

## AS IT APPEARED ON THE 'EDUCATION' PAGE ON THE SUNDAY TIMES –

### Title: **'Solar Energy: Awareness and Action'** **Comenius Project**

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The official kick off meetings of the Comenius Project entitled 'Solar Energy: Awareness and Action' were held in Crete (Greece) between the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2005.

Stella Maris College, Gzira is one of the five partner schools participating in the project; the other four being the 9<sup>th</sup> Primary School of Rethymno, Crete (co-ordinating school), Escole Antré Soares Norte, Braga, Portugal, Scuola Secondaria di 1° Grado C. B. Cavour, Catania, Sicily, and Colexio de Educacion Infantil e Primaria Froebel Galicia, Pontevedra, Spain.

Claudia Caruana Anastasi who teaches English language to all the Grade 6 classes in Stella Maris College and Ivan Mifsud Bons, the science teacher of the upper grades have recently been on a four-day visit to Crete for the first co-ordinators' meeting. The scope of this meeting was to meet with members of the teaching staff from the different European schools and discuss a three-year plan for the project. This meeting served as a springboard for developing and improving teamwork skills and processes not only within a particular school, but especially between learners and teachers from different origins and cultures, promoting European citizenship and exchanging of ideas.

The main aim of the 'Solar Energy: Awareness and Action' project is to sensitise the pupils on issues and aspects of solar energy, within the framework of sustainable development and environmental and ecological awareness, both at conceptual and at practical-experiential level. The programme also attempts to put science and technology in action as its main focus. Thus, pupils will be encouraged to construct their own devices that work with solar energy, such as, simple solar water heaters, solar cookers and solar toys. Such models will eventually be presented at a science fair in a partner country, in order to expose the project's outcomes to the general public.

The Maltese representatives had formal meetings with the Greek project co-ordinator, Nektarios Tsagliotis, and they were introduced to the Portuguese, Italian and Spanish head teachers and teachers involved in the Comenius project. These meetings were held daily at the 9<sup>th</sup> Primary School of Rethymno, where the participants also had the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the co-ordinating school and its teachers. They also visited the classrooms and involved themselves in activities, related to the Solar Energy project, which were organised for the pupils. The Maltese representatives introduced the Lasallian college to the foreign colleagues by

presenting a video featuring 'A Day in the Life of a Grade Sixer'. Moreover, each partner school contributed in the discussion of project ideas. During the development of the project, every school will contribute electronic material in order to build up the official project web site. Teachers from the participating schools have already been in contact with each other through e-mail and in the near future, pupils from the different schools will also be communicating regularly with each other through e-mail.

The Maltese representatives who attended the meetings thank the Socrates NA for its financial support and also, Mr. Stratis Kouvkoulos and Efi Kalikantzarou, headmaster and assistant head of the co-ordinating school, for their kind hospitality. Heartfelt thanks are also extended to Mrs. Myriam Zammit, the headmistress of Stella Maris College Junior School, for her valued advice and support, and to all the teachers at the school who are actively involved in the project.

Heartfelt thanks are also due to Dr. Joseph N. Grima and Dr. Suzanne Gatt from the University of Malta for their help in the Comenius project and their ongoing support to the school through the 'Hands-On Science' project.

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