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## **SECOND YEAR OF PASTORAL VISITS**

### **TWELVE PASTORAL VISITS IN EIGHT MONTHS**

Archbishop Paul Cremona will today embark upon a Pastoral Visit to Mgarr. This is the second year of the programme of pastoral visits which are spread over a period of five years. The primary scope of these visits is for the Archbishop to make a direct encounter with parishioners and with all those people who offer their services within the Church. After the Mgarr Pastoral Visit, the Archbishop will visit the parishes of Mosta and Gharghur.

Between October 2009 and June 2010, the Archbishop visited 12 different parishes: Mellieha, St Paul's Bay, Zejtun, Marsaxlokk, Birzebbuga, Tarxien, Santa Lucia, Qawra, Burmarrad, Ghaxaq, Manikata and Birkirkara (St Helen).

During his pastoral visits to every locality, the Archbishop held meetings with representatives of civil society, as well as with people who form part of Church organizations, among them members of commissions; those who provide liturgical services - such as animation during mass - and the Sacraments; catechists who pass on the faith, both to the young and to adults; those who provide social assistance to persons in need; those who work among youth, married couples and their families. The Archbishop also met children who attend state schools at primary level and those attending classes at centres of Christian Doctrine in the parishes, adolescents and youth, as well as persons hailing from specific categories such as farmers, fishermen and professionals.

At the end of every pastoral visit, the Archbishop prepared a message addressed to the parish community, highlighting the priorities which he felt the parish needed to focus upon. This document was read out during the weekend masses held at the Parish, together with a detailed report including a number of concrete proposals. This report which is put together by the Pastoral Secretariat gives a clear representation of every

parish and the ways in which that particular parish may better utilise the human resources and facilities which are at its disposal.

Among various initiatives which have been taken following the Archbishop's Pastoral Visit one may cite various studies concerning situations of families who require social assistance and the ways in which the Church may continue to be of assistance to these people; initiatives taken by parishes in the North of Malta in order to reach out to foreigners and tourists who frequent these parishes; ways in which the Church may support farmers; dialogue with professionals concerning different realities and issues. Besides these initiatives, the Archbishop strives to encourage and offer direction to all those who are responsible for ameliorating the nature of parish life.

Three years ago, at the start of his episcopate, Mons Paul Cremona OP, had clearly demonstrated his wish to visit all the parishes in Malta. To date, the Archbishop has already visited 27 out of 70 parishes.