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PRESS RELEASE BY THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

150th anniversary of Carlo Diacono's birth commemorated with a concert under the patronage of Speaker Carmelo Abela

Speaker of the House of Representatives, Carmelo Abela, attended *Antiphonarium*, a concert held under his patronage at St Catherine's Parish Church in Żejtun to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the birth of renowned Maltese composer Carlo Diacono.

Born in Żejtun in 1876, Carlo Diacono was one of Malta's most distinguished composers of sacred music. He demonstrated exceptional musical talent from an early age, studied under Maestro Paolino Vassallo and served as organist at the Żejtun parish church. Throughout his career, he conducted the Beland Band, composed the opera *L'Alpino*, which premiered at the Royal Opera House in 1918, and was subsequently appointed Maestro di Cappella of the Cathedral in Mdina and St John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta.

The concert featured a selection of antiphons composed by Diacono, offering an opportunity to celebrate and appreciate the rich legacy of sacred music left by the Żejtun-born composer.

In his address, Speaker Abela emphasised the importance of preserving Malta's musical heritage and passing it on to future generations. He also expressed his personal appreciation for Diacono's music, which has held a special place in his heart since childhood.

The Speaker commended the work of the Cappella Musicale Diacono, under the direction of Maestro Ray Sciberras, and thanked the musicians, singers and everyone involved in organising the commemorative concert.

Concluding his address, Speaker Abela said he hoped Carlo Diacono's music would continue to resonate across generations as an enduring testament to Malta's rich cultural and musical heritage.