



A PASTORAL LETTER

Introducing Pope Leo's First Letter – Magnifica Humanitas

To be read at all Masses on Trinity Sunday, 31st May 2026

My dear brothers and sisters,

On Bank Holiday Monday, you may have heard media reports that Pope Leo has written a teaching letter “*On Safeguarding the Human Person in the Time of Artificial Intelligence.*” If this sounds a daunting subject, even an alarming one, with the call for AI to be ‘disarmed’ due to the threat it poses to humanity. It is important to note Pope Leo does not reject technological progress nor discount the benefits which artificial intelligence can bring, rather he calls us to safeguard what is truly human, “*magnificent humanity*” created to know, love and serve God. The Pope sees humanity standing at a moral crossroads when we must decide whether to use the technology of AI for good or ill.

As the last Pope Leo, at the end of the 19th Century addressed “*New Things*” in the transformation of society by the industrial revolution. The 14th Pope Leo now addresses the revolution of Artificial Intelligence and the dangers it poses if used to de-humanize society; threaten human life; displace the dignity of human work; or deceive and exploit human beings.

Together with his predecessors, Pope Leo draws on the wisdom of the Gospel and the Church’s timeless doctrine to address these new challenges. And the Holy Father does so with a deeply Christ-centred perspective inviting us: “*to contemplate in the face of the Son of God, the grandeur of humanity that shines a light also on the era of AI*”ⁱⁱ. For as the Gospel declares: “*God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son*”ⁱⁱⁱ, love which went as far as the Cross and the Eucharist “*that the world might be saved through him*”^{iv}.

Pope Leo invites us to see that, *“By becoming man, the Son of God enters our history and takes human flesh, bringing with him the love that unites him to the Father and the Holy Spirit. In him the mystery of humanity truly becomes clear ...”*^v.

These words recall Pope Benedict's reflection on Trinity Sunday, when he said in contemplating the Most Holy Trinity, as Jesus introduced us to the mystery of *“Three Persons who are one God because the Father is love, the Son is love, the Holy Spirit is love”*, we see that *“God is wholly and only love, the purest, infinite and eternal love ...”* And so said Pope Benedict *“the strongest proof that we are made in the image of the Trinity is this: love alone makes us happy ...”*^{vi}. The everlasting love we find in the Holy Eucharist which leads us next Sunday - the Solemnity of Corpus Christi - to renew our love and adoration of Jesus truly present in the Blessed Sacrament and inseparably united with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

So, it shouldn't surprise us that Pope Leo writes in these times, we have need of a *“Eucharistic spirituality”*, that is, of Eucharistic life and love^{vii}. And he commends his prayer to Our Lady that *“even the era of AI can become a time when the Holy Spirit brings about the civilization of love in our lives.”* For the Holy Father writes, she is *“the woman of the Magnificat”* whose *“soul magnifies the Lord, and (whose) spirit rejoices in God her Saviour”*^{viii}.

Let us be united with Pope Leo in this prayer and in truly Eucharistic love,

+ *Mark*

Bishop of Shrewsbury

ⁱ Encyclical Letter Rerum Novarum, 1891

ⁱⁱ MH No 233

ⁱⁱⁱ Jn. 3: 16

^{iv} Jn. 3:17

^v MH No. 49

^{vi} Pope Benedict XVI 7th June 2009

^{vii} Cf. Magnifica Humanitas No. 234

^{viii} Lk. 1: 47, Magnifica Humanitas No. 243 & 245