

NEWSLETTER

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Accountability - The cornerstone of a fair society

Governments are established to serve society, ensure justice, and create conditions for equitable development. When those in power neglect to hold accountable those involved in dereliction of duty or outright criminal facilitation, they have failed in their duty and strike a blow against hardworking citizens. Such a government not only legitimises corruption through impunity, but it perpetuates cycles of inequality and mistrust placing the very foundations for an equitable society at risk.

See - Judge - Act

"The common good is the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily.

The leaders of society, especially political leaders, are called to serve the common good with dedication and responsibility.

They must always uphold the law as a means to protect the dignity and rights of all people"

~ Pope John Paul II ~

(Centesimus annus 1991)

Erosion of justice and accountability

Justice serves as the cornerstone of any functioning democracy or system of governance. It ensures that laws are applied consistently, regardless of status or position. When governments shield public officials from facing consequences for their actions, they dismantle this principle. Instead of engendering a culture of accountability, they create a precedent where the powerful and wealthy few can act with impunity. This undermines the rule of law, creating a sense of hopelessness among ordinary workers who depend on a fair system to address grievances and disputes.

The economic burden on workers

Corruption, when legitimised, imposes a hidden tax on the workforce. Public funds, derived from taxes paid by citizens, are siphoned off through fraudulent practices. These funds could have been used to build infrastructure, improve education, provide healthcare and more – all essential services that benefit workers and their families. Instead, they disappear into the pockets of a privileged few.

For example, in countries where corruption is rampant, workers frequently face poor infrastructure, inadequate healthcare systems, and underfunded schools that compromise their children's future. These burdens affect quality of life and reduce a worker's potential to save, invest, or improve their livelihoods. Shielding corrupt officials aggravates these problems, as it ensures the cycle of misappropriation and inefficiency continues unchecked.

The dangers of legitimizing corruption

When a government prioritises protecting officials over prosecuting them, it sends a dangerous message: corruption is tolerable if you are in the right position. This not only encourages existing officials to abuse their power but also normalises such behaviour among future generations. Young people observing such practices start to believe that success is achieved through manipulation rather than hard work, honesty, and skill.

This erosion of moral standards affects workers more than anyone since they rely on merit-based systems to progress. For instance, if promotions or benefits in public institutions are determined by bribery, favouritism or political party affiliation, hardworking employees find themselves sidelined. Such practices breed frustration and stifle innovation, as the most capable individuals are denied opportunities to contribute meaningfully to society – such talented individuals are left with little option other than to look for fresher pastures where their skills are appreciated – leaving mediocrity to rule the day.

The betrayal of trust

Governments derive their legitimacy through the consent of the governed. Citizens entrust leaders to act in their best interests. When this trust is betrayed through the protection of corrupt officials and practices, it creates a rift between the government and its people resulting in a disillusioned and disengaged workforce.

This disengagement can manifest in various ways, from decreased voter turnout to protests and strikes. Over time, it weakens democratic institutions, as citizens lose faith in their ability to bring about change through legitimate channels. The result is often increased instability, which further hinders economic and social progress, trapping workers in a vicious cycle of hardship.

A government's moral responsibility

Governments have a moral obligation to uphold integrity and transparency. By ensuring that public officials are held accountable for their actions, they demonstrate a commitment to fairness and justice. This accountability fosters trust, encourages civic participation, and creates an environment where workers feel valued and protected.

To achieve this, governments must establish robust independent mechanisms for investigating and prosecuting corruption. Independent judiciary systems, transparent processes, and the protection of whistleblowers are essential components of such mechanisms. Additionally, fostering a culture of ethics and responsibility within public institutions helps prevent corruption from taking root in the first place.

Empowering workers to demand accountability

While the responsibility of ensuring justice largely lies with governments, workers play a crucial role in demanding accountability. Through unions, social responsibility groups, and grassroots movements, they must pressure governments to prioritise transparency and accountability. Collective action amplifies the voices of ordinary citizens, making it harder for governments to ignore their concerns. Such actions are a proven tool to challenge entrenched systems of impunity.

Envisioning a just future

A society where public officials are immune to prosecution is one where workers bear the brunt of inequality, inefficiency, and mistrust. By contrast, a government that prioritises accountability sets the bar for equitable growth and development. It creates opportunities for workers to thrive, ensures that public resources are used for the collective good, and upholds the principles of justice and fairness.

Young adults, as future leaders and changemakers, have a unique role to play in shaping this vision. By demanding transparency, refusing to tolerate corruption, and holding governments accountable, they can help build systems that serve everyone - not just the privileged few.

The fight against corruption is not just about punishing wrongdoers; it is about creating a society where hard work, integrity, and fairness are rewarded. Only then can workers truly reap the fruits of their labour in a system that values their contributions and aspirations.

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

Ibragg Youths at the food bank

Last month we promised to share some photos of the Ibragg group experience at the food bank. A good number of young people donated their time and energy, spending time helping out at the foodbank. These young people are a real inspiration to all of us.



Ibragg Youths is a vibrant community at Ibragg parish composed of over 60 members and leaders. Our group meets on a weekly basis to celebrate and strengthen our relationship between God and ourselves.

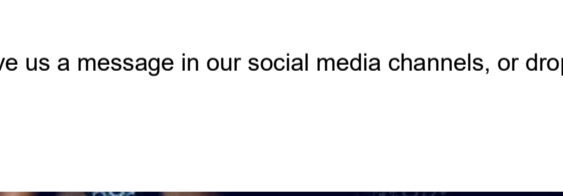
The aim of this group is to provide a social setting within a safe environment where youths can come and have a break from the pressures of school and other activities.

Members are divided into two groups, the 16- group, for those who have recently received the sacrament of Confirmation up to age 15, and the 16+ group, for members aged 16 to 19. The 16- group meets on Wednesdays from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM, while the 16+ group gathers later the same evening, from 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM.

ŻHN Podcast Series

The first episode of our podcast series is now live.

In this first episode we discuss with Fr. Jean Gove the emergence of Artificial Intelligence and the ethical considerations that come with its application in our everyday lives.



You can follow our podcasts on [Spotify](#) (search for Zgħazagh Haddiema Nsara), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#) (search for zhn_malta). New episodes will be posted regularly, so stay tuned.

Want to share your thoughts? Leave us a message in our social media channels, or drop us a message via email.



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](#).

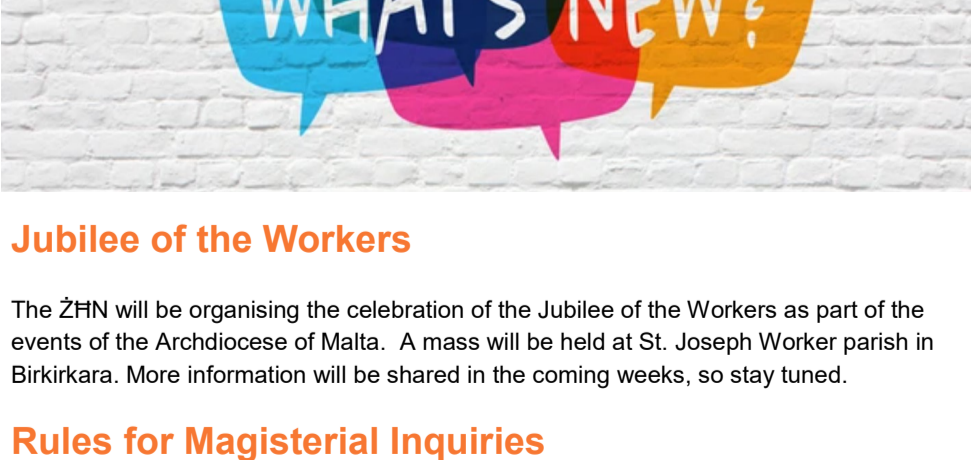
The intention for this month is **'For vocations to the priesthood and religious life'**.

One might think of this prayer intention as providential considering that in Malta we celebrate the feast of Saint Paul's Shipwreck on the 10th of February. Saint Paul, the apostle of the gentiles, inspires throughout the ages. He was a person that amidst adversity and hardship stood steadfast in his newly found faith, unwavering in devotion towards his mission to spread the word of God to all people of good will.

Let this resilience and unwavering devotion encourage each and every one of us to discern a vocation in priesthood or religious life, where one can dedicate their life to God and others.

Prayer of the month

"Let us pray that the ecclesial community might welcome the desires and doubts of those young people who feel a call to serve Christ's mission in the priesthood and religious life"



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. A mass will be held at St. Joseph Worker parish in Birkirkara. More information will be shared in the coming weeks, so stay tuned.

Rules for Magisterial Inquiries

The ŻHN believes that existing rules enabling citizens to request a magisterial inquiry are robust enough and fair. This has also been cited by various independent legal professionals.

However, due to the current closeted debate taking place within government, we support fully Civil Society groups call for a whitepaper to be published on the matter.

We believe that given the present realities the only transparent way to objectively assess if there genuinely is a need for any amendments to this legislation, is to have a serious and objective national debate.

This open debate will enable all competent professionals to participate and put forward their thoughts on the subject. We strongly believe that any changes if really needed must serve the nation and never the vested interests of a chosen few.