

Christmas 2003

Issued: 12th November 2003

Designer: Harry Borg

Unwatermarked Paper

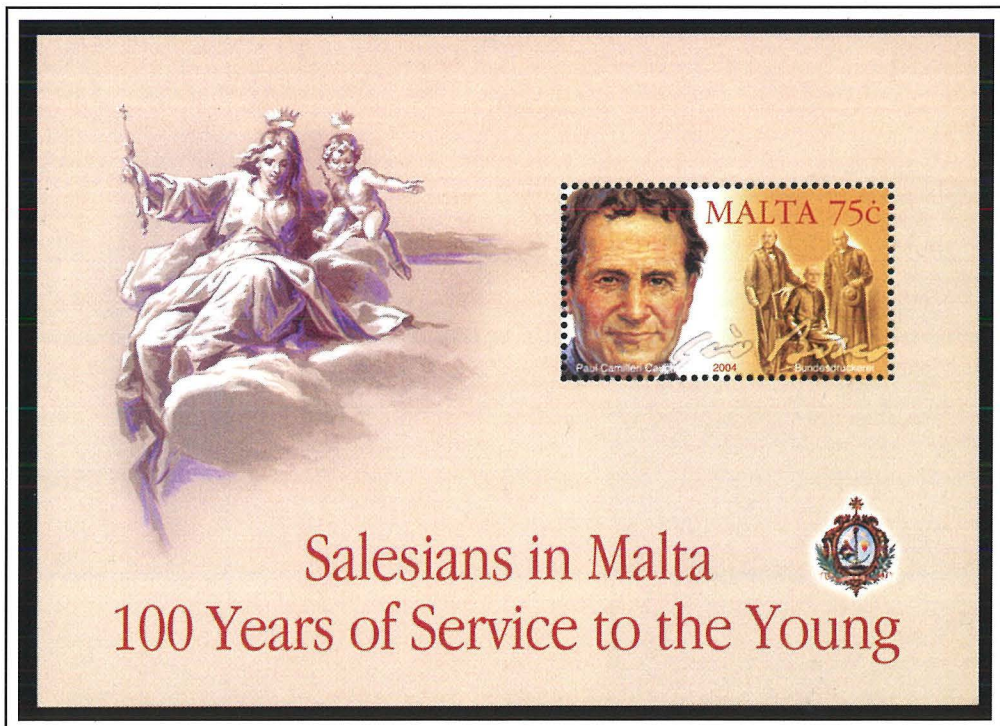


Salesians in Malta

Issued: 7th April 2004

Designer: Paul Camilleri Cauchi

Unwatermarked Paper



Christmas 2003

This year's Christmas set of stamps was issued on 12th. November 2003. Maltapost returned to the traditional religious Christmas stamp with Harry Borg producing a colourful yet artistic set.

Only the two first stamps depict the image of the Holy Mary. The 7c stamp, used on local mail depicts the Annunciation by God's Angel. Mary is seen with lowered head, humbly saying 'YES' to the Lord's command. The 16c value, used for mail to Europe depicts the Holy Family. The Blessed Mother is holding her Child while St. Joseph looks protectively over both of them.

The stamps were printed in Germany by Bundesdruckerei with the Offset process. No watermark was used.

100th Anniversary of the Salesians in Malta

Maltapost plc issued a miniature sheet to commemorate the 100 Anniversary of service to the young by the Salesians of Saint John Bosco in Malta on 7th. April 2004.

Although the image of Our Lady is not depicted on the actual stamp, the well known Gozitan artist Chev. Paul Camilleri Cauchi, included Her on the Miniature sheet. The artist didn't use much colour to do it, but the result is both stunning and majestic. The picture shows Our Lady under the title of Mary Help of the Christians, the Madonna of St. John Bosco, with the Child Christ both riding on clouds and looking down on the world.

The printing of the miniature sheet was done by Bundesdruckerei of Germany and the design was prepared by the equip of the Salesian Press, Malta.



Francesco Zahra,
The Return of the Holy Family from Egypt,
Main Altar Piece, Santa Marija Chapel, Comino.

Wayside Chapels

Maltapost plc. issued a set of stamps showing five of the numerous Wayside Chapels found in the Maltese islands. The set was issued on 16th. June 2004 and was ably designed by Rene' Sacco and printed by Bundesdruckerei of Germany on unwatermarked paper.

The lowest and the highest values depict a rural chapel dedicated to Our Lady. The 3c value shows the *Il-Lunzjata* Chapel found at Hal-Millieri limits of Zurrieq Malta. The 66c value depicts an artistic image of the chapel found on the island of Comino. No fixed date is recorded regarding the building of this chapel. We only know for sure that it existed before 1667, because in that year it was closed down by order of Bishop Bueno. It was later opened for public worship in 1716. From the outside this chapel gives the impression that it is flat, but on the inside the roof tapers to a point. The main altarpiece is a beautiful work of art of the Maltese artist Zahra. It represents The Return of the Holy Family from their flight into Egypt, although it is popularly known as Santa Marija of Comino.

Today the chapel falls under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Gozo and forms part of the parish of Ghajnsielem. Rev. Fr. Karm Xerri is its rector who takes care of the spiritual and temporal needs of the residents of this small island in particular and of the workers and visitors in general.

Maltese Festivals

On 15th. September 2004, Maltapost plc issued a set of stamps commemorating Maltese Festivals. Although no stamp depicts the image of our Lady, one of the festivals commemorated is a very popular Marian festival held each year on the first Sunday in Lent. This is '*Hadd in-Nies*', meaning People's Sunday. On this occasion thousands of Maltese take part in a pilgrimage at Zabbar. It is a penitentiary manifestation to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Graces in reparation for offences committed against God and Our Lady during Carnival.

The stamp with the value of 27c, shows a painting by Italo Horatio Serge about this event. The stamps were designed by Francis X. Ancilleri and the printing by the offset process was done by Printx Ltd of Malta. The stamps were watermarked with Maltese crosses.

Works of Art

One of the five stamps in this set depicts the old church of Saint Mary in Attard Malta. The building of this almost intact church begun around 1615. The interior of the church is in harmonious proportions and its facade is richly carved. In 1700 the choir was enlarged while the belfry was erected in 1718.

Joseph Casha was the designer of this set of stamps, while Printex of Malta did the printing using the Offset process. The stamps are watermarked with Maltese Crosses.

Anthony Grech

References

The Malta Stamp, Official Bulletin of the Philatelic Bureau.

Wayside Chapels

Issued: 16th June 2004

Designer: René Sacco

Unwatermarked Paper



Maltese Festivals

Issued: 15th September 2004

Designer: Francis L. Ancilleri

Watermark 7



Works of Art

Issued: 13th October 2004

Designer: Joseph Casha

Watermark 7



Painting by Amadeo Brogli, Loreto Sanctuary, Italy