ARCHDIOCESE OF MALTA

ONE CHURCH ONE JOURNEY

10 paths to evangelisation

Group Sharing

During his Apostolic Journey, April 2-3, 2022, Pope Francis' words to the People of God in Malta helped us to open our eyes to how we are being called to evangelise through welcoming and serving.

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1. "Your ancestors showed hospitality to the Apostle Paul in his journey to Rome, treating him and his traveling companions "with unusual kindness" (Acts 28:2). Coming from Rome, I too am now experiencing that same warm hospitality, a treasure that the Maltese people have handed on from generation to generation."

   Are there "strangers" in my parish?
   In which concrete ways is the parish community being hospitable?

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2. “For thousands of years, the interplay of historical events and the encounter of different peoples has made this island a centre of vitality and of culture, spirituality and beauty, a crossroads that has received and harmonized influences from many parts of the world.”

What historical events in my parish have contributed to the development of Maltese spirituality? If we remember any, how are they being passed on?

3. “Peace follows unity and rises up from it. This reminds us of the importance of working together, of preferring cohesion to division, and of strengthening the shared roots and values that have forged Maltese society in its uniqueness.”

How are the different groups and communities within the parish — whether religious, cultural, or secular — working together to strengthen shared roots and values?

4. “The environment in which we live is a gift from heaven, as your national anthem also recognizes, by asking God to preserve the beauty of this land, a mother dressed by brightest light.”

What initiatives are being promoted in the parish to protect and sustain the natural environment? What are the areas that need more attention?

5. “The protection of the environment and the promotion of social justice prepare for the future, and are optimal ways to instill in young people a passion for a healthy politics and to shield them from the temptation to indifference and lack of commitment.”

How are young parishioners (and those not so young) being formed to have a passion for healthy politics? Is the parish giving attention to healthy politics through homilies and lifelong catechesis?

6. “Malta is a splendid “laboratory of organic development”, where progress does not mean cutting one’s roots with the past in the name of a false prosperity dictated by profit, by needs created by consumerism, to say nothing of the right to have any and every “right”. A sound development needs to preserve the memory of the past and foster respect and harmony between the generations, without yielding to bland uniformity and to forms of ideological colonization.”

How is dialogue among the generations being promoted in the parish? How do they contribute to lifestyles to counter consumerism?

7. “I encourage you to continue to defend life from its beginning to its natural end, but also to protect it at every moment from being cast aside and deprived of care and concern. I think especially of the rightful dignity of workers, the elderly and sick. And of those young people who risk squandering all the good have within them by following mirages that leave only emptiness in their wake. These are the fruits of radical consumerism, indifference to the needs of others and the scourge of drugs, which suppresses freedom and creates dependence. Let us protect the beauty of life!”

In which ways is the dignity of life being squandered in the parish?
How are we, as parish community, responding?

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8. “My thoughts turn to Saint Paul who, in the course of his last journey across the Mediterranean, unexpectedly came to these shores and found ready assistance. Then, bitten by a viper, he was thought to criminal, but then came to be considered a god because he suffered no ill effects from it (cf. Acts 28:3-6). Between these two extremes, the really important thing was missed: Paul was a man, a man in need of assistance. Humanity is first and foremost: that is the lesson taught by this country whose history was blessed by the arrival of the shipwrecked apostle. In the name of the Gospel that Paul lived and preached, let us open our hearts and rediscover the beauty of serving our neighbours in need.”

How can the parish encourage new ways for people to grow in “neighbourliness” and assist one another?

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9. “The tender love of mothers, who give life to the world, and the presence of women are the true alternative to the baneful logic of power that leads to war.”

How is the presence of women and the tender love of mothers being concretely felt in the parish? What are the roles that women fulfill—or could fulfill?

10. “From there, from the dignity of persons, we can and must start anew. Let us not be deceived by all those who tell us that “nothing can be done”; “these problems are too big for us”; “let others fend for themselves while I go about my own business”. No. Let us never fall into this trap. Let us respond to the challenge of migrants and refugees with kindness and humanity. Let us light fires of fraternity around which people can warm themselves, rise again and rediscover hope. Let us strengthen the fabric of social friendship and the culture of encounter, starting from places such as this. They may not be perfect, but they are, truly, “laboratories of peace”.”

In which concrete ways is the parish community offering hope and building a culture of encounter among all people in the locality? Are there new ways of outreach and evangelisation that the parish could experiment with that perhaps the community has hesitated to try so far?

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What are recurrent themes? Which seem to emerge as priorities?