

MAGNIFICENT HUMANITY (MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS)
POPE LEO'S LETTER TO THE CHURCH
CONCLUSION NUMBERS 229 – 245

At the end of this letter Pope Leo writes that he has been exploring the question of “**what it means to safeguard the human person in the era of artificial intelligence?**” (No. 229 p.192)). He urges us to answer that question by examining carefully technological changes/advances so that we can decide if they are acceptable to us who wish to follow Jesus’ message of love for all humankind. Pope Leo warns “Our world is filled with attempts to seize control of markets and spheres of influence, often shrouded in reassuring rhetoric and seductive ideologies. Yet our hearts yearn for an approach that is **wise and benevolent**, akin to that which Mary praises in her *Magnificat*, when she proclaims that God’s mercy extends in every generation to those who fear him.” (No. 230, p.192) The word ‘fear’ meaning those who hold a deep awe and wonder for God in their hearts. “Ideologies urge humanity to overcome limitations through technology, and to rise above others by asserting dominance. Contrary to this, the mystery of the Son of God entering into our human condition promises something quite different. The living God descends into our history in order to free us from all forms of slavery....For this reason, (Pope Leo writes), as a believer among believers, I invite everyone to contemplate, in the face of the Son of God, the **grandeur of humanity** that shines a light also on the era of AI. In Christ we are called to cooperate in the work of creation, rather than be disinterested observers of technological processes that limit our freedom and responsibility....No computational system, however sophisticated, can create a heart that gives itself, or a conscience that discerns good from evil. Even when machines excel in efficiency, a human face that asks to be gazed upon remains the centre of our history.” (No.232/3, p.194/5)

The spiritual inspiration and energy that we need for this, as the Christian family, is that which we find when we gather together to celebrate mass (Eucharist). We gather to give thanks to God for what God has already given to us. For the universe; for the world; for our bodies; for our relationships and, most especially, for Jesus. St. Augustine explained Eucharist to the new Christians of his local Church by telling them “together you are the body of Christ, (1 Cor 12:27)...You hear the words, ‘the Body of Christ’ and respond ‘Amen’. Be then a member of the Body of Christ that your Amen may be true! The ‘Amen’ that we say in the liturgy, the Body we eat and the Blood we drink, shape our entire lives....It is an extremely personal encounter, yet never simply an act of individual piety...We are the Church of Christ, his members, his body. We are brothers and sisters in him....though many and diverse, we are one.” (No. 234, p.197)

“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 we may bear witness to the grandeur of humanity, in which God has made his dwelling.” (No.245, p.206)