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Address by His Grace Mgr. Paul Cremona O.P.  
Archbishop of Malta  
to His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI  
on the Occasion of His Pastoral Visit  
during the celebration of the Holy Eucharist  
THE GRANARIES, FLORIANA, Malta  
18<sup>th</sup> April 2010.

Your Holiness,

Tomorrow, you will be celebrating the Fifth Anniversary of your Election to the Papacy on the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2005. We thank you for accepting this Mission and we wish you Ad Multos Annos.

We are gathered here today around you, in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. We are here to be strengthened by your message to us today, and by partaking of the Eucharist. Your presence amongst us today will give a new strength and a new dimension to the Community of the Catholic Church in these Islands.

The Catholic Church in Malta has deep cultural roots in the hearts of our people. The profound relationship between our People and the Catholic church in Malta is visible especially through the great love and devotion with which the Maltese have built their Churches and places of worship. It is seen today also in the great numbers of our population who still participate faithfully in the life of the Church.

The Catholic Church has always, and is still contributing very much to the social well-being of the Maltese Society. She has always catered and still caters for different needs of our society: persons with disability, old people, people with drug addiction problems, institutions for children, asylum seekers, and victims of domestic violence as well as in the educational sector.

This is visible also in the support given to people at parish level through different parishes. It is also attested to the contribution that individuals, inspired by Christian ideals have given to the political, cultural and social reality of our Country.

But today we are searching especially for a new evangelisation. Society has changed and it is a challenge for the Catholic Church to examine itself, and its methods of evangelization. We know that now the Church considers itself as a believing Community in the larger Maltese population. It has a mission of love in the name of Christ to witness to its faith and the values inherent in this faith especially those centering around the sanctity of life from the moment of conception; the dignity of every person and the fundamental importance of a stable family based on marriage.

We know that in the light of these changing conditions we cannot just cling to the model of the Church to which we have been accustomed for decades. We have to return to the Church as it unfolds in the Acts of the Apostles: a Church which centres around the listening to and the sharing of the Word and the Eucharist; a Church which thrives on the personal experience of Christ; a Church in which its members are not fazed by persecution but continues to give witness in love to the teachings of the Lord; a Church which passed from the humiliation of having let down the Lord at the moment of his Crucifixion to the humility of the preaching the Word relying on the strength of the Holy Spirit, rather than on the strength of its members; a Church humble enough to recognize the failures and sins in its members but strong enough to count on the presence of the Holy Spirit; a Church which does not seek privileges, but merely strives just to deliver the Good News of the Lord.

Holy Father, in this new evangelisation we are inspired by the main themes of your Encyclical Letters:

In the light of Deus Caritas Est we know that the Church begins from the great love that God the Father has for every person whatever the nationality, race or the beliefs.

From the Spe Salvi we know that in the Christian Religion, man and his salvation is at the centre of the Divinity. God does not remain far and aloof, but comes amongst us. Man is at the centre of Our Lord's Mission.

From Caritas in Veritate we recognize that the Mission of the Church is to mediate this kind of Divine love. The Church lives this Love around the life and teachings of Our Lord, celebrates it in Community around the Eucharist and gives witness to it in the daily life.

Holy Father, this is possible only if, after giving glory to God and Our Lord Jesus Christ, the whole Church Community, each one of us, becomes His Glory, allowing the Lord to recognize us as His sons and daughters.

Holy Father, we are waiting eagerly to listen to your message today to give us light and guidance to help us to fulfill this Christian Vocation and Mission.

✠ Paul Cremona O.P.  
Archbishop of Malta