



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on March 5, 2026

Maltese Man Acquitted of Violating Anti-“Conversion Therapy” Law for Sharing Christian Testimony

In a victory for freedom of speech and religion, a Maltese man was acquitted Wednesday of charges that he had promoted “conversion therapy” when he described on a podcast his journey toward Christ and away from homosexuality.

“Today’s decision is not just a personal vindication,” defendant Matthew Grech said in a [press release](#). “It is a reaffirmation of a fundamental principle: speaking about one’s lived experience, including the transforming power of Christ, is not a crime.”



Liudmila Chernetska/iStock/Getty Images Plus

Marked Grech

Grech first came to the public’s attention in 2018, when he appeared on *X Factor Malta*. In a prerecorded interview broadcast during that appearance, he [explained](#) that, after becoming a Christian, he “appreciated the design that God created” for human sexuality, which does not include homosexual or extramarital intercourse.

Not surprisingly, LGBT activists were [up in arms](#) over the broadcast. Silvan Agius, one such activist who serves in the cabinet of European Union (EU) Commissioner for Equality Helena Dalli, called Grech’s comments “problematic.”

From that point on, Grech was a “marked man,” contended the [Christian Legal Centre \(CLC\)](#), which assisted in his defense.

Choice Words

In 2022, Grech was interviewed on the *PMnews Malta* podcast concerning his faith and his views on homosexuality. He told [FaithWire](#):

They wanted to understand why I view sexuality differently as a Christian, and why I would do such a thing ... forsaking homosexuality altogether as an identity practice. So, we were discussing it. It was scientific, it was practical, it was spiritual, it was a really interesting conversation.

Given that Malta, with much encouragement from Agius, had passed a law in 2016 banning “conversion practices” and the advertising thereof, the hosts naturally asked Grech about the subject. [The New American](#) reported:

Initially, Grech tried to deflect the conversation to his personal testimony. But when the hosts pressed him on the matter, Grech argued that “conversion therapy” was a political term and that there were scientific studies showing that sexuality can be changed while



gender cannot.

Grech never suggested that anyone undergo “conversion therapy.” Nor did his hosts, who, according to CLC chief executive Andrea Williams, “challenged him robustly during his interview.”

However, Grech was introduced as being affiliated with the London-based International Foundation for Therapeutic and Counselling Choice. That was enough for his enemies — who only consider the choice to *become* LGBT, not to renounce it, acceptable — to use as the basis for a police complaint. Not coincidentally, one of the complainants was Agius.

Prosecution Witless

Grech and the *PMnews* hosts were all charged with advertising conversion therapy. Had Grech been found guilty, he could have spent up to five months in prison and been fined as much as €5,000 (about \$5,800).

“For three long years,” Grech said, “my life has been turned completely upside down, not for harming anyone, not for inciting hatred, not for breaking the law, but for sharing my personal testimony of hope and renewal on a podcast.”

Grech’s lawyers argued that his speech was protected by both Malta’s constitution and its human-rights laws derived from its obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights.

Ultimately, Magistrate Monica Vella found both Grech and his hosts not guilty of the charges.

While Grech was thankful for the vindication, he noted that “the process itself became the punishment.” After all, if he had simply pleaded guilty to the charges, he could have served his time and been on his way over two years ago instead of suffering, in his words, “emotional strain, reputational damage, financial cost, and constant uncertainty” all this time.

Grech further asserted:

This prosecution should never have been brought. I believe it was politically motivated and entirely without merit. It has exposed the danger of loosely worded criminal laws that can be stretched and applied at will. When laws are unclear, they become tools[,] and tools in the wrong hands can become weapons.

The anti-“conversion therapy” law was so vague, in fact, that “the prosecution could never coherently define what ‘conversion therapy’ even means,” said Williams. It is, she maintained, “an undefined, politically loaded term with no grounding in fact.” That broadcasters who vocally disagreed with Grech could be charged under the same law “showed just how absurd and dangerous this case had become,” she added.

Global Warming

Grech told [CBN News](#) last year that the law had already had a chilling effect on Maltese broadcasters, who were “afraid to even bring up the subject” of “conversion therapy,” giving audiences the impression that there was only one side to the story.

Had Grech been convicted, that same chilling effect could have been felt worldwide. Malta’s law, the first of its kind in the EU, served as the blueprint for similar laws in other countries, including the



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United States and Australia.

“Today’s acquittal sends an unmistakable message: attempts to criminalize Christian teaching and testimony will not stand,” said Williams. “This is a win for Malta, for Europe, and for all who care about free speech and freedom of religion worldwide.”

The last word, appropriately, goes to the man whose speech was nearly stifled — an ex-homosexual who just got [engaged](#) to a Christian woman:

I stand here today grateful, grateful to my legal team, grateful to those who supported me, and above all grateful to God, whose transforming grace is the very story I was prosecuted for telling.

Truth does not become illegal because to some it is unpopular.

Today, freedom has won.



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