

## **ALPS wanted you to get the most from the retreat experience at Manresa, Gozo.**

A retreat refreshes and revitalizes, gives the opportunity for more time spent in prayer and contemplation, and rekindles and deepens one's relationship with God. One may take this opportunity to more clearly hear God's call and to seek God's healing grace and thereby attain a degree of spiritual renewal. The purpose of our spiritual retreat, as an addition to daily spiritual activities, was to temporarily leave behind the usual distractions we all face, for a time long enough to allow relaxation and for an inner change to occur.

To quote but a few lines from The Catholic Encyclopedia which describes the necessity of such retreats: *"In the fever and agitation of modern life, the need of meditation and spiritual repose impresses itself on Christian souls who desire to reflect on their eternal destiny, and direct their life in this world towards God."*

**The ALPS retreat**, was certainly not a conference, seminar or meeting. Primarily, we have aimed at spiritual development through a prolonged period of reflection rather than simply being exposed to information, techniques, and inspiration and then returned immediately to the daily routine. The time we shared together between the 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at Manresa Retreat House, Gozo, had its common format of a three day retreat, that began on Friday evening and ended Sunday afternoon after sharing a good lunch.

During the retreat, we had adequate time specifically set aside for prayer and contemplation. Fr. Dominic Sultana our Director, even celebrated Holy Mass for the group, on Saturday and on Sunday. A restful setting, was awaiting us at Manresa during the whole week-end with availability of nature walks. In order to accomplish the goal of *"retreat,"* the site itself had some degree of insulation from the ordinary busy life; even if located in the heart of Rabat, Gozo, , the retreat site had ample grounds for walking in a relatively quiet and peaceful atmosphere. Furthermore, Manresa offered to the ALPS group, rooms to allow each person privacy. With the help of an exceptionally well prepared director Fr. Dominic Sultana, spiritual direction certainly individualized assistance in accomplishing the aim of our retreat and in carrying home a renewed sense of purpose.

One may say, that this years' week-end of recollection and retreat held at Manresa, served its purpose to instill in our hearts, a better understanding of how we wish to continue to live our life and sharing each day with our family members and friends with whom we come in daily contact and exchanging ideas and thoughts on many different topics. Let us Pray the Lord, that for the coming year 2019, a good attendance may be repeated for another interesting session by Fr. Dominic Sultana who, yet again has agreed and accepted to **direct for the ALPS group another week-end of recollection between the 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> May 2019.**

We recommend, you book early with Secretary General Alex Borg, to ensure that a room may be booked and reserved in your name at Manresa House / Gozo.

**The attached set of photos, clearly demonstrate the wonderful time the ALPS Group had over the weekend of recollection in Gozo 27<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> April 2018.**