

Maltese e-Newsletter



The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

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The Christmas sermon delivered by a child



*We wish
all ou readers
a very
happy and safe
Christmas
and New Year
2019*

*Nixtiequ
lill-qarrejja taghna
Milied
u s-Sena Gdida
2019
ta' paci, ferh u
barċa*



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Messaġġ: Milied 2018 u l-Ewwel tas-Sena, 2019.

Għeżiež, Iż-żmien ma jistenna lil-ħadd u filli qegħdin nistennew biex jibda millenju ġdid, u filli wasalna biex nibdew is-sena 2019 f'dan il-Millenju. Għalhekk kull minuta hi preżjuża u rigal t'Alla għalina lkoll.

Dawn il-festi jġibu magħhom ferħ u xewqat sbieħ. Il-mistoqsija tagħna hi kemm kulħadd jista' jgawdi minn dan il-ferħ u jara l-ħajja sabiħa? Hu fatt li hemm min dan iż-żmien iġiblu sens qawwi ta' nostalgija u niket fl-istess ħin jew għax tilef lil xi ħadd għażiż għalih jew għax għadda minn xi ġrajja iebsa u għalhekk dan iż-żmien ifakkru f'din l-esperjenza kiefra tal-ħajja. Aħna qegħdin hawn biex nagħmlu l-qalb lil xulxin u biex inwasslu l-ferħ ta' min jaf jafda f'din it-tarbija Ġesu', Alla magħmul bniedem għall-imħabba tagħna. Għalhekk aħna f'dan iż-żmien għandna nsiru ambaxxaturi tal-ferħ u t-tama f'Alla.

Jiena, f'isem il-Kummissjoni Emigranti f'Malta, nixtieq li nwassal lil kulħadd dan il-ferħ u din it-tama. Veru li aħna l-bogħod minn xulxin imma fl-istess ħin aħna daqshekk qrib ta' xulxin premezz tal-mezzi tal-komunikazzjoni. Nifraħ u nawgura lis-Sur Frankie Scicluna li ilu għal tant snin, b'impenn personali u regolari, jwassal dan it-tagħrif permezz ta' din in-*News letter*, użu tant tajjeb ta' dan il-meżżi ta' komunikazzjoni. Din hi ħolqa tant important li tagħmilna aktar ħaġa waħda u nibqgħu nħossuna Maltin, aħna fejn aħna. Nirringrazzja lil kul min jikkontribwixxi permezz tal-kitba u r-riratti li jibagħat hekk insiru nafu x'qiegħed jġri u min huma l-protagonisti tal-ġrajjet li għaddejjin.

Peremzz ta' dawn il-ftit versi nixtieq nawgura li għall-futur ħafna aktar jagħtu sehemhom ħalli tikber din il-familja tal-Maltin, f'artna u barra minn artna. Aħna lkoll Maltin, u ħobbu dak kollu li hu Malti bla ma niċħdu dak li joffrulna kulturi u popli oħra. Meta aħna nikkontribwixxu permezz tal-mezzi tal-komunikazzjoni aħna qegħdin ngħinu lil xulxin insiru aktar sinjuri, sinjurija li ma tikbirx bil-flus u l-għana imma bl-għarfien ta' xulxin u bid-dispożizzjoni għal xulxin. Meta l-kulturi u drawwiet jithaltu jkollna ħaġa ġdida li minna jgawdi kulħadd. J'Alla ngħaddu sena oħra nirċievu din in-*News letter* minn *down under*, bil-ħsieb li nikbru fl-imħabba u l-għaqda ta' xulxin. Nħeġġiġkom biex meta tkunu Malta tgħaddu tarawna, kif jgħid il-Malti, "Ejjew oqgħodu!" tafu fej issibuna, 'Dar l-Emigrant', fejn il-Barrakka ta' fuq, il-Belt, Valletta.



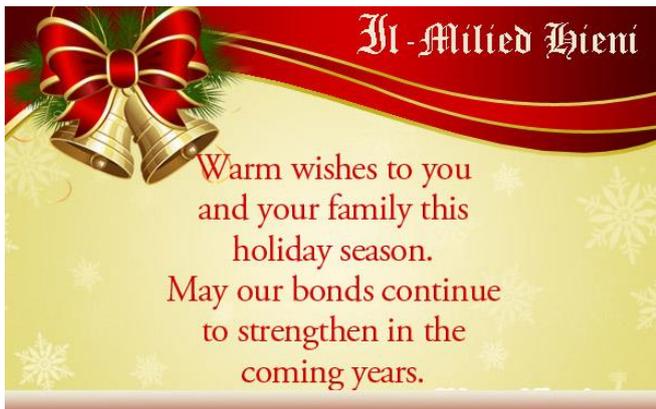
Awguri, saħħa u barka,

Mons. Dun Alfred Vella, (lemin)

F'isem Mons. Philip Calleja (xellug) u l-membri kollha tal-Kummissjoni Emigranti f'Malta.



Christmas in Malta



-Christmas trees and Christmas cards are also popular in Malta, although the main emphasis is always on baby Jesus. Santa Claus is called Father Christmas here and he has the same attraction for children, although not as frenetic and believable as in the USA. Nearly in every town and village a procession is held with children carrying a small statue of baby Jesus and singing Christmas carols along the way. This is held in 66 parishes around Malta and Gozo, usually on Christmas Eve. In every parish church in Malta and Gozo during midnight Mass a small child, dressed as an altar-server, recites a sermon narrating the birth of

Christ. Recently a boy and a girl (or 2 boys) alternate the sermon, memorized to perfection.

Christmas offers a splendid occasion for family gatherings. In most houses an attractively decorated Christmas tree is put up beneath which are placed the various presents wrapped in colorful paper. Christmas pudding and turkey dinner became popular during the first and second world wars when thousands of sailors and soldiers from the British Empire were stationed in Malta. Prior to these wars a rooster, rather than turkey, was the bird to be served at Christmas dinner. The traditional Christmas banquet normally includes the delicious Maltese dish called *timpana*, backed macaroni covered with crusty pastry. A special kind of honey-and treacle rings (*qaghaq tal-ghasel*) are eaten during the Christmas festivities. Mince pies are also very popular and they are this blogger's favorites.



An old tradition that survived up to this day is the sowing of vetch, wheat, grain and canary seed (*gulbiena*) on clots of cotton in flat pans four weeks before Christmas and nurtured in the darkness of cupboards in the kitchen. These seeds shoot up and remain as white as Santa's beard. They are then placed next to the infant Jesus and around the crib.

A custom which unfortunately vanished many years ago was the playing of bagpipes. They characterized the music of the shepherds who tended their flock on Christmas night. The midnight Mass is very popular among the Maltese, and choirs rehearse constantly for their participation. The most popular Christmas carol in Maltese is "*Ninni la tibkix izjed*" (Sleep, don't cry anymore) written in 1846 by Andrew Schembri.

I was happy to teach this carol to American children in Baker City and Bend, Oregon, and they sang it beautifully in Maltese, plus two English verses which I wrote for them. Pageants and plays about the nativity are also quite popular. The Christmas season ends around January 6, the feast of the Epiphany, and that's when all the decorations are finally taken down.

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Fr. Julian's Blog

Christmas in Gozo



Christmas in Gozo 2018 has had its official launch, with the programme for Christmas and the New Year announced by the Minister for Gozo Justyne Caruana.

This fifth year of festive activities organised by the Ministry for Gozo will take place across the island of Gozo between the 1st of December and the 6th of January 2019.

Dr Caruana said that the programme – the choice for Christmas is Gozo – contains a myriad of festivities and special events with something to suit everyone's taste, taking place in a

beautiful and friendly environment.

The programme was prepared by a team created specially and includes the celebrations for New Year. Over the past months, the team worked not only on the programme, but also to ensure that there was involvement from the Government, as well as the private and voluntary sectors, explained the Minister. "This programme is realised on the traditions and the true values of Christmas" said the Minister. Adding that the Ministry had continued to build on the programme from last year "to feel and experience the true meaning of Christmas through every part of this programme."

"Through this Christmas programme we must valorise everything Gozo – traditions, typical local products and the great cultural talent we have on this island," stressed Dr Caruana

The Minister continued by saying that for the first time, the Ministry had managed to attract an artist of international fame to Gozo for the New Year's Eve celebrations, which will be taking place in Independence Square and St George's Square.

UK artist Jonas Blue will be in Gozo for New Year, to join with The Travellers, Ganni & Friends, as well as other Gozitan artists.

Dr Caruana thanked all those who gave their support to this initiative, and welcomed everyone who will be visiting the island for the unique experience of Christmas in Gozo, with a programme that combines both religious and cultural traditions – that are loved by one and all.

To keep up to date with Christmas in Gozo events please follow the [official facebook page](#).

Photograph: DOI/Francis Micallef

"Dear Frank and Family, I most sincerely wish a very Happy and Holy Christmas to you and all of your avid readers around the globe. May the peace and joy of this holy season bring contentment and good health to all. A prosperous New Year to all in 2019. Richard and Madlene Cumbo and Family, Toronto, Canada."

THE SUTHERLAND & St.GEORGE MALTESE GROUP (in SYDNEY. N.S.W. AUSTRALIA)

We wish you ALL a Happy Christmas & a Prosperous New Year.

We are a Social Group, we meet once a month on every First Wednesday of the Month at Miranda & from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon, for interesting & informative meetings & we have Outings regularly. For more info. ring Charles on 0421 662 298

Regards Charles N Muscat



Weird and wonderful Christmas traditions from around the world

Our favourite Christmas traditions around the world are wonderful – sometimes wonderfully weird – and are guaranteed to put you in the festive spirit

It's the most wonderful time of the year. For a couple of weeks every year the world takes on a magic glow, people

seem merrier and even winter somehow feels cosy.

Whether you're celebrating a religious festival, like Hanukkah or Christmas, or a more secular occasion, you're sure to have your own selection of rituals or customs that make the holiday season so special. Our favourite Christmas traditions around the world are loud, proud, and guarantee oodles of festive fun.



Giant Lantern Festival, Philippines

Looking for some festive sparkle? Spend Christmas in the Philippines

The Giant Lantern Festival (Ligligan Parul Sampernandu) is held each year on the Saturday before Christmas Eve in the city of San Fernando – the “Christmas Capital of the Philippines.” The festival attracts spectators from all over the country and across the globe. Eleven barangays (villages) take part in the festival and competition is fierce as everyone pitches in trying to build the most elaborate lantern. Originally, the lanterns were simple creations around half a metre

in diameter, made from ‘papel de hapon’ (Japanese origami paper) and lit by candle. Today, the lanterns are made from a variety of materials and have grown to around six metres in size. They are illuminated by electric bulbs that sparkle in a kaleidoscope of patterns.

Find a flight to Manila



Gävle Goat, Sweden

People overlooking the Gävle Goat in Sweden, just moments before it's set ablaze

Since 1966, a 13-metre-tall Yule Goat has been built in the centre of Gävle's Castle Square for the Advent, but this Swedish Christmas tradition has unwittingly led to another “tradition” of sorts – people trying to burn it down. Since 1966 the Goat has been successfully burned down 29 times – the most recent destruction was in 2016.

You can't believe how much our family loves and appreciates the Maltese e-Newsletter, the journal of the Maltese living in many parts of the world. We are all addicted to it and wait anxiously to receive and read this newsletter. We love Malta and by reading your journal we have learnt so much about its culture and history. We hope we keep on receiving it in the New year 2019. We wish you and all the readers, our fellow expatriates, the best wished for this Christmas season. Il-Milied it-tajjeb
Joe and Theresa Cassar..



If you want to see how the Goat fares this year when it goes up on December 1st, you can follow its progress on the Visit Gävle website through a live video stream.

Kentucky Fried Christmas Dinner, Japan

A family get ready to tuck into a KFC share bucket, a pretty bizarre Japanese Christmas tradition @ajbrusteinthreesixfive

Christmas has never been a big deal in Japan. Aside from a few small, secular traditions such as gift-giving and light displays, Christmas remains

largely a novelty in the country. However, a new, quirky "tradition" has emerged in recent years – a Christmas Day feast of the Colonel's very own Kentucky Fried Chicken.



The festive menu will soon be advertised on the KFC Japan website and, even if you don't understand Japanese, the pictures sure will look delicious with everything from a Christmas-themed standard bucket to a premium roast-bird feast.

The Yule Lads, Iceland

Icelandic Yule Lads run amok this time of year in one of the more fun and mischievous Christmas traditions. In the 13 days leading up to Christmas, 13 tricky troll-like characters come out to play in Iceland. The Yule Lads (jólasveinarnir or jólasveinar in Icelandic) visit the

children across the country over the 13 nights leading up to Christmas. For each night of Yuletide, children place their best shoes by the window and a different Yule Lad visits leaving gifts for nice girls and boys and rotting potatoes for the naughty ones. Clad in traditional Icelandic costume, these fellas are pretty mischievous, and their names hint at the type of trouble they like to cause: Stekkjastaur (Sheep-Cote Clod), Giljagaur (Gully Gawk), Stúfur (Stubby), Þvörusleikir (Spoon-Licker), Pottaskefill (Pot-Scraper), Askasleikir (Bowl-Licker), Hurðaskellir (Door-Slammer), Skyrgámur (Skyr-Gobbler), Bjúgnakrækir (Sausage-Swiper), Gluggagægir (Window-Peeper), Gáttabefur (Doorway-Sniffer), Ketkrókur (Meat-Hook) and Kertasníkir (Candle-Stealer). Visit Iceland this Christmas and catch them all!



Saint Nicholas' Day, Germany

Saint Nicholas with his three amigos: Santa Claus, Knecht Ruprecht and ... a donkey. Not to be confused with Weihnachtsmann (Father Christmas), Nikolaus travels by donkey in the middle of the night on December 6 (Nikolaus Tag) and leaves little treats like coins, chocolate, oranges and toys in the shoes of good children all over Germany, and particularly in the Bavarian region. St. Nicholas also visits children in schools or at home and in exchange for sweets or a small present each child must recite a poem, sing a song or draw a picture. In short, he's a great guy.

But it isn't always fun and games. St. Nick often brings along Knecht Ruprecht (Farmhand Rupert). A devil-like character dressed in dark clothes covered with bells and a dirty beard, Knecht Ruprecht carries a stick or a small whip in hand to punish any children who misbehave.

Norway

Never leave a good broom behind in Norway over Christmas: it might get stolen. Perhaps one of the most unorthodox Christmas Eve traditions can be found in Norway, where people hide their brooms. It's a tradition that dates back centuries to when people believed that witches and evil spirits came out on Christmas Eve looking for brooms to ride on. To this day, many people still hide their brooms in the safest place in the house to stop them from being stolen.

Venezuela

Enjoy a Christmas dinner consisting of 'tamales' in Venezuela. Love Christmas, but think it could be improved by a spot of roller-blading? If the answer is yes, visit Caracas, Venezuela this year. Every Christmas Eve, the city's residents head to church in the early morning – so far, so normal – but, for reasons known only to them, they do so on roller skates. This unique tradition is so popular that roads across the city are closed to cars so that people can skate to church in safety, before heading home for the less-than-traditional Christmas dinner of 'tamales' (a wrap made out of cornmeal dough and stuffed with meat, then steamed). Find a flight to Caracas



Day of the Little Candles, Colombia

Light-up your festive season with this sweet Colombian Christmas tradition © Mafe Aristizabal. Little Candles' Day (Día de las Velitas) marks the start of the Christmas season across Colombia. In honour of the Virgin Mary and the Immaculate Conception, people place candles and paper lanterns in their windows, balconies and front yards. The tradition of candles has grown, and now entire towns and cities across the country are lit up with elaborate displays. Some of the best are found in Quimbaya, where neighbourhoods compete to see who can create the most impressive



arrangement.

Find a flight to Armenia, Colombia

Cavalcade of Lights, Toronto

The sky lights up during the Cavalcade of Lights in Toronto © Ben Roffelsen Photography. In wintry, wonderful Toronto the annual Cavalcade of Lights marks the official start to the holiday season. The first Cavalcade took place in 1967 to show off Toronto's newly constructed City Hall and Nathan Phillips Square. The Square and Christmas tree are illuminated by more than 300,000 energy-efficient LED lights that shine from dusk until 11 pm until the New Year. On top of that, you'll get to witness spectacular fireworks shows



and engage in some outdoor ice skating.



Australia

In Australia, Christmas falls right in the middle of some of the hottest weather of the year. Because of the extreme heat, Christmas is often marked by electrical storms and brush-fires rather than gently falling snow. Australians celebrate Christmas during the hottest part of the year with barbecues and outdoor concerts.

But that doesn't keep Aussies from getting into the Christmas spirit. A Canberra family recently broke a world record by stringing more than 31 miles of

Christmas lights around its property. Some Australians who celebrate Christmas honor the nation's Anglo-Celtic influence with English-style holiday fare likely more appropriate for colder climes. Roast turkey, steamed pudding and gingerbread all might end up on the table.

But it's not all about plum pudding, which is increasingly served with ice cream to help tolerate the Australian summer temperatures, anyway. To further beat the heat, up to 40,000 Australians flock to Bondi Beach in Sydney at Christmastime — and beaches mean barbecues. Carols by Candlelight, derived from a 19th-century Australian tradition, has turned into a big, down-under outdoor Christmas festival. Held on Christmas Eve in Melbourne for the past 76 years, the outdoor concert is now a fundraiser for Vision Australia. Similar events are now held around the world.



Finland

Finland seems made for Christmas. Reindeer run rampant in Finnish Lapland and Joulupukki, a bearded mythical figure who looks and acts for all the world like Santa Claus, is said to make his home where those same reindeer roam.

Santa and his reindeer traveling across the frozen tundra of Finnish Lapland. But it's not all snowflakes and cookies on Christmas Eve, when at noon the Declaration of Christmas Peace is read in a formal ceremony in South Finland. The statement, which has been tweaked a bit since it was first read in the 13th century, offers a surprisingly emphatic reminder

that any sort of unruly behavior that challenges the holiday “shall under aggravating circumstances be guilty and punished according to what the law and statutes prescribe for each and every offense separately.” In other words, hooligans, don't mess with Finnish Christmas.

The peaceful declaration goes on to wish the inhabitants of Finland a joyous Christmas feast. There, a feast is made joyous with the addition of Christmas ham, smoked and pickled fish, cheeses and sweet Christmas breads. The people in the northernmost parts of Finland sometimes even eat reindeer for Christmas. In Finland, people wish each other “Hyvää Joulua” on Christmas.

Councilllllllllor Edgar Agiuson behalf of all the delegates of the Maltese Community Council of South Australia wish the readers of this Journal and all Maltese around the world a happy and peaceful Christmas and a safe and healthy NEW YEAR 2018.



France

In France, Christmas Day is always preceded by a "Reveillon", which means staying awake to usher in the next day, according to Susi Seguret, who leads the Seasonal School of Culinary Arts in several different cities, including Paris.

Bredele, Alsatian small cakes made for Christmas.

"This means essentially gathering with friends, often a dozen or more, and enjoying a multi-course dinner, in company of many bottles of wine and much champagne," Seguret says. "This is a time to dress to the nines, even if at home, and to get out the best china and silver and crystal and all the candles." Seguret says the meal always includes fresh oysters, a fish course, a poultry course, a meat course, an extensive cheese platter and delicate desserts. "In the south of France, around Provence, *les treize desserts* — the 13 desserts, representing Jesus and the 12 apostles — figure into the season." The components of the dish vary by local or familial tradition, but tend to include dried fruits, nougat and other traditional sweets. In northern France, particularly in Alsace, traditional Christmas markets abound. They burst with holiday sweets like the bredele and gingerbread as well as warming mulled wine. On Dec. 6, white-bearded St. Nicolas walks through the streets of Alsace, passing out sweets to all of the "good" children. Sound familiar? Merry Christmas in French is "Joyeux Noel."

January 6... Celebrating 'la Befana' in Italy !



La Befana is a joyous character loved dearly by Italian children of all ages.

La Befana belongs to the Italian tradition of Christmas just like the Easter bunny does to the Christian Spring holiday. *La Befana* is an old woman dressed in long skirts and woolen shawls, often ugly with a wart on her nose, flying on a broomstick just like witches do, bringing gifts to the children the night before January 6th. The name Befana comes from *Epifania*, the day of the Three Holy Kings on January 6th. The tradition of *La Befana* is very old, dating to pre-Christian folklore

with pagan beginnings, and is sometimes linked to the holiday of *Giano e Strenia* in classical Roman times, when gifts were also given.

The much beloved *Babbo Natale* (Father Christmas) and the practice of presenting children with their Christmas gifts on December 25th are relative newcomers to Italian Christmas tradition. Until the 60's or even early 70's many Italian households didn't have a Christmas tree.

In earlier times as now, the Nativity scene was cherished as the focal point of the holiday, often including many other small figurines apart from the Holy Family. Many happy hours were spent creating a landscape with moss and a blue paper sky, building little houses out of wood and pebbles, and arranging tiny shepherds and their animals. On Christmas Day many of the children received useful presents like shoes and clothing from their parents. For that reason, *La Befana* was eagerly awaited, as she was the one who brought the toys! Children would hang their socks inside the chimney before going to sleep the night of January 5th, hoping *La Befana* would fill them to the brim with candies and sweets. A charming part of the tradition is a hard black sugary candy called *carbone* – charcoal – which *La Befana* leaves to children that have been naughty. Even in current times, *carbone* appears after Christmas on many store shelves.

All over Italy you will see women dressed as *La Befana*, as there are many town and village fairs celebrating her. What better place to see *La Befana* but in the eternal city of Rome? In the Piazza Navona

the **Festa della Befana** is open from December 1st to January 7th, with merry-go-rounds and many festive stalls. On Jan.6th at 11 a.m. a colorful procession of people, dressed in traditional historical costumes, leaves Castel San Angelo to reach Piazza San Pietro. If you're planning a holiday trip to the Eternal City, visit [Rome Hotels](#) for a great selection of hotels at discounted prices.

Combining *La Befana* with charity for children is a group called "La Scuola di Pace" the school of peace, Their program may be found at www.lascuoladipace.org

Keep your socks ready: we just never know, do we?

The Feast of the Epiphany, celebrated January 6 with a national holiday in Italy & the tradition of *la Befana* are a big part of Italian Christmas Celebrations Epiphany commemorates the 12th day of Christmas when the three Kings arrived with gifts for Baby Jesus.

Traditionally Christmas holiday season ends in Italy with Epiphany. This celebration includes a story where a witch known as *La Befana*, who arrives on her broomstick during the night of January 5 and fills the stockings with toys and sweets for the good children and coal (sweet!) for the bad ones. The origins of *La Befana* go back to the Roman's pagan festival of Saturnalia, a one or two week festival starting just before the winter solstice. At the end of Saturnalia, Romans would go to the Temple of Juno to have their augers read by an old crone. Many pagan traditions were incorporated into Christmas celebrations when Christianity became the main religion.

13 DECEMBER

When is Maltese Republic Day?

This holiday is always celebrated on 13 December. In Malta, it is called 'Jum ir-Repubblika'.

This holiday is one of five national days in Malta and marks the day in 1974, when Malta became a republic.

History of Maltese Republic Day

On 13 December 1974, the Maltese constitution was substantially revised.

This effectively changed Malta from being a Commonwealth realm into a republic. The British monarch was no longer head of state and Sir Anthony Mamo became the first president of Malta.

Despite independence and becoming a republic, British troops did not leave Malta until 31 March 1979; this was the first time in its long history that Malta was free from foreign soldiers. That day is commemorated by another public holiday - Freedom Day.

13 December is also the Feast Day of saint Lucia, the patron saint of Malta.

How is Maltese Republic Day celebrated?

To mark the day the President of Malta presents awards to those who have served their country or achieved success for Malta. Celebrations take place at St. George's Square in Valletta.

Għezież Ħbieb, Ippubblikata l-ħarġa ta' Diċembru 2018 tar-rivista letterarja virtwali IL-PONT.

Ħajr lil dawk kollha li kkontribwixxew bil-materjal varjat u anki lil dawk li jgħinu biex IL-PONT iwessa' n-numru tal-qarrejja tiegħu.

Minn hawn nibgħat l-awgurju tiegħi lil ALFRED MASSA, President Onorarju tal-Għaqda Poeti Maltin, f'jum għeluq sninu.

https://issuu.com/patrickj.sammuto/docs/il-pont_dicembru_2018?fbclid=IwAR0jRvEAVXUbFJJyzHd-fjvanXonqN-9vaLaZU0-gFTXfrqLV2Pz1gupMo

Aktar tard dil-gimgha nibgħat IL-PONT format pdf.. Awguri lilkom ilkoll għall-Milied. **Patrick Sammut (editur) – Malta**



Maltese Community Council of Victoria Maltese



Cultural Scholarship 2018

PRESS RELEASE

The winner of the 2018 MCCV Maltese Cultural Scholarship is Charlene Trestrail.



Charlene is a third generation Maltese. She has lived most of her life in Melbourne, where her grandparents played a key role in helping her connect with her Maltese heritage.

The aims of this scholarship are to encourage young persons' interest in Maltese culture. The Scholarship award is a grant of \$1000. The MCCV Maltese Cultural Scholarship is to assist the winning candidate to visit Malta to participate in various cultural activities and

appreciate the Maltese culture at first hand. Charlene is expected to stay in Malta for a minimum of three weeks; on her return write a blog/newspaper article about her stay in Malta which will be printed/broadcast in the Australian/Maltese media; make a presentation to the Maltese Community Council of Victoria about the cultural experience in Malta.

Charlene will be expected to continue her interest in the Maltese Community on her return from Malta. In particular, she will be expected to take part in efforts to generate interest in Maltese culture among Maltese-Australian youth.

Charlene has always been fascinated with all things under the ocean; a passion which led her to graduate as a marine scientist from the University of Melbourne. She is currently working towards her PhD, which involves researching the effects that plastic pollution has on marine life. Charlene teaches biology subjects at RMIT University, and volunteers as a mentor to encourage secondary school students to explore science-related careers.

During her visit in 2019, Charlene will be connecting with her family members living in Malta, and exploring both her family history and the rich ancient history of the Maltese islands. She also hopes to improve her Maltese language skills, which started with classes at the MCCV. As a keen SCUBA diver, Charlene plans to explore Malta's unique marine life and historical shipwrecks up close, and will meet with marine scientists at the University of Malta to learn about their scientific research. She is also looking forward to exploring Gozo, and to try her hand at traditional lace-making.

Charlene is interested in meeting other young Maltese-Australians in Melbourne, and hopes to establish a group which will help Maltese-Australian youth connect with each other, and enjoy shared activities. If you are interested in being part of a group that connects you with other Maltese descendants, please get in touch with Charlene by emailing c.trestrail@gmail.com

France's President Emmanuel Macron's words in Paris France, during WW1 centenary celebrations on 10 November 2018



French President Emmanuel Macron used the occasion, as its host, to sound a powerful and sobering warning about the fragility of peace and the dangers of nationalism and of nations that put themselves first, above the collective good.

"The old demons are rising again, ready to complete their task of chaos and of death," Macron said.

"Patriotism is the exact opposite of nationalism. Nationalism is a betrayal of patriotism," he said. "In saying 'Our interests first, whatever happens to the others,' you erase the most precious thing a nation can have. That which makes it live; that which causes it to be great and that which is most important: Its moral values."



Ten Year Old Wonder Girl Publishes Her First Book

"Almikaya is truly an inspiration for other children"

Becca Bonello Ghio

Almikaya Aquilina, model, actor and now writer, has launched her first public book entitled 'The Legend of the Witch' this weekend. And more impressive than her CV is the fact that she's only ten years old.

This wonder-child has been around the local media scene for a while. Though this is her first published book, when she was younger she used to also write for the Saghtar school magazine by contributing her short stories. She's also played several roles on local television drama. *And* she's participated in several fashion shows and modelling competitions. (And she's ten).

The story of the book tells a tale of a normal and energetic student named Alexia who discovers an exciting world of wonders. Her life takes an unexpected turn after this event, as a dangerous force that should have remained dormant is now back with a vengeance.

It's a Narnia-meets-the-first-Harry-Potter kind of book, and we're stoked.

Last Saturday the launch of her book was hosted by Her Excellency Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca at San Anton Palace. At the event, she called Amilkaya's talent "extraordinary", especially since the child "became an author at such a tender age."

The book was produced by Vision+ and Joseph Sultana is the general editor of the book, while Lorna Cynthia Aquilina proofread it. The pictures featured in the book were taken by Yury Mikhailovich.

You can order the book directly from the website of Vision Plus.



<https://lovinmalta.com>



MALTA EMIGRANTS COMMISSION - VALLETTA



Website: <http://www.mecmalta.com/museum/worldwide.html>

Malta Emigrants' Commission

When Dar l-Emigrant was opened in 1972, it became a centre of activity for Maltese migrants, continuing with the work the Migrants' Commission had undertaken since after World War II. The Emigrants' Commission acted in their best interest and that of their families...

CONVENTIONS -A number of Migrants Conventions have been held in Malta during the past years: 1969, 2000, 2010 and 2015. Numerous Maltese migrants came from Australia, Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom. A small number from North Africa were present as well.

WORLDWIDE Malta's economic recovery after World War I depended entirely on the British Government's plans for its military forces stationed in Malta. The war had created a temporary boom, however when the guns were silent in 1918, the economy declined. So did breadwinners' hopes for employment. 10,000 unemployed in a small country like Malta at that time spelled economic disaster.

Dear Mr Scicluna

Thank you very much for the Maltese e-Newsletter - very interesting as always. Wish you and your family a very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Rita Demicoli Mosta – Malta

Many thanks Frn

*Wishing you and all your readers a happy festivities . Yours sincerely in the service of St. John.
Graeme Gately KGSJ Secretary, Priory of South Australia*



Maltese in Australia

first Maltese to come to Australia arrived as convicts around 1810. Group and mass migration gradually picked up, first to Queensland, and after World War I to Sydney, whose automobile industry drew many. Immigration was not without difficulty as Maltese workers tended to be looked down upon and restrictions and quotas were applied. A significant percentage of the Maltese immigrants had intended to stay only temporarily for work but many settled in Australia

permanently. Maltese immigration to Australia reached its peak during the 1960s. Today the majority of Maltese immigrants reside in Melbourne's western suburbs and in Sydney's western suburbs.



Maltese in Canada The first Maltese presence in Canada can be traced to as early as the 19th century, when small undocumented groups were working in Winnipeg and Toronto. In 1910, the Malta Emigration Committee tried to encourage workers to settle in British Columbia, but only those who were British in origin; those of Mediterranean origin were considered undesirable. In the first seven months of 1913, however, approximately 500 Maltese emigrated to Canada. By 1914, there were small groups in Toronto, Windsor, Winnipeg

and Vancouver. Many Maltese organised themselves into associations which kept them united and offered friendship to newcomers by means of social functions.



Maltese in U.S.A.

Before World War I, the Maltese tended to migrate to nearby countries. When so many were out of work after the war, they needed to look further afar. Those who had worked in dockyards had skills which could be used in factories – fitters, engineers, draughtsmen, electricians. Moreover, they had another important skill – they learned English while working with the British on their ships. Skilled Maltese workers saw the US as their new opportunity. At the time, many refugees and emigrants flocked to what they saw

as the “Golden Door” of the United States.

COUNCIL OF MALTESE LIVING ABROAD

Minister Carmelo Abela made reference to the fact that in this year's edition of the Council there will be discussions regarding the possibility of establishing regional committees so that a greater number of Maltese living abroad will have the opportunity to participate actively in initiatives relating to the Maltese diaspora. “The future of our diaspora should be a major challenge and it also brings opportunities in different areas such as business, culture and education.”

Ara... wasal il-Milied!

Għal darb'ohra qieghed nikteb
poezija għall-Milied,
għax dil-festa hekk mi-fruxa
mal-irhula u l-ibliet.

W għalkemm ta' darba fis-sena
qalbna terġa' tfur bil-ferħ
u fejn hemm il-hemm u d-dwejjaq
isaltnu l-paci u s-serħ!

Għalkemm tgerbu elfejn sena
mit-twelid ta' dit-Tarbija,
djarna jerggħu jimtlew bl-hena,
kuntentizza u armonija!

F'dak il-għar ckejken u fqajjar
ried jitwieled Bin il-bniedem
sabiex jifdi d-dinja kollha –
lil kulhadd dlonk jara niedem.

Din il-grajja ahna nfakkru
bil-presepju ġewwa d-dar;
ma' Ġuzeppi u Marija
tilmah lill-baqra u l-hmar

illi bin-nifs shajjen tagħhom
sahħnu lil Ġesù fil-għar
illi mal-ahbar tal-angli
imtela bil-kbar u ż-żgħar

illi grew lejn dik il-grotta
biex jifirhu bil-Bambin;
id-dlam kont taqtgħu b'sikkina –
dawn ma taw kas xejn tal-hin.

F'hakka t'ghajn is-Sema mtela
b'mijiet t'angli ferhanin
illi xerrdu l-ahbar tajba
li kien twieled il-Bambin.

O kemm kienu n-nies ingrati
li ma laqgħux lil Ġesù
u għalqulu l-bieb f'wiççu;
fejn qatt basru dan min hu!

Qatt ma holmu li dat-tifel
għad jagħmlilhom daqstant ġid
sa mal-għuda lilu jsallbu
b'dawk l-imsiemer tal-hadid.

U n-nies tas-seklu tagħna
kif qed jgħadduh il-Milied!
Qed imorru għan-Novena,
jew mank jersqu lejn il-bieb

fejn daqsxejn ta' tifel ckejken
wara xhur shah ta' thejjija
arah jitla' fuq il-pulptu
waqt li jtajjar kull misthija

u erhilu jirrakkonta
it-Twelid tal-Bambin ckejken
f'dak il-għar nieqes minn kollox
fqajjar, gheri u msejken!

Ejjew hbieb immorru lura
nerggħu nidhlu f'dak il-għar
għalkemm minn fuq dik il-grajja
iż-żmien issa għadda u tar.

Ġesù għadu jistemmiena
biex immorru nadurawh,
noffrulu l-ahjar li għandna
bħalma r-raghajja kienu tawh.

B'hekk biss jista' ahna jkollna
Milied hieni u qaddis
illi jimla lill-qlub tagħna
b'ferħ ġenwin mill-aktar fis!

Kav. Joe M. Attard
Diċembru 2018



FROM MELBOURNE – AUSTRALIA CHRISTOPHER BUSIETTA

Christopher Busietta completed his Bachelor of Music at the Melba Conservatorium of Music in 2006 in Melbourne, Australia, studying voice with tenor Peter Mander. Whilst at the Melba, he was the recipient of the Robert Salzer scholarship and Jean Robinson prize.

Upon completing high school, he made his start performing many principal roles in amateur theatre companies around Melbourne. He made his professional singing debut in 2004 singing the tenor arias in J.S. Bach's *St John's Passion* with the Scots Church choir and orchestra to critical acclaim and from that point was often performing around Melbourne as a tenor soloist in concert and in oratorio.



In his final year of his music degree, he made his operatic debut in the role of Pedrillo for lyric Opera of Melbourne's 2006 production of Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio*. Following that, he spent two years performing children's opera at primary schools in Victoria with Opera Australia's Schools Touring Company as Count Almaviva in *The Barber of Seville* and The Prince & Wicked Stepmother in *Cinderella*, as well as performing in the extra chorus for several productions with Opera Australia

and the Victorian Opera Company.

In 2008, he won the *2009 More than Opera German-Australian Operatic Grant* and has since based his professional career in Germany, performing with Staatstheater Wiesbaden, Staatstheater Aachen and currently Stadttheater Augsburg.

His growing list of professional operatic and theatrical roles include Don Ramiro in *La Cenerentolo*, Erwin in *Erwin and Elmire*, Dr Cajus in *Falstaff*, Goro in *Madama Butterfly*, Gherardo in *Gianni Schicchi* and Arturo/Normanna in *Lucia di Lommermoor*. He will be performing eight roles with Stadttheater Augsburg next season including Alfred in *Die Fledermous* and Der Steuermann in *Der Fliegende Hollander*.

Christopher Busietta is the son of Joseph Busietta, a Chartered Accountant, who had migrated to Melbourne in the fifties. Christopher's grandfather, Carmelo "Memé" Busietta, was Malta's leading waterpolo player of the 1920s and an Olympian who, with a view to having Malta participating in the 1928 Olympic Games in Amsterdam, contributed to the formation of Malta's Amateurs Athletic Association, its affiliation to the international federation governing swimming (FINA) and the establishment of the Malta Olympic Committee. Memé's brother, Victor Busietta was also an Olympian who represented Malta in the same sport.

Għeżież ħbieb, Għada jibda l-aħħar u l-isbaħ xahar tas-sena 2018. Hsibt li nibgħat IT-TRIQ (li fih ukoll is-supplement tal-Milied) illum biex fi tmiem il-gimgha tkun tistgħu taqraw din il-ħarġa speċjali. Irrid f'isimkom niringrazzja il-Grupp IT-TRIQ tax-xogħol kollu ta' matul din is-sena biex setgħu jaslu lkom 12-il ħarġa ta' dan il-fuljett, li persważ li ħafna minnkomm tkunu qed tistennew minn xahar għall-ieħor. Fl-istess ħin nawgura wkoll lill-membri tal-Grupp Milied qaddis, ħieni u ta' paċi dejjiema kif ukoll sena għdida ta' prosperità u saħħa.

Fl-aħħar nett nawgura lilkom u lill-familji tagħkom il-Milied u s-Sena 2019 ikunu ta' paċi u ġid kbir. Charles Micallef,
għad-Direzzjoni tal-Grupp IT-TRIQ



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 the Maltese Community in the new year ahead.

May God Bless you all. Best wishes to all the readers of the Maltese Journal

Emmanuel Camilleri, President and the Committee



Hi all, Just thought I'd provide you with an update about my recent book signing jaunt to Malta where "The Sheriff's Catch" has climbed to third spot on the national bestseller list in English fiction!

Agenda Bookshop recently informed me that that I'm the first Maltese national to break this list which is of course very exciting and would not have been possible in the first instance without the backing of patrons and readers in Malta and elsewhere.

I'd also like to thank everyone who made my Maltese trip so memorable as well as those kind farsighted big picture people who found a minute to post a review about

"The Sheriff's Catch" on Goodreads and Amazon - this really helps to get the word around, which makes the promotion and therefore the publication of the next instalments in the series so much easier and quicker!

There should be at least one more update (about the Malta trip and other things) from me in coming weeks before the year is up, so until then I wish you all a relatively sane Christmas shopping expedition, amongst other end of year travails! Best wishes, James

I want to say thank you for including me in your Maltese Journal group. I really enjoy the illustrations and reading the interesting articles about Malta and it's people. I am going to Malta next year to celebrate mum's 70th birthday and I can't wait to visit many of the places featured in your journals. It will be my husband and youngest daughter's first visit and I can't wait to share Malta's colourful history and beauty with them. Regards, Jennifer Young – Adelaide, Australia

Hi Frank we did have a great Christmas. We wish you and all your family a very. Happy, Prosperous & Healthy New Year 2018 from George and Lucy Brimmer

We are proud to say that we are Maltese although we left Malta over 50 years ago. We show this journal to all our Australian friends and they are all surprised to find out how beautiful Malta is, especially its history and heritage. Thanks for the beautiful pictures. Happy Christmas and a happy New Year. Salvinu and Doris Agius



Traditional Christmas Food in Malta

Two main traditional Christmas sweets are the following:
Hot Chestnut and Cocoa Soup - *Imbuljuta Tal-Qastan*

Imbuljuta is the traditional Maltese drink served after **Midnight Mass on Christmas** and New Year's Eve. It is the perfect recipe for those special nights where you want something hot, spicy and deliciously seasonal. This drink has that wonderful Christmassy smell to it, with the **cloves, cinnamon** and chocolate and orange and tangerine rinds as ingredients. And of course **chestnuts!** Generally it is served in mugs or small bowls and always piping hot.

Information taken from <http://tisjir.com/recipes/imbuljuta-tal-qastan/> where the recipe for this Christmas warm drink can be found too. Another good recipe for the *Imbuljuta tal-Qastan* is the following:

<https://natureline.wordpress.com/2009/11/11/imbuljuta-tal-qastan/>
Honey or Treacle Rings - *Qagħaq tal-Għasel*



Qagħaq tal-għasel are sweet pastry rings filled with a **treacle** mixture. Literally translated they are 'honey rings'; but there is absolutely no honey in the recipe. The main ingredient in the filling is treacle. In Maltese treacle is known as *għasel iswed*; so probably that is why they are known as honey rings. Years ago village people used *qastanija*, and not treacle, for their *qagħaq tal-għasel*. This was made by melting down honey-combs after the honey had been extracted from them. In all probability *qastanija* is a corruption of the Italian *castagna*, which means chestnut. It might be that it was so called because the mixture was the colour of chestnuts. But there are absolutely no chestnuts in the mixture. Through the years *qastanija* was substituted by black treacle. For those who have a very sweet tooth, sugar is added to the filling mixture. This information was taken

from <http://tisjir.com/recipes/qagħaq-tal-għasel/> You can find the recipe included there too for you to try out! Another interesting link with the recipe step by step is the following:

<https://honeyandmustard.wordpress.com/2010/08/16/the-gozo-experience-qagħaq-tal-għasel-honey-rings/>

Of course more recipes can be found but they all mainly follow the same ingredients and process.

Enjoy trying out these two Maltese traditional recipes during this festive season!

Maltese Christmas Traditions

ETIMalta

Christmas is celebrated around the globe by millions of people. It is a time of giving, family gatherings, Christmas trees, Christmas Carols and for Christians around the world, prayer.

Malta has it's own unique customs and traditions so if you are celebrating Christmas in Malta, here is a guide to our top Maltese Christmas traditions.

Nativity crib. Presepju

The first ever recorded crib in Malta was in 1607 at the Dominican Friars in Rabat . Since then their popularity has grown from strength to strength and nowadays Nativity cribs are an integral feature of our Christmas celebrations. From simple paper-mache cribs to elaborate mechanical affairs to live cribs in village squares, they can be found everywhere; in each home, church, hotel, town hall, public building and even in roundabouts. Each family will have it's own crib, if not collection of cribs. This consists of figurines, (*pasturi*), of baby Jesus, Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, The Magi, angels donkey, cow and all the characters associated with the nativity story.



During the month of December various crib exhibitions are held throughout the Maltese islands, these exhibitions are popular with both tourists and locals.

These are our top picks:

Malta Tourist Authority crib exhibition held inside the Parliamentary building, Valletta. Ghajnsielem, Gozo. Bethlehem f'Ghajnsielem, a nativity village, with over 100 actors is set up.

Lija Live crib



Vetches. Gulbiena

From about 5 weeks before Christmas many households in Malta and Gozo set about preparing their vetches, gulbiena. A family activity enjoyed by all especially the young.

Seeds of wheat or grain are placed on damp cotton wool and left to germinate undisturbed in a dark corner. These produce long white stems that are then used to decorate windowsills and cribs.

Christmas Eve

On Christmas Eve in most villages and towns one will come across **The Children's procession**, whereby children singing Christmas Carols and carrying Christmas lanterns carry the statue of baby Jesus around the village. This lovely tradition is believed to have been started in 1921 by the priest, Fr. George Preca.

Midnight Mass then follows the Children's Procession. The Mass usually commences with Christmas Carol singing, the most popular Maltese Christmas Carol being, Nini la Tibqieq Izjed.



The highlight of the Mass is the oldest of the Maltese Christmas traditions, **the Child's sermon, Il-Priedka tat-tifel**. A child aged between 7-11 is chosen to recite the Nativity story. This replaces the priest's sermon. This special performance is thought

of as a great honour and the child will have been helped to prepare for it by all extended family members and friends.

After Midnight Mass, it is also a custom for the local parish priest to offer traditional refreshments to his parishioners. Refreshments such as date cakes (**mqaret**) and **Imbuljuta tal-Qastan**, a traditional spicy Christmas drink made using cocoa, chestnuts, cloves and citrus zest.



MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora



We thank all our readers, supporters and contributors. You are keeping this journal alive



REPUBLIC STREET - VALLETTA

Loranne Vella takes national book prize for Rokit

Fantasy novel and eco-fiction is winner of overall book category for National Book Prize 2018

Matthew Vella

Author Loranne Vella has won the Maltese national book prize with her fantasy novel *Rokit*, published by Merlin Publishers.

The novel explores multiple themes, among them the fragmentation of Europe as Petrel leaves Croatia to explore his grandmother's Maltese roots, to find Malta under siege by the effects of global warming.

Antoine Cassar won the first prize in poetry with his collection *Erbgħin jum* (EDE Books). No winners were there in the short stories, drama and translation categories as none of the entries had been shortlisted.



The prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award was bestowed on librarian Lillian Sciberras, who was present to receive the prize from the Prime Minister at the end of the ceremony, while the Best Emerging Author Award went to Antoinette Borg.

The winning title in the 'General research' category was *Curtain Up!* by Paul Xuereb, published by Midsea Books, while *Sal-quċcata tal-Everest* by Marco Cremona and Glen Calleja (Merlin Publishers) and *'Kollni kemm jien għalikom': Il-Ħajja mqanqla ta' Mikiel Gonzi u żminjietna (1885-1984)* by Louis Cilia (Klabb Kotba Maltin) both won in the 'Biographical and historiographic research' category. Last but not least, *A Visual Guide to the Fortifications of Malta* by Stephen C. Spiteri and published by BDL won the prize for 'Best book production'.

The award-giving ceremony of the 2018 edition of the National Book Prize was held at Auberge de Castille on Friday.

WINNERS

Novels in Maltese and English: Loranne Vella, *Rokit*

Poetry in Maltese and English: Antoine Cassar, *Erbgħin Jum*

General Research: Paul Xuereb, *Curtain Up!*

Bibliographical and Historiographical Research: Louis Cilia Bondin, *'Kollni Kemm Jien Għalikom': Il-Ħajja Mqanqla ta' Mikiel Gonzi u Żminijietna (1885-1984)*, and Marco Cremona & Glen Calleja, *Sal-Quċcata tal-Everest*

Best Book Production: Book Distributors Limited (BDL), *A Visual Guide To The Fortifications Of Malta*

Best Emerging Author: Antoinette Borg

Lifetime Achievement Award for Contribution to Literature: Lillian Sciberras

In his speech, National Book Council chairman Mark Camilleri remarked that in 2013, about 500 books were published, whilst this year the amount totalled about 1,000.

"Although the local scene does not have a long tradition, nonetheless it can boast of writers who enriched it greatly," Camilleri said.

The financial reward for the winners of this year's book prize was higher than in previous years. "An increase in the financial reward must also be accompanied by an increase in the standard of writing," Camilleri said, hoping for a time where the Maltese author will be able to sustain himself with his artistic productions.

The National Book Council would like to thank the members of the jury who served on the adjudication board for the National Book Prize 2018: Prof. Anthony Aquilina, Mario Ellul and Prof. Henry Frendo for the categories 'General Research' and 'Biographical and historiographic research'; Andrei Vella Laurenti, Emmanuel Psaila and Dr Claudine Borg for the categories 'Novels in Maltese and English' and 'Poetry in Maltese and English'.



Etnika to expose Malta's music history

Many of the band's traditional instruments were made by the original Etnika team



kalimba, traditional bass drum, katuba and tambourines – in innovative and “not-so-obvious” ways.

The tambur and žaqq. Photos: Oliver Degabriele

A concert by Etnika is acting as a launch pad for a major local project titled Music in Malta – From Prehistory to Vinyl.

An initiative of Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti, the project covers the history of music in Malta through a series of performances by local and foreign musicians and a major exhibition being held next year, showing how traditional instruments and sounds fit into a Mediterranean context.

Photo - A žafžafa or friction drum

The participation of Etnika, known for using ethnic sounds in novel contexts, is thus a fitting start to the programme of events. In Friday's concert at the Manoel Theatre, the six-piece band will be playing a host of instruments, Maltese and non – such as the žummarra, žafžafa, žaqq, Jew's harp or bijambo, thumb piano or



Etnika started out as a research project in 1999.

“Our interest was initially based on the revival of traditional musical instruments, whose context and use was lost as Malta became a more urbanised society,” band member Andrew Alamango said. This meant meeting the last members of the tradition, particularly the last žaqq player and maker Toni Cachia, ‘Il-Ħammarun’, and the last of the traditional tambourine players, Toni Camilleri, ‘It-Tommi’.

“These musicians passed on an invaluable oral tradition... they showed us how the instruments were made and played. They also told us where and when they would play these instruments, the context and their anecdotes.”

Photo: Below - A Jew's harp also known as bijambo.

Many of the band's traditional instruments were, in fact, made by the original Etnika team with guidance from their exponents and modified over time.

Animals and their skins played a big part in the making and playing of these instruments. The group learned that, for example, the žaqq (Maltese bagpipe) was ideally made from the entire skin of an unborn calf, which due to its size and softness would make an ideal bag or air reservoir for the bagpipe.

“In the absence of a calf, which was precious and expensive, smaller animals like goat or sheep and, sometimes, even a cat, would be used,” Mr Alamango said.



These skins were used not only in bagpipes but also for the friction drum, the žafžafa, and tambourines. In both cases, sheep, goat, cat or fish skin would be used.

“This might seem unacceptable today, but it was part of the rural culture at the time. It was useful and necessary back then,” he pointed out.

Mr Alamango said there is very little or no documentation on the instruments' origins but that they are possibly inherited from a Siculo-Arab tradition, like ġhana.

“They are instruments similar to those found in the Mediterranean basin and beyond,” he said.

“Sicily, Tunisia, Libya, Spain, Turkey and other countries have similar counterparts. The playing styles, too, are similar.”

Andrej Vujcic, who plays a host of instruments, said that the most complicated one to make is the žaqq, and that most people find its sound, like that of the žummarra, quite abrasive and hard on the ear.

On the other hand, they appreciate the flejguta's (the cane flute) more calming and melancholic feel. “Personally, I am really enjoying the tambur and bijambo, the latter being particularly interesting for most audiences as it has a very primal sound also connected to the breath and rhythm,” Mr Vujcic said.

The band also uses a pastizzi tray in its performances.

“There is a familiar sound in the day-to-day life here, which is the sound of pastizzi trays being pulled out, scraped and hit by metal tongs and slammed back into place. We managed to get hold of one and, after thorough cleaning, used it as another texture next to the wooden floor on which [dancer] Francesca Grima performs her footwork. “You can hear the result in the title track Maddalena,” explained Mr Vujcic, referring to the band's latest album, Maddalena's Marvellous Tripfolk Klabb.

Last but not least, among Etnika's endless list of instruments, is the voice.

Etnika





The band worked with various għannejja and the finest exponents of the folk singing tradition over the years. These include Mikiel Cumbo 'L-Iżgej', known for his high-pitched singing or għana fil-għoli, and the late ballad singer and poet Frans Baldacchino "il-Budaj".



According to Mr Vujcic, the voice is the most primal and intimate instrument and serves as a connection to the origins of folk music.

"In this concert we would like to introduce another texture of the voice, trace back an older sound in order to find a link with the traditional songs, and juxtapose it to our current interpretation," he said.

"We have experimented in the past with these juxtapositions but this time we are interested in it working musically within the latest Etnika sound. Vocalist Alison Galea will be joined by għana singer Mariele Zammit in a few numbers and the rehearsals showed interesting and inspiring results."

For more information log on to www.musicinmalta.com.

In Prayer, Remembrance and Peace – Marking WWI centenary

BY [GOZO NEWS](#)



An Ecumenical Service was held at St George's Basilica in Victoria to mark the first centenary since the end of the First World War – "the war to end all wars" and to remember those who died in Gozo – In Prayer, Remembrance and Peace.

The homily of the Bishop of Gozo Mgr Mario Grech, is shown in full below – Wage war against indifference.

"We have been summoned here to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War and to honour those men and women who have served in the armed forces. We are gathered to give thanks to those who sacrificed their lives for freedom.

The brave people we are remembering are calling us to recognise their shared suffering by building a better future where difference is accepted and respected. We ought to be filled with profound and

abiding gratitude to all our fallen forebears. We are assembled here to pray to our God of mercy and reconciliation for peace.

When in 1918, in Paris, on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month the Armistice between the Allies and Germany was signed, the world was convinced that such conflicts would never ensue again. Very sadly, history has proved this wrong. During the Great War itself, paradoxically known as "the war to end all wars," there were 40 million casualties. Between 1914 and November 2018, over 70 million military personnel was engaged in war. Unfortunately even today we still live in a world of heightened tension.

As Pope Francis rightly underlined, "today the world once more is at war and is preparing to go even more forcefully into war" (3.11.2017).

Does this simply imply that we have learnt nothing from this experience? How can one explain the fact that many have completely forgotten all about the millions of soldiers, the vast majority young men, that had fallen; the millions that bore the scars of war, psychological and physical; the millions that mourned the absent and lost, etc? In Pope Francis' words, "it seems that we don't learn" (11.11.2018).

Regrettably, "globalisation of indifference" has taken hold of too many of the world's people, numbing them to the horrifying reality faced by victims of war and violence around the world.

The Holocaust Survivor and Nobel Laurate Elie Wiesel notes that "etymologically, the word (indifference) means 'no difference'. A strange and unnatural state in which the lines blur between light and darkness, dusk and dawn, crime and punishment, cruelty and compassion, good and evil."

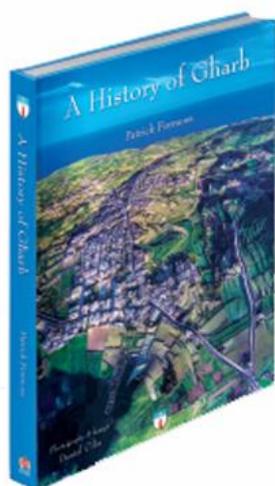
According to Wiesel indifference can be seductive: "it is so much easier to look away from victims; it is much easier to avoid such rude interruptions to our work, our dreams, our hopes. It is, after all, awkward, troublesome, to be involved in another person's pain and despair. Yet, for the person who is indifferent, his or her neighbour are of no consequence. And, therefore, their lives are meaningless. Their hidden or even visible anguish is of no interest. Indifference reduces the other to an abstraction."

As Wiesel remarks, "better an unjust God than an indifferent one." Yet, according to our Christian belief, God is neither unjust nor indifferent. In the Gospel, Jesus assures us: "Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name... Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete" (John 16,24). God will never forsake us. Only we humans are so weak that we can cease to remember our suffering brothers and sisters.

Thus, it is very appropriate that periodically we hold such days of remembrance. On this day we remember to act – we remember past wars to revive the struggle against forgetting – and wage a new war against indifference."

Photographs: MGOZ/Terry Camilleri

A History of Għarb by Patrick Formosa – Gozo book launch



A History of Għarb Patrick Formosa

"Patrick Formosa has written with passion about his beloved village of Għarb."
Professor Stanley Fiorini

A new book – A History of Għarb by Patrick Formosa – will be launched with a presentation in Gozo at the Għarb Parish Church.

The book has 304 pages with more than 350 photographs and also includes a USB card with more than 40 exclusive interviews carried out with the

people of Għarb between 1971 and 1973. The interviews include information on local interests and traditions, such as lace making, the lost language of Għarb, homemade kunserve, and much more.

The launch is taking place on Saturday, the 8th of December at 8.00pm.. The book has been published by the Salesians of Don Bosco (Malta) with photography and design by Daniel Cilia. The launch will be followed on the 22nd of December, with the distribution and signing of the book by the author in the Għarb Local Council premises in the presence of President Marie Louise Coleiro Preca.

The book is available by writing to the author at patrosrose@hotmail.com at a pre-launch price of €55. Residents in Gozo can also contact 99822805 to purchase the book. FacebookTwitterGoogle+WhatsAppPinterestTumblrRedditShare



*Our journal is archived at the
Malta Migration Museum - Valletta
Maltese-Canadian Archives - Toronto
Gozo National Library
Website: www.ozmalta.com*





St. Paul the Apostle Church Maltese Canadian Community Parish
3224 Dundas Street West, Toronto, Ontario M6P 2A3 416-767-7054

OFFICE HOURS Monday, Tuesday Wednesday and Friday. 9:30 am to 3:00 pm. CLOSED : Thurs, Sat, Sundays. (Priests are always available by appointment)

December 2nd. 2018 E-mail: stpaulmssp@gmail.com Website: www.saint-paul-maltese.com

Parish News

Please join us for our Annual Children's Christmas Party on Saturday December 8th at 6.30p.m. There will be a special performance of "Candy Cones in Bethlehem" by some of our Young Parishioners, crafts, games and a visit from Santa. Please bring a dish of your favorite food to share as this is a potluck event. In the spirit of the season, please bring a NEW unwrapped toy, essentials or gift cards(\$5-\$25) increments for grocery stores (including Walmart) for children/youth 5-18, to be donated to BOOST CHILD And YOUTH ADVOCACY CENTRE.

Boost CYAC is committed to eliminating abuse and violence in the lives of children, youth and their families. We believe that all children and youth have a right to grow up in a safe, healthy and nurturing environment. We are dedicated to the prevention of child abuse and violence through education and awareness, and to collaborating with our community partners to provide service to children, youth and their families. Children ages 12 and under are to be registered by December 2nd (Registration forms are available at the back of the Church or from your Children's Liturgy Teachers). For more information please contact Louise Debono: 416-944-2855.

December 9th: For the month of December instead of having the anointing of the sick on the first Friday of the month, we are going to have it on the 9th., so that all those participating in the Federation and Parish Senior's Christmas Luncheon will take advantage of this beautiful ceremony. Advent Retreat St. Cecilia Church: Thursday December 13th & Friday 14th 2018 . Time: 7.00p.m.-9.00p.m. This Advent retreat is led by Fr. Anthony Akpanessien. Everyone is welcome and participate. Happy 50th Wedding Anniversary to Mr. and Mrs. Gauci. May God bless you both.

Pastor: Fr. Emanuel Parnis MSSP

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Inauguration of artistic crib exhibition in Parliament building

Posted On December 2, 2018 - Updated 2 December, 2018 3:09pm

Deputy Speaker Claudette Buttigieg has inaugurated an artistic crib exhibition by the St Andrew's Musical Society Luqa, in the Maltese Parliament building.

The Deputy Speaker emphasised on the authentic message commemorating the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, "Peace to men of goodwill". The Deputy Speaker considered this message as a good augury for all men to exist in peace and harmony and to strive together towards beautiful, good and useful works. The Deputy Speaker added that before the Child of Bethlehem, we should ask Jesus to show us the beauty of humility, and we should think more of others in our actions.

The Deputy Speaker appealed to the public to visit this artistic crib in the Parliament building, and to appreciate traditional craftsmanship and the efforts of the artists who had built this artistic and fine work of art.

The public is invited to visit this crib at the Maltese Parliament building up to 6 January, daily between 9.00 a.m. and 8.00 p.m.

CURRENT AFFAIRS



Students can visit museums and historical sites for free

Report: Antonia Micallef MTV

By the time the Christmas holidays come round, primary and secondary school students will be able to visit museums and historical sites managed by Heritage Malta for free. With them, they can also take two adults who can also enter for free. For this scheme, children will be given a card which will be collected from the school they attend and on the first

visit they will be issued with a special 'passport'.

The executive director of Heritage Malta, Mario Cutajar said that with this card children will be able to learn more about Maltese history.

"I think this is definitely one of the best initiatives by Heritage Malta, however for the Government to invest in our children in this way and in a globalised world, to invest in that which is Maltese, is also a very positive measure not only for children but for the country as well and all that is taking place." The passport the students will be given on their first visit to a Heritage Malta will then be stamped every time they visit another historical site.

Education Minister Evarist Bartolo said that the project which was announced in the Budget has an important meaning and stressed that education goes beyond what is taught inside the classroom. Minister Bartolo described the passport as an educational tool for Maltese and foreign studies to discover more about the Maltese identity.

Culture Minister Owen Bonnici said that this initiative is making our cultural heritage more inclusive because, through their children, adults will also be able to improve their knowledge. He said that this goes hand in hand with various open days which Heritage Malta organises at its sites.

NSW – LOCAL TALENT - MCA Choir, Charlie Muscat, Joe Apap, Natasha Tatarinoff, Katelyn Vella, Alee, James Cassar, Martin and Brianna Vella .
(photos - Jim Borg's facebook)

