



# THE ECHO

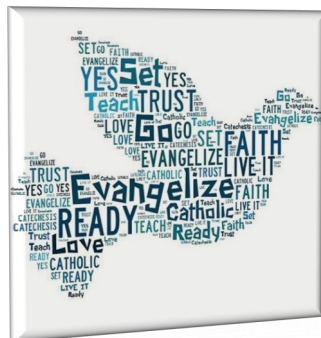


A newsletter for CATECHISTS and RE TEACHERS

Issue 25

Summer Term 2024

## EVANGELISATION



All big or small organisations tend to have their **mission statement** - from schools to Charity organisations and all sorts of businesses. The mission of the Church is so clear and to the point. As stated in the Vatican II document 'Evangelii Nuntiandi', **the Church exists in order to evangelise** (Ev Nun 14). This clarity of purpose emanates from Jesus' words when he ordered his

disciples to **proclaim his word, be witnesses, make disciples, teach and baptise.**

Over the centuries and throughout its history, the Church has been blessed with so many generous people, male and female, who have responded to the call to be Evangelisers and do their bit in proclaiming the message of the Lord to others. Many did this within their close circle of friends and family, within their parish, such as volunteering to be **catechists**, and many others who took a further step of leaving their country of birth and become **missionaries** in other parts of the world. Many recent popes have renewed and echoed the call for us all to be part of this Evangelisation process.

It is our responsibility as members of the Christian community to reflect and ask what is our role in all this - in what way can I be a Witness and Evangelizer in my daily life?



## EVANGELISATION

is the mission  
of the Church,  
not just of a few, but  
**my,**  
**your,**  
**our mission.**

Pope Francis

## THE YEAR OF PRAYER

This year **2024** has been designated as the **Year of Prayer** by Pope Francis. This is being done in preparation for next year's Jubilee year which is marked every 25 years.

This occasion presents us with a great opportunity to go back to the basics of prayer and strive to ensure prayer is central to our daily life as followers of Christ.



## THE ECHO



The word 'CATECHIST' comes from the Greek word meaning 'to echo'. As Catechists or teachers of RE we do not proclaim our own word. We echo the message of Jesus Christ our Lord.

This newsletter aims at providing parish catechists and teachers of RE in schools some support in terms of reflections, ideas, useful resources they can use and so on. Feel free to make more copies for other colleagues and friends. There is also an online version on our website [www.sdc.me.uk](http://www.sdc.me.uk)

# PILGRIMAGE TRIP TO MALTA

The thought of going on a Pilgrimage trip to Malta has been on the minds of several members of the **SDC Friends Group** of our Centre in London for some time. People in this group have been showing interest in visiting **Malta** for a number of reasons including to see the birthplace of our Society, learn more about the **Founder St George Preca** and to explore the rich Christian environment of the island. Some also expressed their desire to experience how **Holy Week** and the Easter Triduum are celebrated and how this differs from that in London.

Following months of thinking and deliberations, the idea came into fruition during the **Easter Break 2024** when a group of fourteen people visited the islands for a week long pilgrimage trip.

The group left from London Gatwick airport on a very early flight on Good Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> March and was therefore on the island around lunchtime, thus in good time to be able to attend the **Good Friday celebration** at the **parish of St Sebastian in Qormi**. We then walked over to the neighbouring parish of St George the Martyr to see the amazing **Good Friday procession** with live characters, statues and solemn music played by various bands – things that no one in the group had witnessed before.

Over the weekend we visited other places of interest and continued to take part in the Easter Triduum celebrations which included attending the **Easter Vigil on Saturday at the Co-Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Valletta** and then attending the **Risen Christ celebration in Cospicua** on Sunday.

One important aspect of this trip was to give a better understanding of SDC and how it operates in Malta. The group had the opportunity to visit a number of **SDC Centres** such as Qormi, Hal Lija and Mosta but we also attended the celebration of the **Mass at the Chapel of the Miraculous medal in Blata l-Bajda** which was followed by a visit to the **SDC General House** and meetings with the members of the SDC Administration. On Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April, the group led the **general meeting** which takes place in the Auditorium every Wednesday. This included information about the SDC Friends group, hymns and sharing of personal experiences by three members of the group.

During the rest of the stay in Malta we also had the opportunity to visit other places of historical interest including the capital city **Valletta**, the old city of **Mdina** where we were treated to a guided tour, **Dingli Cliffs** and other places. We naturally planned a day to visit the charming island of **Gozo** where we visited churches, beaches and other attractions such as the Ggantija temples.



Our final day was also a very important one for our pilgrimage aims as we visited **St Paul's Bay** and Bugibba where we read the narration of the **Shipwreck of St Paul** (Acts 27 and 28) from the Qawra Promenade. In the evening we then attended mass at the **parish church of St Cajetan in Hamrun** where Fr Preca served as a priest for so many years.

For the whole week we were hosted at the **Dar Hanin Samaritan** in Santa Venera. Everyone commented on the good level of service at this centre, its amenities, quality of food and not least the welcoming and accommodating staff working there.



We are sure that this visit will stay in the memory of those who took part for a long time and hope that it was a pilgrimage that will enhance their Christian faith. Different people have been touched by different things and aspects of this trip but they have all commented that this was a great opportunity to get an deeper insight into the life of SDC and the Catholic Church in general.



**SDC** is a Catholic organization that works in the field of catechesis within Catholic Parishes. It was founded in 1907 by St George Preca. For more information or to download resources for parish or school catechetical programmes visit our website [www.sdc.me.uk](http://www.sdc.me.uk).  
SDC, 38 Ryefield Road, Upper Norwood, London SE19 3QU.