

NEWSLETTER

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To Govern a Nation, One Must Truly Love the Nation

To be elected to govern a nation is one of the most profound responsibilities a person can undertake. To lead is to prioritise the welfare of the people, the nation's identity, culture and heritage over personal gain, power,

See - Judge - Act

"If we are to share our lives with others and generously give of ourselves, we also have to realize that every person is worthy of our giving. Not for their physical appearance, their abilities, their language, their way of thinking, or for any satisfaction that we might receive, but rather because they are God's handiwork, his creation.

God created that person in his image, and he or she reflects something of God's glory.

Every human being is the object of God's infinite tenderness, and he himself is present in their lives"

~ Pope Francis ~

(Evangeli Gaudium no. 274)

or vanity. As Plato wrote **"A true guardian of the state must have no private wealth, since he serves the public good"** (Republic, Book III).

History provides plenty of evidence that leadership rooted in love for the nation has uplifted societies, while self-serving governance has led to widespread suffering and the inevitable collapse of nations. This reality is even more pronounced in the context of a small nation like ours where the margin for error and experimentation is non-existent. We either do the right thing or perish.

Love for the Nation: The Road to Prosperity

One example of governance driven by selflessness and love for the nation is the rule of **George Washington**, the first president of the United States. At the conclusion of the American Revolutionary War, he had the opportunity to seize power and become a monarch. Instead, he voluntarily stepped down from military command and relinquished his presidency after two terms, despite calls for him to stay on. Washington's **devotion to the principles of democracy and the greater good laid the foundation for stability and growth**. By rejecting self-enrichment and personal aggrandisement, he put the interest of the nation and its people first.

A similar example is that of **Abraham Lincoln**. Confronted with the greatest crisis in American history - the Civil War - Lincoln chose the rights of every individual in the nation above all else. His decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring enslaved people in Confederate states free, was not only morally courageous but also politically risky. The easier choice was to leave things as he found them, but **the easier choice is seldom the right choice for the nation**.

Another example is that of **Nelson Mandela's** leadership in South Africa, a compelling testament to the transformative power of selfless governance. After 27 years of imprisonment, Mandela could have sought reconnection on those who oppressed him and his people under apartheid. Instead, **he chose reconciliation**, fostering a new era of unity and democracy in South Africa. Mandela's love for his country and all its people regardless of ethnicity enabled him to build bridges in a divided nation. His presidency became a model of ethical leadership, proving that **putting the nation above personal interests can heal even the deepest wounds**.

Self-Enrichment: The Road to Misery

In contrast, history is full of leaders who prioritised self-enrichment, leading to the degradation of their nations.

The reign of **Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette** in France is a prime example. While the French populace suffered from famine and economic hardship, the monarchy indulged in extravagance and opulence. This disconnect between the rulers and the ruled fuelled resentment, eventually culminating in the French Revolution. The monarchy's **failure to govern with compassion and accountability** led to not only their downfall but also years of political chaos and bloodshed.

Similarly, the regime of **Mobutu Sese Seko** in the Democratic Republic of Congo demonstrates how self-serving governance can devastate a nation. Mobutu amassed an enormous personal fortune while the nation's infrastructure crumbled, and its people languished in poverty. His rule, marked by corruption and kleptocracy, left the country deeply impoverished and politically unstable. Even decades after his ousting, **the Congolese people continue to suffer from the repercussions of his greed and mismanagement**.

Another example from recent events is that of the **Assad** regime in Syria. After years of war, violence and oppression the country is devastated, with millions destitute and living as refugees. While the people of Syria endured war and famine the Assad's lived in luxury, syphoning millions into their personal bank accounts. As one protester after the fall of the regime commented from one of the Assad palaces, *"they left and did not even bother turning off the heating"*. The damage wrought on Syria, and its people will take decades to heal and all because of a person's **self-infatuation which placed the individual and its tribe above the needs of the nation**.

Lessons from History

The contrast between these leaders underscores the critical importance of governance rooted in love for the nation and loyalty to its people. Leaders who govern with genuine love for their country know that their **power is not an entitlement but a responsibility**. Such leaders genuinely invest in public goods such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure. These leaders ensure that every penny invested pays back many times over, and ensure that checks and balances are in place, safeguarded in law, to ensure that there is full transparency and accountability around these investments. Such leaders do not use their position of power to pilfer a nation's resources.

A key takeaway from these historical examples is that **love for the nation entails humility and accountability**. It requires leaders to genuinely listen to their people, to be open to criticism and let democratic processes function unhindered – **a leader cannot be judge and jury**. Emphatic leadership requires a leader to objectively address the needs of the people rather than imposing their will. A good leader never puts the interests of a small minority above all else. Good leaders have a clear understanding of the words "party" and "patria" ensuring that the good of the **nation comes before the party**.

The failure to govern with compassion inevitably leads to inequality in society, marginalisation of the poor, social unrest, economic collapse, and political instability. **When leaders prioritise self-enrichment and the needs of their party, they erode public trust and weaken the very institutions that sustain the nation**. The downfall of regimes like those of Louis XVI, Mobutu, and Assad serve as a warning of the dangers of a leadership incapable of love and loyalty to the nation.

Shaping a nation's destiny

To govern a nation is to shoulder the responsibility of shaping its destiny. The best leaders are those who love their nations deeply and prioritise the well-being of all their people above all else. Washington, Lincoln, and Mandela remind us that **leadership rooted in selflessness and compassion can uplift societies and transform nations**.

As nations around the world grapple with challenges of war, inequality, corruption and climate change, the need for leaders who govern with love, empathy, transparency, accountability and loyalty to the nation has never been greater. History teaches us that true leadership is not about accumulating wealth or wielding power; it is about serving the nation and leaving it stronger, more just, and more united than before. Leaders who embrace this ethos inspire progress and prosperity for future generations.

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



Year of the Jubilee

The Holy Father has chosen **2025** to be a year of Jubilee, something which happens every 25 years.

The theme is **"Pilgrims of Hope"**, and it will be a year of hope for a world suffering the impacts of war, poverty, injustice, the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and a climate crisis.

During this Jubilee journey, let us together as one people, people of Christ, people of hope, turn towards Christ Redeemer with renewed energy and pray that Good prevails over Evil.

Let us not stop there however, as pilgrims of hope let us all *choose* to bring living hope to our place of work and study, our families and our communities.

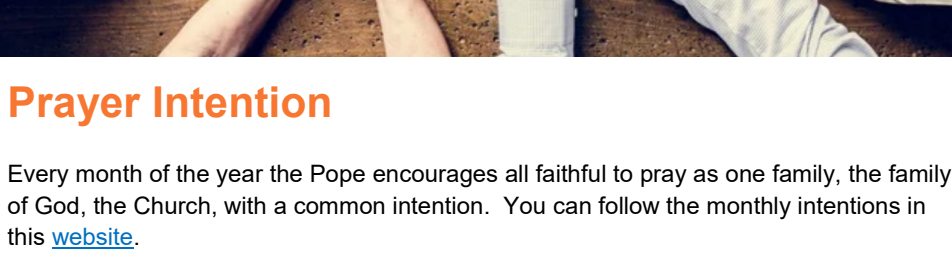
If you would like to learn more about the Jubilee, head to the [official Jubilee 2025 website](#).

80 years of ŻHN in Malta

The Żgħażaġh Haddiema Nsara movement marks eighty years since its establishment in Malta by Fr Michael Galea SJ in 1945.

The movement is part of the International Coordination of the Young Christian Workers (ICYCW).

As a movement we continue to actively participate in society practicing our [See - Judge - Act](#) method to promote social justice.



Prayer Intention

Every month of the year the Pope encourages all faithful to pray as one family, the family of God, the Church, with a common intention. You can follow the monthly intentions in this [website](#).

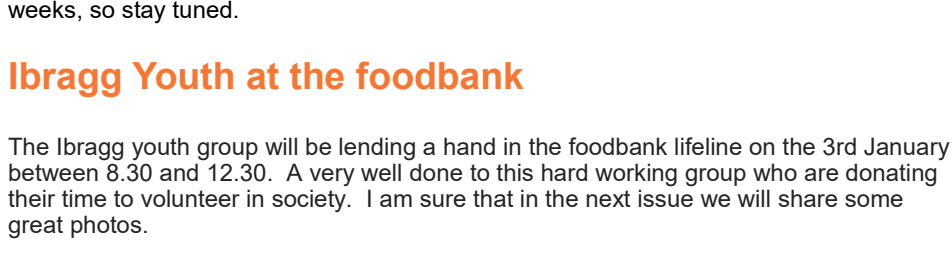
The intention for this month is **'For the right to an education'**.

There are so many people around the world today that are denied an education. Whether because of war, poverty, religious discrimination or inadequate funding, denying a person, child or grownup, the right to a good education is a human rights violation of the worse type.

A proper education is not only benefits the individual, but is the driver to build better and fairer societies. It is inconceivable that in the 21st century this most basic of rights is still denied to millions around the globe.

Prayer of the month

"Let us pray for migrants, refugees, and those affected by war, that their right to an education, which is necessary to build a better world, might always be respected"



Jubilee of the Workers

The ŻHN will be organising the celebration of the Jubilee of the Workers as part of the events of the Archdiocese of Malta. More information will be provided in the coming weeks, so stay tuned.

Ibragg Youth at the foodbank

The Ibragg youth group will be lending a hand in the foodbank lifeline on the 3rd January between 8.30 and 12.30. A very well done to this hard working group who are donating their time to volunteer in society. I am sure that in the next issue we will share some great photos.