

Personalities who lived in Strait Street, Valletta

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In the first part of her feature on Strait Street (The Sunday Times, May 10) Josianne Facchetti mentioned some important people who lived there.

Among them, Bishop Thomas Gargallo at No. 45, Mro Giuseppe Malfeggiani at No. 5, and Blessed Ignatius Falzon at No. 49. Except for Blessed Falzon, neither of the other two is commemorated with a small marble tablet outside the house where they were born.

Mro Malfeggiani (1828-93) was a great musician and composer. Born in Valletta, he studied music under Fr Burlò; he was an army band master and appointed three times to conduct the orchestra at the Royal Opera House, Malta, and twice in Alexandria, Egypt. He was also maestro di cappella at St Lawrence collegiate church in Vittoriosa.

Mgr Thomas Gargallo was Bishop of Malta. He can also be considered the founder of the Collegium Melitense, forerunner of the University of Malta. Students of the Lyceum still wear a badge with Gargallo's coat-of-arms.

Incidentally, Blessed Falzon's right-hand man was the Augustinian Fr Cullen, who lived and died at St Augustine's priory in Valletta.

Other important personalities who lived in the area around Strait Street included the painter Mattia Preti, who lived in St Patrick Street; Bishop G. Pace Forno, Bishop Giovanni Maria Camilleri, Mro Fr Joseph Spiteri Fremond, a great musician, all Augustinians, who lived at St Augustine's priory in Old Bakery Street. Mgr A. Grech Delicata, Bishop of Gozo, also lived and died at 31 Old Bakery Street.

I appeal to the local council to mark these personalities by putting up commemorative tablets outside their residences.

Comments

Philip Lingard (1 week ago)

A big draw for tourists (particularly Americans) must surely be the setting Thomas Pynchon's novel *V* in Strait Street.
