

NEWSLETTER

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Open your eyes

In the apostolic letter "[Octogesima Adveniens](#)" published in 1971 Pope Paul VI asserts the relevancy of the message of "[Rerum Novarum](#)", the momentous encyclical by Pope Leo XIII released 80 years earlier.

Fast forward 52 years to the present and those realities are still true. Humans are still shackled by a primitive urge to dominate each other, to seek to take advantage, to possess – we are self-focused at the exclusion of all except our immediate tribe.

As a human race we struggle to embrace a harmonised human family view of the world built on equality and justice, and on the premise that we are one people sharing one DNA and one, very delicate, planet.

We conveniently choose to be selective on whom we call our neighbour. But my neighbour isn't just the person living next door! My neighbour is that widow in the Ukraine and other conflict regions that lost her husband to a senseless war; my neighbours are those families in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia who due to drought are facing starvation; my neighbours are those young girls in Afghanistan that are robbed of an education; my neighbour is that gentlemen in India who got to know about his mother's death in a recent train crash from a photograph; my neighbours are the families and friends of those people who lost someone due to a workplace accident, these people suffer in silence while the authorities drag their

feet to bring about justice and change; my neighbours are the victims and families of those migrants drowned off Greece while seeking a right to live a decent life away from poverty, hopelessness and conflict.

Nationally we are fast becoming a society that creates wealth through exploitation, especially of third country nationals - we have re-legitimised slavery under the pretext of '*at least they earn something*' – proof of this is a recent [report](#) which puts the average cost of a construction site death at Eur7,030 – a modern day equivalent of 30 pieces of silver. Also, one sees the blatant corruptive abuse perpetrated by those people appointed to manage the common good; one sees the attitudes of an increasing group of the citizenry were '*all's good as long as I am doing well*'.

In the face of these realities the 4th paragraph of this apostolic letter exhorts us to be observant of the world around us, to judge reality based on ethical and moral principles as espoused in the gospels and seek to take action to become active agents of change.

"In the face of such widely varying situations it is difficult for us to utter a unified message and to put forward a solution which has universal validity. Such is not our ambition, nor is it our mission. It is up to the Christian communities to analyse with objectivity the situation which is proper to their own country, to shed on it the light of the Gospel's unalterable words and to draw principles of reflection, norms of judgment and directives for action from the social teaching of the Church. This social teaching has been worked out in the course of history and notably, in this industrial era, since the historic date of the message of Pope Leo XIII on "the condition of the workers", and it is an honour and joy for us to celebrate today the anniversary of that message. It is up to these Christian communities, with the help of the Holy Spirit, in communion with the bishops who hold responsibility and in dialogue with other Christian brethren and all men of goodwill, to discern the options and commitments which are called for to bring about the social, political, and economic changes seen in many cases to be urgently needed. In this search for the changes which should be promoted, Christians must first renew their confidence in the forcefulness and special character of the demands made by the Gospel. The Gospel is not out-of-date because it was proclaimed, written, and lived in a different sociocultural context. Its inspiration, enriched by the living experience of Christian tradition over the centuries, remains ever new for converting men: end for advancing the life of society. It is not however to be utilized for the profit of particular temporal options, to the neglect of its universal and eternal message." (Octogesima Adveniens par. 4)

Let us take to heart this message and work actively to create a better world. Let us open our hearts to others, really embrace diversity, and work ceaselessly for a just world.

Be the change you want to see, be that change today!



Filled with the Holy Spirit

A few weeks ago, Sunday 28th May to be precise, we celebrated Pentecost.

In the New Testament, Pentecost is the occasion of the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and other followers of Jesus Christ, as described in the Acts of the Apostles 2:1–31 and therefore, in the Christian liturgical year, it became a feast commemorating this occasion.

Baptised and confirmed Christians are all endowed with the Holy Spirit.

You might remember from catechism classes the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit - Fear of the Lord, Fortitude, Council, Piety, Knowledge, Understanding, and Wisdom.

We need to let the Spirit work through us. Do not ask what others can do for you, but rather ask what you with the help of the Holy Spirit can do to make each second of your existence worthwhile for the good of others.



Young People and Work Project (YPW)

It is with great pleasure that we announce the continuation of the YPW project.

On the 14th of June ZHN in association with ZAK organised a session with 20 young people about the work life. The well attended session was lead by an experienced leader in the field. It was invigorating to see the young people actively engage and take part in the discussion. This session highlighted the big concerns young people have about entering the workforce and the great challenges they face from technological advancement in light that not all young people feel prepared and knowledgeable enough to join the workforce.

We plan more sessions like this during the year. If you are a leader of a youth organisation and would like to engage with us to host a session email us and get in touch on zghazaghaddiemansara@gmail.com.

110th ILO Conference

From 27th of May to the 11th of June, Governments', Workers' and Employers' representatives from 187 ILO Member States discussed world of work issues at the International Labour Conference (ILC). Five members of the International Coordination of the Young Christian Workers team attended the exchanges of the commissions, focusing on safety and health at work, as well as on the social and solidarity economy. To read more about what was discussed and access reports and documents head to the [ILO](#) site.

ZHN locality engagements

Throughout its history ZHN has always prided itself in being part of the fabric of Maltese society at a locality level.

We are therefore very pleased to have been invited to assist the leaders of the Tal-Ibragg youth group by dedicating some of our time and volunteer resources.

During our first meeting we were impressed by the energy put in by the group leaders, and the attending youths.

We look forward to a fruitful partnership.