



25/2012

**Letter Circular of
H.E. Mgr. Mario Grech
Bishop of Gozo**

To the Rev. Archpriests, Parish Priests, Rectors, Religious Superiors, Consecrated Persons and the Christian faithful.

Ad Limina Visit

Dear ones,

Accompanied by Archbishop Paul Cremona O.P. and Emeritus Archbishop Ġużeppi Mercieca, tomorrow (today) I will be going to Rome for the *ad limina Apostolorum* Visit. It is the duty of every diocesan bishop to make, every five years, a visit to the "tombs of the Apostles Peter and Paul". Although I will travel alone from Gozo, I will be carrying each and every one of you in my thoughts and I will present you to His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI.

The highlight of this ecclesial event is the audience which we will have with the Pope on Monday 28th May. It is expected that the Pope asks us about the joys and tribulations of our Church. At the same time, as Head of the Church, he will proclaim to us the good news he wishes to impart to us. This meeting confirms and strengthens the ties that should bind the bishops and the Pope who together form the 'Apostolic College'.

This meeting also celebrates the bond of the people of God in our country and the Pope, who as the Bishop of Rome is the Vicar of Christ and the successor of Peter. If our bond with the Pope slackens or breaks we do not remain in full communion with the one Church of Christ! Therefore during this visit, we Bishops renew both our personal obedience and the obedience of the local church to the Pope and the Magisterium of the Universal Church. I feel that in the present circumstances this *ad limina* visit is providential.

During these days in Rome we will make a pilgrimage on the tombs of Saints Peter and Paul to commemorate and express the same faith they had for Christ, which faith is so precious to us that like them we are not afraid to give witness even at the cost of martyrdom. We will be having several meetings with the dicasteries of the Holy See. Each and every one of these departments acts in the name of the Pope. They have various responsibilities such as the doctrine of the faith, the sacraments, the clergy, the religious, immigration, evangelisation and others. During these meetings we will discuss the report that each diocese has drawn up about the pastoral work carried out in the last years.

I want to assure you that in each of these moments you will all be in my mind. I ask you to pray for me and my brother Bishops so that by the assistance of the Holy Spirit this experience is a moment of grace for us all.

I pray for the fulness of gifts of the Holy Spirit on you and on the Church in our country.

Given from the Episcopal Curia, Victoria Gozo, today Saturday 26 May 2012, the eve of the Solemnity of Pentecost.

Mgr. Saviour Debrincat
Chancellor

+ Mario Grech
Bishop of Gozo