



## Wirt Ghawdex

(founded 1981)

VO/0227

### Press Release

#### A niche is restored



The Kerċem Local Council together with Wirt Ghawdex representatives and the Hon. Giovanna Debono, Minister for Gozo, and the Hon. Dr Chris Said, Minister of Justice, Dialogue and the Family, formally inaugurated the works carried out on the niche of our Lady of Mount Carmel in Kerċem, Gozo. This event took place as part of the celebrations of Jum Kerċem 2013.

As part of its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, Wirt Ghawdex wanted to contribute in the preservation of some part of the heritage in a local community. It was decided that, in conjunction with the Kerċem Local Council, the much needed maintenance work on the statue of the Madonna Tal-Karmnu (Our Lady of Mount Carmel) located at St. George's Fief, limits of Santa Luċija, and its immediate surrounding area, would be undertaken. Wirt Ghawdex took up the cleaning and minor repairs of the niche and pedestal, and the professional restoration of the statue which was carried out by restorer James Licari. The Kerċem Local Council rehabilitated and enhanced the surrounding area with rubble walls, greenery, a replica of a water fountain which used to stand nearby, and by putting up a brief history of the niche.

#### History

The statue of the Madonna tal-Karmnu shows the Blessed Mary holding baby Jesus on her right arm. Both Madonna and baby Jesus hold a scapular, towards which there still exists a great devotion locally. Originally, the statue stood by itself on a stone pedestal. The elements had their toll on the statue until, about a hundred years ago, a niche enclosing the statue – thus preserving it from more damage – was built on top of the pedestal.

It is said that the statue was commissioned as a sign of thanks from the local community for the deliverance from plague.

#### Inscriptions

The two Latin inscriptions on the pedestal render the following meanings: *'His Excellency Archbishop Francesco Saverio Caruana, on 20 August 1837, decreed that 40 days indulgence would be conferred on whoever recites the Salve Regina in front of this statue.'* And *'Celest Cassar has erected a niche for this statue of the Madonna tal-Karmnu and has always maintained and kept it lit, all at his own expense.'*

Joe Zammit Ciantar  
PRO, Wirt Ghawdex



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## Taghrifa għall-Istampa

### Niċċa restawrata

Il-Kunsill Lokali ta' Kechem flimkien ma' rappreżentanti ta' Wirt Ghawdex, l-On. Giovanna Debono, Ministru għal Ghawdex, u l-On. Dr Chris Said, Ministru għall-Ġustizzja, Djalogu, u l-Familja, inawguraw uffiċjalment t ix-xogħol ta' tindif u restawr li sar fuq in-niċċa tal-Madonna tal-Karmnu, f'ta' Kechem, Ghawdex. Din l-attività saret bħala parti miċ-ċelebrazzjonijiet ta' Jum Kerċem 2013.

Bħala parti miċ-ċelebrazzjonijiet tat-30 anniversarju, Wirt Ghawdex riedu

jikkontribwixxu fl-ippreservar ta' wirt storiku f'xi komunità, hawdex. Gie deċiż li, flimkien mal-Kunsill Lokali ta' Kechem, jagħtu sehem fit-tindif u r-restawr tant meħtieġ tan-niċċa tal-Madonna tal-Karmnu li tinsab f'Ċnus ta' San Ġorġ, limiti ta' Santa Luċija. Wirt Ghawdex ha ħsieb it-tindif u tiswijiet zgħar fin-niċċa u fil-pedestall, u hallsu għar-restawr tal-istatwa li sar mir-restawratur James Licari. Il-Kunsill Lokali ta' Kechem, min-naħa tiegħu, irreabilitizza u sebbha l-inhawwi ta' madwar b'ħitan tas-sejjieħ, pjanti, replick ta' funtana li darba kien hemm fil-viċin, u b'kitba bl-istorja tan-niċċa fil-qosor.



### Storja

L-istatwa tal-Madonna tal-Karmnu turi lill-Madonna bil-Bambin fuq idha tal-lemin, u żżomm labtu f'idha l-oħra. Il-Bambin ukoll qiegħed iżomm labtu iħor – labtu li lejha għadha ħajja devozzjoni kbira fil-gżejjer Maltin. Oġġinarjament l-istatwa kienet waidha fuq pedestal, imperrċa għall-elementi li hallew il-marki tagħhom fuqha. Kien għalhekk li madwar mitt sena ilu, fuq il-pedestall inbniet niċċa li fiha tqiegħdet għall-kenn l-istatwa.

Jingħad li din l-istatwa giet ikkummissjonata mill-komunità lokali, bħala radd ta' ħajr għall-ħelsien mill-pesta.

### Iskrizzjonijiet

Iż-żewġ iskrizzjonijiet, bil-Latin, li hemm mal-istatwa jgħidu hekk: *'L-Eccellenza Tiegħu l-Arcisqof Francesco Saverio Caruana, b'digriet tal-20 ta' Awwissu 1837, jagħti 40 jum indulgenza lil kull min jirreċita Salve Regina quddiem din l-istatwa' u 'Celest Cassar bena niċċa għal din l-istatwa tal-Madonna tal-Karmnu u ha ħsiebha u jżommha mixgħula kuljum, a spejjeż tiegħu.'*

Joe Zammit Ciantar  
PRO, Wirt Ghawdex