

16 September 2014 | 1100 hrs | 172/2014

There were 613 priesthood ordinations under the tenure of eight bishops and two apostolic administrators within the Gozo Diocese over the past 150 years.

## Diocese of Gozo: 1864-2014

The Diocese of Gozo was established on 16 September 1864, and the National Statistics Office is marking this 150th anniversary with data on ordinations within the diocese.

Of the 613 ordinations that took place in Gozo since 1864, 28.2 per cent, or 173, were registered in the last fifty years. This is in contrast to 217 ordinations between 1864 and 1913, and a further 223 between 1914 and 1963. A third of all those ordained are still alive, of whom 48 per cent are over 64 years old. The majority of those ordained in the last decade are living abroad.



Gozo's population 150 years ago accounted for 11.5 per cent of the total population; the latest Census puts the share at 7.5 per cent. In absolute terms, Gozo's resident population practically doubled since 1864. During the same period, the population on the mainland has more than trebled.

Data from the episcopal archives show that a third of all those ordained came from Victoria, while a further 29 per cent hailed from Nadur (15 per cent) and Xagħra (14 per cent). Bishop Giovanni-Maria Camilleri, who was responsible for the diocese for 35 years, ordained 169 priests, or 28 per cent of the total. At their ordination, 84 per cent of priests were under 28 years of age ■

### Historical note

On 16 September 1864, Blessed Pope Pius IX established Gozo and Comino as a separate Diocese from Malta through the Papal Bull *Singulari Amore* ("With Remarkable Love"). On 22 September, Michele Francesco Buttigieg was chosen as the first Bishop of Gozo. Since its foundation, the diocese has been governed by eight bishops, including the current one, and two apostolic administrators.

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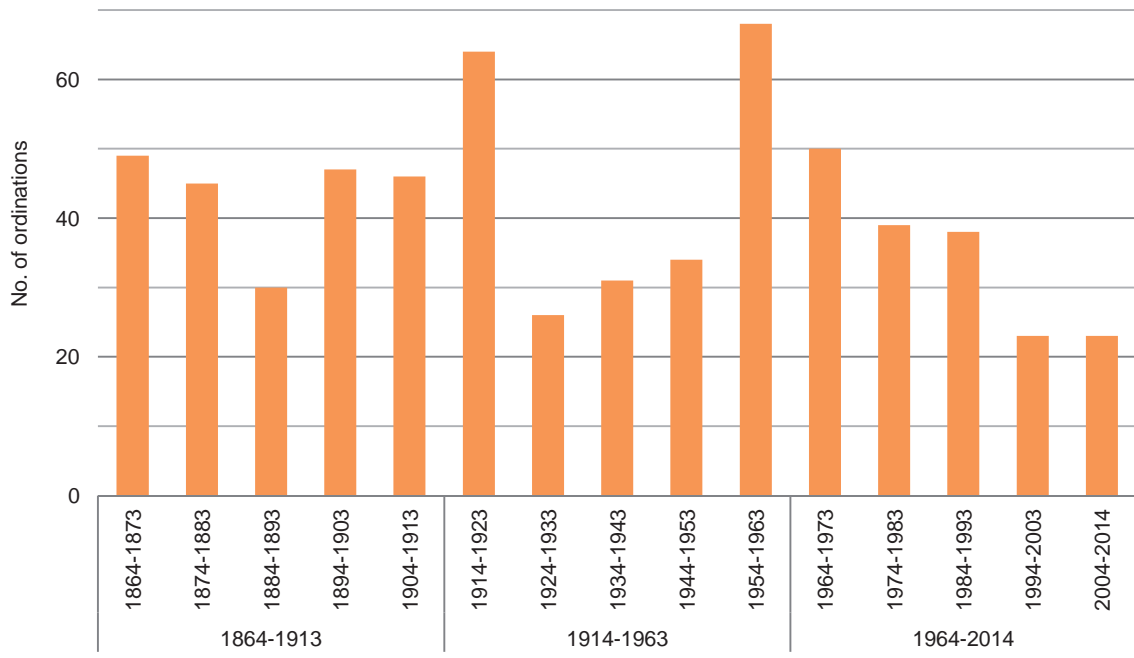
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**Table 1. Distribution of Population by Region: Census Years 1842-2011**

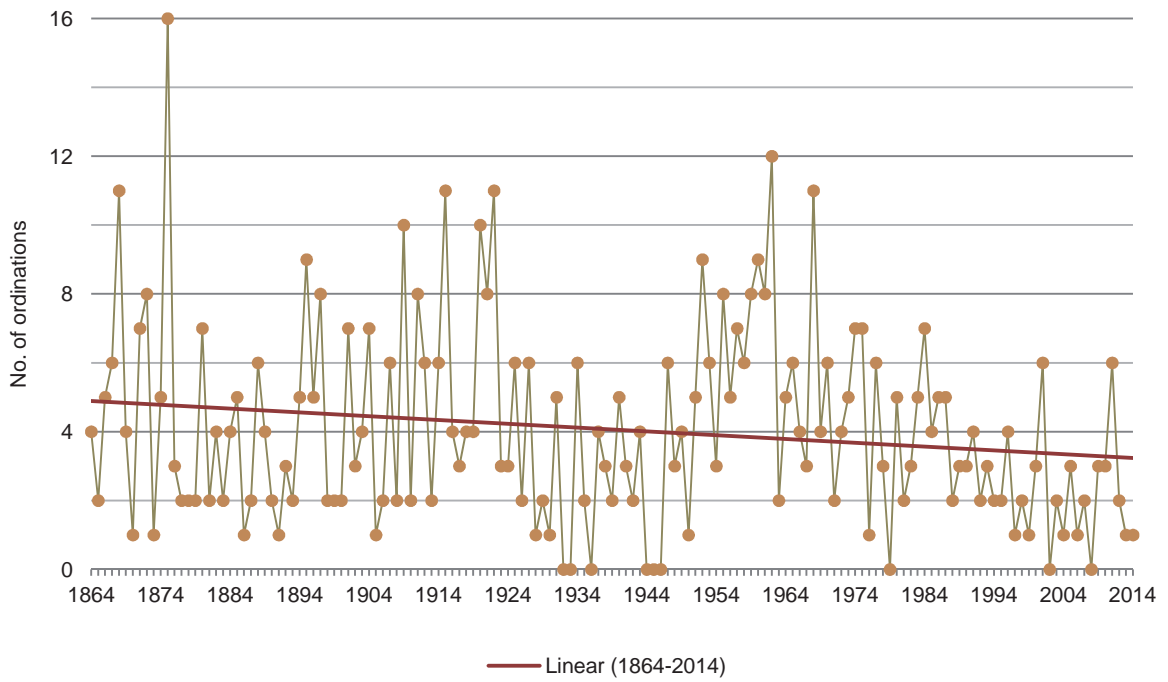
<b>Census Year</b>	<b>Malta</b>	<b>Gozo and Comino</b>	<b>Total</b>
1842	101,513	14,416	115,929
1851	108,833	14,663	123,496
1861	118,596	15,459	134,055
1871	124,384	17,391	141,775
1881	132,129	17,653	149,782
1891	146,484	18,553	165,037
1901	164,952	19,790	184,742
1911	188,869	22,695	211,564
1921	189,697	22,561	212,258
1931	217,784	23,837	241,621
1948	278,311	27,680	305,991
1957	292,019	27,601	319,620
1967	288,238	25,978	314,216
1985	319,736	25,682	345,418
1995	349,106	29,026	378,132
2005	373,955	31,007	404,962
2011	386,057	31,375	417,432

Note: In the majority of cases, Census figures were used. Data relating to 1842 and 1881, however, were corroborated by entries in the Blue Books since the NSO does not have the Census reports for the two years in question.

**Chart 1. Ordinations by 10- and 50-year periods**



**Chart 2. Annual Ordinations: 1864-2014**



**Table 2. Ordinations by Locality and 25-year periods**

<b>Locality</b>	<b>1864-1888</b>	<b>1889-1913</b>	<b>1914-1938</b>	<b>1939-1963</b>	<b>1964-1988</b>	<b>1989-2014</b>	<b>Total</b>
Victoria <sup>(a)</sup>	50	49	31	32	27	12	<b>201</b>
Nadur <sup>(b)</sup>	18	14	9	23	18	10	<b>92</b>
Xagħra	10	11	15	11	19	19	<b>85</b>
Għarb	8	8	6	6	6	4	<b>38</b>
Żebbuġ	8	4	7	7	6	2	<b>34</b>
Xewkija	8	5	4	4	8	4	<b>33</b>
Ta' Sannat	4	4	5	7	9	2	<b>31</b>
Qala	3	2	12	7	4	2	<b>30</b>
Ta' Kerċem <sup>(c)</sup>	-	2	4	5	5	4	<b>20</b>
Fontana <sup>(d)</sup>	-	-	3	9	3	-	<b>15</b>
Għajnsielem	3	2	3	2	1	1	<b>12</b>
San Lawrenz <sup>(e)</sup>	-	4	5	1	1	-	<b>11</b>
Munxar <sup>(f)</sup>	-	-	-	2	3	1	<b>6</b>
Għasri <sup>(g)</sup>	-	-	1	2	2	-	<b>5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>613</b>

(a) Victoria includes both the Cathedral and St George parishes which up to 1955 were one single parish;

(b) Qala formed part of Nadur parish up to 3 February 1872;

(c) Ta' Kerċem formed part of Victoria up to 10 March 1885;

(d) Fontana formed part of Victoria up to 27 March 1911;

(e) San Lawrenz formed part of Għarb parish up to 15 March 1893;

(f) Munxar formed part of Ta' Sannat parish up to 12 December 1957;

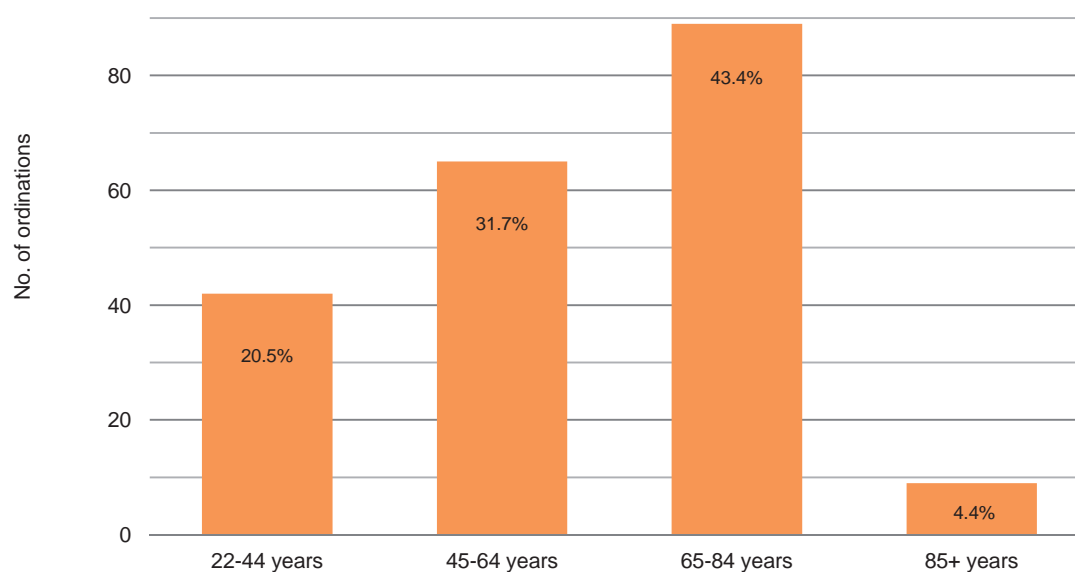
(g) Għasri formed part of Victoria/Żebbuġ/Għarb up to 16 December 1921.

**Table 3. Ordinations under the Tenure of Bishops in Gozo**

Bishop	Tenure	Ordinations
Michele-Francesco Buttigieg	1864-1866	6
Paolo Micallef (Ap. Adm.) *	1866-1867	7
Antonio Grech-Delicata	1868-1876	60
Pietro Pace	1877-1889	39
Giovanni-Maria Camilleri	1889-1924	169
Michael Gonzi	1924-1943	57
Giuseppe Pace *	1944-1972	147
Nikol-Ġużeppi Cauchi	1972-2005	109
Mario Grech	2005-	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>1864-2014</b>	<b>613</b>

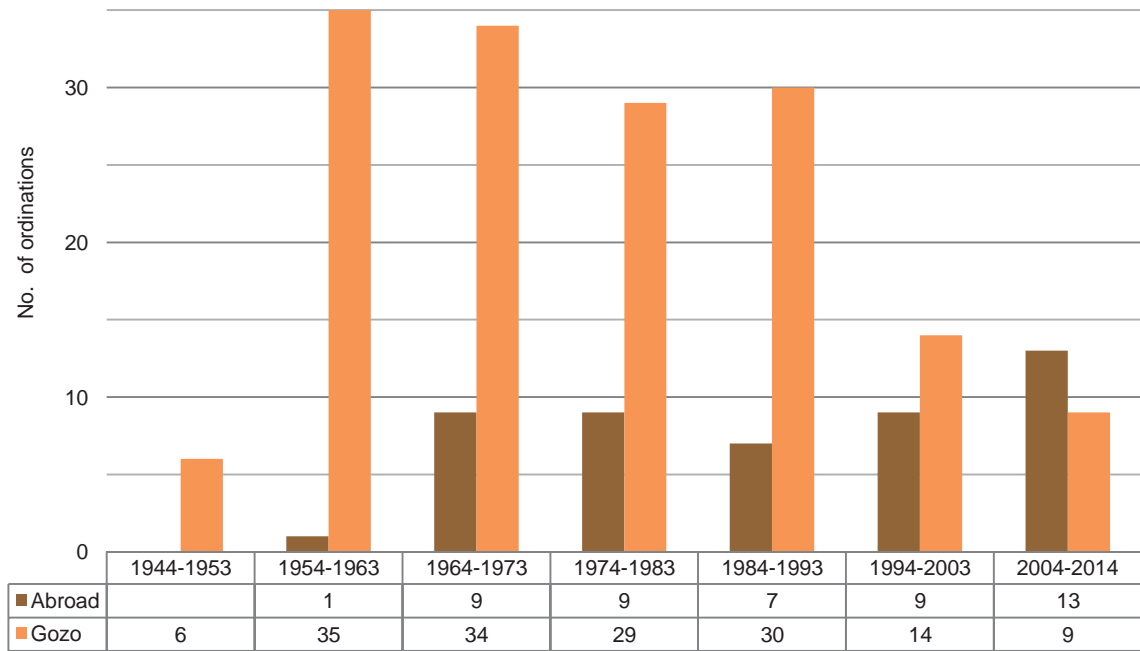
\* In two instances, the Gozo Diocese had an Apostolic Administrator. An Apostolic Administrator in the Roman Catholic Church is a prelate appointed by the Pope to serve as the Ordinary in a diocese that either has no bishop (as in the case of the Ap. Adm. Paolo Micallef [1866-1867]) or has a bishop that is unable to perform duties due to ill-health (as in the case of Ap. Adm. Nikol-Ġużeppi Cauchi [1967-1972]). With regard to the 147 ordinations under the tenure of Giuseppe Pace, 27 were actually ordained by Nikol-Ġużeppi Cauchi during his tenure as Apostolic Administrator.

**Chart 3. Ordained Priests by Age Group\***

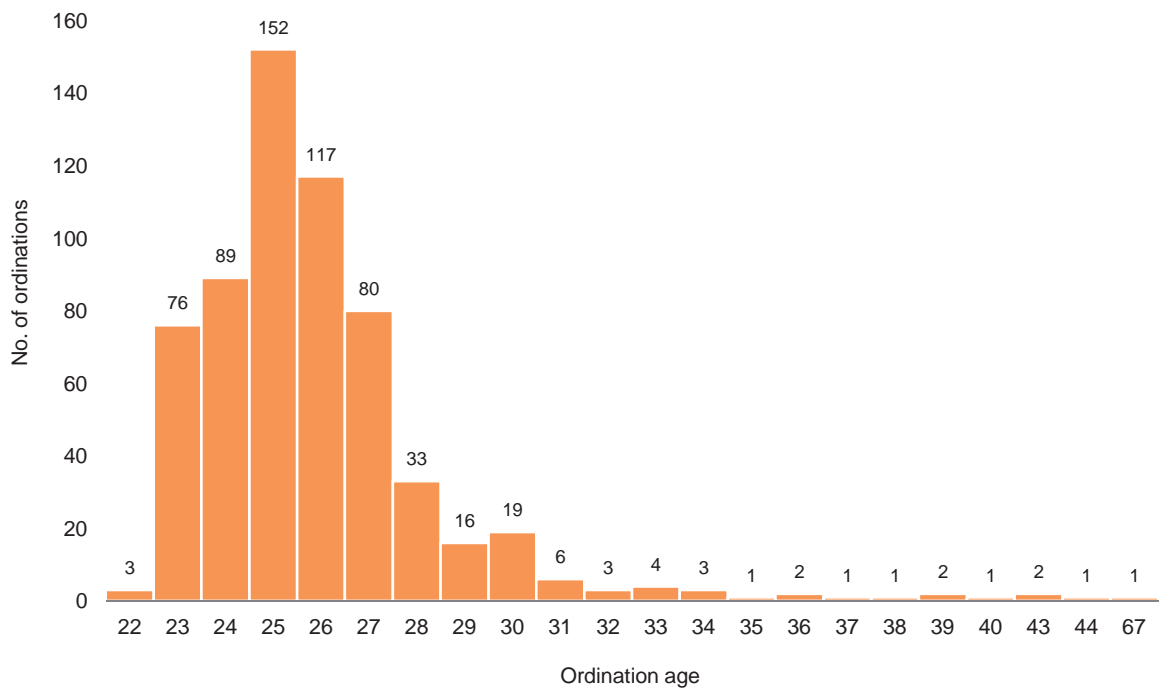


\* Data refer to priests who are still alive.

**Chart 4. Ordained Priests living in Gozo or Abroad**



**Chart 5. Priests by Ordination Age: 1864-2014**



## Notes

1. Illustrations and analysis are based on the number of ordinations during period under review. Figures do not include ordinations of members within religious orders.
2. Basic data are based on three registers at the Episcopal Archives in the section Regesta Ordinationum – registers with the names of individuals ordained, the name of the ordaining minister, and the place and date of ordination; and over 1,600 files in the section Acta Ordinationum – files with documents required by a person to be accepted in the Seminary and, eventually, to be promoted to Sacred Orders.
3. The NSO analysed and processed basic data compiled by Joseph Bezzina, the Archivist, and Jimmy Xerri, former Bishop's secretary, and refined by Francesco Pio Attard.