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## **HENRY CASOLANI – BIOGRAPHY**

Henry Casolani, son of George and Maria Concetta nee Borg was born at Valletta on the 25th November 1917 and was baptized at the Parish church of St Paul in Valletta on the 29th of that same month. Henry Casolani married Inez nee Vassallo on 19th April 1944 at St. Augustine's Church, Valletta. Henry and Inez Casolani had an only child, Cecilia Mary who became a Sister of St. Joseph of the Apparition.

From his very early childhood till the very end of his life, Henry Casolani was polite, well-mannered and would never quarrel with anyone. He was a born artist yet he never boasted of this. He was already engaged with Inez when he won a scholarship to pursue his artistic studies in Italy, but he declined the offer as he did not want to be separated from Inez for such a long time.

At the start of the Second World War, Henry was seconded with the Royal Army Medical Corps. Thereafter and until he was pensioned in 1977, Henry Casolani spent a life-long career as a senior draughtsman at the Malta Public Works Department. At his work place Henry created an atmosphere filled with the spirit of the Gospel. He was most upright in his ways and was trusted by one and all. He was exceptionally virtuous, honest and unselfish. He was good humoured; he was also friendly with everyone. Henry was considered by all those who knew him as an agent of peace, who was capable of building 'bridges' among his colleagues at his work place. Henry regularly used to lead his friends into prayer and reminded them of their religious duties.

"A good motto is: speak no evil against anyone, but praise those who deserve it." (Henry Casolani). Henry Casolani never held a grudge against anyone neither did he ever speak ill of others. It was with kindness and affection that he treated those who were unjust with him. Whenever he went out, Henry always carried money specifically to donate to those who collected for charity or who asked for help. The daily Mass and Communion, the frequent reception of the Sacraments, the daily recourse to Our Lady particularly through the Holy Rosary, the regular visits to the Blessed Sacrament and his daily reflection on the Word of God and the lives of Saints enhanced Henry Casolani's close union with God.

In the difficulties of everyday life, Henry Casolani spontaneously turned towards the Divine help. Henry had a good share of pain, suffering and distress. From the age of thirty-eight, Henry Casolani was diagnosed with diabetes which later led to serious health conditions. Henry bore his ailments in perfect silence, never uttering the slightest word of complaint. Henry Casolani's total surrender to God is confirmed by an outstanding and instantaneous healing of macular degeneration which, according to medical people, is scientifically inexplicable.

Henry Casolani's life was one of uncompromising fidelity to his married vocation. His family was the world to him. Henry and Inez Casolani's married life was a school of sanctity. Rev. Prof. Maurice Emyan SJ summed it all up when he wrote: "They impressed me immediately with their kindness,



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as well as with their religiosity and the Christian values that underlined all their speech and behaviour.”

According to witnesses, Henry was ‘a saint’, ‘an apostle of peace’ ‘a humble person’, and ‘a man of God’. Henry Casolani died on 29th December 1999. The very last words he uttered in a most clear yet imploring tone were, ‘Mother of God, have mercy on me.’