

One Church Many Cultures

THE GOOD NEWS OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY

In This Issue

1 COVER ARTICLE
AI in Light of Human Dignity

2 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

3 CHAIRMAN'S REFLECTION

4 AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS

5 ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLAND AFFAIRS

6 PASTORAL CARE OF MIGRANTS, REFUGEES, & TRAVELERS

8 HISPANIC/LATINO AFFAIRS

9 ASUNTOS HISPANOS/ LATINOS

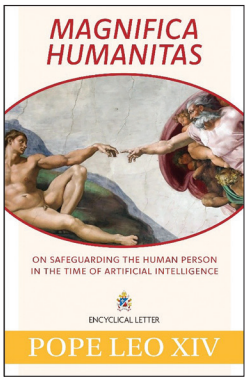
10 SPECIAL FEATURE

11 NEWS FROM THE SECRETARIAT

12 Committee and Staff
13 Recommended Resources
14 USCCB Positions on Artificial Intelligence
15 Prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe

AI in Light of Human Dignity

By Most Rev. John T. Folda



Every technological development has changed the way we live, work, build, and communicate. Like the printing press and the computer chip before it, artificial intelligence has exploded on the scene, and it will have a profound impact on our lives from now on.

AI has great promise and potential. Already it is being used to further the work of medical care, weather prediction, and engineering. In its best form, it could open paths to improve the lives of people all over the world. However, AI could also be used to exploit and dominate or to create division and strife. As AI becomes more versatile and powerful, the moral evaluation of AI will become even more important. And this is where human reason and conscience become indispensable. Every human person has a God-given conscience that allows us to evaluate the morality of a given act. AI can approximate this moral evaluation, but conscience is unique to our humanity.

In every era, the Church reflects on developments that affect the human family, and it does so in light of our faith in God. Pope Leo XIV has frequently spoken of the revolutionary changes that will come with advancements in technology, especially AI. But he also warns that such changes must always respect the unique dignity and individuality of the human person. He urges that we use this very advanced and powerful technology to benefit not just a few but all: to benefit the common good. Underlying his exhortation, he appeals once again to the "civilization of love," which is rooted in our relationship with God, who is love itself.

→ *Continued on page 2*

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Safeguarding Humanity

By Maria del Mar Muñoz-Visoso, MTS



Even before the USCCB announced the creation of a bishops' Task Force on Preserving Human Dignity in the Age of Artificial Intelligence in September, the Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church decided to make Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical, *Magnifica Humanitas* (*On Safeguarding the Human Person in the Time of Artificial Intelligence*), the central theme of this fall/winter newsletter issue.

Rather than offering a summary of the pope's document, when many good ones already exist out there, we asked our contributors to offer one highlight: something they found remarkable from their perspective. Theirs was not a simple task. The text is so rich and timely that we had a hard time selecting potential quotes to highlight because so many good ones can be found in the message, and they are all equally relevant!

Three of our bishops responded to the challenge. Bishop Robert Brennan of Brooklyn, in his Chairman's Reflection, focuses on what it means to be human and makes the case for cultivating personal relationships, including with God, as a central component of our humanity. "Prayer cannot be answered by a machine. Love cannot be replaced by a device," he writes eloquently.

In the cover essay, Bishop John Folda of Fargo makes the case for moral reason and human conscience as indispensable elements to safeguard human dignity and the common good in the age of AI. Bishop Robert Boxie III, auxiliary of Washington, focuses on Catholic social teaching as the lens to evaluate everything we do, and he reflects on the pope's decision to apologize on behalf of the Church for its complicity and slow response to the radical incompatibility of the Gospel with slavery and human trafficking.

Fr. John E. Cordero brings the perspective of a pastor ministering to a largely immigrant population in Southern California. He affirms that "the lived experience of immigrants is a treasure trove of wisdom," a story that only they can tell and no machine can replace. Sabrina Paul-Noel reflects on the topic of solidarity in *Magnifica Humanitas* and on how her Haitian community chooses fraternity and hope over fear in these difficult times. Yohan Garcia, from the USCCB Secretariat of Justice, brings a uniquely Latino, Catholic social teaching perspective to his reading of the encyclical. And a final article and prayer remind us that the Virgin Mary—her life and prayer in the Magnificat—exemplifies how a Christian ought to respond to the issues of today and every age.

In the end, with this encyclical Pope Leo invites all of us not to be afraid to dirty our hands in "the construction site" of our time and to be, like Mary, "weavers of hope" (nos. 16, 245).

Maria del Mar Muñoz-Visoso is executive director of the USCCB Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church.

AI IN LIGHT OF HUMAN DIGNITY

Continued from page 1

In his first encyclical letter, *Magnifica Humanitas*, Pope Leo addresses both the opportunities and the risks associated with AI. His purpose is to remind us of the dignity of every human person in light of these new developments—and to caution against losing sight of our dignity in our enthusiasm for AI and the innovations that flow from it. The human person is sacred and endowed with God-given dignity and rights and must always have primacy in our decisions and actions.

In his May 2026 address introducing the encyclical, Pope Leo told us: "Every person is unique and irreplaceable, a free and intelligent subject with a conscience, capable of seeking God, serving one another, caring for our common home." Even as AI promises to bring enormous change to our culture and our world, we must work together to build a more human and fraternal society, and we must never lose sight of the unique, God-given dignity of each of our brothers and sisters.

Technology can be a useful tool, but it can never substitute for the genius and creativity of the human person. It cannot love sacrificially or aspire to the transcendent life that God has prepared for us. As with all new things, we should approach AI with a firm grounding in the truths that God has revealed to us and in the light of the saving love of Jesus Christ. Let us pray for the wisdom of the Holy Spirit as we continue this journey together.

Bishop Folda is the Bishop of Fargo in North Dakota.

CHAIRMAN'S REFLECTION

What Does It Mean to Be Human? The Central Question of *Magnifica Humanitas*

By Most Rev. Robert Brennan



Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical letter, *Magnifica Humanitas*, focuses not only on the relatively recent accessibility of artificial intelligence but more importantly on the question of what it means to be human.

Relationships are central to our humanity: certainly our relationships with one another, but above all our relationship with our Creator, the God who made us and loves us. God allows each of us to form a bond with him. This is a living, authentic relationship. Nothing can fabricate or replace it. In the very mystery of the Word made flesh, the mystery of humanity becomes clear. Jesus came to live among us and to teach us how to be human.

As Pope Leo XIV writes in *Magnifica Humanitas*, "we must lovingly safeguard the grandeur of humanity bestowed upon us and revealed in its fullness in Christ, the splendor of which no machine can ever replace" (no. 15).

A few months ago, I was asked by *The Tablet*, the newspaper of the Diocese of Brooklyn, about a platform someone created so people might converse with an AI-generated Jesus. We can understand what one might look for in such a platform. There is something comforting about adding a voice to what we know and understand about Jesus. Yet a computer-generated voice, even one in continuity with the Gospel, is not real. It is not Jesus.

The age-old problem, going back to the creation accounts in the book of Genesis, is the temptation to create God in our image and likeness, when the truth is the other way around. We find it easier to create God in the image we want at a given moment. Even we, as faithful believers, need to guard against the trap of treating Jesus as an imaginary friend: one who is there when we want him, who says what we want to hear, who does not challenge us, and who is silent when we want him to be.

> ***"We do not merely seek any kind of peace . . . but instead, the true peace born of justice."***
>
> **— Pope Leo XIV, *Magnifica Humanitas*, no. 215**

Jesus is a real person. We profess Jesus, risen from the dead, alive and present among us. Though we may not see him or hear a voice, as we are used to in relationships, he does give us ways to know and love him.

In the Bible, particularly in the Gospels, Jesus reveals himself to us. We encounter Jesus in a real way every time we attend Mass and partake of the Eucharist. In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and in each of the other sacraments, we find the presence of Jesus. Take time to tell him what is on your mind. Yes, speak to him as a friend. But take time to listen. Sit in the silence. You won't necessarily hear a response, but you will sense his living presence. Each of us needs a true friendship with Jesus to help us on our earthly pilgrimage. Prayer cannot be answered by a machine. Love cannot be replaced by a device.

AI is not going anywhere anytime soon. In academics and research, AI can be a useful resource. But it must never interfere with or replace our individual relationships with Jesus Christ. Nothing can replace the love and mercy of God and the Sacred Heart of Jesus, who loves us more than we can ever imagine. Let Jesus, true God and true Man, always be our comforter, protector, and redeemer.

Bishop Brennan is the Bishop of Brooklyn and chairman of the USCCB Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church.



An Apology for the Ages

By Most Rev. Robert Boxie III

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical, *Magnifica Humanitas*, is the document for our times. Steeped in Church Tradition and Catholic social teaching, it underscores the dignity of the human person in the era of artificial intelligence, a rapidly expanding phenomenon touching nearly every aspect modern society. AI, like technology generally, has great potential to enhance human flourishing, but AI also can diminish us. Pope Leo reiterates throughout his encyclical that any technology, progress, or "upgrades" in civilization must affirm the dignity of the human person, safeguard our sacredness, and be ordered to the common good, justice, and the care of the vulnerable and our common home. These fundamental tenets of our faith provide the lens to evaluate everything we do.

> *"The Church renews her firm condemnation of all forms of slavery, trafficking and the commodification of persons. She likewise highlights the urgent need for reflection and action that keep the inalienable dignity of every human being and the common good, as both the focus and goal of society."*
>
> **— Pope Leo XIV, *Magnifica Humanitas*, no. 174**

Deeply embedded in the document and easily missed is paragraph 176. Here Pope Leo asks forgiveness for the Church's past complicity in slavery and the trafficking of human beings. He acknowledges this "wound in Christian memory" and notes that although the Church has always upheld the dignity of the human person, her full understanding of this teaching and its incompatibility with slavery has matured over time—exactly 18 centuries! Now the pope asks for pardon. The United States, too, has a painful connection to slavery: the nation's participation in the transatlantic slave trade, which trafficked nearly 13 million Africans across the ocean. Chattel slavery dominated our history even before our nation's founding. Enslaved Africans were treated as property without basic human dignity. They endured some of the most inhumane conditions known to any civilization. Unfortunately, the legacy of slavery remains today in wide racial disparities.

Many, including myself, were surprised at Pope Leo's admission and request for forgiveness in a document concerning AI. But he is being historically honest and theologically consistent. He gives this apology in the context of new "digital" forms of slavery and human trafficking involved in AI's development and the digital economy created from it. Identifying modern forms of slavery allows the pope to reiterate the Church's past condemnation "of all forms of slavery, trafficking and the commodification of persons" (no. 174). And he recalls the broader practices of slavery and human trafficking in church history—a grave denial of the human dignity of so many. It should not surprise us that the first American pope, who has African ancestry and descends from those who both enslaved and were enslaved, would be sensitive to this history. He has the authority to set the historical record straight in the Church—that enslavement and

→ *Continued on page 12*

The Stories Only We Can Tell: *Magnifica Humanitas* on What a Machine Cannot Say



By Fr. John Ernesto Cordero, MMHC

From our sanctuary, I can see to the very back pews. During our 8 a.m. Spanish Mass on Sundays, I often catch the figure of a Korean woman discreetly dancing in the vestibule while the congregation sings. Bathed in the morning light from our front doors, her dance is her own full, conscious, and active participation in the worship of a community whose language she does not share.

In a conference on homiletics, the Capuchin priest Fr. Edward Foley described human beings as *homo fictus*: the storytelling human. My parishioner's dance makes a further point. In his 1962 memoir, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, the psychoanalyst Carl Jung said: "Loneliness does not come from having no people about one, but from being unable to communicate the things that seem important to oneself." Our ability to express how we experience and make sense of this world—our storytelling—is not merely descriptive of us. It is a necessary facet of our humanity.

As an immigrant pastor in Southern California, I shepherd a parish teeming with fellow immigrants. During a pastoral council meeting, I noticed that only two at the table had been born in the United States. One was a descendant of the Dutch who worked the old dairy farms of this area, and the other was the cat. The rest of us came from all over the world. This reality is mirrored, in varying degrees, in many of our Catholic communities.

> *"[Computers] lack the affective, relational and spiritual perspective through which human beings grow in wisdom."*
>
> **— Pope Leo XIV,**
> ***Magnifica Humanitas*, no. 99**

The lived experience of immigrants is a treasure trove of wisdom. When immigrants claim their own voice, their experience brings a freshness to the conversation about Catholic life in this country. These authentic stories can also become the foundation of pastoral initiatives in which immigrants are seen, heard, and welcomed. I cannot stress enough the intentionality with which church leadership needs to listen. In turn, immigrants must work to make their storytelling voice more articulate and compelling. According to the Filipino theologian Fr. Faustino Cruz, "the effectiveness of immigrant ministry depends on how intentionally immigrants become interpreters of their own daily life and struggle." He challenges immigrants, especially those in leadership, to reflect more deeply on how to make sense of a confusing world—to be storytellers with depth and agency.

Agency makes a voice authentic and powerful. In this era of pervasive artificial intelligence, that agency can be easily surrendered to a chatbot. In *Magnifica Humanitas*, Pope Leo XIV reminds us that artificial intelligence undergoes no lived experience, possesses no physical body, and does not mature through relationships (no. 99). It can imitate our language without ever having lived what our language carries. So we must put in the work to voice our own stories with clarity and eloquence. As Pope Leo told young Catholics gathered in Indianapolis in November 2025, we must not ask AI to do our homework for us. As immigrants, let us not surrender honest (even at times clumsy) attempts to communicate what is truly important—to tell the stories that can lead to our own full, conscious, and active participation in the Church in the United States.

Fr. John Ernesto Cordero, MMHC, is an immigrant pastor in Southern California.



Fear or Fraternity: A Haitian Reflection on Solidarity in *Magnifica Humanitas*

By Sabrina Paul-Noel

Of everything in *Magnifica Humanitas*, one teaching stood out to the Haitian community: Pope Leo XIV's warning that the way a society treats the migrant reveals whether it is ruled by fear or by fraternity. We read it not as doctrine but as a description of our own lives.

When the highest court in the land handed down a ruling that ripped away the protection keeping hundreds of thousands of Haitians safe, the ground shifted beneath families we love: parents afraid of being torn from their children, children who know no other home, workers who have built their lives here in good faith. Let no one call them illegal. They followed every rule and reached for the pathway to citizenship, only to be turned back by loopholes and a process so long that those who have done everything right still wait. Their fear is our fear now. When the night is darkest, our people do not disappear. We go to church, and we pray out loud.

This is not defiance for its own sake. It is faith. Our Lord taught that faith no larger than a mustard seed is enough to move what the powerful call immovable. We may look small before the court amid the years of waiting. Our faith is not small. This is the solidarity Pope Leo XIV names a principle and a virtue, the sworn enemy of indifference: We are a people of fraternity, and fraternity refuses to whisper.

We will not hide. We pray the novena to our patroness aloud. We carry her image through the open street. We sing in Creole until the whole neighborhood knows that we are here and unafraid, that we belong to God first, before any government paperwork. A people who prays in secret is still only frightened. A people who prays aloud, shoulder to shoulder, has begun to be free. That is our solidarity: no fear carried alone, no voice silenced alone.

The Church has not left us to sing alone. Bishops have refused to stay silent. Parishes have thrown open their doors. Ministries have met our people with dignity, not suspicion. They have said plainly that welcoming the stranger is not policy but the will of Christ. When one member of the Body of Christ suffers, the whole Body suffers, and it has come to stand with Haiti.

> ***"The Blessed Virgin Mary not only teaches us to recognize God's invisible work, but also directs our gaze to 'the points at which humanity is broken and the world becomes distorted.'"***
>
> **— Pope Leo XIV, *Magnifica Humanitas*, no. 244**

Pope Leo XIV closes his letter with the song of Mary, who stood before the powerful unafraid and proclaimed a God who casts down the mighty and lifts up the lowly. That is the promise of the mustard seed: the smallest faith outlasts the greatest power. Haiti has always sung it to Our Lady of Perpetual Help, whose help is perpetual, never occasional. The government has stamped the word "temporary" on our brothers and sisters, but there is nothing temporary about our dignity, nothing temporary about our faith, nothing temporary about our God. We will not cower. We will not fall silent. We will keep singing, loudly, until every one of us is heard.

Sabrina Paul-Noel is a consultant to the Subcommittee on Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees, and Travelers.

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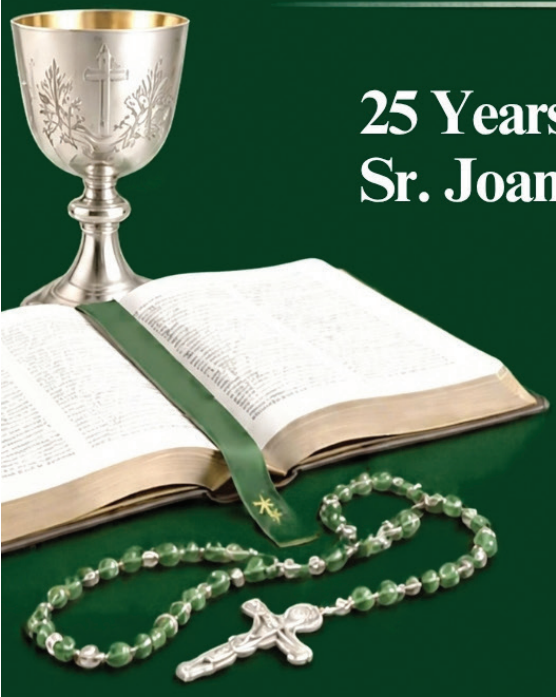
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30 Years of Service
Dr. Alejandro Aguilera-Titus

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United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church



Small Seeds, Great Hope: Living Out the Call from *Magnifica Humanitas*

By Yohan Garcia

I eagerly awaited the publication of Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical, *Magnifica Humanitas*. I have read several documents from the Magisterium upon their publication with great enthusiasm and have often found in them a roadmap for addressing some of the most pressing challenges of our time. Yet reading *Magnifica Humanitas* felt different. I was pleased with the Holy Father's account of the development of our Catholic social doctrine, its foundational documents and principles, and the importance of safeguarding human dignity at a time of profound transformation. At the same time, however, *Magnifica Humanitas* challenged me to do more than look for answers. It called me to participate actively in building "the civilization of love" (no. 186), for which the Holy Father offers a simple but demanding formula: a shared responsibility (no. 181).



Jesus and the parable of the mustard seed. Source: Wikimedia Commons.

As I reflected on this task, I wondered where to even begin in a time of so many technological advances and threats to human dignity. Those of us who work in justice and peace often find ourselves operating in a rescue mission mode. So much is happening at home and abroad that we can find it difficult to keep up, much less determine where our efforts can make a meaningful difference.

At first glance, this reality can feel overwhelming, even hopeless. Yet *Magnifica Humanitas* offers a small but significant hint about how we might respond. Pope Leo reminds us: "We believe in the power of the Kingdom, which grows from the tiny size of a mustard seed, which, once sown, sprouts and grows (cf. Mk 4:26-32). While the tumult of confusion is all around us, goodness grows silently from the earth" (no. 210). This image of the mustard seed provides an important lens through which to understand our responsibility as missionary disciples and faithful citizens in a rapidly changing world.

In the Parable of the Mustard Seed, Jesus tells us: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a person took and sowed in a field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, yet when full-grown it is the largest of plants. It becomes a large bush, and the 'birds of the sky come and dwell in its branches'" (Mt 13:31-32).

Pope Leo further reminds us that our responsibility is not to solve every problem or control every outcome. Rather, we are called to faithfully respond to the responsibilities entrusted to each of us. This perspective challenges the temptation to become paralyzed by the magnitude of the problems before us. If we are to build "the civilization of love," we cannot give up or abandon our moral responsibility to help change the direction of our society. As the Holy Father states: "The civilization of love will not arise from a single or spectacular gesture, but from the sum total of small and steadfast acts of fidelity that serve as a bulwark against dehumanization" (no. 213).

The task may seem daunting. Yet perhaps the invitation of *Magnifica Humanitas* is not to accomplish everything at once, but to identify the mustard seed we can plant today. The question, then, is not whether our contribution is large enough. The more important question is: What mustard seed is God asking me to plant today?

Yohan Garcia is the Catholic social teaching education manager for the Secretariat of Justice and Peace at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Semillas Pequeñas, Gran Esperanza: Viviendo el Llamado de *Magnifica Humanitas*

Por Yohan Garcia

Esperé con muchas ansias la publicación de la primera encíclica del Papa León XIV, *Magnifica humanitas*. He leído varios documentos del Magisterio con gran entusiasmo inmediatamente después de su publicación y a menudo he encontrado en ellos directrices para abordar algunos de los desafíos más urgentes de nuestro tiempo. Sin embargo, leer *Magnifica humanitas* se sintió diferente. Me agradó mucho que el Santo Padre ofreciera una síntesis sobre el desarrollo de la Doctrina Social de la Iglesia, sus documentos y principios fundamentales, y la importancia de salvaguardar la dignidad humana en un tiempo de profunda transformación. Al mismo tiempo, sin embargo, *Magnifica humanitas* me desafió a hacer más que buscar solo respuestas. Me llamó a participar activamente en la construcción de "la civilización del amor" (no. 186), para la cual el Santo Padre ofrece una fórmula simple pero exigente: una responsabilidad compartida (no. 181).

Al reflexionar sobre esta tarea, comencé a preguntarme por dónde empezar en una época de tantos avances tecnológicos y amenazas a la dignidad humana. Quienes trabajamos en el área de la justicia y la paz a menudo nos encontramos operando en lo que parece un modo de misión de rescate. Hay tanto sucediendo en nuestras comunidades locales como alrededor del mundo que puede ser difícil mantenerse al día, y mucho menos determinar dónde nuestros esfuerzos pueden hacer una diferencia.

A primera vista, esta realidad puede parecer abrumadora, incluso sin esperanza. Sin embargo, *Magnifica humanitas* ofrece una pequeña pero significativa pista sobre cómo podríamos responder. El Papa León nos recuerda: "creemos en la fuerza del Reino, que se desarrolla a partir de la pequeñez de un grano de mostaza, como una semilla que, una vez sembrada, brota y crece (cf. Mc 4,26-32). Mientras el ruido de la confusión nos rodea, el bien crece silenciosamente desde la tierra" (no. 210). Esta imagen de la semilla de mostaza ofrece una perspectiva importante para entender nuestra responsabilidad como discípulos misioneros y ciudadanos fieles en un mundo que cambia rápidamente.

En la parábola de la semilla de mostaza, Jesús nos dice: "El Reino de los cielos es semejante a la semilla de mostaza que un hombre siembra en un huerto. Ciertamente es la más pequeña de todas las semillas, pero cuando crece, llega a ser más grande que las hortalizas y se convierte en un arbusto, de manera que los pájaros vienen y hacen su nido en las ramas" (Mt 13,31-32).

El Papa León además nos recuerda que nuestra responsabilidad no es resolver cada problema ni controlar cada resultado. Más bien, estamos llamados a responder fielmente a las responsabilidades que se nos confían. Esta perspectiva desafía la tentación de quedar paralizados por la magnitud de los problemas que tenemos ante nosotros. Si vamos a construir "la civilización del amor," no podemos renunciar ni abandonar nuestra responsabilidad moral de ayudar a cambiar el rumbo de nuestra sociedad. Como afirma el Santo Padre: "La civilización del amor no nace de un gesto único y espectacular, sino de una suma de fidelidades pequeñas y tenaces, que hacen frente a la deshumanización" (no. 213).

La tarea puede parecer abrumadora. Sin embargo, quizá la invitación de *Magnifica humanitas* no sea lograr todo de una vez, sino identificar la semilla de mostaza que podemos plantar hoy. La pregunta, entonces, no es si nuestra contribución es lo suficientemente grande. La pregunta más importante es: ¿Qué semilla de mostaza me está pidiendo Dios que plante hoy?

Yohan Garcia es el gerente de la doctrina social de la Iglesia en la Secretaría de Justicia y Paz de la USCCB.

SPECIAL FEATURE

Weavers of Hope: A Marian Reading of *Magnifica Humanitas*

By Yolanda Taylor-Burwell, CMP



In May 2026, Pope Leo XIV released his first encyclical letter, *Magnifica Humanitas*. The document reflects on human dignity in the age of artificial intelligence. The Blessed Virgin Mary is referenced throughout the encyclical and given special attention in its conclusion. Pope Leo emphasizes Mary's example as the Church navigates the opportunities and challenges of new technologies.

As technology becomes increasingly integrated into daily life, people can experience greater isolation despite being more connected than ever. *Magnifica Humanitas* reminds us that authentic human relationships remain essential. Through the Eucharist, participation in the Mass, community, and service to others, we encounter Christ and one another in meaningful ways. Pope Leo writes: "Let us cultivate relationships! In an era that favors speed and fragmentation, the human person still yearns to receive care and recognition from attentive minds, kind words and hands capable of tenderness. The digital culture multiplies connections and offers new opportunities for interaction; yet, the human heart retains an irrevocable need for genuine closeness" (no. 239).

> ***"In an era that favors speed and fragmentation, the human person still yearns to receive care and recognition."***
>
> **— Pope Leo XIV, *Magnifica Humanitas*, no. 239**

The Holy Father encourages us to cherish moments of personal encounter, including shared meals, community gatherings, time with the lonely, and service to the poor. These experiences remind us that technology can never replace genuine human presence.

The encyclical also calls us to adopt Mary's perspective by seeing the world through the eyes of those who suffer and are often overlooked. Pope Leo writes that Mary teaches us to recognize "the points at which humanity is broken and the world becomes distorted" and to view history from the perspective of "the widow, the orphan, the stranger, the wounded child, the exile and the fugitive" (no. 244).

In a world often shaped by power, wealth, and influence, Mary directs our attention to those on the margins. Her example challenges us to listen to the voices of the poor and vulnerable and to recognize the dignity of every person. This invitation is especially important as society considers the ethical implications of artificial intelligence and technological advancement.

The encyclical concludes with a hopeful invitation. Drawing inspiration from Mary's faith, Pope Leo calls us to become "weavers of hope." He writes: "With the same faith as Mary, let us become 'weavers of hope' in our world, sharing who we are and what we have, so that the presence of Jesus may grow among us and his Kingdom take shape" (no. 245).

As we navigate an era increasingly shaped by AI, we are called to remain rooted in faith, community, and service. Following Mary's example, we can build a civilization of love where technology serves humanity rather than replacing it. By cultivating authentic relationships, standing with those who suffer, and sharing the hope of Christ, we become true weavers of hope in our families, parishes, and communities.

Yolanda Taylor-Burwell is the education and projects coordinator of the Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church.

Congratulations to Bishop Oscar Cantú of San Jose, California

Bishop Cantú, who until November 2026 served as chairman of the Subcommittee on Hispanic/Latino Affairs and is leading the US bishops' preparations for the 500th anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe in 2031, has been named chairman of the newly established Task Force on Preserving Human Dignity in the Age of Artificial Intelligence.

The task force will focus on promoting policies and practices that safeguard human dignity, religious liberty, democratic institutions, workers, families, and vulnerable populations as artificial intelligence continues to shape society.

Read more about the task force and its members and consultants at https://www.usccb.org/news/2026/members-and-consultants-us-bishops-task-force-artificial-intelligence-announced.



Bishop Oscar Cantú presents the Intercontinental Guadalupan Novena during the USCCB Spring Plenary Assembly in June 2026.



Mar Muñoz-Visoso, Executive Director, and Dr. Alejandro Aguilera-Titus, Assistant Director, pose before the Tilma displayed during the USCCB Administrative Committee meeting in September 2026.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Resources and Novena Guadalupana

This Guadalupan Jubilee Year (October 12, 2026, to October 12, 2027), as the Church prepares for the 500th anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe in 2031, dioceses across the United States are invited to participate in the Intercontinental Guadalupan Novena, a journey of faith and hope that unites Catholics throughout the Americas.

US dioceses have received an authentic, life-sized replica of the Tilma that hangs in the basilica in Mexico City. US Catholics are invited to join the One Tilma, One Heart (Una tilma, un corazón) initiative. Materials for the reception and enthronement of the Tilma, as well as the missionary activity that will follow, have just been posted on the new dedicated webpage: https://www.usccb.org/resources/One Tilma One Heart- Translation Clean 8.21.26.pdf. There you can explore prayer resources, pastoral materials, and ways to deepen devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe as we celebrate her message of faith, unity, and evangelization.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE CHURCH COMMITTEE

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Most Reverend Robert Brennan
Diocese of Brooklyn
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Chairman of the Subcommittee on Hispanic/Latino Affairs

Most Reverend Jeffrey Grob
Archdiocese of Milwaukee
Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees, and Travelers

Most Reverend Joseph Espaillat
Archdiocese of New York

Most Reverend Earl Fernandes
Diocese of Columbus
Chairman of the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Island Affairs

Most Rev. John T. Folda
Diocese of Fargo
Chairman of the Subcommittee on Native American Affairs

Most Rev. Brian Nunes
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AN APOLOGY FOR THE AGES

Continued from page 4

trafficking were wrong, and the Church was wrong ever to participate in them—and he does.

For so many people, especially descendants of those enslaved, this admission and apology are long overdue. Perhaps more importantly, Pope Leo gives us the opportunity, even permission, for real healing of our collective conscience (national and ecclesial). He urges us to remove barriers that prevent us from confronting together this past evil and address its lingering effects. The pope allows us to have honest dialogue about how we have all been wounded by this past sin and about how our nation and our Church benefited from the (mis)treatment of her sons and daughters of African descent. This is a necessary first step towards building a "civilization of love" (no. 38). A document extolling the magnificent dignity of the human person should speak about the great indignity and inhumanity of slavery. Thank you, Pope Leo, for giving voice to what so many people have waited so long for and what justice requires.

Bishop Robert Boxie III is auxiliary of the Archdiocese of Washington.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Print version: To learn more, visit www.usccb.org/committees/cultural-diversity-church/resourcesbooks.

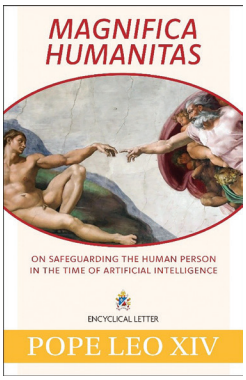
Online version: Click for more Secretariat Resources.

Discover resources for building a more welcoming and culturally diverse Church!

Our Church is enriched by the many cultures, traditions, and experiences that make our Church diverse. The Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church offers a valuable collection of resources designed to support ministry leaders, parish staff, educators, and faith communities in fostering intercultural understanding and engagement. Visit our resource pages as given at the top of this page.

POPE LEO XIV

Encyclical Letter *Magnifica Humanitas* (*On Safeguarding the Human Person in the Time of Artificial Intelligence*)



- Online: https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/encyclicals/documents/20260515-magnifica-humanitas.html
- For sale through Our Sunday Visitor (OSV)

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

- US Bishops' Administrative Committee Establishes a Task Force on Artificial Intelligence (media release)—September 16, 2026: https://www.usccb.org/news/2026/us-bishops-administrative-committee-establishes-task-force-artificial-intelligence
- USCCB *Magnifica Humanitas*: https://www.usccb.org/magnifica-humanitas
- USCCB Webpage on Artificial Intelligence: https://www.usccb.org/artificial-intelligence
- USCCB Positions on Artificial Intelligence: https://www.usccb.org/resources/USCCB Positions on AI.pdf

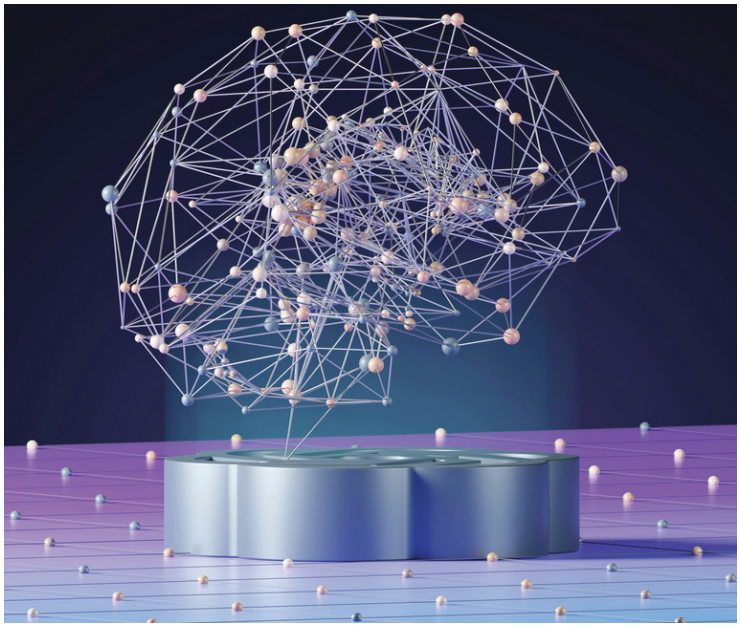
INTERCONTINENTAL GUADALUPAN NOVENA

- Novena Intercontinental Guadalupana: https://novenadeguadalupe.com/en/
- One Tilma One Heart (English): https://www.usccb.org/resources/One Tilma One Heart - Translation Clean 8.21.26.pdf
- The Order of Enthronement of the Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe: https://www.usccb.org/resources/Final ORDER of ENTRHONEMENT Guadalupe Tilma (002).pdf

> *"All of us, at every level, can contribute to building the foundation of peace, which is justice. We do not merely seek any kind of peace—such as an absence of conflict at any cost—but instead, the true peace born of justice."*
>
> **— Pope Leo XIV, *Magnifica Humanitas*, no. 215**

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Positions on Artificial Intelligence



OVERVIEW

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) expressed its positions on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) through a pastoral statement for Labor Day and a principles letter to Congress, building upon Catholic Social Teaching and the Holy See's document on AI, *Antiqua et Nova*. The USCCB's response to AI is that this technology must serve humanity and the common good of all people.

"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."

- Pope Leo XIV, *Magnifica Humanitas*, no. 15

LABOR DAY STATEMENT ON AI AND THE DIGNITY OF WORK

In a statement for Labor Day, Archbishop Borys Gudziak addressed the "AI revolution" in the workplace, emphasizing the need to protect the rights of workers. While acknowledging that AI can be used to benefit humanity, Archbishop Gudziak expressed concern for the impact AI will have on workers and the historical consequences when rapid technological advances are used without ethical discernment.





ADVOCACY TO CONGRESS

Six chairmen of the USCCB wrote a principles letter to Congress in June 2025 outlining how AI development and uses should serve all of humanity. The letter addressed the use of AI in relation to family life, labor and the economy, healthcare, education, political and civic life, warfare, and energy and the environment. Additionally, the USCCB's Committee on Communications supports legislation "to create a regulatory framework for AI ethics that promotes the moral agency of humans in decision-making and addresses data protection, accountability, bias, and the impact of AI on employment."

PRAYER TO OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE



O God, who made the Mother of
your Son to be our Mother and our Queen,

graciously grant that we who venerate
this image of Our Lady of Guadalupe

may be protected by her intercession

and attain in the heavenly Kingdom

the glory promised to your children.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Photo: USCCB Staff.

United States
Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Secretariat of
Cultural Diversity
in the Church

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Pope Leo XIV signs his first encyclical, *Magnifica Humanitas*, on May 15, 2026.