

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC VISITS THE MAJOR SEMINARY

On Wednesday 13th January 2010, H.E. the President of the Republic, Dr. George Abela paid a visit to the Major Seminary. We invited the President as a part of our reflection as a community on the identity of the diocesan priest. We asked Dr. Abela to share with us his reflections on how he sees the presence of the priest in Maltese society today. It is through this dialogue that we can become more aware of and appreciate our call in today's world.



Dr. Abela was greeted by the Rector Rev. Dr. Jimmy Bonnici and Vice-Rector Msgr Alex Cordina. The meeting with the Seminary Community took place in the Audio-Visual Room of the Seminary. After the National Anthem, the Rector gave a welcoming address to the President. Dr. Abela then addressed the Major Seminary Community speaking about the role of the priest in the Maltese society of today.

Dr. Abela said that we could assign many roles to the priest: confessor, counsellor, psychologist, therapist... but the major mission of the priest transpires fully as that of re-evangelising society. It is, in Pope Benedict's words, being there for others, presenting Christ as hope and life as worth living. It is living with both mind and heart, witnessing the compassion, mercy, understanding and love of Christ. Indeed, through technology and globalisation we have become neighbours but, the President asked, have we become brothers? It is this witness of compassion and fraternity that society today expects from the priest.

After answering some questions, Dr. Abela showed his appreciation for being invited at the Seminary. He admitted that he did not expect such a large number of seminarians today (36) and said that "seeing this good crop that comes from Maltese families, there is certainly no need to experiment in other forms of families!"

The visit was concluded by a reception where the President could meet and speak with various members of the Major Seminary Community.

See gallery, section 2.