



## Appreciation: Rev. Mgr Moses Debono

**Seminarian Karl Andrew Schembri**

There is much to be said about Rev. Mgr Moses Debono, who passed away at the age of 93. He was born in Mellieħa on May 29, 1928, to Joseph and Mary. Out of 14 children, only eight survived. He was fond of the fact that he was raised in a very simple environment where hard work and sacrifice were an integral part of their daily life. Also, he often used to remark that they were very happy especially because, as a family, they used to dedicate much time to prayer.

I have known Dun Mosè since I was six when I joined the group of altar boys in Mellieħa. Fr Moses often used to share with us some reflections on his priestly vocation. I can still remember him explaining how two uncles of his, both priests, helped him discern his calling to the priesthood.

Dun Mosè had opted not to join the seminary at the age of 18, but instead, went to a tailoring school and eventually worked as a tailor in Mellieħa. It was only after the war, in 1949, when he was 21 years old, that he joined the seminary. He was ordained priest on March 17, 1956, together with my uncle, Rev. Can. Joachim Schembri, from Qormi. Since my uncle passed away when I was still young, it used to be Dun Mosè's joy to recount tales of their experiences while at the seminary together.

Dun Mosè's first assignment as a newly ordained priest was in his hometown parish of Mellieħa where he spent most of his 66 years of priesthood, apart from short periods which he spent as parish priest, first of Manikata, then of Gharghur.

Dun Mosè will be remembered for his sense of dedication to the Mellieħa altar servers, whom he supervised for more than 60 years overall. Indeed, in



1976, he invested in a property in Triq il-Kappillan Magri so as to provide a better venue for their catechesis and meetings.

Dun Mosè also had a great love for music and, indeed, was one of the founders of the Choral and Orchestral Society Maria Bambina in 1947. Apart from being one of its founding members, he was also its spiritual director and supported this society in various ways until he passed away on Sunday, May 1.

On a personal level, I am very grateful to Dun Mosè for his spiritual accompaniment throughout my life. Dun Mosè worked continuously for priestly vocations. Besides being a very good role model, he prayed daily for priestly vocations and always tried to help youths discern their own calling.

It was his joy to share his own experience with others because he always believed that ongoing formation is essential.

He also loved working closely with families since he strongly believed that they are necessary to foster vocations to the priesthood and religious life. I remember that he used to spend hours praying in the church, and now, being at the seminary myself, I will cherish this image of him throughout my life.

Dun Mosè deserves our heartfelt gratitude for his lifelong service to the parish and community of Mellieħa. We pray that his life may be a model to us and that, from heaven, he will continue to pray for more youth to give their lives to serve the people of God.

May his soul rest in eternal peace.

*Note: This article appeared on the Sunday Times of Malta of 8 May 2022.*



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