



THE CHURCH IN MALTA

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE
Archdiocese of Malta

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AN OPPORTUNITY TO REVITALIZE FAITH IN THE EUROPEAN PROJECT

“Malta’s Presidency of the Council of the European Union offers our nation the opportunity to give a strong impetus to revitalizing faith in the European project. We augur that Malta will continue to consolidate and implement the values of human dignity, democracy, human rights, justice, solidarity and the rule of law cherished by the founding fathers of the European Union, in the areas of the six priorities adopted for its Presidency: migration, security, the single market, social inclusion, neighbourhood policy and the maritime sector.”

This was the message conveyed by the Archbishop of Malta, Mgr Charles J. Scicluna, during a meeting with the Prime Minister of Malta, Dr Joseph Muscat, held on Friday 6th January 2017, at *Auberge de Castille*, in Valletta. The meeting was attended by Mgr Mario Grech, Bishop of Gozo, Bro. Olivier Poquillon O.P., General Secretary of COMECE (the Commission of the Bishops’ Conferences of the European Union), Right Reverend Dr Robert Innes, Anglican Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe, Ms Doris Perschke, General Secretary of the Churches’ Commission for Migrants in Europe, and Ms Erin Green on behalf of the Conference of European Churches. The Archbishop of Malta was accompanied by Mgr Joe Galea Curmi, the Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Malta, and Rev. Prof. Emmanuel Agius, Dean of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Malta.

During the cordial meeting, Archbishop Charles J. Scicluna presented the Prime Minister with a report through which the Catholic Church in Malta offered its reflections on Malta’s Presidency of the Council of the European Union, which is taking place in very challenging times for the Union. The Church believes that this Presidency is an important event for our county since the Maltese Government is offered the opportunity during the next six months to influence and shape the EU’s agenda in line with its own priorities and goals.

The Catholic Church and European Christian Churches (CEC) urge the EU to return to the values of the EU founding fathers by solving common problems together building on their shared history, and to consider the European project as more than just a common market. The single market, which is essential for economic growth, should not be separated from social inclusion.

The EU needs to act quickly to rescue the poor and the weak. All efforts should include family-friendly measures as the family is the heart of the “culture of life”.

The proposed reforms of the European Union’s Common Asylum System, falls short in offering a fair, transparent and efficient asylum system based on high protection standards. Burden Sharing, or “responsibility sharing”, and the reform of the Dublin Regulation are the two most important issues that have divided the EU and which exert most pressure on the Maltese presidency.