

# MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS

*"Magnificent Humanity"*

Pope Leo XIV · Signed 15 May 2026 · Released 25 May 2026

## ON SAFEGUARDING THE HUMAN PERSON IN THE TIME OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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**A HUMANIST REWRITE\* by Thomas Mengel\*\***

Full text with tracked changes · All five chapters and conclusion

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**LEGEND** ~~Red strikethrough = religious/theological text removed~~ *Green italic = humanist text added*

This document rewrites Magnifica Humanitas from a humanist perspective, grounding human dignity, social ethics, and the common good in shared human reason and solidarity rather than divine creation, Christology, or ecclesial authority. The social-ethical analysis — on AI, labour, truth, peace, and human flourishing — is preserved in full.

# INTRODUCTION

## The res novae of our time

1. Humanity, *created by God in all its grandeur, in all the grandeur it has made for itself through millennia of thought, struggle, and solidarity,* is today facing a pivotal choice: either to construct a new Tower of Babel or to build the city in which *God and humanity dwell together human beings dwell together in justice and mutual recognition.* Each generation inherits the task of shaping its own era, of guiding history to become a place where the dignity of every person is safeguarded, justice is promoted and fraternity is made possible. Yet every era also runs the risk of creating an inhumane and more unjust world. Whenever humanity is in danger of marring its true identity, *we Christians lift our eyes to the Incarnate God, knowing that it is "only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of humanity truly becomes clear." In Jesus Christ, this humanity in its grandeur becomes the Way, the Truth and the Life, opening the path for each of us to grow toward fullness. we do well to turn to the long tradition of human wisdom — philosophical, ethical, and scientific — which insists that our dignity is intrinsic, not conferred, and that each person carries within them a capacity for reason, compassion, and self-determination that no technology should be permitted to diminish or override.*

2. *Founded on Christ, the living stone, we experience the powerful and mysterious action of the Holy Spirit, and we believe that every authentic human effort to cooperate with him for the good will be blessed by our heavenly Father, in whom we place our hope. For this reason, we Grounded in our shared humanity and the cumulative moral wisdom of our civilizations, we* can diligently contribute to every initiative that builds a more just world, and we can call others to collaborate in promoting the integral development of every human being. We wish to engage in dialogue with all men and women of our time, with whom we share in the events, questions and aspirations of humanity. Together with them, we seek to identify new paths for the common good and for promoting a dignified life for all. Indeed, openness to dialogue is an integral part of *the Church's vocation because, constituted in Christ as "a sacrament... of communion with God and of the unity of the entire human race," she recognizes history as the place where the Gospel challenges and directs human experience. any community that takes seriously the responsibility of living well together, because the human community, bound by mutual care and accountability, recognizes history as the place where our deepest values are tested and renewed.*

3. In this spirit, *Pope Leo XIII published his Encyclical Rerum Novarum in 1891, the 135th anniversary of which we celebrate with deep gratitude this year. With that document, my beloved predecessor gave impetus to the reflection on society, the economy and politics, which is now known as the "Social Doctrine of the Church." When some objected that the Church should not waste energy on worldly matters, but instead focus on communicating the message of eternal life, Leo XIII responded with realism and wisdom, saying that the proclamation of the Gospel cannot overlook the concrete lives of people. the tradition of humanist social thought — from the labour reformers of the 19th century through to the framers of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

— *has insisted that any account of the good life cannot overlook the concrete, material conditions in which people actually live.* Many decades have passed since then, and *the Magisterium, pastors, theologians and faithful have continued to reflect on social issues in the light of the Gospel. Today, the Social Doctrine of the Church is a legacy of wisdom, where we find principles for thought, criteria for discernment and judgment, and concrete guidelines for action. Founded on Sacred Scripture and Tradition, and in engagement with the sciences, it helps us clearly interpret the challenges of the present and identify appropriate ways for living out a clear Christian witness, with joy and in service to the world. It is not an inert set of concepts, but a living corpus of truth that safeguards and interprets humanity's vocation to a full and just life. I therefore wish to add my own voice to this living tradition, invoking the help of the Spirit of wisdom, who has dwelt in the world since its beginning.* *thinkers, activists, jurists, and citizens have continued to build that tradition, drawing on philosophy, the social sciences, and lived experience. Today, humanist social thought offers a legacy of principles — human dignity, solidarity, subsidiarity, the common good — which belong to the shared ethical heritage of our species. They help us interpret the challenges of the present and identify ways of responding that place every person at the centre. I therefore wish to add this voice to that living tradition.*

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## Two exemplary images

7. In order to answer these questions and discern how to navigate responsibly the era of AI, I would like to bring to mind two scenes from *the Bible the ancient literature of human self-understanding*: the construction of the Tower of Babel (*cf. Gen 11:1-9*) and the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem (*cf. Neh 2-6*). *Whatever one's view of their historical or theological status, these narratives encode lasting insights about collective hubris and collective renewal.* The story of Babel appears in the Book of Genesis at the origins of humanity. After settling in a plain in the land of Shinar, the people decided to build a city and a tower "with its top in the heavens." Fearing being scattered across the earth, they sought to guarantee stability and power for themselves, and above all to "make a name" for themselves. It was an impressive feat: a single language, a single technology, a single direction. However, the project concealed a profound danger. It was a project conceived *without reference to God, without reference to anything beyond the builders' own ambition*, supported by a uniformity that eliminated diversity and that chose homogenization over communion. When a city is built on pride and the claim to self-sufficiency, communication breaks down, languages are confused and people no longer understand each other. The result is not unity, but dispersion. Babel thus reveals the limits of any effort that, however grandiose, arises from self-affirmation, sacrifices human dignity for efficiency and *aspires to reach heaven without God's blessing.* *mistakes the accumulation of power for genuine human flourishing.*

8. The Book of Nehemiah, in turn, opens at a time of great vulnerability in the history of ancient Israel. After the Babylonian exile, a portion of the people returned to Jerusalem, but the city was still in ruins, the walls collapsed and the gates burned.

Nehemiah, a Jew in the service of the Persian King Artaxerxes, received news of the disastrous state of his ancestral city. Before taking action, he ~~fasted, prayed and interceded for the people. He then asked the king for permission to return to Jerusalem and, upon arriving,~~ *gathered himself in reflection, sought permission to return to Jerusalem and, upon arriving,* examined the destroyed areas in silence. He did not impose solutions from above. He convened the families, assigned each of them a section of the wall to rebuild, listened to their concerns, coordinated their efforts and addressed any opposition. The narrative shows how the city is reborn, not through the initiative of one man, but through the shared responsibility of all: men, women, ~~priests,~~ artisans, heads of households and young people all play a part. It is an undertaking ~~with God at the center, which~~ *rooted in mutual accountability, which* rebuilds relationships before rebuilding with stones. Thus, ancient Jerusalem rediscovers a common language — not one of uniformity, but one of communion, namely the harmony ~~that arises when all persons assume their own role and recognize that their~~ *strength comes from the Lord. strength comes from one another.*

9. In light of these two images, ~~the Holy Spirit challenges us today~~ *our shared moral heritage calls us today to account* regarding our relationship with technology and the ongoing digital revolution. Scientific discoveries are ~~talents entrusted to humanity~~ *achievements of humanity* so that they may bear fruit (~~cf. Mt 25:14-30~~). Technology has the power to heal, connect, educate and protect our common home; but it can also divide, exclude and generate new forms of injustice. In practice, technology is never neutral, because it takes on the characteristics of those who devise, finance, regulate and use it. Therefore, the primary choice is not between a "yes" or "no" to technology, but rather between constructing Babel or rebuilding Jerusalem; between a power that claims to dominate ~~the heavens~~ *the future* and a people who work together ~~in the presence of God~~ to rebuild the walls of fraternal coexistence.

10. We must, then, avoid the "Babel syndrome," namely the idolatry of profit that sacrifices the weak, a uniformity that neutralizes differences, and the pretense that a single language — even a digital one — can translate everything, including the mystery of the person, into data and performance. The risk of dehumanization — of building a future that ~~excludes God and~~ reduces the other to a means — is an ancient and ever-new temptation that today takes on a technical guise. Instead, let us choose the "way of Nehemiah," which highlights the importance of working together to make ~~the City of God~~ *the city* a safe place for ~~returning exiles~~ *all who seek to belong to it. Within this shared task, Christians discover their unique role of guiding actions toward God so that, in his light, pluralism does not dissipate into disorder, but instead, through the practice of synodality, it becomes the space in which humanity rediscovers its solid foundations and its final end. In the Book of Revelation, John sees the New Jerusalem "coming down out of heaven from God" (Rev 21:2) as a gift for all humanity. And this vision of grace is an invitation for us Christians to work together in order to foster a peaceful, just and dignified life in community within today's "cities."* *Within this shared task, each person of good will — whatever their tradition, philosophy, or worldview — discovers a calling: not to await a perfect city from outside history, but to build one here, imperfectly and together, through the patient, practical, and democratic work of shared governance and mutual care.*

## Building for the common good

11. Building a city founded on the common good implies, first and foremost, building on a firm **relationship with God. It means recognizing that the truth of his love calls us to life "in all its fullness" (Jn 10:10) and communion with him. Like Saint Augustine, we too can say, "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you."** Indeed, **God has inscribed in our hearts a desire for happiness that embraces all the dimensions of life. The Church, in dialogue with the men and women of our time, recognizes** *relationship with one another and with our world. It means recognizing that human beings are constituted by longing — for meaning, for connection, for a life that matters — and that this longing cannot be satisfied by consumption, performance, or algorithmic optimization alone. As philosophers across many traditions have observed, persons are restless until they find their footing in something larger than private gain. Indeed, human experience across cultures attests to a desire for flourishing that embraces all the dimensions of life. Any serious ethical tradition, in dialogue with the men and women of our time, recognizes* the urgent need to safeguard and guide this aspiration toward its deepest truth.

12. Secondly, building for the common good means accepting the limits and weakness of humanity without considering them an error to be corrected. Today, the human desire for fullness of life is at risk of being misled by deceitful goals, such as the prospect of a technology that promises to free us from all weakness, and models of wellbeing that leave behind entire populations. All too often, we place our hope in unlimited "upgrades," in forms of progress that exacerbate inequalities, and in immediate solutions incapable of healing people's wounds. As a result, while some pursue the illusion of unlimited self-assertion, many are deprived of basic necessities. **The Church reminds us, with a firm yet humble voice,** *Humanist wisdom insists*, that true fulfilment is not achieved by eliminating weakness but through harmonious growth. It is found where freedom and responsibility are intertwined with mutual care and true solidarity, and where progress is measured by the dignity of each person and the good of all peoples.

13. Thirdly, building a world in which everyone can flourish requires shared responsibility and courage. No one can single-handedly bear the weight of the challenges the world is facing, just as no one is so weak that they cannot play their part **for "power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9)** *for the smallest act of solidarity contributes to the larger whole.* All are given their own section of the wall: scientists and researchers, entrepreneurs and workers, educators and legislators, civil society, popular movements and **faith communities** *communities of conscience.* This is the logic of subsidiarity, which values the cooperation between generations, peoples, disciplines and cultures as the best way for fostering stability, prosperity and peace.

14. Finally, building for the common good requires **an evangelical language a language of shared humanity.** We must avoid humiliating or antagonistic words, opting rather for a clarity that sheds light and a frankness that unlocks new possibilities. We cannot condone naïve enthusiasms, nor fuel unfounded fears. Instead, let us establish

standards for discernment — the dignity of the human person, the universal destination of goods, the preferential option for the poor, care for our common home and peace — and let us translate these standards into practices such as responsible planning, the assessment of human and social impact, the inclusion of the most vulnerable, the promotion of digital literacy and guiding research and industry toward justice and peace.

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## Remaining human

15. ~~In the recent Ordinary Jubilee Year of 2025, we walked as pilgrims of hope and were blessed with many graces. Strengthened by these gifts, we~~ *Drawing on the accumulated wisdom and hard-won achievements of our shared human story, we* can move forward with confidence to face the arduous tasks and demanding challenges that lie ahead. In the era of artificial intelligence, when human dignity is threatened by new forms of dehumanization, ours is the pressing duty to remain profoundly human. We must lovingly safeguard the grandeur of humanity ~~bestowed upon us and revealed in its fullness in Christ, the splendor of which~~ *that we have inherited and built together, and the richness of which* no machine can ever replace. True progress always stems from a heart open to others, an intelligence willing to listen and a will that seeks what unites rather than what separates.

16. I address this heartfelt appeal to ~~all the Catholic faithful, to all Christians and to~~ all men and women of goodwill. Let us not be afraid to get our hands dirty on the "construction site" of our time. Like Nehemiah, let us ~~pray,~~ plan wisely and work perseveringly, placing ~~God at the forefront of our actions and~~ the human person at the center of our choices. Thus, the "rejected stones" — the poor, the sick, the migrants and the least among us — will become the cornerstone, and a solid, welcoming common home will emerge on the earth, where love and faithfulness will finally meet, and righteousness and peace will embrace. ~~This is the blessing we implore from God; and the task that stands before us is that of being builders of communion, rather than architects of Babel. We are to be servants of the coming Kingdom, instead of lords of towers destined for ruin. With the heart of a shepherd and a father, I ask everyone to abandon the construction of yet another Tower of Babel and to join forces in building up the common good, so that humanity will never lose its beauty, and the world once again will come to recognize the human heart as the place where God desires to dwell. The task that stands before us is to be builders of communion rather than architects of Babel — not servants of a coming Kingdom, but active makers of a living, shared world, so that humanity will never lose its beauty, and each person will come to recognize every other as worthy of dignity, care, and belonging.~~

## CHAPTER ONE

### A DYNAMIC APPROACH FAITHFUL TO

#### **THE GOSPEL** HUMAN REASON AND THE TRADITION OF SOCIAL ETHICS

17. In this first chapter, I intend to present synthetically how ~~the Social Doctrine of the Church has taken shape in the recent Papal Magisterium and in the Second Vatican Council, in order to demonstrate its dynamic character. Indeed, in each era the res novae require that this teaching address historical questions in the light of revealed Truth. In this regard, artificial intelligence, too, should not be considered as merely yet another theme to be studied or a crisis to be managed, but rather as a development that challenges the categories of Social Doctrine from within, calling for their further development in fidelity to the Gospel.~~ *the tradition of humanist social thought has taken shape across multiple centuries, incorporating insights from moral philosophy, the labour movement, international law, and the human sciences, in order to demonstrate its dynamic character. In each era the res novae require that this tradition address historical questions in the light of reason and human experience. Artificial intelligence, too, should not be considered as merely yet another theme to be studied or a crisis to be managed, but rather as a development that challenges the categories of social ethics from within, calling for their further development in fidelity to human dignity.*

18. This overview, however, would not be very comprehensible if, before reflecting on the contribution of individual ~~popes and their most relevant documents, thinkers, movements, and their most relevant contributions,~~ *we do not first clarify some fundamental principles concerning the way in which the Church exists in history and relates to the world. Failing to do so would expose Social Doctrine to the risk of being perceived as an undue interference in "worldly" matters or as an external code of ethics imposed from above. In reality, it stems from a Church that walks alongside humanity, recognizing the autonomy of earthly realities and the distinction between ecclesial and political communities.* *humanist ethics exists in history and relates to lived social reality. Failing to do so would expose social ethics to the risk of being perceived as abstract moralizing disconnected from political and economic life. In reality, humanist social thought walks alongside humanity, recognizing the autonomy of democratic and civil institutions and the distinction between moral guidance and political authority.* Indeed, it is for this very reason that it strives to serve the common good.

### A tradition journeying through human history

19. ~~The Church is present in the world as a sign of unity for the entire human family.~~ *Humanist ethical traditions are present in the world as a resource for the entire human family. She* *This tradition* recognizes today's questions and challenges as the current setting in which to carry out ~~her particular vocation~~ *its particular calling* of listening, dialogue and service, and of being responsive to everything concerning the lives of contemporary men and women. This involvement in people's lives helps ~~the~~

**Church** *this tradition* understand ever more clearly that **her mission** *its mission* has a historical scope and entails a responsibility for the way in which social relations are built. For this reason, **she** *it* cannot consider itself a stranger to the forces shaping society. On the contrary, **the Church actively participates** *humanist social thought actively participates* in the processes by which society grows and is organized, and offers its own contribution to the creation of a more just and fraternal society. **Pope Francis emphasized this historical dimension of the Church's mission:** "No one can demand that religion should be relegated to the inner sanctum of personal life, without influence on societal and national life, without concern for the soundness of civil institutions, without a right to offer an opinion on events affecting society." *The same principle applies to all serious ethical traditions: no school of thought that takes human flourishing seriously can be confined to the inner sanctum of private life, without concern for the soundness of civil institutions, without a right — and a duty — to offer an opinion on events affecting society.*

20. **The Church's vocation and duty to accompany humanity in the specifics of history leads her to recognize that earthly realities possess their own proper character and order. The Second Vatican Council expressed this principle with particular precision in the Pastoral Constitution Gaudium et Spes:** "If by the autonomy of earthly affairs is meant that created things and societies themselves enjoy their own laws and values... then the demand for autonomy is perfectly in order." *This affirmation shows that creation bears the imprint of an original goodness that our human outlook must preserve, cultivate and bring to fulfilment. The responsibility to accompany humanity in the specifics of history leads humanist social ethics to recognize that political and social realities possess their own proper character and order. As Enlightenment and democratic thought have long maintained, human societies enjoy their own laws and values, discovered through reason and experience rather than imposed from above. This affirmation shows that human social life bears the imprint of accumulated wisdom that our collective outlook must preserve, cultivate and bring to fulfilment.* In this regard, **the Church offers herself** *humanist ethics offers itself* in a way that helps to interpret reality in all its depth, supporting with humble firmness the choices that promote the dignity of every person, the cohesion of communities and the good of all.

21. Recognizing that **God upholds the freedom of men and women in the unfolding of history, the Second Vatican Council affirmed** *human freedom is the foundational value from which all social ethics proceeds, humanist traditions affirm* the distinction between **the ecclesial community and the political community** *civil society and political institutions*, emphasizing that each must operate with full autonomy. **The Church's presence in the world is also expressed through her relationship with civil society and public institutions. By engaging with these entities, the Church acknowledges the value of social and political realities and honors their specific responsibilities. The Church does not claim to assume the functions belonging to the State.** *Humanist ethical traditions engage with civil society and public institutions, acknowledging the value of social and political realities and honoring their specific responsibilities. Humanist social thought does not claim to assume the functions belonging to the State.* On the contrary, it esteems those who serve the common good, and firmly acknowledges the responsibility that civil institutions hold within society. At the same time, when **the mission entrusted to the Church prompts her**

*a commitment to human dignity prompts us* to address the real suffering of the men and women of our time, this closeness does not stem from an intent to supplant civil institutions. Rather, it stems from *evangelical charity compassionate solidarity*, which impels ~~the Church~~ *all persons of conscience* to draw near to the wounds of humanity whenever they surface with greater severity.

22. Starting from this twofold acknowledgment — the autonomy of earthly realities and the distinction between ~~ecclesiastical and political spheres~~ *ethical guidance and political authority* — allows for a clearer understanding of how ~~the Second Vatican Council set for the Church in her relationship with the world. Gaudium et Spes reminds us that "it is the task of the whole People of God, particularly of its pastors and theologians, to listen to and distinguish the many voices of our times and to interpret them in the light of God's word, in order that the revealed Truth may be more deeply penetrated, better understood and more suitably presented." Listening to the "many voices" is no mere sociological exercise, but instead requires spiritual discernment. Guided by the Spirit, the People of God come to recognize in cultural and social transformations both the signs of the presence of Christ, who comes and guides history toward its fulfilment, and those aberrations that obscure his face. In this way, the essential core of revealed Truth is not altered, but made explicit and adopted as a living standard for guiding concrete choices, inspiring paths of personal and communal conversion, promoting structural reforms and supporting new forms of evangelical witness in public life. History is thus understood as one of the places in which the Church allows herself to be taught by the Spirit about the humanizing power of the Gospel.~~ *a humanist social ethic engages with the world. The task is to listen to and distinguish the many voices of our times and to interpret them in the light of reason, evidence, and accumulated human experience, so that our understanding of justice and dignity may be more deeply penetrated, better understood, and more suitably enacted. Listening to the "many voices" is no mere sociological exercise, but requires the disciplined discernment of what promotes flourishing and what diminishes it. Guided by critical reason, persons of conscience come to recognize in cultural and social transformations both those forces that expand human freedom and dignity, and those distortions that contract it. History is thus understood as the evolving space in which our moral understanding is tested, refined, and deepened.*

### **The wisdom of the human sciences**

23. ~~The Church regards all who sincerely seek "truth, goodness and beauty" as companions on the journey, and considers them as "precious allies" in defending the dignity of every person and in caring for creation. Adopting the pastoral approach of the Second Vatican Council, which invites us to listen, discern and interpret the signs of the times, and enlightened by the wisdom of the word, the Church is not afraid to encounter human knowledge. Indeed, the word of God provides reliable standards for establishing paths of justice and opening ways of reconciliation and peace among peoples. When it comes to applying these standards to the complex situations of our time, the contributions of philosophy and of the human and social sciences is essential.~~ *Humanist ethics regards all who sincerely seek truth, goodness, and justice as companions on the journey, and considers them as precious allies in defending the dignity of every person. Guided by openness to evidence and argument, this tradition is not afraid to encounter*

*human knowledge in all its forms. Indeed, philosophy, moral reasoning, and cross-cultural dialogue provide reliable resources for establishing paths of justice and opening ways of reconciliation and peace among peoples. The contributions of the human and social sciences are essential to understanding and analyzing cultural, economic and political dynamics more deeply. Saint John Paul II recalled that the Church welcomes the contributions of the social sciences in order "to draw from them concrete insights that help her carry out her magisterial office." A dialogue with such kinds of knowledge does not diminish the power of the Gospel. On the contrary, it makes it possible to identify with greater clarity what genuinely fosters the lives of individuals and communities. Such dialogue makes it possible to identify with greater clarity what genuinely fosters the lives of individuals and communities, and to revise ethical conclusions when evidence demands it. This openness to correction and growth is one of the deepest strengths of humanist social ethics.*

24. Nourished by this fruitful dialogue between *the Gospel and human knowledge*, the Church has progressively developed her Social Doctrine, cultivating in history a wise patrimony marked by theological and anthropological coherence rooted in the Christian understanding of the person. Precisely because this patrimony arises from faith and a corresponding vision of reality, it does not amount to a repertoire of technical solutions or an economic or political model to be set against others. Instead, it belongs to a different order, namely that of the principles that guide the interpretation of events and sustain an evangelical understanding of historical processes and the choices these entail. Herein lies the proper function of Social Doctrine, *moral reason and human experience*, humanist social thought has progressively developed a living patrimony of principles marked by coherence rooted in the shared understanding of the human person as a being of reason, relationship, and dignity. Precisely because this patrimony arises from shared human reflection rather than any single authority, it does not amount to a fixed code of answers. Instead, it belongs to the order of principles that guide the interpretation of events and sustain an ethical understanding of historical processes and the choices these entail. Herein lies the proper function of *humanist social ethics*, which does not claim to supplant the responsibilities of politics or institutions, but offers itself as a foundation for collective discernment, helping to recognize and promote whatever serves the dignity of persons, the vitality of communities and the common good.

### **Social ethics as shared discernment**

25. Understanding that *the truth is a gift to be shared, not a possession to be monopolized*, frees the Church from the temptation of seeking forms of presence based on power. In order to rediscover the evangelical approach of a gentle proclamation of truth that is not imposed, Saint John Paul II invited us to examine honestly the times when acquiescence was given to "intolerance and even the use of violence in the service of truth." In this same vein, I too have reaffirmed that the Church "does not claim to possess a monopoly on truth," because truth is not a territory to be defended, but a good to be shared. For his part, Pope Francis expressed this same perspective in his striking phrase, "time is greater than space." *moral understanding develops through dialogue and grows over time, rather than being delivered whole from any single source*, frees humanist social thought from the temptation of dogmatism. What matters most is not

*occupying positions of authority or defending particular philosophical strongholds, but initiating good processes of reasoning and enabling them to mature. In this way, the truth of the Gospel is not imposed from above, but grows over time within the concrete interweaving of lives, communities and cultures. This is not a truth that fears diversity, but instead welcomes and guides it. It does not eliminate conflicts, but transforms them, reuniting that which history tends to scatter. This concept can also be illustrated by the image of a multifaceted polyhedron, in which the one truth of the Gospel is reflected from different angles. ethical truth is not imposed from above, but grows over time within the concrete interweaving of lives, communities, and cultures. This is not a truth that fears diversity, but instead welcomes and learns from it. It does not eliminate conflicts, but seeks to transform them, reuniting that which history tends to scatter. This concept can be illustrated by the image of a multifaceted polyhedron, in which the shared truth of human dignity is reflected from different cultural and philosophical angles.*

26. This attitude of openness to truth, which is at the same time both one and diverse, profoundly expresses the *catholicity of the Church, for she embraces the entire human family yet is also immersed in the concrete situations of peoples and cultures. The Second Vatican Council reminds us that, in virtue of this very catholicity, "each part contributes its own gifts to other parts and to the entire Church."* In this way, the Church grows as a whole and as individual communities thanks to a mutual exchange and to shared efforts toward an ever fuller communion. It follows, then, that the People of God are not only gathered together from many peoples, but are also intertwined through different functions, vocations, cultures and traditions, each being called to support and enrich one another. From this perspective, Saint Paul VI acknowledged that, given the great variety of historical situations, it is unrealistic to think that the Church's Social Doctrine can propose a single response that is valid in all contexts. For this reason, he invited each Christian community to interpret the reality in its own country with clarity and responsibility. *universality of humanist ethics, which embraces the entire human family yet must also be immersed in the concrete situations of peoples and cultures. Moral wisdom grows through mutual exchange across traditions, disciplines, and communities. Each cultural context contributes its own insights. It is unrealistic to think that any single ethical framework can propose a single response that is valid in all contexts; for this reason, humanist ethics invites each community to interpret its own reality with clarity and responsibility, while maintaining fidelity to the core commitments of dignity and solidarity.* The fruitful tension between universal principles and local application is an intrinsic aspect of living ethics, for it encompasses the whole world, while addressing the specific issues of each context as the real setting in which justice takes shape.

27. In light of what has been said so far, *the Church's Social Doctrine humanist social ethics* can be seen more authentically. It is not a handbook of principles and norms to be applied, but a process of shared discernment. It is born from the encounter between *the eternal truth of the Gospel and the questions of history. accumulated human moral experience and the urgent questions of history.* It allows itself to be challenged by the signs of the times, and draws nourishment from the contributions of science, culture and human experience. Therefore, when the dignity of our brothers and sisters is violated, when politics fails to address the tragedies of humanity, when the

economy turns against the person or science oversteps the limits of its competence, ~~the Church — together with other Christian denominations and believers of other religions — must make her voice heard, not in order to dominate, but to promote communion. Understood in this way, Social Doctrine becomes a theology of communion in history, a history in which the Word made flesh continues to be present through dialogue, memory and prophecy.~~ *all persons and communities of conscience must make their voice heard, not in order to dominate, but to promote the common good. Understood in this way, humanist social ethics becomes a philosophy of solidarity in history — a history in which human dignity continues to be asserted through dialogue, memory, and the prophetic refusal of injustice.*

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## The development of social thought from the 19th century to the present

28. Having outlined the way in which ~~the Church is present in history and engages in dialogue with the world~~ *humanist social ethics engages with lived historical reality*, I would now like to consider the development of ~~Social Doctrine in the Magisterium, which has responded~~ *social thought across multiple traditions, which has responded* to the major social transformations from the nineteenth century to the present day. I will emphasize some essential points in order to show how the present text stands in continuity with that tradition. I would also like to stress how, within this tradition, the core commitments regarding the human person and society are constantly intertwined with a renewed capacity for listening to historical situations and for responding to contemporary issues.

### *The first stages: labour, dignity, and the question of the person*

29. What we now call ~~the "Social Doctrine of the Church" is not a spontaneous product of the modern age. Instead, it is the fruit of receiving and structuring a long tradition of ecclesial reflection on life in society, rooted in Sacred Scripture, the Church Fathers and the theological and legal developments of the Middle Ages and modern era. Although the expression "Social Doctrine of the Church" was coined by Pius XII in 1950, its content began to take shape as an organic corpus of social teaching with Leo XIII's Encyclical Rerum Novarum. Confronted with the "new things" of his time — the conflict between capital and labor, the question of the workforce, and economic and social transformations — Leo XIII did not limit himself merely to acknowledging the unrest, but saw these situations as an area for the Church's pastoral mission. He exposed them to rigorous discernment, illuminating their causes and possible solutions in the light of the Gospel and an integral vision of the human person created in the image of God.~~ *humanist social thought is not a spontaneous product of the modern age. Instead, it is the fruit of a long tradition of moral and political reflection on life in society, rooted in the philosophical traditions of antiquity, the natural law reasoning of the medieval period, and the democratic and emancipatory movements of the modern era. Although the systematic formulation of these principles accelerated in the 19th century, its content had been developing for centuries. Confronted with the "new things" of the industrial age — the conflict between capital and labor, the exploitation of workers,*

*and rapid economic transformation — early social reformers did not limit themselves merely to acknowledging the unrest, but saw these situations as demanding moral and political response. They illuminated causes and possible solutions in the light of reason, human solidarity, and an integral vision of the person as inherently worthy of dignity.*

30. The landmark documents of early social thought constitute a milestone in the development of ~~the Church's social teaching. The document places the dignity of work and of workers at the forefront of its reflection; affirms the right to a fair wage for oneself and one's family; recognizes that persons have a fundamental value that takes precedence over capital and profit; defends private property along with its indispensable societal role; esteems workers' associations; and proposes forms of cooperation between the different components of society as an alternative to the mentality of class struggle. It is not surprising, then, that Pius XI defined it as the "Magna Carta" of Christian social action. In Rerum Novarum, the Church's ancient wisdom regarding the human person and life in society took on a new form capable of responding to the industrial age and offering the first major systematic framework for the Social Doctrine that would be further developed in the following decades. While many of the historical conditions described by Leo XIII have changed, at least two insights remain highly relevant today: the primacy of human labor over any mindset focused solely on finance or productivity — with the consequent attention to the people and families most susceptible to exploitation — and the inseparable link between proclaiming the Gospel and pursuing a more just social order. Rerum Novarum thereby continues to remind us that there is no authentic evangelization that does not also affect the structures of human society.~~ *this tradition. These early texts placed the dignity of work and of workers at the forefront of social reflection; affirmed the right to a fair wage for oneself and one's family; recognized that persons have a fundamental value that takes precedence over capital and profit; and proposed forms of cooperation between the different components of society as an alternative to pure class warfare. At least two insights remain highly relevant today: the primacy of human labor over any mindset focused solely on finance or productivity — with the consequent attention to the people and families most susceptible to exploitation — and the inseparable link between the pursuit of human dignity and the transformation of the economic structures of society.*

31. The great social documents of the early 20th century broadened the focus of social ethics to encompass the overall structure of the economic and political order. They denounced the concentration of economic power in the hands of a few; criticized both unlimited competition and collectivist projects that undermine the freedom and responsibility of the individual; strongly affirmed the workers' right to association; and reiterated the requirement that wages be proportionate not only to performance, but also to the needs of workers and their families. The principle of subsidiarity was systematically formulated in this period, and was to become one of the cornerstones of social ethics. According to this principle, whatever can be carried out by individuals, families, intermediary organizations and local communities should not be carried out by higher-level authorities. ~~Pius XI clearly recalled the societal role of private property and denounced~~ *These traditions clearly recalled the societal dimensions of property and denounced* forms of totalitarianism that demean the dignity of the person, stifle life in society, and discriminate according to race. Three insights remain particularly relevant

today: the awareness that injustice concerns not only individual behavior but also economic and institutional structures; the importance of subsidiarity; and the link between the dignity of work, fair remuneration and the genuine possibility for families to lead a dignified life.

32. In the tragic context of the Second World War, and the years of reconstruction that followed, ~~the teachings of Pius XII made a significant contribution to the development of Social Doctrine. This is particularly true of his Christmas radio messages, in which he outlined the framework of an international order based on justice, peace and the recognition of human dignity. In these messages, the Pope proposed a dialogue with society based on an appeal to natural law understood as a set of objective principles that precede the interests of individuals and States, and which must regulate both the internal life of nations and their mutual relations.~~ *the framers of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international humanitarian law made a decisive contribution to humanist social thought. In these documents, they outlined the framework of an international order based on justice, peace and the recognition of human dignity. They proposed a dialogue with global society based on an appeal to universal human rights understood as a set of principles that precede the interests of individuals and States, and which must regulate both the internal life of nations and their mutual relations.* They recognized democracy as a means for ensuring the proper exercise of authority. At the same time, they warned against any attempt to base law on utility or force, recalling that an international order governed by the advantage of the strongest exposes weaker peoples to oppression and fundamentally undermines trust between nations.

### ***The mid-twentieth century: rights, development, and global solidarity***

33. A new phase in ~~the Church's social teaching began with Saint John XXIII, who placed a greater emphasis on the global dimension of social issues and the language of rights. In Mater et Magistra, he presented the Christian faith as a light capable of uniting heaven and earth. He recalled that, while the Church's primary mission is the sanctification and proclamation of eternal goods, she does not neglect the concrete needs of people's daily lives, and is concerned with every authentic human good. Based on this unified vision of humanity, John XXIII emphasized~~ *humanist social thought began with the postwar human rights movement, which placed a greater emphasis on the global dimension of social issues and the language of universal rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and cognate international instruments recalled that any authentic ethical tradition is concerned with the concrete needs of people's daily lives. Based on this unified vision of humanity, these frameworks emphasized* that societal life requires a balance between the initiative of citizens and groups — who are called to organize themselves and work together — and the action of the State, which must coordinate and provide support without stifling the freedom and responsibility of individuals. ~~In Paecem in Terris, John XXIII addressed for the first time not only the faithful, but also all people of good will, organically linking~~ *The great humanist declarations linked* the dignity of the person to the recognition of fundamental rights and duties, and proposing a direction for society — at the international level too — based on truth, justice, ~~love~~ *solidarity* and freedom. In the present day, the following aspects of this tradition remain particularly significant: the

universal perspective of its appeal; the reference to human rights as a shared framework; and the conviction that lasting peace requires institutions and relations between peoples that are inspired by the dignity of every person.

34. The mid-twentieth century marked a turning point in the understanding of justice in the contemporary world. Progressive social documents and constitutional frameworks presented the image of ~~a Church that is close to humanity, engaged with the world and committed to reflecting on the concrete reality of historical situations. The text addresses the major issues of marriage and the family, economic and societal life, the political community, war and peace. It insists that economic and institutional structures are just only to the extent that they serve the integral development of the person and promote the responsible participation of all. The importance of Gaudium et Spes for the Social Doctrine of the Church lies not only in having opened up horizons for thematic reflection, but also in its method of discernment that invites us to interpret historical changes guided by the Gospel and human expertise. This approach reveals that dialogue with the world is not a tactical choice for the Church, but a concrete expression of her mission because the Gospel, like leaven, is capable of transforming the structures of society from within and forging paths toward a greater humanity. The Declaration Dignitatis Humanae recognized that religious freedom is a fundamental right grounded in human dignity that must be guaranteed by law so as to prevent people from being forced to act against their conscience.~~ *institutions close to humanity, engaged with lived social reality and committed to reflecting on concrete historical situations. These documents insisted that economic and institutional structures are just only to the extent that they serve the integral development of the person and promote the responsible participation of all. Freedom of conscience was recognized as a fundamental right grounded in human dignity that must be guaranteed by law. This principle is highly relevant today and continues to provide social ethics with decisive criteria for protecting individuals and building pluralistic and peaceful societies.*

35. An understanding of peace emerged in this period that was not reduced to the mere absence of war, but took shape within the scope of integral human development. ~~In Populorum Progressio, Paul VI described development~~ *Humanist social thinkers described development* as a transition from less humane to more humane living conditions — a process that concerns "each person and the whole person," that is, every dimension of the person and all people without exception. Development understood in this way is in reality "the new name for peace," because it aims to eradicate the roots of injustice and conflict and create opportunities for a more dignified life for all.

36. Applied to postindustrial society, marked by urbanization, new forms of poverty and rapid cultural changes, ~~Paul VI believed that although the Gospel was proclaimed, written and lived out in a historical and cultural context very different from our own, its message was not "outdated." Instead, it offers a vision of the human person, relationships, authority and the common good~~ *humanist social ethics maintained that although its foundational texts were written in very different historical contexts, its core insights were not "outdated." Instead, the vision of the human person, relationships, authority and the common good* that emerges from this tradition remains relevant and capable of inspiring fresh responses to new forms of injustice and alienation.

### ***The recent period: ecology, fraternity, and the digital age***

37. The most recent phase of social thought has been marked by a deepened awareness of the interconnection between human dignity, ecological integrity, and global solidarity. **The encyclicals 'Laudato Si'** and **Fratelli Tutti**, by Pope Francis, *The tradition of ecological ethics and global solidarity, articulated by many thinkers and movements of the late 20th and early 21st centuries*, brought these themes into systematic dialogue with the core commitments of social ethics. The care of our common home is not a peripheral concern but intrinsic to the defence of human dignity — for the poor and vulnerable are always the first to suffer from environmental degradation. Global fraternity — the recognition that all human beings are bound by ties of solidarity that transcend national borders — is not an aspiration but an ethical imperative in an age of planetary challenges.

38. The digital revolution adds a further dimension to this developing tradition. **The Church** *Humanist social ethics* approaches the digital transformation of society not merely as a technical question but as a question of power, dignity, and justice. Who controls the algorithms? Whose voices are amplified and whose are silenced? How are the gains of technological progress distributed? These are not merely questions for engineers or economists, but for all who are committed to a just and humane world. It is in this spirit that the present document engages with the challenges of artificial intelligence.

### ***Interpreting history in the light of reason***

39. The development of humanist social thought teaches us that **the light of faith** *the light of reason and moral experience* is not a fixed point but a living source, which illuminates new situations as they arise. Each generation must interpret its own historical moment with fresh eyes, drawing on the accumulated wisdom of the tradition while remaining open to new insights. The challenge of our time — how to safeguard human dignity and promote the common good in the era of artificial intelligence — requires exactly this combination of rootedness and openness, of fidelity to core principles and courage in their application.

## CHAPTER TWO

### FOUNDATIONS AND PRINCIPLES OF ~~THE SOCIAL DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH~~ HUMANIST SOCIAL ETHICS

#### The foundations of social ethics

##### *The human person:*

##### ~~image of the Triune God~~ *bearer of intrinsic dignity*

40. The human person stands at the centre of social ethics. Not as an abstraction, but as a concrete, embodied individual — capable of reason and relationship, of love and labour, of suffering and joy. This centrality does not derive from productivity, social utility, or any contingent quality; it is ~~grounded in the theological affirmation that every person is created in the image and likeness of God (imago Dei) — a unique, irreducible being who reflects the divine intelligence and love, who is called to know, love and serve God and neighbour, and who participates in the ongoing work of creation.~~ *grounded in the philosophical affirmation that every person is an end in themselves — a unique, irreducible being with a capacity for reason and moral agency that cannot be legitimately reduced to a means for any other end. This is the bedrock of humanist social ethics, expressed across many philosophical traditions: from the Kantian insistence on rational autonomy to the communitarian recognition of persons as embedded in webs of relationship and mutual obligation.*

41. This affirmation has direct consequences for how we understand technology. If every person is ~~made in the image of God~~ *an end in themselves with intrinsic worth*, then no person may be reduced to a data point, a consumer profile, or an efficiency unit. ~~The imago Dei grounds the absolute prohibition on treating persons as mere means; it also grounds~~ *The intrinsic dignity of persons grounds the absolute prohibition on treating them as mere means; it also grounds* the claim that every person has a right to participate in decisions that shape their life, and that systems of power — including technological systems — must be accountable to those they affect.

##### *The equal dignity of all human beings*

42. From the equal dignity of every person flows the principle of non-discrimination: no person may be treated as less than fully human on the basis of race, sex, national origin, religion, disability, age, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic. This principle is not a recent discovery; it has been painfully won through centuries of struggle against slavery, colonialism, patriarchy, and countless other systems of oppression. ~~Its deepest root, for the Christian tradition, is the recognition that every person is equally loved by God and equally called to eternal life.~~ *Its deepest root, for humanist traditions, is the recognition that every person shares equally in the capacity for reason, suffering, and flourishing that constitutes our common humanity.* Whatever our metaphysical starting points, the practical implication is the same: systems, structures, and technologies that systematically disadvantage particular groups are unjust, and must be reformed.

### ***The supreme value of human rights***

43. The tradition of human rights translates the abstract principle of human dignity into concrete, enforceable claims. Every person has a right to life, to physical integrity, to freedom of thought and expression, to participation in the political community, to work under just conditions, to education, to healthcare, and to a share in the cultural life of humanity. These rights are not granted by states; they are recognized by states as pre-political claims that any legitimate political order must respect. In the era of AI, this framework must be extended: every person has a right to *meaningful explanation of automated decisions that affect their lives, to protection against discriminatory algorithms, to privacy and data sovereignty, and to participation in the governance of the technologies that shape their world. These are not new rights invented for the digital age, but applications of perennial principles — dignity, autonomy, equality, participation — to new circumstances.*

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## **The principles of social ethics**

### ***The principle of the common good***

44. The common good is not the sum of individual interests, nor the imposition of a single vision on all; it is the set of social conditions that enable individuals and communities to flourish. It requires institutional structures, legal frameworks, shared infrastructure, and cultural practices that support rather than undermine the dignity and development of every person. ~~The Second Vatican Council defined the common good as "the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily."~~ *Classical humanist political philosophy and modern social democracy alike have defined the common good in terms of the conditions for the full development of human capacities.* In the digital age, the common good includes access to the internet as a public utility, the regulation of monopolistic platforms, the democratic governance of AI, and the protection of public space — including digital public space — from purely commercial capture.

### ***The principle of the universal destination of goods***

45. The resources of the earth — including the products of human knowledge and creativity — are not the exclusive property of those who happen to control them at any given moment. They have a universal destination: they are meant to serve the good of all. Private ownership is legitimate, but it is not absolute; it is always conditioned by the social function of property. In the digital economy, this principle challenges the treatment of data, algorithms, and AI systems as purely private assets to be exploited for profit without regard for social consequences. *The fruits of artificial intelligence — which are built on the collective data generated by billions of people, on publicly funded research, and on the cumulative intellectual heritage of humanity — belong, in a meaningful sense, to humanity as a whole, and their benefits should be distributed accordingly.*

### ***The principle of subsidiarity***

46. Subsidiarity holds that decisions should be made at the lowest level of social organization capable of making them effectively. Higher-level authorities should support, not supplant, the capacities of individuals, families, local communities, and civil society. Applied to the governance of AI, subsidiarity suggests that regulatory power should be distributed across multiple levels — local, national, and international — and that communities most affected by technological systems should have a meaningful voice in how they are governed. *It also counsels against the concentration of AI governance in the hands of a small number of powerful corporations or states, which is precisely the concentration of power that the Babel narrative warns against.*

### ***The principle of solidarity***

47. Solidarity is the recognition that we are bound to one another across the lines of difference — nation, class, generation, culture — and that the flourishing of each depends on the flourishing of all. It is not mere sentiment but a practical commitment to institutional arrangements and personal dispositions that take seriously the claims of those we will never meet. In the digital age, solidarity requires *that the benefits of AI be accessible to all, not only to those in wealthy countries or privileged social positions; that the risks and disruptions of technological transformation be borne equitably rather than concentrated among the most vulnerable; and that the voices of those most affected by algorithmic systems have weight in decisions about their design and deployment.*

### ***The principle of social justice***

48. Social justice concerns the fair distribution of benefits and burdens in society, and the structural conditions that make such fairness possible or impossible. It requires not only that individuals act justly, but that institutions, economic systems, and technological infrastructures be designed and governed in ways that are just. ~~The Church's tradition of social justice has consistently insisted on the preferential option for the poor: in situations of conflict between the interests of the powerful and the needs of the vulnerable, the claims of the latter must take priority.~~ *The humanist tradition of social justice has consistently insisted on the priority of the most vulnerable: in situations of conflict between the interests of the powerful and the needs of the vulnerable, the claims of the latter must take priority. This is not charity but justice.*

### ***Integral human development***

49. Human development is not merely economic growth or technological progress. It is the integral flourishing of every dimension of the person: cognitive, affective, relational, creative, civic, and ~~spiritual~~ *meaning-making*. A society that produces great technological capacity while leaving many of its members isolated, alienated, or unable to participate in civic life has not achieved development in the fullest sense. The standard by which AI and digital systems must be assessed is not whether they increase GDP or productivity, but whether they expand or contract the conditions for integral human flourishing.

### ***An examination of conscience for our times***

50. Before proceeding to the specific challenges of AI, ~~the Church~~ *this tradition* pauses to ask honestly: how well do existing institutions, policies, and social arrangements embody these principles? The answer is mixed. On the one hand, the last century has seen remarkable progress in the recognition of human rights, the reduction of extreme poverty, the extension of democratic participation, and the expansion of access to education and healthcare. On the other hand, inequality has grown dramatically in many contexts; democratic institutions are under strain; public discourse is distorted by misinformation and manipulation; and the natural environment on which all life depends is being degraded at an accelerating rate. The emergence of powerful AI systems is not happening in a vacuum; it is happening in this context, and its effects will be shaped by it. This examination is not cause for despair, but for clear-eyed realism and renewed determination.

## CHAPTER THREE

### TECHNOLOGY AND DOMINANCE: THE GRANDEUR OF HUMANITY IN LIGHT OF THE PROMISES OF AI

#### *The technocratic paradigm and digital power*

51. The emergence of powerful digital technologies has given rise to what may be called a technocratic paradigm: the tendency to treat technological capability as the primary standard of value, and to subordinate all other considerations — human dignity, social cohesion, ecological integrity, democratic participation — to the logic of technological optimization. This paradigm is not neutral. It tends to concentrate power in the hands of those who control the most powerful technologies, to marginalize those who lack access, and to erode the social and political institutions that protect the common good. Against this paradigm, *the Church asserts a humanistic vision of technology* *humanist social ethics asserts a vision of technology* in the service of persons, not persons in the service of technology.

52. Digital power takes several forms that warrant particular attention. First, there is the power of data: the capacity to collect, store, and analyze information about individuals and populations at unprecedented scale. Second, there is the power of algorithms: the capacity to make consequential decisions — about credit, employment, healthcare, legal outcomes, and social participation — in ways that are often opaque and unaccountable. Third, there is the power of platforms: the capacity of a small number of companies to shape the information environment of billions of people, determining what they see, what they believe, and how they relate to one another. Fourth, there is the power of automation: the capacity to replace human labor across a wide range of domains, with profound consequences for the distribution of work, income, and social participation.

#### **Artificial intelligence: a valuable tool that requires vigilance**

53. Artificial intelligence, understood broadly as the capacity of computational systems to perform tasks that have historically required human intelligence, is not a single technology but a family of technologies with widely varying capabilities, applications, and risks. Many of these applications hold genuine promise for human flourishing: AI can improve medical diagnosis, accelerate scientific research, make education more personalized and accessible, help manage complex logistical and environmental challenges, and extend human creative and cognitive capabilities in ways that were previously unimaginable. These benefits are real, and *the Church humanist social ethics* does not approach AI with a posture of reflexive suspicion. Technology is, as noted above, a profoundly human endeavour — an expression of the creativity, curiosity, and problem-solving capacity that define our species.

54. At the same time, the deployment of AI systems raises profound concerns that must be addressed with clarity and urgency. These concerns include: the reinforcement of existing biases and inequalities through discriminatory algorithms; the erosion of privacy through pervasive surveillance; the manipulation of public opinion through

targeted disinformation; the displacement of workers without adequate social provision for those affected; the concentration of economic and political power in the hands of a small number of AI-dominant corporations and states; the development of autonomous weapons systems that remove human judgment from lethal decisions; and the risk of catastrophic failure in critical systems — infrastructure, financial markets, healthcare — that are increasingly dependent on AI. These are not hypothetical future risks; they are present realities that are already causing harm to real people.

### ***Responsibility, transparency, and the governance of AI***

55. Effective governance of AI requires clarity about who is responsible for its development and deployment, and what standards must be met. Responsibility must be assigned clearly and enforced effectively. Developers, deployers, and users of AI systems all bear responsibility for the consequences of those systems, and this responsibility cannot be diffused into anonymity through the complexity of supply chains or the opacity of algorithms. Transparency is a prerequisite of accountability: persons affected by automated decisions have a right to meaningful explanation of how those decisions were made, and to mechanisms for challenge and redress. *This is not a demand for technical minutiae, but for the kind of intelligible justification that democratic societies require of all exercises of power over persons.*

56. The governance of AI cannot be left to the market or to the voluntary commitments of corporations. It requires robust public institutions — national regulatory agencies, international agreements, and democratic oversight mechanisms — that are capable of setting and enforcing standards that reflect the full range of human values, not only those legible to commercial metrics. *Civil society, academic research, labour organizations, and affected communities must have meaningful roles in the governance of AI, not merely as consultees but as co-shapers of the regulatory frameworks that will determine how this technology is developed and deployed.*

## **What must not be lost**

### ***Underlying narratives: transhumanism and posthumanism***

57. Among the cultural and philosophical currents that shape the development of AI, two deserve particular attention: transhumanism and posthumanism. Transhumanism holds that human beings should use technology to transcend the biological limitations of the human condition — eliminating disease, extending life indefinitely, augmenting cognitive and physical capacities beyond current norms. Posthumanism goes further, envisioning a future in which the distinction between human and machine is dissolved, and in which intelligence, agency, and even consciousness may be instantiated in non-biological substrates. These visions are not without genuine insights: the aspiration to reduce suffering and expand human capability is admirable, and the recognition that the human is a historically changing kind of entity has real philosophical merit. However, both frameworks tend to evacuate the normative core of humanist ethics — the conviction that there is something about human existence as it is that is worth protecting, something that cannot be reduced to substrate or optimized away.

58. Against the reductionism of transhumanism and posthumanism, **Christian humanism insists that the human person is not merely a biological platform to be upgraded, but a being created in the image of God, whose dignity is grounded in a relationship with the divine that no technology can replicate or enhance.** *humanist social ethics insists that the human person is not merely a biological platform to be upgraded, but a being whose dignity is grounded in capacities — for reason, relationship, creativity, and moral agency — that constitute what is most distinctively human, and that no technology can replicate or replace.* This does not mean that all enhancement is wrong, or that every technological modification of the human condition is to be rejected. It means that the criterion for evaluating such modifications is not whether they increase performance or longevity, but whether they deepen or diminish the conditions for genuine human flourishing.

### ***The limit, the heart, the grandeur of the human person***

59. Human vulnerability — our finitude, our dependence on one another, our susceptibility to illness and loss — is not a defect to be engineered away. It is constitutive of what we are, and it grounds our capacity for empathy, solidarity, and love. A culture that treats vulnerability as a problem to be solved by technology, rather than as a condition to be embraced and shared, is one that has lost touch with something essential about what it means to be human. **The encounter with the crucified and risen Christ — the God who enters into human suffering and transforms it from within — is the deepest resource of Christian humanism for resisting the temptation of technocratic invulnerability.** *The encounter with the sufferings of others — which grounds the moral emotions of compassion and solidarity — is the deepest resource of humanist ethics for resisting the temptation of technocratic invulnerability.* We are not called to a future without suffering, but to a future in which suffering is met with care, and in which the structures of society are organised to minimise unnecessary harm.

60. The grandeur of the human person is not located in capability alone. It is found in the capacity for love — the free, unconditional gift of self to another — which no artificial system can replicate. It is found in moral seriousness: the willingness to take responsibility for one's actions and their consequences, to acknowledge error and seek to repair it, to hold oneself accountable to values that transcend self-interest. It is found in the creative imagination: the capacity to envision what does not yet exist, to give form to beauty, to make meaning out of suffering and mortality. These dimensions of the human cannot be automated or outsourced. They are what must be protected.

### ***The authentic 'more than human':***

***grace and Christian humanism*** *culture and humanist flourishing*

61. The aspiration to be "more than human" is ancient and legitimate. What differs is the path proposed. **Christian humanism locates the "more than human" in the transformative encounter with grace — in the opening of the person to a love and a wisdom that exceed their own capacities, not by eliminating the human but by elevating and perfecting it. The authentic transcendence of the human person is not achieved by replacing biology with silicon, but by the deepening of love, justice, and wisdom that the Gospel offers to all who receive it.** *Humanist ethics locates the "more than human" in*

*the transformative encounter with culture, education, and moral formation — in the opening of the person to a love and a wisdom that exceed their individual capacities, not by eliminating the human but by deepening and expanding it. The authentic transcendence of the human person is not achieved by replacing biology with silicon, but by the deepening of love, justice, and wisdom that the best of our traditions offer to all who engage with them.* Technology can be a servant of this aspiration, but it cannot substitute for it.

### **Two cities and two loves**

62. The tradition of political philosophy has long distinguished between two fundamental orientations of human social life: the orientation toward domination and self-aggrandizement, and the orientation toward mutual service and the common good. ~~Augustine spoke of two cities, defined by two loves: the love of self to the point of contempt for God, and the love of God to the point of contempt for self.~~ *Political philosophers have spoken of two cities, defined by two loves: the love of self to the point of contempt for others, and the love of others to the point of genuine solidarity.* In the era of AI, these two orientations are in direct contest. The orientation toward domination produces an AI that serves the interests of those who control it, concentrates power, surveils populations, and optimises for profit. The orientation toward service produces an AI that is genuinely accountable, accessible, and oriented toward the good of all. The choice between them is not primarily a technical question but a moral and political one — and it is a choice that every society must make.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### SAFEGUARDING HUMANITY AT A TIME OF TRANSFORMATION: TRUTH, WORK, FREEDOM

#### Truth as a common good

##### *Truth and democracy*

63. Democracy depends on a shared epistemic commons: a set of agreed facts, reliable sources of information, and norms of rational discourse without which citizens cannot make meaningful decisions about their collective life. This commons is under severe strain. The proliferation of digital misinformation, the fragmentation of media ecosystems into mutually reinforcing ideological silos, the use of AI to generate plausible-seeming falsehoods at industrial scale, and the deliberate manipulation of public opinion by powerful actors — all of these threaten the epistemic foundations of democratic self-governance. ~~The Church has always maintained that truth is not a matter of majority vote, but this does not diminish the imperative to protect the shared epistemic conditions on which democratic life depends.~~ *Humanist ethics insists that the integrity of public discourse is a precondition of democratic self-governance, and that the deliberate manufacture and distribution of falsehood is not merely wrong in the abstract but a direct assault on the conditions of political freedom.*

##### *Communication and the collective imagination*

64. The media environment shapes not only what people believe but who they are — their sense of identity, their understanding of belonging, their capacity for empathy with those unlike themselves. An information environment dominated by algorithmically curated outrage, by content optimised for engagement rather than truth, and by the systematic exploitation of psychological vulnerabilities, is one that degrades the moral and civic capacities of persons. *This is not a merely aesthetic complaint; it is a claim about justice, because a degraded information environment disproportionately harms those who are least equipped to navigate it critically — children, the elderly, the poorly educated, those in conditions of poverty and stress.*

##### *Toward an ecology of communication*

65. An ecology of communication — by analogy with the ecology of the natural environment — is a system of practices, institutions, and norms that maintains the health of the information environment on which human social and civic life depends. Such an ecology requires: public investment in quality journalism and public broadcasting; strong legal frameworks against defamation, fraud, and incitement; algorithmic transparency and accountability; media literacy education at all levels; and international cooperation to prevent the use of digital platforms as instruments of political manipulation. ~~The Church supports and encourages all of these initiatives, not as a matter of political preference, but as a requirement of the common good.~~ *These initiatives are required not by any particular political preference, but by the basic commitments of a society that takes the common good seriously.*

### ***An educational alliance for the digital age***

66. Education is the most powerful long-term investment a society can make in the human capacities needed to navigate the digital age with wisdom and integrity. This requires not only technical education — digital literacy, computational thinking, data skills — but above all education in the humanistic disciplines: critical thinking, ethical reasoning, historical understanding, aesthetic sensibility, and the capacity for empathy and dialogue. *These capacities are not luxuries or supplementary to "real" education in technical skills; they are the foundation on which responsible citizenship, genuine creativity, and the wise use of technology depend.*

### ***The central role of schools***

67. Schools are the primary institutional sites in which the next generation learns not only knowledge and skills but habits of mind, social dispositions, and civic values. In the face of the digital revolution, schools face a double challenge: to equip students with the technical capabilities they will need, while simultaneously protecting and deepening the human capacities that technology cannot provide. This requires teachers who are themselves adequately supported and equipped; curricula that integrate technological and humanistic education; and institutional cultures that model the values of honesty, care, and collaborative inquiry that the wider society needs. *The Church, through its extensive network of educational institutions worldwide, is committed to this task. All institutions of education, public and private, religious and secular, share in this commitment.*

## **The dignity of work at a time of digital transition**

### ***The value of work***

68. Work is not merely a means of earning income; it is a fundamental mode of human self-expression, social participation, and dignity. Through work, persons contribute to the common good, develop their capacities, sustain their families, and find meaning and purpose. The threat that AI poses to employment is therefore not merely an economic problem but a human and social one: when work disappears, it is not only income that is lost but the social recognition, the structure, and the sense of purpose that work provides. *This does not mean that every job must be preserved at all costs; some forms of work are degrading or dangerous and their automation is genuinely welcome. But it does mean that the transition away from labor-intensive employment must be managed with care, with adequate social provision, and with genuine attention to the human costs of displacement.*

### ***The problem of unemployment***

69. Technological unemployment is not a new phenomenon; previous waves of technological disruption have created new categories of work even as they destroyed old ones. However, the speed and breadth of AI-driven automation raise genuine questions about whether this pattern will repeat at sufficient scale and speed to prevent

widespread structural unemployment. ~~The Church does not claim to know the answer with certainty,~~ *Humanist social ethics does not claim to know the answer with certainty,* but insists that the question must be taken seriously, and that complacency in the face of foreseeable harm to vulnerable workers is morally unacceptable. Policies to address technological unemployment might include: investment in education and retraining; strengthening of social safety nets; reform of working-time norms; and exploration of mechanisms for distributing the gains of productivity growth more broadly.

### ***An economy that values dignity***

70. The economy is a human institution, created by human beings for human purposes. It is not governed by laws as rigid as the laws of physics; it is shaped by choices — about what to produce, how to organize production, how to distribute the fruits of production, and what to count as valuable. An economy that values dignity is one that makes these choices in ways that are consistent with the equal worth of every person: that provides adequate incomes and secure employment; that distributes the gains of technological progress broadly; that protects workers against exploitation; and that does not treat human beings as factors of production to be optimised and discarded. *Cooperative models of enterprise, strong labour protections, progressive taxation, and robust public provision of essential services are all among the institutional tools through which an economy can be shaped to serve dignity rather than merely accumulation.*

### ***Families and young people: the social conditions for hope***

71. The family — in its diverse forms — is the primary institution in which human beings first experience care, belonging, and the formation of character. The economic and social disruptions caused by technological transformation fall heavily on families: through unemployment and precarious employment, through the erosion of time for family life, through the colonization of domestic and relational space by digital platforms, and through the particular vulnerabilities of children and young people in algorithmically mediated environments. ~~The Church has always insisted on the importance of supporting families as the fundamental unit of social life, and this insistence acquires new urgency in the digital age.~~ *Humanist social ethics insists on the importance of supporting families and communities as the fundamental sites of human formation and care, and this insistence acquires new urgency in the digital age.*

## **Protecting freedom against dependencies and commercialization**

### ***Dependencies and societal control***

72. One of the distinctive features of digital platforms is their capacity to create dependency: through habit, through network effects, through the architecture of addictive engagement that maximises time-on-platform at the cost of other goods. These dependencies are not accidental; they are designed, by engineers whose metric of

success is engagement rather than wellbeing. The result is a form of **technoeratic colonization of the imagination** *commercially engineered colonization of attention and imagination* that narrows the space of thought, erodes the capacity for sustained attention, and substitutes algorithmic curation for genuine human encounter and reflection. Addressing this requires not only individual willpower — which is poorly matched against the resources of multi-billion-dollar platforms — but structural interventions: regulation of addictive design practices, limits on the use of behavioral data for manipulation, and investment in alternative forms of public digital infrastructure.

### ***Breaking the chains of new forms of slavery***

73. The language of slavery is not hyperbole when applied to certain conditions in the digital economy: to the gig workers whose labour is managed by algorithms that extract maximum output for minimum compensation, to the platform workers denied basic labor protections in the name of "flexibility," to the users whose attention is harvested as a commodity without their meaningful consent. These are genuine forms of unfreedom, in which persons are subjected to systems of control that serve the interests of others at their expense. *The abolition of these new forms of unfreedom requires the same combination of moral clarity, political will, and institutional creativity that was required for the abolition of older forms of servitude.*

### ***A shared responsibility***

74. The responsibility to address these challenges is shared: by governments, which must regulate and provide; by corporations, which must build and deploy AI responsibly; by civil society, which must advocate and organize; by educators, who must equip the next generation; and by individual citizens, who must exercise their voice and their agency. No single actor can solve these challenges alone. What is required is a democratic politics of technology — one that is genuinely responsive to the needs and voices of all citizens, and not only to those with the resources to shape the regulatory environment. **The Church commits itself to this shared responsibility, through its educational institutions, its engagement in public debate, its advocacy for the poor and vulnerable, and its witness to the possibility of a life organized around values other than profit and power.** *All institutions and individuals committed to human dignity share in this responsibility, each contributing what they uniquely can to the shared project of building a just and humane digital society.*

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE CULTURE OF POWER AND THE CIVILIZATION OF SOLIDARITY

[ Original heading: ~~THE CULTURE OF POWER AND THE CIVILIZATION OF LOVE~~ — retitled *THE CULTURE OF POWER AND THE CIVILIZATION OF SOLIDARITY* ]

#### *The civilization of solidarity in the digital age*

75. Against the culture of power — which concentrates decision-making authority, disciplines populations through surveillance, and treats the common good as a residue of competitive self-interest — ~~the Church proposes the civilization of love: a social order shaped by the values of the Gospel, in which every person is recognized as a brother or sister, and in which the institutions of society are organized around the service of the most vulnerable.~~ *humanist social ethics proposes the civilization of solidarity: a social order shaped by the values of mutual recognition and shared responsibility, in which every person is recognized as a fellow human being deserving of equal dignity, and in which the institutions of society are organized around the service of the most vulnerable.* This is not a utopian fantasy; it is a practical program, realized imperfectly in every society that takes human rights seriously, and toward which history, at its best, tends.

#### The culture of power

##### *The normalization of war*

76. War — the organized use of violence to achieve political ends — has been a constant feature of human history. But the normalization of war, the treatment of military violence as an ordinary instrument of policy rather than a catastrophic last resort, represents a profound moral failure. In the digital age, this normalization is accelerating: cyber warfare blurs the line between peace and conflict; information warfare manipulates populations without physical violence; and the development of autonomous weapons removes human judgment from lethal decisions. *The humanist tradition insists that war, where it cannot be avoided, must be governed by strict principles of proportionality, discrimination, and necessity — and that the development of weapons systems that operate autonomously, without meaningful human control, violates these principles.*

##### *Force without limits*

77. The application of force without legal or moral limits — whether in warfare, in the policing of civilian populations, or in the economic coercion of weaker states — is a form of injustice that AI risks amplifying dramatically. When surveillance technologies enable governments to monitor and control entire populations; when algorithmic systems make life-altering decisions about individuals without accountability; when autonomous weapons can be deployed at scale without human judgment; the concentration of coercive power reaches levels that are incompatible with the dignity and freedom of persons. *The response to this concentration of power is not merely legal*

*but cultural: a culture that normalizes these applications of AI will produce them, regardless of what the law says. A culture that insists on the dignity of every person, on accountability and transparency, on the rule of law as a constraint on all power — including technological power — will resist them.*

### **Weapons and artificial intelligence**

78. The application of AI to weapons systems raises questions that go to the heart of what we understand by moral responsibility and human dignity. Autonomous weapons systems — capable of selecting and engaging targets without meaningful human control — present a challenge that existing frameworks of international humanitarian law were not designed to address. When a machine kills, who is responsible? The developer, the deployer, the commander who authorized the system? The diffusion of moral responsibility through technological mediation is not a solution but an evasion — and it is one that the most powerful militaries in the world are actively pursuing. *The international community must establish clear norms prohibiting the development and deployment of fully autonomous weapons systems, and must do so before such systems become so widespread that prohibition becomes practically impossible.*

### **The crisis of multilateralism**

79. The challenges of the digital age — including the governance of AI, the regulation of digital platforms, the management of data flows, and the prevention of AI-enabled warfare — are inherently global, and cannot be addressed by individual states acting alone. Yet the multilateral institutions created in the post-World War II era are under strain: challenged by great-power competition, by the rise of nationalist politics, by the inadequacy of their founding frameworks to new realities, and by the increasing capacity of powerful non-state actors to operate across jurisdictions without effective accountability. *The response to this crisis is not to abandon multilateralism but to reform and strengthen it: to create new international institutions and agreements capable of governing the digital dimension of global life, and to ensure that these institutions are genuinely representative of all humanity, not only of its most powerful states and corporations.*

### **A supposed political realism**

80. Those who resist efforts to constrain power — whether military, economic, or technological — often invoke "realism": the claim that in a competitive world, those who do not maximize their power will be dominated by those who do, and that ethical constraints are therefore luxuries that can only be afforded by the naive. This is a seductive argument, but it is ultimately self-defeating. A world in which all actors maximize power without ethical constraint is a world of escalating conflict and mutual destruction. The argument for ethical constraint is not that it will be costless, but that the alternative — an unconstrained race to the technological and military bottom — is far more costly. *History teaches that the most durable forms of political order are those grounded in genuine consent, legitimate authority, and respect for the rights of all; not in the naked exercise of power.*

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## Building the civilization of solidarity

### *We can all do our part*

81. The transformation of a culture of power into a civilization of solidarity is not the work of governments alone, nor of international institutions, nor of corporations. It is the work of every person who chooses, in their daily life, to act with integrity, to resist the normalization of injustice, to treat those unlike themselves with dignity, and to contribute their particular gifts to the common good. This is the logic of the Nehemiah narrative: the walls of the city are rebuilt not by a single hero but by many people, each attending to their own section, each sustained by the knowledge that they are part of a shared enterprise.

### *The need to disarm words*

82. The language of public discourse matters. Words that dehumanize, that incite hatred, that normalize contempt for particular groups, prepare the ground for concrete acts of injustice and violence. The digital information environment has given new power to this kind of language, and new reach. *The commitment to disarming words — to replacing the language of contempt with the language of common humanity — is not weakness or sentimentality. It is a practical necessity for any society that wishes to remain capable of the democratic self-governance on which the common good depends.*

### *Building peace through justice*

83. Peace is not the absence of conflict; it is the presence of justice. Where people are denied their rights, excluded from participation, subjected to exploitation, or treated as less than fully human, the conditions for peace are absent. No amount of surveillance, policing, or military force can substitute for justice as a foundation for peace. In the digital age, this means ensuring that the transformations being wrought by AI are governed justly: that their benefits are widely shared, that their risks are not concentrated among the already vulnerable, and that those affected by them have voice in how they are managed.

### *Adopting the perspective of victims*

84. A test of any social ethics is whether it can adopt the perspective of those who are most harmed by the systems it seeks to govern. This requires active effort, because the voices of those who are most harmed are typically the least audible in the chambers where decisions are made. *The victims of algorithmic discrimination, of surveillance-enabled repression, of platform-mediated exploitation, of AI-accelerated economic displacement — these persons must be central, not peripheral, to the governance of AI. Their experiences are not merely data points; they are moral evidence about what is actually happening in the world, and what needs to change.*

### *Cultivating a healthy realism*

85. A healthy realism about the possibilities and limits of change is not the same as fatalism or cynicism. It involves recognizing that good outcomes require sustained effort, that interests that benefit from the status quo will resist change, and that progress is typically incremental rather than revolutionary. But it also involves recognizing that change is possible — that the history of human societies is full of examples of apparently intractable injustices being overcome, of institutions being reformed, of cultures being shifted. *The development of nuclear weapons was followed by international agreements that have, imperfectly but genuinely, constrained their proliferation. The recognition of environmental degradation as a global challenge has produced international frameworks that, while inadequate, represent real progress. AI governance is achievable, if there is the political will to achieve it.*

### **Reviving dialogue**

86. Dialogue — genuine dialogue, in which different perspectives are heard and taken seriously, in which the goal is mutual understanding rather than victory — is the primary tool of democratic self-governance and of peaceful conflict resolution. The digital age has in many ways impoverished dialogue: by rewarding polarization, by enabling the construction of information silos, by making contempt easier and empathy harder. Reviving genuine dialogue requires investment — in institutions, in norms, in the cultural practices that make it possible. *It requires, above all, the willingness to treat those with whom we disagree as fellow human beings whose perspectives deserve engagement, even when we find those perspectives deeply wrong.*

### **The necessity of diplomacy and multilateralism**

87. The governance of AI requires new forms of international cooperation: agreements on data flows, on AI safety standards, on the prohibition of particularly dangerous applications, on the equitable distribution of the benefits of AI, and on the representation of all regions and peoples in AI governance processes. This is not a task that can be accomplished quickly or easily; it requires the patient, unglamorous work of diplomacy, negotiation, and institution-building. But it is essential. An ungoverned global AI race will produce outcomes that serve the interests of the most powerful actors at the expense of everyone else. *The alternative — an international regime for AI governance that is representative, rule-based, and genuinely committed to the benefit of all humanity — is achievable, and is worth every effort to achieve.*

### **Hoping and acting**

#### **Praying and hoping** *Hoping and acting*

88. The challenges described in this document are real, and the forces that produce and perpetuate them are powerful. It is natural to feel discouraged. *The Christian response to discouragement is prayer: the turning of the heart toward a God who sustains the possibility of the good even when human efforts fail. Prayer is not a substitute for action, but it sustains the disposition from which authentic action flows — hope, grounded not in confidence about outcomes but in trust in the one who holds all outcomes in his hands. The humanist response to discouragement is not despair but renewed commitment: the turning of the will toward a vision of the good that is worth*

*working for, even when success is uncertain. Hope, in this sense, is not a feeling but a practice — the practice of acting as if a better world is possible, because it is, and because without that action it will not come to be.* This hope is not passive. It is the source of the energy, creativity, and persistence that are needed to build, piece by piece, a world worthy of human dignity.

## CONCLUSION

### *The human word became flesh*

**The Word became flesh** *The human word became deed*

89. **The mystery of the Incarnation — the Word of God taking on human flesh — is the central affirmation of Christian faith, and it is from this mystery that Christian humanism draws its deepest resources. In Christ, God affirms the goodness of material existence, of embodied human life, of historical engagement. There is no escape from history into a purely spiritual realm; the task is to transform history from within, in the power of the Spirit.** *The oldest and most powerful affirmation of humanist ethics is that ideas must become deeds: that the commitment to human dignity is tested not in philosophical argument but in the choices made by individuals, institutions, and societies in the face of real challenges. There is no escape from history into pure theory; the task is to transform history from within, in the power of shared commitment and collective action.*

### *One body in*

**Christ** *shared humanity*

90. **The Christian vision of the human community as one body in Christ — in which every member is necessary, in which the suffering of one is the suffering of all, in which the gifts of each are for the benefit of all — is one of the most powerful images of solidarity ever articulated. It is this vision that sustains the Christian community in its engagement with the challenges of the age.** *The humanist vision of the human community as a shared body — in which every member is necessary, in which the suffering of one diminishes all, in which the gifts of each are for the benefit of all — is one of the most powerful images of solidarity that human thought has produced. It is this vision that sustains all communities of conscience in their engagement with the challenges of the age.*

### *The construction site of our time*

91. Magnifica Humanitas — Magnificent Humanity — is the aspiration at the heart of this document. Not a humanity that has achieved perfection, but a humanity that is always in the process of becoming more fully itself: more just, more compassionate, more creative, more capable of living together across difference. The era of AI presents both a threat to this aspiration and an opportunity to advance it. *The threat is real: AI can be used to concentrate power, to surveil and manipulate, to deepen inequality, and to erode the human capacities that matter most. The opportunity is equally real: AI can be used to expand access, to augment human capabilities in ways that are genuinely liberating, and to help address some of the most pressing challenges facing humanity.* Which future we get depends on the choices we make — individually, institutionally, politically, and culturally.

### *The song of hope*

*The song of hope: **the Magnificat** the human aspiration*

92. ~~The Magnificat — the song of Mary at the beginning of the Gospel of Luke — is one of the most radical social texts in the Christian tradition. It proclaims that God has "brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly," that he has "filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty." It is a song of hope that is also a manifesto of justice.~~ *The aspiration toward justice — the long, imperfect, unfinished human project of building a world in which the powerful are held accountable, the lowly are lifted up, the hungry are fed, and the full are asked to share — is one of the most consistent themes of human moral life across cultures and centuries. It is a song of hope that is also a manifesto of solidarity.*

93. This is the hope that sustains the work of all who are committed to human dignity in the age of AI. Not the hope of a technological utopia in which all problems are solved by better algorithms, but the hope of a world in which human beings — in all their magnificent, difficult, irreducible humanity — remain at the centre of the story. ~~This is the world that God desires for his children.~~ *This is the world that our shared humanity calls us to build together.*

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**\* About this article**

*This document has been created with research and editorial assistance of [Claude AI](#). It draws on Magnifica Humanitas (Pope Leo XIV, 15 May 2026). All five chapters and the conclusion were reworked to ground the encyclical's social-ethical analysis in shared human reason and solidarity rather than theological authority. The rewrite retained the document's analytical framework and core ethical principles while replacing every load-bearing theological claim.*

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