

## I arrived in Malta on April 5, 1973 to pioneer the Unification Church of Malta

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April 5, 1973



*Photo date and location unknown*

I arrived in Malta on 5th April, 1973. The five weeks before I had spent in Scotland with a girls' witnessing team. As this drew to an end I became restless, excited and expectant. When Dennis and Doris Orme told me of my new mission to mother a nation, Malta, I felt very happy but also apprehensive. Could I do it?

I had been told that Malta was always warm and sunny, but as I walked from the plane the old breeze howled around me. I was later told that Malta had experienced her worst winter in over ninety years. The streets were narrow, the landscape rocky, and the cream stone houses sturdy. The countryside was covered in red and yellow flowers which waved a welcome. Father was happy!

Malta is a European nation, but her position in the middle of the Mediterranean and her history with its strong Arab heritage have molded her into a country where north, south, east and west meet. The Maltese language is Semitic and this together with the architectural styles which are somewhat eastern are a strong reminder of the 200 years between 870 to 1091 when Malta was ruled by the Arabs. Because of her strategic and vulnerable position this tiny island of under half a million people has changed hands many times as she has always been coveted by the surrounding larger nations. One hundred and fifty years ago to escape French rule the Maltese invited the British to rule and remained a colony under Britain until she gained independence in 1964. English is commonly spoken, especially in the only two towns Valletta and Sliema. The people easily slip from English to their native Maltese and back again.

Malta is very beautiful and I often liken it to a jewel set in the midst of the blue sea. The sun shines hot

and bright and as beautiful as this sounds it is indemnity to be out in the middle of the day. Businesses close and most people have a siesta from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. The Maltese are helpful, warm, and beautiful with golden brown skins and dark hair. I was surprised to find them very formal and conservative. Much more so than English people.

The beauty of Malta is exotic and eastern. The countryside is terraced with stone walls surrounding the small fields. The houses are built with flat tops on which lines of washing dry in the breeze. A large church dominates each village and life centers around it. The religious festivals or 'festas' are the highlight of the year. The capital Valletta was built by the Knights of St. John. It is surrounded by walls and ramparts as a protection against invasion by hostile nations like the Turks in the Middle Ages. The narrow streets of Valletta are lined with small bazaar-like shops which bustle with activity.

Christianity was brought to Malta by St. Paul. The 27th Chapter of Acts relates how St. Paul's ship was wrecked off the coast of Malta. St. Paul healed many sick and his message of Christianity was received by many.

Twice in Malta's history she achieved great fame by her stand in battle against great odds and what seemed like inevitable defeat. The first time was in 1065 when the Great Siege took place. The Turks invaded the island but were defeated by the Knights of St. John with the help of the Maltese people. The second time was during World War II when the Germans bombed Malta relentlessly.

The island endured and fought doggedly on. Because of her steadfastness and bravery she was awarded the George Cross by King George VI. I fervently hope that her third stand would be in battle against Satan resulting in victory for the Father.

All Maltese people are Roman Catholic. The Church is very medieval here and has a very strong grip on the people. Young people here are dominated both by church and parents. Today they are rebelling and struggling to break free. There is not much to occupy or inspire young people here, thus they are very bored and angry at the society which has created their kind of environment. Drug addiction and sexual permissiveness are growing. And many are just seeking a chance to leave Malta.

Man's extremity is God's opportunity so I hope to find some good seeds for Father here.