

Graduates reunite for golden anniversary

Claudia Calleja



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Photo: Chris Sant Fournier.**

A number of former university students who are either retired or in the twilight of their careers yesterday returned to the place where their journey began 50 years ago - the Old University's church in Valletta.

One of the golden graduates of the Royal University of Malta - as it was then known - was President Eddie Fenech Adami, who said he still recalls the day he and his peers stood in the same church in Merchants Street for their graduation Mass.

"The feeling now is one of nostalgia... sometimes you have to look twice before you recognise one of them," Dr Fenech Adami said.

The years may have etched wrinkles on the graduates of '58 but the classroom bond between them was evident as, after yesterday's Mass, they enthusiastically reminisced and teased one other.

During the Mass, the dark-suited men and smartly dressed women - who graduated in law, medicine, dentistry, architecture and the arts, among other subjects - sat side by side.

Some of those present yesterday travelled from overseas to seize the rare opportunity to see their old friends. Chief Justice Emeritus Giuseppe Mifsud Bonnici, Judge Albert Camilleri, Judge Ena Cremona and former Labour Health Minister Vincent Moran were among those who attended the event, which was followed by a reception at the President's Palace in Valletta where they could catch up on half a century of life experiences.

The Mass was celebrated by Archbishop Paul Cremona, University Chaplain Michael Bugeja and another four monsignors who had graduated with the congregation.

After the ceremony, event organiser and University Chancellor John Rizzo Naudi handed out mementos, showing the dates 1958 and 2008, to the 57 graduates as well as to relatives representing a further 27 who have passed away.
