

DEAR friends,
Margaret's and my summer holidays this year will be spent in Malta in late June and early July, so we hardly need our coats and woollen scarves for that one. Margaret has family living in Malta so it is always good to go and catch up and still at the same time be ourselves and do what we want to do without asking anyone's permission first.

Holidays are for relaxing and recharging and Malta gives the opportunity for all that and much more, although personally I have to say that I much prefer the slower pace of life and greener environment of the sister island Gozo to the rush of the main land. Just think, 400,000 people crowded into a country not much bigger than the Isle of Wight. And that is without counting the tourists.

As I write this, we are coming up to Mothering Sunday, which is always a welcome and pleasant oasis at the time of Lent, when travelling with Jesus through his suffering and temptation, we can sometimes feel a bit despond-

ent about things. However, soon Easter will be here and just at the right time with the joy of spring and everything else that we know will give us that extra boost and desire to get up and go again. Just like holidays do.

Coming back to Malta, off the mainland we find St Paul's Island which is little more than a small and very rocky stretch of land, where supposedly the great apostle was shipwrecked and subsequently converted the whole population to his – or should I say God's – way of thinking. After the pain and the danger of the shipwreck came the hope and the light of the Gospel, and I know of few places where that awareness of the presence of God is as evident as in Malta and Gozo. They say there is one church for every day of the year on those islands alone. I have never counted them despite many a visit over the years, but I have no doubt about the statistic.

May the peace and the joy and the hope of Easter be a real blessing to you all.

Rev Preben Andersen

Thought for the weak



with the Rev Preben Andersen