

# The English-Speaking Roman Catholic Community on Gozo

Patron Saint—St. Thomas More  
Our website: [www.escgozo.org](http://www.escgozo.org)

## 6th Sunday of Easter (B)

5th May 2024

Celebrated by

Fr. Loretu Tabone

*God's love for us - and its implications, our call to love others.*

### First Reading Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48

As Peter reached the house Cornelius went out to meet him, knelt at his feet and prostrated himself. But Peter helped him up. 'Stand up,' he said 'I am only a man after all!' Then Peter addressed them: 'The truth I have now come to realise' he said 'is that God does not have favourites, but that anybody of any nationality who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to him.' While Peter was still speaking the Holy Spirit came down on all the listeners. Jewish believers who had accompanied Peter were all astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit should be poured out on the pagans too, since they could hear them speaking strange languages and proclaiming the greatness of God. Peter himself then said, 'Could anyone refuse the water of baptism to these people, now they have received the Holy Spirit just as much as we have?' He then gave orders for them to be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ. Afterwards they begged him to stay on for some days.

*The word of the Lord*

### Responsorial Psalm 97(98):1-4

*The Lord has shown his salvation to the nations.*

Sing a new song to the Lord for he has worked wonders.

His right hand and his holy arm have brought salvation. (R)

The Lord has made known his salvation; has shown his justice to the nations. He has remembered his truth and love for the house of Israel. (R)

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Shout to the Lord, all the earth, ring out your joy. (R)



### Hymns for Today

**"To sing is to pray twice"**

215 God Is Love

356 Let All That Is Within Me

567 Oh Lord All The World

### Second Reading 1 John 4:7-10

My dear people, let us love one another since love comes from God and everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Anyone who fails to love can never have known God, because God is love. God's love for us was revealed when God sent into the world his only Son so that we could have life through him; this is the love I mean: not our love for God, but God's love for us when he sent his Son to be the sacrifice that takes our sins away.

*The Word of the Lord*

### Gospel Acclamation

**Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord, Alleluia, alleluia, give praise to His Name**  
Jesus said: 'if anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him'

**Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord, Alleluia, alleluia give praise to His Name.**

### We Pray For...

Those in our community who need our prayers, and all our relatives and friends who are in need and those who have died.

### Memorial Acclamation

When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your death O Lord, until you come again.

## Gospel

John 15:9-17

Jesus said to his disciples: 'As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandment and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my own joy may be in you and your joy be complete. This is my commandment: love one another, as I have loved you. A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends, if you do what I command you. I shall not call you servants any more, because a servant does not know his master's business; I call you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father. You did not choose me: no, I chose you; and I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit, fruit that will last; and then the Father will give you anything you ask him in my name. What I command you is to love one another.'

*The Gospel of the Lord*



## Dates for your diary

**07 May 24** Catholic Action/Bible Study Group 4.30 to 5.30 pm at Santa Lucija Church

**09 May 24** Adoration in English at Ghasri Parish Church at 3.30 pm followed by refreshments at the Parish Centre. Parking available

## A Synodal Journey

Please see attached inspirational message to us all from

Padre Jose Camilleri

## Commentaries on Today's Readings

After hearing today's readings pause now to consider the following reflections:

From: Rev Robert Draper:

Today's readings offer the opportunity for a profound and transcendent reflection on love and can help prepare us for the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity which we celebrate in two weeks' time. Love is such a powerful and profound emotion in human beings that it is easy to perceive of it as being rooted in ourselves. That is why the reading from 1 John is so striking: 'this is the love I mean: not our love for God, but God's love for us.' For Christians, God's love for humankind is the foundation of all human experience of love. Theologically all love has its origin in the mutual love of the three persons of the Trinity, and that love invites all to enter into, and share of, that love. A human child learns love by being loved, and if deprived of love as an infant, the effect can be devastating. Even more so human beings are able to love simply because they have been loved first - loved into existence. When John - both the John of the First Letter and the John of today's Gospel - speak of love, that is always the starting point. The Gospel links the love of the Father for the Son with the Love of the Son for the disciples (and therefore us). Human love therefore reflects that love which originates in the love within the Trinity. By calling his disciples (and us) friends, Jesus expressly brings them into the very life of love which is the Trinity; and as is necessarily the case within the life of the Trinity, insists that such love be fruitful.



### Sacred Heart Seminary Chapel Enrico Mizzi Street Victoria

(car park available on Sundays & Holy Days  
opposite Seminary)

**Sunday Mass at 10.00 am**

**The Sacrament of  
Confession**

is heard before Mass. Please allow  
time before Mass is due to  
commence

**Our chaplain:**

Father Loretu Tabone:

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**Council Members:**

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The collection for last Sunday was  
€176.51. All monies collected are  
deployed to cover the costs of run-  
ning our community and for good  
causes

#### Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for May

Pope Francis asks that we pray that  
"men and women religious, and  
seminarians, grow in their own  
vocational journey through human,  
pastoral, spiritual, and community  
formation, that leads them to be  
credible witnesses of the Gospel".

And from: Dom Henry Wansbrough  
OSB

Like so many of the great discourses of Jesus in the gospel of John, today's reading is not a shorthand record of Jesus' words, but will have been written up after the event. Most probably there were several slightly different versions of what Jesus said at the Last Supper. In any case, one can see that the author has in mind two different contexts: Jesus' own historical situation at the Last Supper and the situation of the early Church, where the disciples are being tested hard in their mission. They need encouraging by Jesus' own example of his sacrifice and by his promise of real friendship; they are friends, not servants, specially chosen by Jesus to bear fruit that will last. So we too are welcomed as friends, chosen and commissioned by Jesus to go out and bear fruit, but reminded that we must be prepared to pay the price. There is no fruit without pruning. Jesus had just given the example of service by washing the feet of his disciples. If we are to share the joy of Jesus we must be ready to join him also in laying down our lives for our friends. Do we ever have to make hard choices for Christ?

#### PRAYER AT THE END OF MASS

As suggested by His Holiness, Pope Francis:

Holy Michael, Archangel,  
defend us in the day of battle:  
Be our safeguard against the  
wickedness and snares of the devil.  
May God rebuke him, we humbly  
pray: and do thou, Prince of the  
heavenly host, by the power of God  
thrust down to hell, Satan, and all  
wicked spirits who wander through the  
world for the ruin of souls.

#### FOOTNOTES

"There is nothing impossible to  
they who will try."

— Alexander the Great

"Success is not final, failure is  
not fatal: it is the courage to  
continue that counts."

— Winston Churchill

"Spread love everywhere you  
go."

— Mother Teresa

#### Readers Rota

05-May Readings	Emilia Aquilina-Gray	Prayers	Andy Young
12-May Readings	Andy Young	Prayers	Mary Newman
19-May Readings	Mary Newman	Prayers	Emilia Aquilina-Gray
26-May Readings	Emilia Aquilina-Gray	Prayers	Aimee Vant
02-Jun Readings	Aimee Vant	Prayers	Angelika Camilleri
09-Jun Readings	Angelika Camilleri	Prayers	Johanna Marks
16-Jun Readings	Johanna Marks	Prayers	Stella Woodgate

## A Synodal Journey

The Good Lord has given me the gift to revisit Guatelama, a country where I spent more than 30 years working as a missionary. It was a privilege to once more be with the people I loved and who gave back their love to me. Very often I'm told: "Where are you going, how long are you carrying on travelling now that you have reached 90 years?" Apart from these well-meaning comments, I get constant warnings from my legs, reminding me that I am too old to travel and I should sit on an armchair forgetting the past and just live on my beautiful memories. But, the rest of my body gives me a different message encouraging me to ignore the weak legs, and that while I still enjoy good health, I should venture out and rest my legs when the need arises.

Notwithstanding the inner conflict, I am in Guatelama, getting here after a journey that took around 20 hours, apart from the further two hours I had to cover the distance between the airport and my familiar destination. I was met by the usual crowd of children in the village square all eager to see what I have brought them. I only had a few date and honey ring-cakes and a few bars of chocolate. My bag felt much lighter to carry and in no time, I landed on my bed for a good sleep.

I was up at six and I could see from my window the birds shifting from one tree to another while their melodious dawn chorus seemed like a warm welcome. The cock in the yard started crowing, little did he know that he would soon find himself in the pot. Would he have crowed had he known? The hot sun soon replaced the cold January mornings back in Gozo. Soon came the first knock at my door. Quickly I opened the door and there were standing there two catechists welcoming me: "Bienvenido, Padre Jose' que regalo tenerte con nosotros nuevamente."

We sat at the table, had a cup of coffee, fruit from the mountain area beside us and slowly started our journey along the road. It was an hour and a half walk and although every step I took seemed heavy, I could not say 'no' to a calling.

"We arrived" announced one of the catechists, "can you not hear the children shouting?" In no time at all, we reached the village Square and among the children there was one with a placard with my name written on it. As he noticed me looking at him, he paraded the placard for all to see it. The locals joyfully shouted: "Padre Jose' esta con nosotros."

The first person who presented himself to me was the local catechist. He addressed me by thanking me for accepting their invitation to visit them and continued: "In you we see the Good Samaritan, the man who came down from his beast to tend to the scars of the man who lay on the road. We wish that through this Synodal journey, you tend to our scars with your comforting oils, and unite us all as brothers and sisters bringing us all towards Jesus who loves so much."

At that moment I felt that it was not only these people who needed healing, but I too needed healing for the times when I did not listen to their call, made them feel abandoned, they looked for me but I was not there. They asked me to give them forgiveness and with my head bowed I forgave them as I quietly begged forgiveness for myself too.

We walked towards the chapel, a Synodal walk together with Church spread around the world. The boy with the placard had the keys to the chapel hidden in his pocket, I then realized he was the son of the sacristan. He placed the placard on the floor, gave me the keys and asked me to open the door but as he

realized that I could not open the door, he took the rusty keys back and turned them as he said me: "Now, you open the door."

As I stepped in, all I could see was a void, bare walls and no roof. The people noticed my expression of sadness on my face. The catechist approached me and told me: "Padre as you well know, we are poor, and you know that we own nothing, this chapel is a symbol of our poverty. It has no roof so that the sun rays warm our faith and with our eyes turned upwards we can reach the mercy of God and just wallow in his love for us. It has no roof, so that when look up with arms outstretched we see our Father's abundant love for us. And in the stars at night we see the beauty of creation and with sister sun and brother moon we delight in marvels of the same creation."

Truly with a sense of awe at the catechist's words, I sat quietly in a corner, asking for forgiveness. I felt the balm of God's mercy envelope me. I felt that I had been through a Synodal journey with the whole Church around the world.

*Padre Jose Camilleri*

5th May 2024