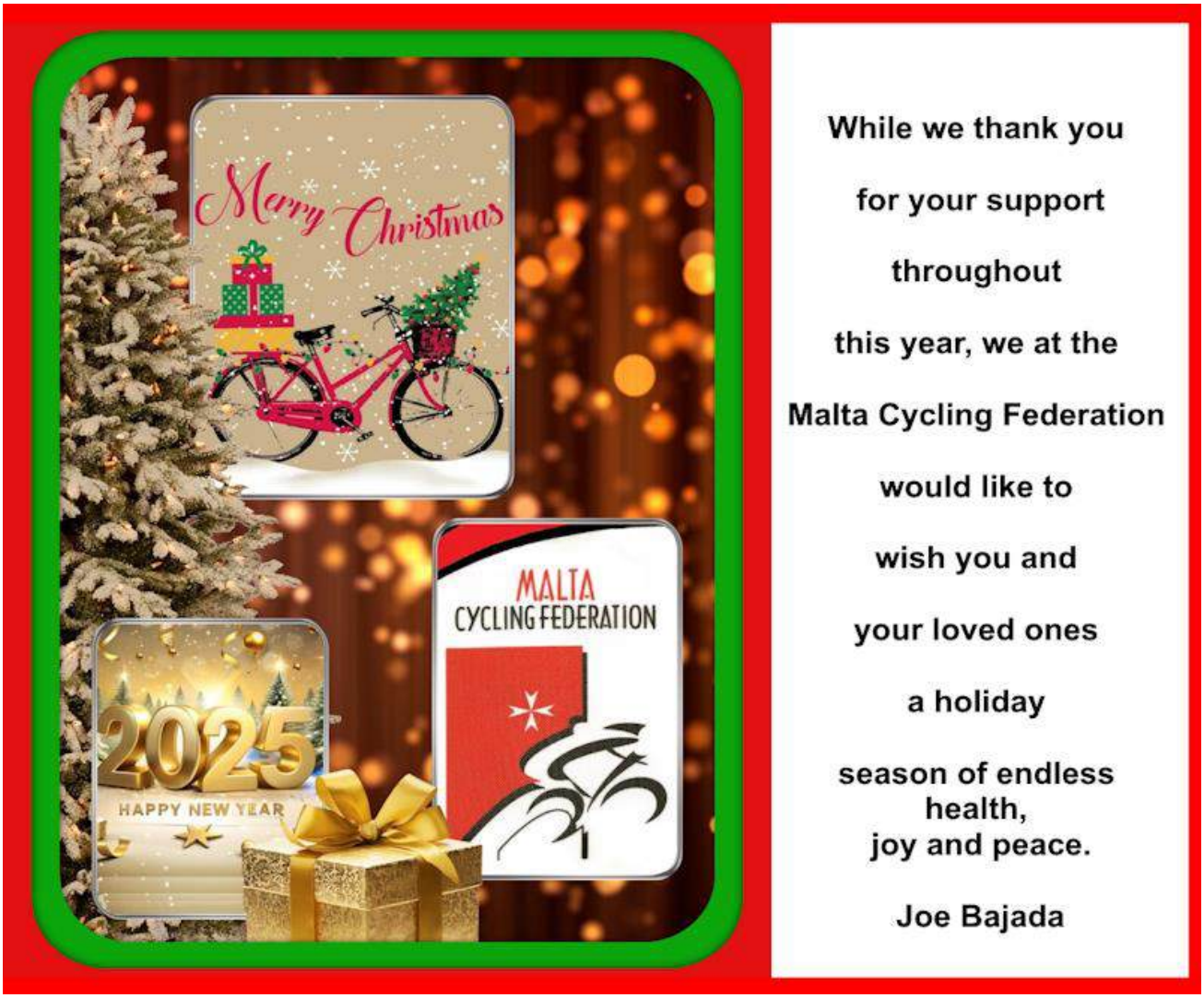
The majority of graduates in ISCED levels 6 (Bachelor's or equivalent) and 7 (Master's or equivalent) were Maltese (81.1% and 77.5% respectively), whilst in ISCED levels 5 (Short-cycle tertiary education) and 8 (Doctoral or equivalent), the majority of graduates were foreign nationals (67.8% and 60.3% respectively).

VIOLINIST JOSEPH CHETCUTI AND THE POLICE BAND WISH POPE FRANCIS A HAPPY 88TH BIRTHDAY

Maltese violinist Joseph Chetcuti, known for his Araniissa and Brillanti programs, joined the Malta Police Band in a performance to celebrate Pope Francis' birthday. Pope Francis Turns 88.

The performance took place at the prestigious Sala dei Papi in Vatican City, with notable attendees including Minister for the Interior Byron Camilleri, Police Commissioner Angelo Gafà, and H.E. Frank Zammit, Malta's Ambassador to the Holy See. The celebration offered a joyful tribute to Pope Francis, who continues to inspire millions around the world.

On his Instagram platform, Pope Francis reflected on the Christmas season, urging the world to pray for peace: “In these days leading up to Christmas, I invite everyone to renew their prayers to the Lord, asking him to grant the gift of peace to the world.” **Joe Bajada**



THE WORLD OF JOSEPH MUSCAT

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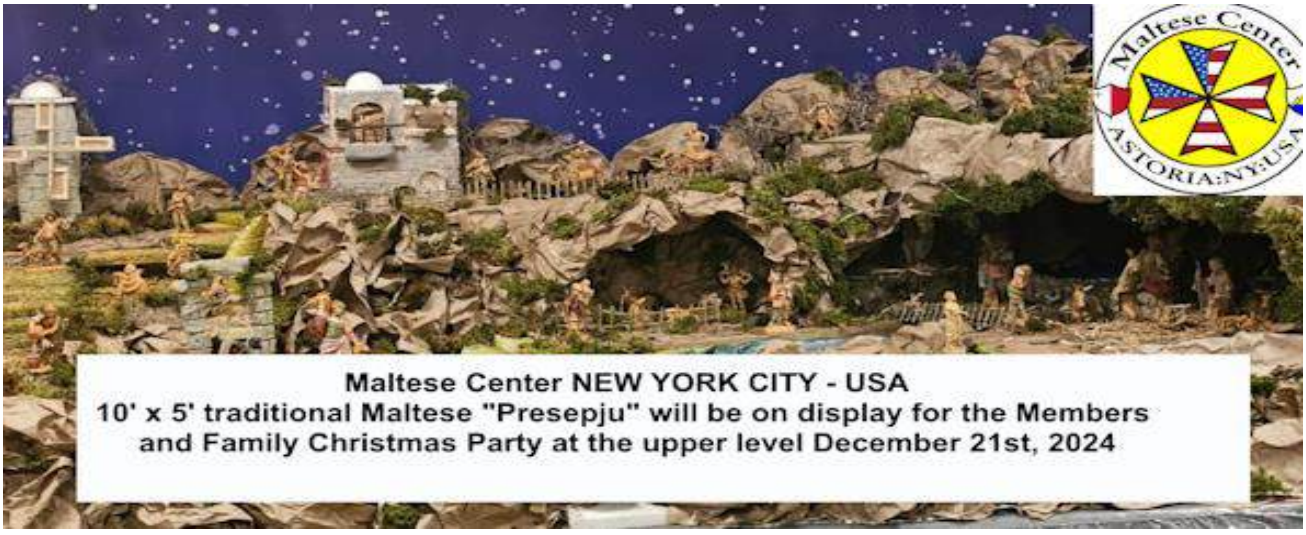
Joseph Muscat is a graduate of the Ontario College of Art, University of Toronto and Glendon College, York University. Since 1981, he has exhibited his work in solo and group exhibitions in Canada, USA, Europe and South Korea. His work is in many Public, Corporate and Private collections. He has received numerous Ontario Arts Council grants and a Canada Council Travel Grant. His work has been included in art textbooks and reproduced on book and magazine covers. He has lectured at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Architecture and has taught Visual Arts part-time with the Toronto District School Board. Joseph Muscat is a member of several Professional Artists Associations. He was Chair of Propeller Gallery, Toronto between 2010 and 2015, a founding member of Le Labo d'art and a past board director of the Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition and BRAVOart.

He has sat on a number of arts' juries locally and nationally and is a member of Padejo, a three-artist working collective. Mr. Muscat is represented by David Kaye Gallery, Toronto, Danielle Wohl Fine Arts, Orinda, California, Guildworks in Bloomfield, Ontario and Gallery MIZ in Seoul, South Korea.