

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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HOW CAN I DO RESEARCH ON GENEALOGY?

- The collection of Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, and Death records is housed at the Mdina Parish Archive but researchers may consult digital versions at the Cathedral Archives or may send us details of specific records when requiring official certificates. The collection spans from 1539-present. They record the certificates of all inhabitants of Mdina (Notabile) and Rabat from 1539 to 1902. The records from 1902-present, only record inhabitants of Mdina. For certificates of inhabitants of Rabat from 1902-present, one must consult the Rabat Parish Archive. For any genealogical queries, one must always contact the specific parish archive around Malta and Gozo. Contact details of other parishes may be found on the following link: <https://parrocci.knisja.mt/parrocci/>

HOW MAY I SEARCH FOR SPECIFIC NAMES AND SURNAMES FROM THE PAST?

- The Cathedral Archives offers a wide range of primary sources that may be consulted to shed light on demography, names, and surnames. Our earliest record is that of the Militia List dated 1419, which documents the names and surnames of men from all the existing *casali* at the time. Our collection of 18th century CEM *Stati Animarum* provides detailed information on the inhabitants of Malta's towns and villages. These manuscripts were compiled by the parishes to note the number of parishioners, grouped according to household, and usually include the ages of each entry and the time of compilation. Of worth consulting is the collection of CEM *Stati Liberi*. This collection is made up of official Curia records which usually state the marital status of travelers, both natives of Malta and foreigners who wished to marry in Malta. These include statements by the applicant as well as two or more witnesses. The details include; names, surnames, places of birth, ages, and occupations. This collection is made more accessible through a catalogue of names and their references that may be consulted in the reading room.

HOW CAN I DO RESEARCH ON THE HISTORY OF ART IN MALTA?

- The Cathedral Archives have been consulted by a number of academics that have contributed to the study of art history in Malta. The ACM collection of *Minuti, Mandati, Conti, Procure, Registri and Miscellanea* allow one to gather rich data on the number of commissions to architects, painters, and artisans by the Cathedral Chapter as well as the payments and logistics for primary material and works of art that contributed to the artistic and

architectural patrimony of the Cathedral building and seminary as from the 14th century. These volumes have allowed professors and students alike to contribute to our knowledge of the life and legacy of masters such as Mattia Preti, Francesco Zahra, Lorenzo Gafa, and others. One may also consult our large collection of secondary source publications on the history of art in Malta and abroad. Two precious volumes, also document with illustrations, the collection of relics and precious ornaments once kept at St John's Conventual church. One may also wish to consult the Museum's collection of paintings, silver ornaments, prints, and drawings.

HOW CAN I DO RESEARCH IN ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION DURING 16TH, 17TH, AND 18TH CENTURY MALTA?

- The Cathedral Archive houses the collections of Malta's two main ecclesiastical tribunals. The Tribunal of the Holy Roman Inquisition and the Medieval Tribunal of the Bishop. Catalogues may be accessed by visiting the Archives Categories section. The manuscripts of these separate courts have been studied at great length by many local and foreign scholars, for they represent the political and juridical scenarios of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. The testimonials presented for every court case shed light on everyday religious crimes and sins, local and foreign individuals, material culture, and litigations. Of importance is also the system through which sentences were passed which varies from case to case and between the two tribunals.

HOW CAN I DO RESEARCH ON VARIOUS MUSICAL COMPOSITIONS AND COMPOSERS?

- Musicians and researchers have considered our large collection, a rich and unique repertoire. More information and catalogues of musicians and their compositions held at the Cathedral Archives may be accessed by visiting the Archives Categories section. Alternatively, one may buy or consult our publications on early Maltese and Italian composers, the Nani collection, the Vella composers, and the works of Carmelo Pace.

WHAT DOES THE CATHEDRAL ARCHIVE OFFER TO THOSE STUDYING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MALTESE LANGUAGE?

- In the testimonials of the AIM *Processi Criminali*, one encounters the occasional quotes in Maltese by witnesses, documented with Italian spelling. These references in Maltese range from magic spells to placenames and nicknames of persons. An important volume, which belongs to the ACM Miscellanea collection, is known as the *Mezzo Vocabolario*. This is an 18th

century Maltese-Italian dictionary which unfortunately is missing its first half. The same collection also boasts of a few 18th century church sermons written in Maltese. Furthermore, is the collection of notes and diaries of Can. Fortunato Panzvecchia who lived throughout the early part of the Language Question crisis in the 19th Century. Some of his notes and commentaries shed light on this political and educational scenario but noteworthy is his translations of the Bible into the Maltese Language. The Cathedral Archives, in recent years, was also entrusted to safeguard the personal memorabilia which include notes, correspondences, and copies of some poems of the National poet Dun Karm Psaila.

