

CHAPTER ONE – LETTER OF POPE LEO XIV
MAGNIFICENT HUMANITY (MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS)
On Safeguarding the Human Person in the time of
Artificial Intelligence

CHAPTER ONE
A DYNAMIC APPROACH FAITHFUL TO THE GOSPEL

This Chapter uses the word “dynamic” in its title to explain that the gospel message needs to address the new questions and challenges that arise in every generation. The Holy Father explains that the Church’s Social Doctrine is not an interference in “worldly matters”, or a “code of ethics imposed from above. It comes from the Church’s wish to walk “alongside humanity”. (No.17, p.24)

He quotes Pope Francis who wrote to the Church in 2015, (*Laudato Sí, Praise Be to You*, subtitled, *On Care for Our Common Home*),. In that letter Pope Francis warned that we must ask ourselves the question “who holds power today and how do they use it? It must be recognised that nuclear energy, biotechnology, information technologies, knowledge of our own DNA and many other abilities which we have acquired.... have given those with the knowledge, and especially the economic resources to use them, an impressive dominance over the whole of humanity and the entire world....Technological power thus takes on an unprecedented ‘private’ aspect, which makes it even more challenging to discern, govern and direct toward the common good”.(No.4, p.13) Pope Francis further reminds us in his letter, *The Joy of the Gospel (Evangelii Gaudium)*, that “what matters most is not occupying positions of power or defending cultural strongholds, but initiating good processes and enabling them to mature”. (No.25.,p.31)

The focus in this first chapter is the teaching of the Church through the writings of various Popes and the documents of the Second Vatican Council which discusses the Church in the world today. It ends by emphasising that the “new things” of each era, e.g. artificial intelligence, need to be assessed under “the great principles of Social Doctrine, which direct the discernment of believers in their personal and public lives”. (No.45, p.53) Chapter Three deals with these principles in detail but the general principles are outlined here. Namely, do these changes take into account the dignity of every person or care for creation? Do people and society benefit from these changes socially; economically; physically and, of course, spiritually? We are reminded “that the truest response to the love of the heart of Jesus is concrete love for our brothers and sisters”. (No.44, p.52)