

The English Speaking Roman Catholic Community on Gozo

Patron Saint—St. Thomas More

Our website: www.esccgozo.org

Sacred Heart Seminary Chapel—Enrico Mizzi Street, Victoria
Sunday Mass 10.00 am (Confession available prior—please allow ample time)

8th June 2025

Pentecost

Celebrated by
Fr. Loretu Tabone

A day that changed everything.



First Reading Acts 2:1-11

When Pentecost day came round, they had all met in one room, when suddenly they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven, the noise of which filled the entire house in which they were sitting; and something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech. Now there were devout men living in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven, and at this sound they all assembled, each one bewildered to hear these men speaking his own language. They were amazed and astonished. 'Surely' they said 'all these men speaking are Galileans? How does it happen that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; people from Mesopotamia, Judaea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya round Cyrene; as well as visitors from Rome – Jews and proselytes alike – Cretans and Arabs; we hear them preaching in our own language about the marvels of God.'

The Word of the Lord

Second Reading Romans 8:8-17

People who are interested only in unspiritual things can never be pleasing to God. Your interests, however, are not in the unspiritual, but in the spiritual, since the Spirit of God has made his home in you. In fact, unless you possessed the Spirit of Christ you would not belong to him. Though your body may be dead it is because of sin, but if Christ is in you then your spirit is life itself because you have been justified; and if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he who raised Jesus from the dead will give life to your own mortal bodies through his Spirit living in you. So then, my brothers, there is no necessity for us to obey our unspiritual selves or to live unspiritual lives. If you do live in that way, you are doomed to die; but if by the Spirit you put an end to the misdeeds of the body you will live. Everyone moved by the Spirit is a son of God. The spirit you received is not the spirit of slaves bringing fear into your lives again; it is the spirit of sons, and it makes us cry out, 'Abba, Father!' The Spirit himself and our spirit bear united witness that we are children of God. And if we are children we are heirs as well: heirs of God and coheirs with Christ, sharing his sufferings so as to share his glory.

The Word of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm 103(104):1,24,29-31,34

(R) Send forth your spirit, O Lord, and renew the face of the earth.

Bless the Lord, my soul!
Lord God, how great you are,
How many are your works, O Lord!
The earth is full of your riches. (R)

You take back your spirit, they die, returning to the dust from which they came.

You send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the earth.
(R)

May the glory of the Lord last for ever!
May the Lord rejoice in his works!
May my thoughts be pleasing to him.
I find my joy in the Lord (R)

♪ Hymns for Today ♪

126 Come Holy Ghost

873 Holy Spirit We Welcome You

914 The Spirit Lives (Walk in the Light)

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of
your faithful
and kindle in them the fire of your
love.

Alleluia!

Gospel John 14:15-16,23-26

Jesus said to his disciples: 'If you love me you will keep my commandments.

I shall ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you for ever. 'If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him and make our home with him. Those who do not love me do not keep my words. And my word is not my own: it is the word of the one who sent me. I have said these things to you while still with you; but the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all I have said to you.

The Gospel of the Lord

Memorial Acclamation
We proclaim your Death, O Lord
and profess your Resurrection
until you come again

We Pray For

Those in our community and all our relatives and friends who need our prayers especially **Francesca Coen** recovering from being run over by a cyclist and severely injured as well as those who have died

Compassion and care until the end
Pastoral letter on assisted voluntary euthanasia as read last week- attached
See Pages 3&4



After listening to today's readings let us now consider the following reflections:

Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection.

In Jesus' final speech to his disciples after the Last Supper he is preparing them for life after the Resurrection. He several times mentions a mysterious figure called the 'Paraclete'. 'Paraclete' is Greek for 'advocate', that is someone who is called to your side to help, to guide you through a tricky patch. In Hebrew teaching about the Last Judgement there would be an Accuser and an Advocate on either side. In the gospel, Jesus asks the Father to send this Advocate to his followers to be his own presence when Jesus is no longer there and to guide the Church into all truth. That is the inspiring situation which Jesus speaks of: the Church and every one of her members will continue through the power of the Spirit to grow in understanding of the mysteries of God, as a people over the centuries and as individuals over the years of life. Before the Spirit was given, even the disciples who had been with Jesus throughout his ministry failed to understand his real significance, and certainly lacked courage to proclaim it. The coming of the Paraclete was the booster-rocket which set off the Church on its course and keeps it on course. Now it is the duty and privilege of each of the members of the Church to fulfil the prophetic office of the Church, understanding more deeply and declaring more clearly the truth about Christ in the world. What does the Holy Spirit teach? What difference does the Spirit's presence and teaching make in our lives?

And that of Fr. Robert Draper

The phenomenon of 'speaking in tongues' (glossolalia) is reported in several places in the New Testament (Acts 10.46; 1 Cor. 14) and describes spontaneous and ecstatic praise of God which is mainly unintelligible. It is a practice used today in Pentecostal and Charismatic Christian communities. What Luke speaks of in today's passage from the Book of Acts does not seem to have that character, nor that purpose. Luke's writings are constructed in a very careful and theological way. The detail in this passage - the long list of places of the hearers in Jerusalem - emphasises that the whole world is present and receives the message. Over the centuries readers have struggled with this list of exotic and strange peoples and places - as they still do today. That is deliberate, we are meant to be intrigued by the diversity and colourful variety. What brings the people together to where the apostles are is the sound of the great wind which is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit. They gather and they hear and they understand 'the marvels of God'. The whole thrust of the book of Acts is that the word of God empowered by the Holy Spirit is taken from Jerusalem (where Luke's Gospel begins and ends) to the ends of the world. There is but one gospel and it is intended for all people - so all can encounter the word proclaimed. The letter of Paul to the Corinthians emphasises the oneness of revelation - the one spirit creates one body made up of many parts, and all may hear and understand the Good News.

PRAYER AT THE END OF MASS

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.

Celebrations in June Birthdays

**17th Johanna Marks
28th Francesca Coen**

Dates and
Information for
your diaries



12th June 2025

4.30 pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in English at Ghasri followed by refreshments.

22 June 2025

Community lunch to celebrate feast of St Thomas More at Valley View - Xlendi. 12 for 12.30 pm. Please see and complete form outside chapel to make booking. Payment to David FP or council member

Money Matters



The collection for last Sunday was €195.03. All monies collected are deployed to cover the costs running our community and for good causes

Thank you for joining us for our Sunday celebration here at the Seminary. If you are currently reading the newsletter on our website but would like to receive a weekly copy to your personal email address, please contact Johanna on johannamarks3@gmail.com.



Please enter and leave the chapel silently before and after mass

Readers Rota

08-Jun Readings	Andy Young	Prayers	Johanna Marks
15-Jun Readings	Johanna Marks	Prayers	Angelika Camilleri
22-Jun Readings	Angelika Camilleri	Prayers	Vince Vella
29-Jun Readings	Tom Welch	Prayers	Mary Newman
06-Jul Readings	Mary Newman	Prayers	Tom Welch
13-Jul Readings	Stella Woodgate	Prayers	Chris Holland
20-Jul Readings	Chris Holland	Prayers	Rachel Holland

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COMPASSION AND CARE UNTIL THE END

PASTORAL LETTER ON ASSISTED VOLUNTARY EUTHANASIA

A public consultation is currently underway in our country regarding so-called 'Voluntary Assisted Euthanasia'. In a White Paper published by the Government, it is being proposed that patients will be legally permitted to end their own lives with the assistance of medical professionals, either in hospital or at home, if they meet the following conditions: they are over 18, suffering from a terminal illness, and they have been told by doctors they have less than six months to live.

We invite you to reflect carefully, and understand, the implications of the White Paper on your future and that of your loved ones so that you are in a position to add your voice to the consultation process.

Every human life is precious

The voluntary assisted euthanasia being proposed is, in fact, assisted suicide; that is, providing a patient with the necessary tools and assistance to end their own life by self-administering what the White Paper refers to as "medicine", provided through the national health service. What this means is that the patient will be required to deliver a lethal dose to himself or herself.

Proponents of the White Paper claim that the process contains various "safeguards" to limit who can receive this lethal concoction as well as to protect against coercion by family members and third parties; however, we know from the experience of other countries that, over time, these safeguards are eventually eroded, and more and more people end their lives for one reason or another.

Life begins to be considered a burden rather than a gift, and medical duty to care may even become a duty to kill. A right to die can become a duty to die.

We must also say that despite all the proposed safeguards – and safeguards are never free from abuse – a killing of even one person remains a killing. We consider every human life to be precious and valuable. No one should feel worthless. Someone considering ending his or her life should not receive from the State the assistance to commit suicide, but rather, they should receive the support to live with dignity, surrounded by love and care. God's commandment "You shall not kill", a principle engraved in our hearts and at the core of our society, always continues to guide us in life.

We must never be complicit in killing. Many doctors recognise their responsibility to remain faithful to the oath they took to save life and not to help end it.

As a Church, we recognise that our constant work in favour of life is a valuable contribution to the National Suicide Prevention Strategy in Malta, published by the Government just a few weeks ago. This strategy demands consistency. The White Paper, through its proposal of assisted suicide in particular cases, undermines this important strategy. Our mission must always be in favour of respecting and safeguarding the life of every person.

A "Failure of Love"

We wish to recall the clear words of Pope Francis, when he explained that euthanasia, and we quote, is "a failure of love, a reflection of a 'throwaway culture'" in which "persons are no longer seen as a paramount value to be cared for and respected" (encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, 18). Indeed, euthanasia is often, misleadingly, presented as a form of compassion.

However, 'compassion', a word that means 'to suffer with', does not involve ending a life intentionally, but rather the willingness to share in the suffering of those who are facing the final stages of their journey on this earth. (Message to Participants in the International Symposium on Palliative Care, Toronto, 21–23 May 2024).

The Best Possible Care

There is an alternative: instead of directing our energies at providing opportunities for assisted suicide, our appeal to the State is to strengthen, through all the investment necessary, palliative care for all who need it – and we emphasise for all – so that we can offer the best possible care until the final moments of life.

We all know that much still needs to be done in this respect. That is why we fully support the commitments set out in the National Strategy for Palliative Care in Malta, recently published by the Government.

What is palliative care? It is holistic care that greatly reduces suffering. It is not just medical care to relieve pain, but also psychological, social and spiritual support. It is a genuine form of compassion. In the words of Pope Francis: “Palliative care, while seeking to alleviate the burden of pain as much as possible, is above all a concrete sign of closeness and solidarity with our brothers and sisters who are suffering. At the same time, this kind of care can help patients and their loved ones to accept the vulnerability, frailty and finitude that mark human life in this world.”

In this sense, it is appropriate to use medicine to ease the suffering of those in critical condition, and to administer this not with the intention of causing death, but to relieve

pain, even if, as a consequence, life may be shortened. We believe a patient also has the right to refuse extraordinary medical treatment and to decline disproportionate treatment that causes unbearable suffering and offers no hope. That right is unfettered.

Closeness and Support

We must show compassion to those who are suffering due to illness, especially those nearing the end of life. In us, they should find empathy, closeness, great care, support and the necessary palliative care.

When some people reach a critical and dependent state, they may begin to feel like a burden on their relatives or those close to them. They may say: “I do not want to be a burden on those around me.” Some may start to feel it is their duty to end their life because they are suffering, see no meaning in life or have lost the will to continue living.

We must accompany these people with love, not abandon them, and give them all the help they need in the difficult and trying circumstances in which they find themselves.

We must never, in any way, make them feel that it would be better if they ended their life. Yet, if this White Paper becomes law, who will protect the vulnerable from coercion, or from feeling a burden on family?

Appreciation

We would like to express our deep appreciation to the many families who care for relatives and friends with terminal illnesses, for the invaluable work of Hospice Malta – St Michael Hospice is a beacon of hope in Maltese society – and for the many professionals and others working in this field in hospitals and care homes. We pray for them that they may continue, with great dedication, to uphold the protection of life and the dignity of every person. We pray that we may always be at the service of those who are suffering, as Jesus taught us, with a heart that is gentle and humble.

Let us end pain, not life. Let us show compassion and care until the end.

We bestow our pastoral blessing upon each and every one of you.

Today, Saturday, 31st May 2025,