

## News

# Remains of Maltese mystic to be transferred from cemetery to Vittoriosa church

The remains of Francesca Tereza Parlar, a Maltese mystic and a Dominican Tertiary, will be transferred from the Addolorata Cemetery to the Dominican Church of the Annunciation of Vittoriosa, on 13 February 2021.

Francesca Tereza Parlar was born in Valletta on 24 November 1842, and baptised in the Dominican Basilica of Our Lady of Safe Haven and of St Dominic of Valletta, a statement issued by the Dominican Convent said. From an early age she manifested an ardent desire to receive the Eucharist. Her wish was granted after she fell ill at the tender age of 8 years. Since then, her only food intake was the Eucharist, and she drank solely Holy Water.

On 13th February 1882, Teresa Parlar was enrolled as a Tertiary Dominican in Vittoriosa by the then prior, Fr. Vincent Schembri O.P., amidst numerous mystical raptures and visions. Her fame briskly spread throughout the island, eventually soliciting a visit by then Bishop of Malta Mgr Pietro Pace on 30 January 1891. From 1896-1898, Teresa Parlar endured many hardships, following decisions taken by the Commission established by the Church to study her case.

She was sent to Ta' Saura Hospital in Rabat, and later to Imgieret, where she ended up serving the lepers. Parlar is said to have lived these trials with great humility and charity, and indeed, there was no evidence to corroborate deceit in her extraordinary religious experiences, the statement said. In 1901 she returned to her home in Triq il-Ponta in Senglea, where she had lived since her family had returned from Constantinople many years earlier.

She had once prophesied that her abode in Senglea will be demolished and never rebuilt. Today, where once stood Parlar's humble household (destroyed during World War II), stands a lonely palm tree in an unusual open space in the heart of Senglea. On 12 August 1927, Teresa Parlar breathed her last, leaving behind an undying fame of sainthood. She was interred in a separate grave reserved for her in the middle of the Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows, owned by the Dominicans of Vittoriosa in the Addolorata Cemetery.

On 13 February 2021, the 139th Anniversary of her enrollment as a Tertiary Dominican, in this Jubilee Year for the Dominicans, the remains of



Francesca Teresa Parlar will be exhumed privately.

At 9:30am the remains will arrive at the Basilica of Our Lady of Victories in her hometown Senglea. There a mass will be said by Archpriest Kan. Robin Camilleri, at 10:00am.

At midday the remains will then be taken to the Dominican Priory of the Annunciation in Vittoriosa, where they will lay in repose in the Oratory of Our Lady of the Rosary. At 6pm, the remains will be carried to the adjacent Dominican Church of the Annunciation, where a solemn mass will be presided over by the Prior Rev. Fr. Aaron Zahra O.P., joined by the Canons

of the Collegiate Basilica of Our Lady of Victories of Senglea, and the Dominican Friars of the Basilica of Our Lady of Safe Haven and of St Dominic of Valletta.

The remains will then be interred in the grounds of the Dominican Church in the Chapel of St Catherine of Siena, which is the patron saint of Tertiary (Lay) Dominicans.

The general public is invited to attend these events, while ensuring that all the directives issued by the Health Department against the spread of Coronavirus are observed. The wearing of masks, and safe-distance keeping are mandatory.