

The English Speaking
Roman Catholic Community on Gozo
Patron Saint – St. Thomas More
Our website: www.esccgozo.org
Seminary guest WiFi: Letmein123!
Sacred Heart Seminary Chapel – Enrico Mizzi Street , Victoria

23rd August 2026
21st Sunday Ord A
Celebrated by
Fr. Loretu Tabone

I will give you the keys of the kingdom of Heaven



Gospel Acclamation
Alleluia Alleluia!!

God in Christ was reconciling the world
to himself,
and he has entrusted to us the news that
they are reconciled.
Alleluia!

First Reading **Isaiah 22:19-23**

Thus says the Lord of Hosts to Shebna, the master of the palace: I dismiss you from your office, I remove you from your post, and the same day I call on my servant Eliakim son of Hilkiah. I invest him with your robe, gird him with your sash, entrust him with your authority; and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the House of Judah. I place the key of the House of David on his shoulder; should he open, no one shall close, should he close, no one shall open. I drive him like a peg into a firm place; he will become a throne of glory for his father's house.

The Word of the Lord

♪ **Hymns for Today** ♪

731 The Spirit is Moving
36 I am the Bread of Life
236 Hail Mary, full of Grace

Second Reading **Romans**
11:33-36

How rich are the depths of God – how deep his wisdom and knowledge – and how impossible to penetrate his motives or understand his methods! Who could ever know the mind of the Lord? Who could ever be his counsellor? Who could ever give him anything or lend him anything? All that exists comes from him; all is by him and for him. To him be glory for ever! Amen.

The Word of the Lord

Gospel

Matthew 16:13-20

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi he put this question to his disciples, 'Who do people say the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say he is John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' 'But you,' he said 'who do you say I am?' Then Simon Peter spoke up, 'You are the Christ,' he said, 'the Son of the living God.' Jesus replied, 'Simon son of Jonah, you are a happy man! Because it was not flesh and blood that revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. So I now say to you: You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church. And the gates of the underworld can never hold out against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven.' Then he gave the disciples strict orders not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

The Gospel of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm 137(138):1-3,6,8

(R) Your love, O Lord, is eternal: discard not the work of your hands.

I thank you, Lord, with all my heart:
you have heard the words of my mouth.

In the presence of the angels I will
bless you.

I will adore before your holy temple.
(R)

I thank you for your faithfulness and
love,
which excel all we ever knew of you.
On the day I called, you answered;
you increased the strength of my soul.
(R)

The Lord is high yet he looks on the
lowly
and the haughty he knows from afar.
Your love, O Lord, is eternal,
discard not the work of your hands.
(R)

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 and
those who have died

Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

Holy Michael, the 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 cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who wander through the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen

COMMUNION REFLECTION

For all the disillusion we have experienced with the outside, we never seem to look inside for that which we seek..... Perhaps we have been misled by the tidal wave of advertising that washes over us.....So we have bought ourselves into debt, consumed all the happiness-making products. Yet we continue to "lead lives of quiet desperation." We haven't been able to cash in on the promotional promises of happiness.....I think we are looking for happiness in all the wrong places. We have pinned our hopes on other people and on objects that simply cannot deliver. To remind myself, I have a sign on the mirror over my sink. It reads "You are looking at the face of the person who is responsible for your happiness". (John Powell SJ, Happiness is an inside job.)



After listening to today's readings let us now consider the following :
Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection.

At last Peter recognizes that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ. At last he realizes that in Jesus he can see the action of God made visible. The disciples followed Jesus as soon as he called, but for a long time they were puzzled about what to make of him, of his wonderful teaching and his godlike personality. Now comes a shaft of light and understanding. We too often take some time to appreciate the true worth of someone we know well: a little gesture can sometimes reveal just how generous and thoughtful they are. Peter suddenly grasps that here is the Son of God, acting among them, a daunting or even terrifying thought. Jesus replies to Peter's recognition with his own generosity, giving him a new name, 'Rock', for this is what 'Peter' means. If you name something, you make it your own, take it to yourself. This is just what Jesus does with Simon who becomes his own Peter, his own 'Rock'. That is the importance of the naming of a child at Baptism: Jesus takes us to himself and we become his. The early Christians called themselves 'Those over whom the name of Jesus has been called'. We may have been named Mary or John, but the name of Jesus has been called over us and we have become his. What are the implications for us of Jesus' promise to Peter?

And from Fr. Robert Draper

What the readings from Isaiah and Matthew today invite us to do is reflect on the extra-ordinary reality that God actually chooses human individuals to be part of his plan for the well-being of God's people. Neither writer for one moment considers the selection of Eliakim or Peter to be simply some sort of job selection in an ordinary sense. We certainly know from the later history of Peter that a more thorough human selection process would have revealed an unreliable candidate! That is precisely the point. Pundits and commentators have every right to view the election of Pope Francis or Pope Benedict, for example, in terms of ecclesiastical politics or trends or issues, and the faithful should not be so naive or immature as to ignore such comments; but reflecting in faith, and pondering in prayer, God's people will seek to discern not human but other dimensions of the choosing and selecting of those who are entrusted with the care of Christ's sheep. St Paul encourages us along these lines ; how impossible to penetrate his motives or understand his methods. This is not the same as a fatalistic spiritual laissez-faire on the part of the believer. It is rather taking seriously the truth that God takes us seriously – and chooses to involve us in the divine plan, and work that plan out with and through human participation (and weakness). That is something of the riches of the depths of God –and the extraordinary love and dignity that God offers humanity.

Eucharistic Ministers

23-Aug-26 Monique Sant Georges Ben Miltenburg
30-Aug-26 Iain Dando Mary Newman
06-Sept-26 Monique Sant Georges Johanna Marks
13-Sept-26 Mary Newman Iain Dando

Readers Rota – If you would like to join please contact Johanna on johannamarks3@gmail.com

23-Aug Readings Rachel Holland	Prayers Chris Holland
30-Aug Readings Johanna Marks	Prayers Mary Newman
06-Sept Readings Sylvia Fernandes	Prayers Andy Young
13-Sept Readings Andy Young	Prayers Stella Woodgate
20-Sept Readings Stella Woodgate	Prayers Johanna Marks

Pope Leo XIV's prayer intention For August

For evangelization in the city

Let us pray that in large cities often marked by anonymity and loneliness we find new ways to proclaim the Gospel, discovering creative paths to build community.

FOR YOUR DIARY

Bible Study Group.

New meeting date TBA

Adoration will recommence on **8th Oct.**

30th August – Diamond

Celebration Mass – See attached

Birthdays

18th – Chris Holland

21st – Monique San George

Celebrations in August

23rd – Jean Kennedy

24th – Lilian Fitzpatrick

Anniversaries

20th – Rachel & Chris Holland

27th – Veronica and John Grech



Money Matters

The collection for Saturday – Assumption was €34.20 and for last Sunday €175.04 . All monies collected are deployed to cover the costs of running our community and for good causes

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Council Members:

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David Felice Pace 79560051

Marcel & Sylvia Grech-Marguerat
77051050

Johanna Marks 99950596

Mary Newman 77047872



30th August 2026

Concelebrated Mass by

Cardinal Mario Grech

Fr. Loretu Tabone

Padre Jose Camilleri

Fr George Debrincat

Canon John Muscat

As a celebration of the 60th Wedding Anniversaries of:

Lilian and Reg Fitzpatrick - 8th October 2026

Veronica and John Grech - 27th August 2026

Isabel and Chris Barlow— 1st October 2026

Francesca and Brian Coen — 26th December 2025



**This special occasion will be followed by a catered, informal reception in the hall
to which all are invited**