

5th August 2018

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**FIRST MESSAGE BY THE AUXILIARY BISHOP JOSEPH GALEA-CURMI
AT THE CONCLUSION OF HIS EPISCOPAL ORDINATION**

We have given our heartfelt thanks to God during the celebration of this Mass. To him all glory and praise.

I would also like to thank you, beloved Archbishop of Malta, for this Ordination and for your pastoral ministry that you fulfil with such profound wisdom and boundless love. As your auxiliary, I pray that you will always find in me the help that you need.

I thank you, dear Archbishop Emeritus Paul Cremona O.P. and Bishop Mario Grech, co-ordaining bishops, and Bishop Paul Darmanin O.F.M. Cap., for always seeing in you the beautiful witness that has benefited me greatly. I must also mention Archbishop Joseph Mercieca, of eternal memory, who I remember with much gratitude.

I thank you, dear Archbishop Alessandro D’Errico, Apostolic Nuncio to Malta, for your attendance here today and for your ministry here in Malta. May I convey through you, my special thanks to Pope Francis, our beloved Holy Father.

I thank the civil authorities; I appreciate your presence here today.

Heartfelt thanks go to my beautiful family that is so dear to me, together with all my relatives. I remember in a special way, my mother and father who nourished me with so much love and care. I believe that especially today, they are of great help and support to me from above.

I thank all the priests who are here today and also those who could not be attendance. I received a great deal of support from many priests but today I would like to mention just one who only few weeks ago was called to our Father’s house—Fr Arthur Vella SJ—I will be forever grateful for his spiritual direction for many years.

I thank you all, dear friends, each and every one of you; special thanks go to the parish communities of Birkirkara (St Joseph the Worker) and of Ħal Balzan.

Heartfelt thanks go to those who have worked tirelessly in the organisation of this celebration. I greatly appreciate your help.

My short message can be found in the motto I have chosen: *Vitam alere caritate*, cherishing life with love. Human life is precious because it is a gift of God given to us for safekeeping and protection. Therefore, we cherish it from the very beginning of conception, when it is already human life, until the end of its natural life. But we should also cherish life at every stage, we should cherish everyone's life, even of those who are wrestling with life in the middle of the vast sea, or those who are going through suffering alone, or those who are in despair.

We will cherish life by sustaining it with love in the ordinariness of life: with our words, with the attention we give to each other, in our service as proclaimed in today's Gospel. It is the heart, full of love, that it open for everyone, that helps us to give good counsel and to have an attitude of encouragement, of compassion, of forgiveness while at the same time working against all that brings about division, hatred, and suffering. My wish is that this spirit of love will always guide me in my mission as bishop, and helps me to be a joyful servant imbued with serenity until the end.

My prayer is this: O Lord, united with you, may I always do everything for your glory, with your spirit, and for the good of others just how you taught us.

And like Pope Francis likes to tell us, do not forget to pray for me.

✠ **Joseph Galea-Curmi**
Auxiliary Bishop of Malta