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Mackay Maltese Club Inc.

*Franciscan Sisters and
Francis of Assisi Home
Jubilee and
Festa tal-Madonna
tal-Vittorja
Program*

*10 year
Celebration of MMC*

September 2004

Mackay Maltese Club Inc.

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The following activities are happening in September, 2004

- * ***'Festa tal-Madonna tal-Vittorja' Procession & Mass 10, 11 & 12th***
- * ***Jubilee Celebrations for Franciscan Sisters of the Heart of Jesus***
- * ***50 year Jubilee Weekend for the Francis of Assisi Home***
- * ***Two Photographic and Historical Exhibitions also in September***
- * ***Also celebrating 10 years of the Mackay Maltese Club***

Festa tal-Madonna tal-Vittorja' Friday, September 10 - A Jubilee/Festa outdoor Procession and con-celebrated Mass will take place at 7pm at the Francis of Assisi Home in Dupuy Street, West Mackay. Bishop Brian Heenan will lead the celebrations assisted by Bishop Joseph Grech and local priests. Once again we expect a huge crowd for our big weekend. We encourage the children to attend be ribbon pole bearers and escort the Our Lady Of Victories statue. We encourage everyone to wear our traditional colours of red and white. Be proud of your Maltese heritage.

A Photographic and Historical Exhibition, titled 'Our Shared Heritage' will be on display at Artspace Mackay during the month of September and a special Jubilee Exhibition will be featured at the Mackay City Library. Come along and share the journey with us. Everyone welcome!

Saturday September 11: A special Jubilee/Festa Mass will be held at St Brigids Church Farleigh at 6pm. Bishop Joseph Grech visiting from Bendigo will celebrant. Come along early to secure a seat as we expect to have a large representation of young people present.

Festa Dinner, Saturday 12 at 7.30pm at the Farview Tavern, Farleigh, Mackay. N.B. Dinner bookings are essential, just see any club committee member or phone Carmel Baretta on 49421661. Book now.

Sunday September 12; Jubilee celebrations continue with a special Jubilee Mass at the Francis of Assisi Home. Light refreshments will follow.

'Our Lady of Victories' by The Most Reverend Joseph A Grech D.D.

The feast of our Lady of Victories always had a special place in the hearts of the Maltese people. This feast is intrinsically bound with the history of the Maltese Islands, so much that this still celebrated today in a special and unique manner. St. Pius V established the feast of Our Lady of Victories after the Christian Navies defeated the Ottoman Turkish supremacy at the battle of Lepanto in 1571. This engagement effectively broke the Turkish supremacy in the Mediterranean.

The 8th September is a day which is etched in the life of the Maltese people. It was on this day in 1565 that the Knights of Malta, together with the Maltese people, defeated the overwhelming forces of the Ottoman forces of the Ottoman Empire in our Islands. This victory was achieved with great sacrifice and heroism on the part of the defenders of the Islands. (Malta more recently, on the 8th September, 1943, Italy surrendered and the Italian fleet anchored at St. Pauls Bay and Marsaxlok Bay three days later). This meant that the constant siege suffered by the Maltese people during the Second World War was finally lifted.

What can we learn from this? I believe that this gives us a very clear picture of the Maltese character. Our ancestors were not afraid to face any difficulty that came their way. They were always ready to adhere to their convictions even if that meant that they had to undergo much suffering and pain. They had a certain resilience that made them give all their best for the defence of their country and for what they believed in. Their passionate pride and love for their country helped everyone to overcome incredible odds. They preserved, because they knew this was part and parcel of their character.

At the same time they also realised that together with their efforts, they had to rely on their faith. They went into battle with a prayer on their lips and with firm convictions that good will triumph over evil. They knew they were protected by Divine Providence. They knew they could trust what their Catholic faith taught them. They made their own, the words of Psalm 91:

***'He rescues you from the snare
of the fowler, set on destruction,
He covers you with his pinion.
You find shelter under his wings
His constancy is shield and protection'***

We are the heirs to these qualities. Today, we might be living in another country, which has provided us with so many blessings and opportunities. However, deep inside us, there is still a heart that is formed and sustained by a history of bravery and faith. We need to be constantly reminded of this, so that we can pass it on to our future generations.