

Places of Worship worth visiting

THE GROTTA DEDICATED TO OUR LADY

Close to the well known Sanctuary, on the right hand side of the main road that leads to Mellieha Bay is a long flight of steps that lead to this underground grotto, hewn into the massive rocks. The focal attraction is the Statue of the Madonna holding Baby Jesus in her arms. This grotto was embellished at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The image of the Madonna attracts a great devotion from the faithful. Various witnesses have declared that they saw the Madonna blessing all those present, by making the sign of the cross. A permanent water spring flows under the Statue. The grotto walls are encased by many votive offerings especially by dresses of babies who miraculously survived serious illnesses.



Photo: Malcolm Grima

THE SELMUN CHAPEL

This small Chapel caters for the spiritual needs of the inhabitants living around but outside the centre of the town. It is built a short distance away from another chapel annexed to Selmun Palace and now integrated into the hotel that overlooks the bay of Mgiebah. The chapel is dedicated to Our Lady of the Ransom. The titular painting over the Altar was painted by Francis Antoine Favray, a famous painter.



ST. JOSEPH PARISH CHURCH, MANIKATA

The village of Manikata is a separate Parish dedicated to St. Joseph. This locality is under the jurisdiction of the Mellieha Local Council as it lies within the boundaries of Mellieha. The Church, although not high in structure, dominates the village and the valley down under as it stands on the top of a hill. The shape of this Church, officially opened in February 1975, was purposely chosen. It is different from other churches we are used to. To complement the surroundings of agricultural and bare land the building has a shape of a corbelled hut, commonly found around the village.

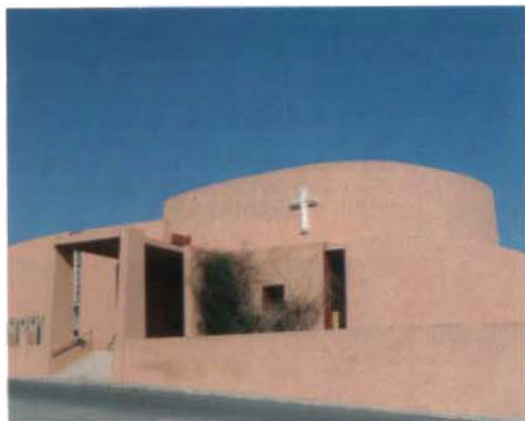


Photo: Michael Cauchi

THE CHAPEL DEDICATED TO THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

This Chapel stands perched on the edge of the cliffs at I-Ahrax tal-Mellieha. Its origin dates back to the middle of the eighteenth century. The painting of the Madonna, engraved on wood, also showed the coat of arms of Grand Master De Vilhena and that of Bishop Alpheran de Bussan. Today this painting is conserved at the Mellieha Sanctuary as a precaution against vandals. The current chapel was built in the 1960's a short distance away from the original chapel which stood on the edge of the cliff overlooking the sea. Every year, exactly on the 8th December many devotees trudge on foot all the way to this chapel where Holy Mass is celebrated for all the congregation present.

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