



**The Raoul Follereau Foundation (Malta) - The Order of Charity**  
**is a registered NGO [No. VO/0980]**  
**administered by the**  
**Grand Priory of the Maltese Islands**  
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**Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem**

September 2018

RAOUL FOLLEREAU FOUNDATION (MALTA): NGO NO. VO/0980

# Order of Charity Newsletter

## EDITORJAL

Kalaupapa, fil-gżira ta' Molokai, hija l-kolonja tal-lebbruzi fejn 8,000 ruħ ġew eżiljati fi żmien seklu. Sitta minn dawn il-pazjenti ta' età ta' bejn 73 u 92 sena, għadhom jgħixu hemm. Meta jmutu huma, tkun spicċat l-istorja kerha ta' din il-gżira.

Kien fil-bidu tas-snin 1800, meta fil-Hawaii bdew jaslu vapuri merkantili barranin b'nies morda fuqhom. Il-mard venerju qatel 10,000 ruħ f'għoxrin sena filwaqt li mietu ħamest elef oħra bit-tifu. Fl-1853, 15,000 mietu bil-ġidri u għaxar snin wara, tfaċċat marda ġdida li t-tobba sejfuhla l-

“lebbra ġenwina tal-Orjent.”

Il-gvern iddeċieda li jeżercita l-kwarantina biex iwaqqaf din il-marda li dak iż-żmien kienet meqjusa bħala marda li tittiehed. Eluf ta' pazjenti bil-lebbra ġew eżiljati lejn din il-gżira. Dawn ma ngħataw l-ebda ikel għax kienu mistennija jaħdmu l-art u kienu joqgħodu fi kmamar primittivi bl-ilma razzjonat filwaqt li jaqsmu l-gveret bejniethom.

Il-kolonja kibret għax kien hemm eluf ta' żwigijiet. Il-pazjenti kienu mwarrbin mis-soċjetà minħabba l-biża' li l-marda kienet tittiehed. Kif jitwiieldu t-tfal huma kienu

jigu separati mill-ġenituri u jingħataw għall-addozzjoni. Ħafna minnhom kibru mingħajr ma saru jafu min kienu l-ġenituri tagħhom.

Patri Damjan kien wieħed minn tal-ewwel li wasal fuq il-gżira biex jiehu ħsieb dawn il-pazjenti. Wara sittax-il sena ta' ħidma kontinwa huwa miet ukoll bl-istess marda. Ħalla warajh biex tiehu ħsieb il-lebbruzi lil Sister Marianna Cope, li dan l-aħħar giet dikjarata

qaddisa bħalu u llum il-gżira saret post ta' pellegrinaġġ.

Kien l-itwal u l-aġħar eżilju mediku fl-istorja tal-Istati Uniti tal-Amerka. Din il-gżira izolata



llum hija mimlija ċimiterji għall-eluf li mietu hemm.

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In view of the requisites of the Data Protection Act, anybody who wishes to be excluded from the mailing can send a note or e-mail to that affect (rforderofcharity@gmail.com)

Fl-1980, Kalaupapa saret park storiku nazzjonali li ma jistgħux iżuruh aktar minn mitt ruħ kuljum. Il-vizitaturi jaslu hemm bil-baħar jew b'ajruplani li jesgħu biss disa' persuni. Hekk kif imutu l-aħħar pazjenti, il-gvern irid jara x'ha jagħmel b'din il-gżira fejn la hemm knejjes, la skejjel u lanqas ħwienet. Fl-2009, il-President Obama ffirmat leġislazzjoni biex jinbena monument bl-

ismijiet ta' kull min intbagħat fil-gżira.

"L-agħar haġa meta jkollok il-marda tal-lebbra hija li anke wara li tfieq, is-soċjetà tħares lejך bħala marida," qalet waħda mill-pazjenti fl-2003. "In-nies ma jafux kemm iweggħgħuna meta jibqgħu jħarsu lejna b'dak il-mod."

Xi wħud mill-aħħar pazjenti ta' Kalaupapa jridu li l-kolonja

tinfetaħ għall-pubbliku ħalli kulhadd isir jaf kif kienu jgħixu qabel imutu l-ftit li fadal. "Ejjew issa li għadna ħajjin, mhux wara li mmutu lkoll," qal wieħed minnhom ta' 74 sena u li għex fil-gżira mill-1959. "Qabel kienu jistħu jkellmuna iżda issa kulhadd irid jinvolvi ruħu."

**CHEV. TONY C. CUTAJAR**

## Rachna's dream

Rachna lives in Bihar, one of the poorest states in India. She first noticed dark spots appearing on her forehead and across her face, and began to lose sensitivity in her hands, meaning she was unable to do basic things. 'Before, I couldn't do basic things like cook, put on clothes or carry heavy things'.

Rachna struggled to get a diagnosis and only after she became severely ill was she diagnosed with leprosy. She endured lengthy treatment of multi-drug therapy before final-

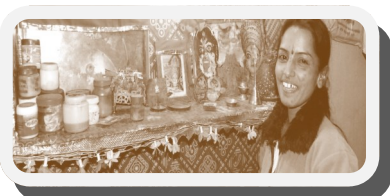
ly being cured.

Now she supports other people affected by leprosy and other diseases, encouraging them to seek diagnosis and helping them care for their disabilities. 'Because of Lepra's support I feel completely better. They gave me counselling, treatment and health assistance. They arranged for me to have eye surgery in both of my eyes'. But there is still stigma surrounding leprosy in Rachna's community. Those who are affected by the disease are often made to feel ashamed and no one wants to be near them. 'I didn't want to tell anyone about the disease after knowing that my own family felt differently towards me. My

parents didn't tell anyone in the community because they were afraid that everyone would hate me.' Rachna's experience has inspired her to help provide relief to those in the same situation and dispel the myths surrounding leprosy.

' My dream is for India and the world to be free from leprosy. Why should they be kept away from society? This is like any other disease and they have a right to dignity and respect.'

Rachna became a community ambassador and is now a full time Lepra employee helping other affected by leprosy. She leads health education



<https://www.lepra.org.uk/rachna>

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camps, teaches self-care and works closely with the local leprosy colony, helping to prevent disability.

In 2015 Rachna joined the ILEP advisory board giving a voice to those affected by the disease and helping to influence ILEP's activities.

## Boby's Story

'My name is Boby and I read in class four. My father works in the fisheries and supports our family of five members. I have one elder sister and a younger brother. We are living in Senpara village of Bogra Sadar. One day my mother noticed a few white spots on my face, but we were not bothered much as it was not irritating me in any way because I had no sensation there.

After a few days, a group education session organised by Lepra took place in front of our house. Like others, my mother also attended the session and came to know that any patch with loss of sensation could be an early sign of leprosy and that it may develop into a disability if leprosy remained untreated.

Soon my mother took me to see Lepra staff. They examined me with care and advised me to report to a nearby Upazila Health Complex. The next day I went and they diagnosed me with leprosy. Me and my family were very upset at hearing the bad news. We thought we would have to be isolated from the society and I would never be able to attend school. But Lepra staff counseled us

Leprosy carries a lot of stigma – including self-stigma. Everyone should be aware of the disease, and the fact that if you take the treatment you can get cured. 'If you take the treatment you are the same as other people, you can have a normal life – so there is no need to discriminate. This support has changed my life; I am happy and I love my job.'

and told me that the disease is in its early stages and if I can complete full treatment, I will be absolutely free from leprosy. We came back home with medicine which was completely free of cost. Now I am taking medicine regularly with continuous follow up from the health staff. I can go to school. I am very happy that I was diagnosed early and will not be affected by disability.'



## Armadillos are making Brazil's leprosy problem worse -June 28, 2018

Brazil is the one country where leprosy rates are higher than one case per 10,000 people. Tens of thousands of cases are reported annually there, and these figures likely understate the actual prevalence of the disease. That's because most people in Brazil who wind up with these infections live in rural areas, where access to healthcare is limited. Plus, it can take years for *Mycobacterium leprae*, the bacteria that causes the illness, to reach a state where a person experiences symptoms. In other words, most people are unaware they've contracted the bacteria, and even if they did, they may not be able to seek treatment.

Leprosy can be transmitted from person to person through tiny water droplets in the air, and typically spreads among people who live in close contact with one another for long periods of time, like families. Typically, though, it takes years of living with someone with an infection for anyone to contract the disease in this way. A much quicker way to contract *M. leprae* is by having an appetite for armadillo. **"Armadillos are kind of a delicacy—think about it like lobster."**

A study published today (June 28) in the journal PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases estimates

that over 60% of the armadillos scurrying around Brazilian forests carry *M. leprae* and frequently transmit it to the people living there, who eat it as a source of protein. "Armadillos are kind of a delicacy—think about it like lobster," says John Spencer, an immunologist who has researched leprosy for years at Colorado State University and led the study.

They're also ideal hosts for *M. leprae*. These bacteria thrive at a specific temperature—34°C (93°F)—which happens to be the internal core body temperature of armadillos. *M. leprae* invades the cells in armadillos' bodies, and uses them as a place to feed and replicate. The bacteria don't produce toxins, so the armadillo doesn't get sick right away (nor would any other host). Instead, the bacteria reproduce and reproduce; after about a year, the sheer number of *M. leprae* cells kill the creature.

Humans aren't the best host for *M. leprae*, since our core body temperature is higher, at 37°C (98°F). Still, the bacteria can survive in our skin cells, which are cooler, and in our nerve cells, because *M. leprae*, for still-unknown reasons, has a unique ability to bind to nerve cells. It takes longer for copies to replicate in these conditions, which is why it can take years to develop symptoms,

like the telltale skin lesions, or pain or loss of sensation in the fingers, toes, or joints.

Spencer and his team traveled to a small village in Pará, Brazil (a large state in the northeast part of the country) and analyzed blood samples of the 146 people living there to see if anyone was infected with *M. leprae*. They also asked the villagers about their contact with armadillos, and took blood samples from 16 different armadillos that had been caught by the villagers for food.

The team found that most of the armadillos were infected with *M. leprae*, as were 65% of people who reported eating the animal more than once a month. (They gave free treatment to anyone found to have the infection.) Hunting armadillos also appeared to be a risk factor for carrying the disease, likely



because hunters are exposed to armadillo blood, Spencer says.

Cooking armadillo meat kills off any *M. leprae* bacteria, but in this part of Brazil, many like to eat the animal's liver—one of the main sites of the bacteria—raw as part of a ceviche dish. Spencer's team also found that some families would catch armadillos live and keep them in their homes to fatten them up before eating, which would also increase the likelihood of transmission between

them.

Spencer estimates in some isolated, rural regions of Brazil, as many as 4% of people may have infections with *M. leprae*. That translates to about 400 cases per 10,000 people, much higher than the current statistics. "We're trying to impress on the Brazil government that they need more resources to combat this problem," Spencer says.

The Brazilian government has already made it illegal to hunt armadillos for food, but the people living in some of these remote regions rely on the animals for protein. "It's a social, cultural thing—they've been doing this for generations. They like to eat armadillo, and it won't change their behavior," Spencer says.

A more effective approach would be focusing on reaching out to these communities proactively to ensure everyone is properly treated. Hansen's disease can be cured with antibiotics, and, if caught early, doesn't leave any permanent damage. Plus, actually visiting these communities would give public health workers a chance to remind people that if they are going to eat armadillo, they should cook it thoroughly.

## MALTA (MENTAL ASYLUM AND LEPER HOSPITAL) HC Deb 14 April 1943 vol 388 cc1231-2W 1231W

**Hyacinth Bernard Wenceslaus Morgan (11 September 1885 – 7 May 1956)** was a Labour Party politician in the United Kingdom. He was a Member of Parliament (MP) from 1929 to 1931, and 1940 to 1955. He was born, of Irish descent, in Grenada, West Indies and came to the United Kingdom to study medicine at Glasgow University in 1904. While at University he was active in the Fabian Society and founded the students' Irish Nationalist Club. After qualifying, he worked in a number of Glasgow mental hospitals and then served as a doctor in France during World War I, and then entered general practice in London, initially at Greenwich, later Camberwell and finally at Paddington.



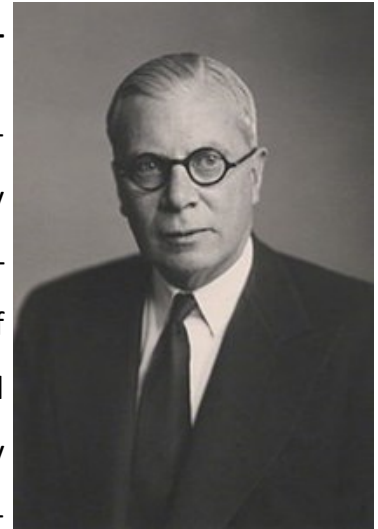
**Dr. Morgan** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that in the island of Gozo, in the Crown Colony of Malta, the mental hospital, asylum, and the leper colony are in the same enclosure of an old walled building, inadequately separated by a wall and that one medical officer in charge acts as medi-

cal superintendent of both institutions; whether he will improve these arrangements; and what recent improvements have taken place in the dietaries of these places?

**Oliver Frederick George Stanley, MC (4 May 1896 – 10 December 1950)** was a prominent British Conservative politician who held many ministerial posts before his relatively early death. Stanley was the second son of Edward Stanley, 17th Earl of Derby, by his wife Lady Alice, daughter of William Montagu, 7th Duke of Manchester. Edward Stanley, Lord Stanley was his elder brother. He was educated at Eton, but did not proceed to the University of Oxford due to the outbreak of World War I. During the First World War, Stanley was commissioned into the Lancashire Hussars, before transferring to the Royal Field Artillery in 1915. He achieved the rank of captain, and won both the Military Cross and the Croix de Guerre.

## Hon. Oliver Stanley 1942 – 1945 (Secretary of State for the Colonies)

The mental asylum and the leper hospital are within the same enclosing wall but are in separate buildings adequately separated by open grounds and an inner wall. Each institution is entirely self-contained. One resident medical superintendent is in charge of both institutions but the asylum is visited regularly by the medical superintendent of the mental hospital, Malta, and the leper colony is similarly visited by the leprosy control officer. The present arrangements are reported to be satisfactory. Since November, 1942, the dietary has been increased and improved in relation to increases and improvements which I am very glad to say it has been possible to make in the dietary of the general population following a very material improvement in the supply position.



## Il-bank tiegħek fil-qalb tal-komunità

L-HSBC huwa l-bank li jinsab fil-qalba tal-komunità tiegħek. B'għarfien internazzjonali u esperjenza lokali, aħna nistgħu nghinuk tiegħu hsieb aħjar il-finanzi tiegħek. Il-fergħat tagħna huma miftuħin kuljum f'diversi lokalitajiet madwar Malta u Għawdex, b'xi whud mill-fergħat joffru wkoll servizz ta' filgħaxija.

Għalhekk ejja żurna u flimkien niddiskutu l-bżonnijiet bankarji tiegħek. L-impjegati tagħna, kollha mharrġa fil-*customer service* u mmexxija minn *branch manager* b'esperjenza kbira fil-qasam bankarju jinsabu herqana biex ikunu ta' servizz għalik.

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Nirnexxu flimkien

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[http://stlazarusmalta.org/aff\\_0oC.html](http://stlazarusmalta.org/aff_0oC.html)

The Raoul Follereau Foundation [Malta] - Order of Charity is a non-profit organisation set up in Malta in 1967 with the goal of collecting monetary support for the assistance of lepers throughout the World. It forms part of the international Raoul Follereau Foundation established in 1946 by the world famous anthropologist who died in 1977. The main aims of the Foundation are:

- to encourage social help to those suffering from leprosy;
- to ascertain that these people are treated as they should;
- to help lepers find their place in society;
- to give financial help to leprosaria and missions working with them.

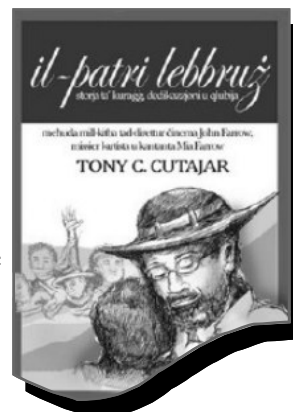


Raoul Follereau

*Help us help fight the scourge of leprosy*

## Kif tista int tghin ix-xoghol tal-Ordni tal-Karità

- Billi issir membru tal-għaqda—dan jiswa biss is-somma ta' €10 fis-sena. Li tkun membru jfisser li tircevi in-newsletter regolari b'mogħod elektroniku jew pubblikata.
- Billi tagħti donazzjoni b'kull ammont li tixtieq int. Sintendi kull donazzjoni tigi rikonnexuta b'rcevuta
- Billi tixtri il-ktieb *Il-Patri Lebbroz* li jipprezenta storja ta' kuraġġ, dedikazzjoni u qlubija tal-qaddis li gie ddikjarat il-patron tal-presuni morda bil-lebbra. Il-Patri Lebbroz Damjan ta' Molokai kien mar jaħdem f'kolonja tal-lebbrozi abbandunati minn kulhadd. Għalihom kien sacerdot, tabib, bennej, mexxej, habib, missier. Fi ftit kliem kien l-għajn tas-salvazzjoni u t-tama tagħhom. Jum fost l-oħrajn, beda l-omelija tiegħu bil-kliem: "Għez iez ħuti lebbrozi..." biex hekk qasam mal-kompatrijotti tiegħu fuq il-Ġz ira ta' Molokaj, l-aħbar li hu wkoll kien ittieħed mill-marda. Miet ta' 49 sena. Huwa u gie ddikjarat qaddis sitt snin ilu mill-Papa Benedittu XVI. Il-Ktieb jinbiegħ €6.50 biss inkluss il-posta. Ibghat cekk ta' €6.50 pagabbli lill-Ordni tal-Karita.



## Offerta mill-qalb

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