ENCYCLICAL LETTER
POPE LEO XIV
MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS

ON SAFEGUARDING THE HUMAN PERSON IN THE TIME OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

May 15, 2026

Humanity, created by God in all its grandeur, 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. (#1)

1. The encyclical's title , on the occasion of the 135th anniversary of RN from Leo's namesake
2. thenFive chapters, plus a fairly long introduction and conclusion.
3. Don't skip over the intro or conclusion, in many ways they convey Pope Leo's voice the best, strong, clear, hopeful
4. The first two chapters set the stage for addressing the reality of Artifical Intelligence today by laying out the Church's understanding of how over the last 135 years the gospel in dialogue with the wisdom of the world has led to clear doctrinal principles that form Catholic Social Teaching, or better Catholic Social Doctrine.
5. Chapter Three addresses the reality of AI in a more general way, with Chapter Four focused on three significant social realities that get tested/challenged by the ermerging world of AI: Truth, Work, and Freedom.
6. Chapter Five lays out the contrast of two ways of two ways of building our world: a culture of power (with a significanct focus on war and armed conflict) or a civilization of love
7. The conclusion offers a homiletic exhortation to bring our faith, hope, love and prayer to the task of building the civilization of love.

INTRODUCTION (#1- #16)

The res novae of our time

While Leo XIII spoke in his time of "new things" (*rerum novarum*), today we cannot limit ourselves simply to repeating his insightful teachings. Instead, we must ask God for the wisdom to interpret the great trends of our time, particularly technological advances. In recent years, it has become increasingly evident how rapidly and profoundly digitalization, artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics are transforming our world. (#4)

In the past, it was largely up to the State to guide and direct innovation. Today, however, the main drivers of development are private, often transnational, parties that are endowed with resources and the capacity to intervene that surpass those of many Governments. Technological power thus takes on an unprecedented, predominantly "private" aspect, which makes it even more challenging to discern, govern and direct such power toward the common good. (#5)

1. Whereas Leo XIII was addressing the significant and fairly speedily changing world of especially the Western world in the grip of the Industrial Revolution, Pope Leo today recognizes the perhaps even more momentous changes on the horizon due to the transformation of the world through the technology we have available, especially through dignitalizatin and Artificial Intelligence. Like his predecessor he is calling the world to an examen of conscience centered on protecting the dignity of the human person and communtiies in the wake of such social-cultural-economic-political changes.
2. In addition to the newness of AI, Pope Leo also reminds us of the change in relationship between the State and private economic enterprises
3. Leo calls for a renewed discernment today and to ask the questions (#6): 6. For this reason it is necessary to begin a shared discernment process for identifying the spiritual and cultural roots of ongoing transformations. … For this very reason, crucial questions impose themselves on our conscience and can no longer be avoided: Where are we going? Toward what goal do we wish to orient ourselves? What direction should we choose as a people and as a human community.

Two biblical images

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 construction of the Tower of Babel (cf. Gen 11:1-9) and the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem (cf. Neh 2-6).

- 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. (#7)
- The [Nehemiah] 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 rebuilds relationships before rebuilding with stones. (#8)

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 and a people who work together in the presence of God to rebuild the walls of fraternal coexistence. (#9)

1. Leo offers two biblical images. The efforts of those building the Tower of Babel and the efforts of those rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem after return from exile. The first promising grandeur and safety but ends in dispersion because it does not have God's blessing. The second succeeds because there is a collaborative effort, all playing their part.
2. #9: the bottom line starting point with all technology, including AI

Building for the common good

Building a city founded on the common good implies:

- first and foremost, building on a firm relationship with God.(#11)
- Secondly, building for the common good means accepting the limits and weakness of humanity without considering them an error to be corrected. (#12)
- Thirdly, building a world in which everyone can flourish requires shared responsibility and courage. … 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. (#13)
- Finally, building for the common good requires an evangelical language. We must avoid humiliating or antagonistic words, opting rather for a clarity that sheds light and a frankness that unlocks new possibilities.
  - — the dignity of the human person, the universal destination of goods, the preferential option for the poor, care for our common home and peace — (#14)

1. Want to point out especially #14, where Leo talks about building for the common good requiring an "evangelical language" and by that he is talking about a style of engagement with the world, avoiding humiliating language, etc…

CHAPTER ONE: A DYNAMIC APPROACH FAITHFUL TO THE GOSPEL (#17-#45)

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 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, Francis expressed this same perspective in his striking phrase, "time is greater than space." (#25)

- **The wisdom of the word of God in dialogue with the human sciences**
- **Social Doctrine as a shared discernment**
- **The development of Social Doctrine from Leo XIII to the present**

1. Chapters One and Two lay out the Church's wisdom that it brings to the conversation with the world as we all pursue the truth and the common good.

2. The Church journeying through history is just that—a journey of discernment where the wisdomof the word of God must be in dialogue with the human sciences and in so doing the Church has articulated a Social Doctrine (NB: the term doctrine rather than teaching!}. Already at beginning Leo talks about that: 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." (#3)

2. He then goes on to go through the historical development of that Social Doctrine.

CHAPTER TWO: FOUNDATIONS AND PRINCIPLES OF THE SOCIAL DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH (#46-#89)

The foundations of Social Doctrine (#48-58)

- **The human person: image of the Triune God** (intrinsic dignity)

At the heart of the Christian understanding of the human person lies the great biblical affirmation that men and women are created in the image and likeness of the Triune God. Created for relationship, every human person is planned and willed by God to enter into communion with him, with others and with creation. Human dignity does not depend on a person's abilities, wealth or position in life, nor on the right or wrong choices made; instead, it is a gift that precedes and transcends each person, endowed by God as an expression of his unfailing love (#50)

- **The equal dignity of all human beings** (inalienable dignity)
- **The supreme value of human rights** (inviolable dignity)

The Church gratefully acknowledges that "the movement toward the identification and proclamation of human rights is one of the most significant attempts to respond effectively to the inescapable demands of human dignity." (#24)

1. Chapter Two then articulates the foundations and principles of that social doctrine. The foundation: the human person, made in the likeness of the Triune God (therefore truly human fulfillment only in receiving and sharing love in relationships of mutual care), means that every human person possesses a dignity that is intrinsic, inalienable and inviolable.
2. Note the appreciation for naming and protection of human rights. These, for the church, include more than just economic rights but cultural, political, social and environmental
3. And a recognition of the Church's need to grow in protecting the rights of women. (#57): Along with a greater awareness of the value of every human person and their rights, recognition of minority rights has also grown. Yet, there is still a long way to go to ensure that the rights of a great many, namely women, are equally and genuinely guaranteed throughout the world. It is a fact that "doubly poor are those women who endure situations of exclusion, mistreatment and violence, since they are frequently less able to defend their rights." 74 It is, therefore, not enough to state simply that men and women have equal dignity and rights; it is necessary that this be reflected in concrete decisions, such as in laws, access to employment, education, social and political responsibilities, and the way society listens to and values women's contributions. As long as this gap persists, we

cannot say that society truly and fully recognizes that women have the same dignity as men.

The principles of Social Doctrine **(#59-89)**

- **The principle of the common good**
- **The principle of the universal destination of goods**
- **The principle of subsidiarity**
- **The principle of solidarity**
- **The principle of social justice**

1. Then the Pope discusses five principles of Social Dotrine that safeguard the dignith of the human person. The first, the common good I would separate out from the other four in that it is an overarching principle, in tandem with the dignity of every human person,--what Leo will call the 'social expression' of the dignity of the human person—it provides the framework for all Catholic social doctrine. The remaining principles then concretrize how that dignity and common good can be achieved.
2. Secondly, he raises the term 'social justice' to the level of a clear principle. That is a bit different than how that term has been used in the past, more as a synonum for the common good. But Leo uses it, as we will see in a moment, to get at the structural level of justice/injustice. Much of what he says here is following the 2005 Compendium on the Social Dcoctrine of the Church published by the Vatican Pontifical Coucnil for Justice and Peace, but here he shapes it in his own language. The result are by and large the same principles but with a bit better way to integrate the reality of sinful structures and taking what the Compendium has as a separate principle, the preferential option for the poor, tied to the universal destination of goods, and making each principle include a special concern for the poor and vulnerable and marginal.

The principles of Social Doctrine

- **The principle of the common good (#59-64)**

We can describe it as the social expression of the dignity recognized in every person (#59)

The Second Vatican Council affirmed that the common good consists in "the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily." (#60)

- **The principle of the universal destination of goods (#65-67)**

First of all, this principle reminds us that the earth's goods — soil, water, air and natural resources — are given by God to the entire human family to sustain the lives of all, and that every person has an inherent right to the use of such goods, both now and in the future.(#65)

Today, among the goods that are universally intended for everyone, we must also include new forms of property, such as patents, algorithms, digital platforms, technological infrastructure and data. (#67)

- The principle of subsidiarity
- The principle of solidarity
- The principle of social justice

1. We can explore more details on these principles in the Q and A if anyone would like, I have them in the slides for you to review at your leisure—I will make the slides available after.
2. For now just a reminder of what they are.

The principles of Social Doctrine

- The principle of the common good
- The principle of the universal destination of goods
- **The principle of subsidiarity (#68-72)**

The Social Doctrine of the Church refers to subsidiarity as the principle according to which the role of individuals, families, local communities and intermediary organizations should not be supplanted by higher-level authorities. Moreover, higher-level institutions must recognize, protect and promote the freedom and creativity of lower-level entities, coordinating their contributions so that they can cooperate effectively for the common good. (#68)

The principle of subsidiarity applies especially in the context of the digital revolution. Here, the highest level is not the State, but rather major economic and technological actors that exercise de facto power over the conditions of everyday life. … In this context, States and transnational institutions are called to ensure fair rules and effective safeguards, so that local communities, intermediary organizations, schools, universities, religious institutions and associations have a voice and can contribute to the discernment of choices that affect people's daily lives, such as employment, access to services, data management and digital environments. (#71-72)

- The principle of solidarity
- The principle of social justice

1. Important insight of Leo, as already mentioned, that subsidiarity takes on a different look with the power of private actors who have more control than the State. So not justa balance between State and local/intermediary groups but the State need to protect access of those groups to the technology

The principles of Social Doctrine

- The principle of the common good
- The principle of the universal destination of goods
- The principle of subsidiarity
- **The principle of solidarity (#73-76)**

The Church's social teaching emphasizes that solidarity is both a principle and a virtue. As a principle, it expresses the objective order of relationships among individuals, groups and peoples, pointing to an awareness of interdependence whereby the good of each person depends on the good of others. As a virtue, it requires a "firm and persevering determination" for the common good, with particular attention to those most in need. Pope Francis noted that solidarity is "a way of making history" that creates communities and not just masses of individuals. For this reason, it requires a modest and shared way of life, the ability to forego immediate benefits in order to create opportunities for others in the future, and a willingness to challenge habits and privileges — including those related to digital consumption and the use of technology — when they prevent others from living with dignity. (#75)

- The principle of social justice

1. Solidarity includes a solidarity with the poor and vulnerable, of course, but in CSD it means more than that. IT is a task of not letting differences created chasms that are insurmountable. Along with subsidiarity, very much is captured by Francis' focus on synodality and especially encourage you to reflect on his Fratelli Tutti encyclical.

The principles of Social Doctrine

- **The principle of social justice (#77-85)**

Justice, however, concerns not only the behavior of individuals, but also the way in which the structures of society are conceived and organized. (#77)

The idea of "social justice" helps us recognize that injustices do not arise solely from the wrong choices of individuals, but also from structures, mechanisms and economic and cultural systems that produce inequality almost automatically. … In this perspective, justice is not merely about the fairer distribution of resources or the correction of current injustices, but also assumes a restorative dimension. It aims to mend broken bonds and reintegrate those who have been excluded, taking into account the wounds caused by injustices, such as wars, colonialism, racial or gender discrimination, violence against entire peoples and exploitation. (#79)

Justice demands that we prevent the emergence of new forms of exclusion and deprivation of freedoms: individuals and peoples hindered or denied access to basic technologies, communities exposed to invasive surveillance and social groups penalized by opaque algorithms that perpetuate prejudice and discrimination. In the digital age, a just social order guarantees everyone equal access to opportunities, protects the youngest and weakest members of society, combats hate and misinformation and subjects the use of data and technology to public oversight (#80)

1. The structural element to the common good and to injustice
2. Leo will shift the preferential option for the poor under this principle more than universal destination of goods as in the Compendium. So, #78: The recent Magisterium has insisted that social justice begins with the least among us. Saint John Paul II spoke of a preferential option for the poor that must guide both personal and societal choices, while Pope Francis denounced a "'throw away' culture" that generates ever new forms of exclusion. From this perspective, social justice requires us to look at individuals and communities, starting with the most vulnerable: the poor, migrants, refugees, internally displaced persons, victims of violence and people living in urban or existential peripheries.
3. And he calls the treatment of immigrants the litmus test for this principle: so #81 :A litmus test for social justice today is the treatment of migrants, refugees and those forced to move due to poverty, violence, climate change and environmental disasters. The way a society treats them reveals whether its sense of justice is driven by fear or by the spirit of fraternity. Pope Francis urged us to see migrants not simply as a problem to be managed, but as a living image of the People of God on the move. They are people with dignity, resources and dreams, who have the right to be treated with respect

and to ask to become active members of the societies that welcome them. Social justice in this area entails at least two complementary commitments. On the one hand, this means protecting the rightful hopes of those forced to leave by ensuring safe and legal routes, dignified conditions for receiving them, and genuine pathways to integration. On the other hand, it means promoting the right to remain in one's homeland in peace and security by addressing the root causes that force people to migrate, including those linked to economic injustices and the climate crisis.

An examen for the Church (#86-89)

In conclusion, I would like to touch on a point that is particularly close to my heart. Social Doctrine is not merely a message addressed to society; it is also an examination of conscience for the Church — a home and school of communion that is always called to ensure that the principles outlined in this chapter are applied, especially within its own structures. (#86)

1. With particular emphasis on subsidiarity (#87:subsidiarity becomes the guiding principle for governance and pastoral life. It involves recognizing and supporting the faithful and intermediary ecclesial organizations as they carry out their responsibilities, valuing charisms and skills and avoiding any form of paternalism that suffocates evangelical freedom. In practical terms, the participation of the baptized in decision-making processes and their shared responsibility in the mission are achieved through genuine, rather than merely nominal, participatory bodies., solidarity via the Eucharist, and social justice in the exercise of authority/power.

CHAPTER THREE TECHNOLOGY AND DOMINANCE. THE GRANDEUR OF HUMANITY IN LIGHT OF THE PROMISES OF AI (#90-130)

- ***The technocratic paradigm and digital power (#92-96)***

In his Encyclical Laudato Si', Pope Francis denounced the growing dominance of a technocratic paradigm in our globalized world: the tendency to let the logic of efficiency, control and profit alone shape personal, social and economic decisions. This makes it clear that technology is not simply a tool. When it becomes the standard by which everything is judged, it begins to dictate what matters and what can be discarded, reducing creation to an object of exploitation and human beings to mere cogs in a system driven toward ever greater efficiency. (#92)

For this reason, technological progress — valuable in itself — requires careful discernment of the anthropological vision that guides it and the ends it pursues. If technological development advances without a corresponding ethical and social progress, the result may be an increase in means without a growth in humanity: "having more" without "being more." In such a scenario, there is a risk that individuals will be evaluated principally according to the outcomes they produce. (#94)

1. With Chapters Three and Four we come to specifically AI portion of the encyclical. With that Catholic Social Doctrine in the background, what might that wisdom bring to the conversation about AI, its development, its oversight, its use?
2. Chapter Three he touches more generally In the reality of AI and its challenges. Chapter Four he will zero in on three specific challenges he believes we face in the time of AI

- ***The technocratic paradigm and digital power (#92-96)***

Here, we must recognize another crucial aspect, which I have noted earlier. In many cases withing many cases within the digital context, control over platforms, infrastructure, data and computing power does not rest with States, but with major economic and technological actors. These entities effectively set the conditions for access, determine the rules of visibility and shape the very possibilities for participation. When such power is concentrated in the hands of a few, it tends to become opaque and evade public oversight, increasing the risk of distorted forms of development that give rise to new dependencies, exclusions, manipulations and inequalities. (#95)

1. Again, a huge new reality is the power of private enterprises and not just the State

- ***Artificial Intelligence (#97-111)***

It is not possible to provide a single, comprehensive definition of AI. What can be stated, however, is that we must avoid the misconception of equating this type of "intelligence" with that of human beings. … So-called artificial intelligences do not undergo experiences, do not possess a body, do not feel joy or pain, do not mature through relationships and do not know from within what love, work, friendship or responsibility mean. Nor do they have a moral conscience, since they do not judge good and evil, grasp the ultimate meaning of situations, or bear responsibility for consequences. … Even when these tools are described as capable of "learning," their way of doing so is different from that of a human person. (#99)

The apparent objectivity of the responses and suggestions these systems provide can lead us to overlook the fact that they reflect the cultural assumptions of those who designed who designed and trained them, with all their strengths and limitations. The artificial imitation of positive human communication — words of advice, empathy, friendship and even love — can be engaging and at times genuinely helpful. However, for less discerning users, it can also be misleading, creating the illusion of a relationship with a real personal subject. (#100)

1. Recently, there has been much discussion in the AI world and the news about the type of intelligence that AI is. One of the co-founders of Anthropic, who was present at the papal announcement of this encyclical, believes there is human like intelligence and potential consciousness. Most do not believe that and in fact there is a counter-narrative by leading AI researchers that criticize those who want to model AI as closely as possible on human processes. Rather, it is a type of intelligence, as Pope Leo points out here, that does not and cannot not be human and we need to remember that. Even in our language we tend to say things in shorthand that cuts out human agency in AI. AI said. AI told me. No, the algorithms developed by people in AI have produced… Brendan can address that better in Q and A.
2. And within such algorithms, there can be, and so we need to have a critical realism about this, cultural and other types of biases that then exclude certain people or manipulate the data in ways that are not neutral. That is why Pope Leo insists, rightly, that AI is not morally neutral.

- ***Artificial Intelligence (#97-111)***

The gains in efficiency and the potential to improve certain services are clear, yet rapidly and uncritically adopting them exposes us to a range of risks, including the tendency to overlook the environmental impact. Current AI systems require enormous amounts of energy and water, significantly influencing carbon dioxide emissions, and place heavy demands on natural resources. (#101)

...we cannot consider AI to be morally neutral. In reality, every technical tool embodies choices and priorities through what it measures, ignores and optimizes, and how it classifies people and situations. If a system is designed or used in a way that treats some lives as less worthy, or excludes them without the possibility of appeal, then it is not merely a tool "to be used well," since it has already introduced criteria that contradict the inalienable dignity of the human person. For this reason, ethical discernment cannot be limited to asking whether we are using a system for good or bad purposes; it must also examine how that system is designed and what vision of the human person and society is embedded in the data and models that guide it. (#104)

1. Another aspect of AI is the enormous data and energy that is required.
2. Read the quote on not being morally neutral

- ***Artificial Intelligence (#97-111)***

In fact, as with every major technological shift, AI tends to amplify the power of those who already possess economic resources, expertise and access to data. In light of the common good and the universal destination of goods, this raises serious concerns, since small but highly influential groups can shape information and consumption patterns, influence democratic processes and steer economic dynamics to their own advantage, undermining social justice and solidarity among peoples. (#108)

Finally, I would like to employ the expression "to disarm," which is close to my heart. Disarming AI means freeing it from the mentality of "armed" competition, which today is not limited simply to the military context, but is also an economic and cognitive phenomenon. This entails a race for ever more powerful algorithms and larger datasets, driven by the desire to secure geopolitical or commercial dominance. To disarm means discrediting the assumption that technical power automatically confers the right to govern. To disarm does not mean rejecting technology, but preventing it from dominating humanity. (#110)

1. Especial attention to the way the common good can be compromised because of how AI can put the power in the hands of a few, undermining social justice and solidarity.
2. Call for disarmament on AI race as we used to call for/still car for weapons, especially nuclear disarmeament

- **What must not be lost (#112-124)**

Thus, intelligence, when absolutized, overshadows other essential dimensions of life, such as affection, the will, commitment and relationships. Similarly, technical power, if left unbalanced, does not make us more capable; it makes us more isolated and more vulnerable to being dominated and excluded. (#113)

In an attempt to shed light on the cultural assumptions accompanying the ongoing digital revolution, I would now like to turn our attention to certain currents of thought that interpret progress as surpassing the human condition, and which are often grouped under the labels of transhumanism and posthumanism. (#115)

From the perspective of the Church's Social Doctrine, the key issue is not the use of technology as such, but the vision that underlies it. If the human being is treated as something to be perfected or surpassed, it becomes easier to accept that some lives are less useful, less desirable or less worthy. In the name of progress, "necessary sacrifices" may begin to be justified, placing the burden on the most vulnerable in pursuit of a supposed optimization of the species. (#117)

Our relationship with life seems to be in crisis today. Everything that appears as a "limit"— incapacity, illness, old age, suffering, vulnerability — tends to be seen primarily as a defect to be corrected, rather than as a reality through which our humanity matures and opens itself to relationship. And yet we must remember that humanity flourishes not *despite* limitations, but often *through* them. (#118)

1. Now Leo gets into the heart of the discussion on AI. The gap between what we think/hope AI will bring humanity and the danger of it increasing our isolation and leading to dominating the vulnerable and excluded.
2. Here Leo goes into some detail about the reality of human finitude/limits not as a defect but as a core reality of human life. And the capacity to overcome some of them is fine, but the pursuit of a post or transhumanism that escapes all bodily limitations is not human development but a denial of our humanity.

- **<u>The authentic "more than human": grace and Christian humanism</u> (#127-128)**

The expression "more than human" is not an exclusive domain of technological promise. For centuries, the Christian tradition has maintained that human beings are not confined by the boundaries of their own nature; rather, they are called to self transcendence, not through an escape from reality or a contempt for their limitations, but through their fulfillment in love. (#127)

When we embrace the possibility of transcending ourselves through God's grace, we do not deny our nature, nor do we become less human. On the contrary, as Pope Francis explained, "We become fully human when we become more than human, when we let God bring us beyond ourselves in order to attain the fullest truth of our being. (#128)

1. Of course, in our theological tradition we talk about a "more than human" supernatural aspect to life, the grace of God that builds on and transforms and perfects human nature, but does not abrogate it, or eliminate our finitude but opens that finitide to the infinite of God

CHAPTER FOUR: SAFEGUARDING HUMANITY AT A TIME OF TRANSFORMATION. TRUTH, WORK, FREEDOM (#131-181)

Having outlined the context in which the challenge of technological transformation is situated, especially those linked to AI and to transhumanist and posthumanist currents, we cannot remain at the level of general analysis alone. When languages and tools change, so do everyday actions and social relationships. For this reason, we must focus on certain areas in which these transformations have particularly concrete, and at times tragic, consequences. In light of the principles of the Church's Social Doctrine, the digital transformation invites us to rediscover truth as a common good, to protect the dignity of work and to safeguard freedom against all forms of dependence and commercialization. (#131)

- **Rediscover truth as a common good** (#132-147)
- **Protect the dignity of work** (#148-169)
- **Safeguard freedom** (#170-181)

1. In Chapter Four Pope Leo focuses on 3 concrete realities that are challenged in the time of AI. Truth. Work. Freedom

Rediscover truth as a common good (#132-147)

- ***Truth and democracy (#132-134)***

Tools that could foster dialogue and participation are often used to construct distorted narratives and blur the boundaries between truth and falsehood, mixing facts with opinions. Disinformation did not begin with AI, yet today it finds a powerful amplifier in AI. … At the same time, truthful information … is deeply relational, built through bonds of trust and shared practices, as well as an honest exchange with others and with the world. Only the shared pursuit of the veracity of facts, perceived as a common good, can provide a solid foundation for just communication. (#132)

…"once the idea of a universal truth about the good, knowable by human reason, is lost, inevitably the notion of conscience also changes." (quoting JPII) … "If society is to have a future, it must respect the truth of our human dignity and submit to that truth. Murder is not wrong simply because it is socially unacceptable and punished by law, but because of a deeper conviction. This is a non negotiable truth attained by the use of reason and accepted in conscience. A society is noble and decent, not least for its support of the pursuit of truth and its adherence to the most basic of truths." (quoting Pope Francis) (#133)

The search for truth is an essential element of democracy … Indifference to the truth leads, slowly but surely, to a descent into totalitarianism. (#134)

1. The search for distort and the distortions/manipulations that AI can cause. We see it in our media today. There is such a thing as fake news but when actual objective reporting is said to be fake and truth social –like reporting fabricates facts wholesale , when deep fakes are getting better and better, the common good is at risk because at the core of the common good is an honest pursuit of truth and an ability for all to trust sources of information

Rediscover truth as a common good

- ***Communication and the collective imagination (#135-136)***

  In view of this, it is important to recall that communication "is not only the transmission of information, but it is also the creation of a culture." (#135)

- ***Toward an ecology of communication (#137-138)***

Our first task is neither to demonize nor idolize technological tools, but to utilize them on the basis of a fundamental principle, namely that truth is a common good and not the property of those with power or influence. We must therefore promote an ecology of communication. On the level of public policy, this entails establishing norms so that the decision-making behind content selection and its development becomes more transparent and protects personal data. Regarding social and cultural aspects, this requires a strengthening of intermediary organizations, serious journalism and forums for debate, where reasoned argumentation and verification carry greater weight than immediate reaction. For families and schools, there is a growing need for new educational awareness and for formation concerning the proper and critical use of digital tools, AI and online commercial and financial platforms. (#137)

1. Not just a matter of correct facts but the power of communication to build a culture and so need a whole ecology of communication that shares inan honest pursuit of the truth

Rediscover truth as a common good

- ***An educational alliance for the digital age and the central role of schools (#139-147)***

Without careful attention, an educational system lacking in a love for truth may emerge, in which an incessant flow of information replaces the essential exercise of research, reflection and discernment. As knowledge becomes increasingly fragmented, it becomes difficult to grasp reality as a whole, to ask profound questions about meaning, or to develop authentic, critical and creative thought. (#146)

1. The Pope does not pretend to have the concrete answers on how to regulate education, or the media, and so it comes across a bit generic. But his whole point is that we need to build this together, we each have a role, all groups and agencies have a role in 'building the wall" of Jerusalem. And the Church's teaching contribution is its Catholic Social Doctrine.
2. In this area of the pursuit of truth, what would subsidiarity look like? What would solidarity look like? What would the universal destination of goods look like? What would a structural social justice look like that protected persons, families, intermediary groups?

<u>The dignity of work at a time of digital transformation</u> (#148-164)

- ***The value of work (#148-150)***

  Since the emergence of her Social Doctrine, beginning with *Rerum Novarum,* the Church has emphasized the protection of workers and the need to combat all forms of exploitation. Above all, however, the Magisterium has recognized in work "the essential key" to understanding the entire social question, since it is through their work that individuals develop many dimensions of their existence. (#148)

  Today, the convergence of automation, robotics and AI is rapidly transforming the very structure of work. It is said that this will bring great improvements for everyone. In reality, however, the "new ways" of working are not necessarily better, for "while AI promises to boost productivity by taking over mundane tasks, it frequently forces workers to adapt to the speed and demands of machines, rather than machines being designed to support those who work. As a result, contrary to the advertised benefits of AI, current approaches to technology can paradoxically de-skill workers, subject them to automated surveillance and relegate them to rigid and repetitive tasks. The need to keep up with the pace of technology can erode workers' sense of agency and stifle the innovative abilities they are expected to bring to their work." Precisely in order to avoid this drift, it is necessary to design systems that are centered on the human person and not solely on performance. (#150)

1. Work/Labor from the beginnig of the CST tradition has been a central concern, in fact maybe the most important connecting thread through all of the CST tradition. For Pope Leo XIII it was the effects of the Industrial Revolution on the family (urbanization, poor wages, child labor, unions, etc.), especially at the local and state level. For Pius XI it was the growing socialist movements, for JPII it was the distortion caused by communist understanding of Marxism and the consequences of an unrestrained capitalism (Laborem exercens, Centessimus annus), For Benedict XVI it was the loss of communitarian initiatives in the globalization process. Now for Leo the challenges and potential threat posed by AI.
2. The commonality through all the teaching is three fold: 1) work has the ability to and we should strive for work to be such that it gives people a dignity of sharing in the creation of the community and world around; 2) in that pursuit the basic rights of workers must be protected: fair wayge, healthy working conditions, work that does not destroy one's human creativity; 3) the dignity of the worker in his/her work is the guiding principle not increase of capital.

The dignity of work at a time of digital transformation

- ***The problem of unemployment (#151-156)***

It is certainly desirable for technology to relieve humans of arduous, repetitive or dangerous tasks and to provide intelligent support for human activity. Yet, the protection of employment opportunities and the irreplaceable role of the individual must remain the general rule. The pursuit of greater profits cannot justify choices that systematically sacrifice jobs, because the human person is an end, not a means, and the economic order must remain subordinate to human dignity and the common good. (#152)

Work remains a fundamental dimension of the human experience, for not only is it a means of sustenance, but it is also a context for expression, relationships and contributing to the community. Therefore, the problems related to work extend beyond the income necessary for family survival. (#154)

At this time of transition, it is not enough to react only when jobs disappear; we must oversee the transformation in advance. One viable path is, first of all, to establish social criteria for innovation. Here, every introduction of automation and AI should be accompanied by verifiable measures to protect the employment, retraining and participation of workers. (#156)

1. And in #151 Leo quotes JPII about unemployment as a grave evil, when it reaches massive proportions

The dignity of work at a time of digital transformation

- ***An economy that values dignity (#157-164)***

It is thus necessary to remember that economic freedom is not absolute; it must always be measured against the common good and the dignity of every person. (#157)

The experience of recent decades shows that in economic and financial crises, it is always the poor who pay the highest price, while the theories that promise automatic general prosperity often prove to be illusory. … It is important to move beyond the current metrics of development — which for more than eighty years have been tied to the concept of Gross Domestic Product GDP— since these metrics almost systematically neglect aspects essential to the overall wellbeing of people and the environment. (#158-159)

More than ever, in the age of AI and robotics, it is no longer possible to rely solely on the "invisible hand" of the market. Politics has the task of orientating economies and technologies to the common good, promoting dignified work, social inclusion and an equitable distribution of the benefits of innovation. Since many economic decisions transcend national borders, there is also a need for international cooperation capable of defining common strategies, especially in favor of the most vulnerable countries and people, (#163)

1. Leo ties cryptocurrency reality into the caution of #160-161: The social function of credit remains irreplaceable. Finance for its own sake is fundamentally different from finance aimed at the development, creation and evolution of work. 161. This perspective needs to become part of a broader view of global dynamics. While the world's wealth has grown in absolute terms, it is increasingly concentrated in fewer hands, widening inequalities both within and between countries. "There are a few who have too much, and too many who have little, that is the logic of today." (#160-161)
2. This leads him to ask that such higher level authorities have common criteria such as accountability and transparency, inclusion and access, and social policies such as taxation that help correct imbalances

Protecting freedom against dependencies and commercialization (#170-181)

- ***Dependencies and societal control (#170-172)***

When business models thrive on human weakness, the person is treated as a means rather than as an end; those who design or finance such systems bear a moral responsibility that cannot be ignored. There is an urgent need to promote technologies that strengthen interior freedom by fostering education in digital sobriety and the protection of minors, thus countering models that exploit vulnerability. (#170)

A further risk, less visible but no less serious, is that of social control made possible by the massive collection of data and use of algorithmic systems. When every action—movements, purchases, relationships and preferences—leaves a trace, a new form of power emerges, namely the power to profile, predict and influence behavior, often without individuals being fully aware of it. If such kinds of data are used to make decisions affecting concrete opportunities — such as access to credit, employment or essential services — there is a risk of undermining freedom and discriminating against the most vulnerable. Furthermore, control is exercised not only through explicit prohibitions, but also through the architecture of visibility: what is amplified or rendered invisible, what is rewarded or penalized, ultimately shapes opinions and choices, fostering conformity and self-censorship. For this reason, freedom in the digital age is not merely a matter of interiority but also a public concern. (#171)

1. Brings in post humanism goal of some where there are classes of citizens as though not equal dignity

Protecting freedom against dependencies and commercialization

- ***Breaking the chains of new forms of slavery (#173-179)***

This distorted view of the human person is reflected today in various forms of servitude directly linked to the digital economy. Nothing in the world of AI is immaterial or magical. Every seemingly immediate and flawless response is the result of a long chain of mediation, involving vast networks of natural resources, energy infrastructure and, above all, people. A significant part of the digital economy's functioning relies on the silent work of millions of people engaged in essential yet largely unseen activities, such as data labeling, model training and content moderation, often involving disturbing material. In many cases, these workers are young people, predominantly women, working under demanding conditions for minimal wages. (#173)

1. Here Leo will recognize the Church's complicity in too long delaying opposition to slavery: #176: *This constitutes a wound in Christian memory, one from which we cannot consider ourselves detached. It is impossible not to feel deep sorrow when contemplating the immense suffering and humiliation endured by so many in stark contrast to their immeasurable dignity as persons infinitely loved by the Lord. For this, in the name of the Church, I sincerely ask for pardon*

Protecting freedom against dependencies and commercialization

- ***A shared responsibility (#180-181)***

From this perspective, the Social Doctrine of the Church calls for a shared responsibility. It asks that these processes be guided with foresight: by institutions capable of regulating without stifling, and protecting without taking over; by businesses that recognize work and dignity as measures of success; by intermediary organizations and educational communities that rebuild trust and relationships; and by citizens who cultivate responsibility, moderation, discernment and a sense of truth. Only in this way can innovation genuinely serve integral human development, rather than becoming a source of exclusion and dominance. And only in this way can the promise of progress be recognized as authentic, because it is measured against the inviolable dignity of every man and woman.(#181)

1. And the third concrete challenge/potential a threat as AI grows: maintaining truly human freedom

CHAPTER FIVE: THE CULTURE OF POWER AND THE CIVILIZATION OF LOVE. (#182-228)

Here the question is not merely the efficiency of new tools, but also the risk that technology, detached from ethics and responsibility, will render decisions about life and death more rapid and impersonal, and will present the use of force as an immediate and viable option. (#182)

what is created for defense can be rapidly repurposed for offense, and the fine line between protection and aggression becomes blurred. While AI can enhance the defense and protection of civilians, it can also lower the threshold for the use of force, shield people from responsibilityand foster a culture in which the enemy is reduced to a statistic and the victim to "collateral damage." (#184)

- ***Building a civilization of love rather than furthering a culture of power in the digital age***

1. In addressing these current warfare/armament issues, Leo will use the contrast of the two approaches/two cities: Babel as a culture of power and Nehemiah rebuilding Jerusalem as a civilization of love.
2. Reminds us that the term "civilization of love" was coined by Pope Paul VI, and it is a term picked up by every subsequent pope in a positive manner, along with the term integral human development.

<u>The culture of power</u> (#188-209)

- ***The normalization of war (#189-192)***

[In the early 1960s] Nevertheless, in public discourse, there was a widespread conviction that war should remain a last resort, subject to strict ethical and legal limits, and always oriented toward a political vision of peace. (#189) Today, however, we are witnessing a real paradigm shift in public discourse and in decisions regarding rearmament, with a troubling revival of war as an instrument of international politics, while the very ethical principles that had previously limited its use are being eroded. (#190)

We are also witnessing a disconcerting loss of historical memory, as first-hand accounts of the Holocaust and the two World Wars are disappearing. This leads to a selective or distorted rewriting of the past, in a context where fake news and the manipulation of narratives obscure the lessons that have been learned. (#191)

Today, more than ever, without prejudice to the right to self-defense in the strictest sense, it is important to reaffirm that the “just war" theory, which has all too often been used to justify any kind of war, is now outdated. (#192)

1. Just war theory no longer viable. Outdated. Written BEFORE US/Israel attacked Iran

The culture of power

- ***Force without limits (#193-196)***

The close link between economic interests, the military apparatus and political decisions produces an “armed nation," in which war appears as a natural extension of politics, and the arms market becomes an autonomous driving force behind military decisions. Nor can we ignore the enormous economic interests behind war. (#193)

In the past, recognition of the threat posed by weapons capable of destroying all of humanity had promoted paths toward détente and disarmament negotiations. Unfortunately, this approach has been left behind, and the evolution of nuclear arsenals — including the prospect of its “tactical" use — makes the use of such weapons seem less improbable. (#194)

The same logic applies to conventional warfare. Military force, weak diplomatic initiatives and the complexity of the interests at stake contribute to conflicts that tend to become protracted, with extremely high human and environmental costs. (#195)

The situation is further destabilized by the presence of new armed operatives, such as jihadist groups, private militias and criminal networks that mark the end of the State’s monopoly on the use of force. (#196)

1. Some of the reasons why "just war" no longer lens to evaluate conflict: the economic interests of maintaining war, the willingness to not exclude WMD from tactical use discussions, protacted nature of conflects and their environmental costs (think Ukraine), non-State military operatives, then add to that AIs use within conflect (next slide)

The culture of power

- ***Weapons and artificial intelligence (#197-200)***

The Holy See has recently observed that the growing ease with which autonomous weapons systems can be deployed makes war more "feasible" and less subject to human control. This violates the principle that armed force should be used only as a last resort in cases of legitimate self-defense. For this reason, the development and use of AI in warfare must be subject to the most rigorous ethical constraints, to guarantee respect for human dignity and the sanctity of life and to avoid a race to develop such arms. (#197)

No algorithm can make war morally acceptable. AI does not remove the intrinsic inhumanity of conflict; indeed it can only bring about conflict more quickly and render it more impersonal, lowering the threshold for resorting to violence, transforming defense into threat prediction and thus reducing victims to data. (#198)

Concrete criteria for discernment must be established. (#199): personal responsibility, timeframes that allow for truly human decision making on irreversible consequences, identification/protection of civilians

The culture of power

- ***The crisis of multilateralism (#201-203)***

The culture of power also stems from the crisis of the multilateral system. The institutions established to safeguard the concept of a common future for all peoples and a global common good appear to have been weakened. This is due not only to structural limitations, but also to a frequent lack of shared will to support and reform them, or to recognize their moral authority. Instead of making progress, we are regressing from the significant turning point of the twentieth century. (#201)

In this context, peacebuilding has been relegated to a secondary role. Cooperation for development, disarmament, conflict prevention and the establishment of mutual trust are neglected in the name of power politics. The achievements of humanitarian law are also being compromised. Indeed, the principle of proportionality in responding to aggression, the protection of access to water, food and essential goods, and respect for the lives of civilians, especially children, come to be regarded as naïve relics of the past. (#203)

1. 1989 crumbling of the Soviet block is that moment when hope for truly global approach looked possible. That is now faded because of the issues cited in #203

The culture of power

- ***A supposed political realism (#204-209)***

I would argue, however, that what is truly irresponsible is Realpolitik, the form of political "realism" that sows in consciences and in society an attitude of resignation to the inevitability of war, and dismisses peace and dialogue as utopian or irrational positions that ignore the risks at stake. In fact, peace is neither a naïve hope nor merely the absence of war; instead, it is always possible as the fruit of justice and charity. (#205)

In such a climate, nihilism and pragmatism become intertwined and end up normalizing grave errors. Religious extremism and identity-based fanaticism ally themselves with irrational economic policies, while politics often turns to misinformation and ridiculing opponents, and systematically cultivating fears and resentments. Thus, diversity is increasingly perceived as a threat, which fuels a desire for possession, a will to dominate, hegemonic ambitions, abuses of power and a fear of those who are different, thereby creating an environment in which new conflicts can develop almost imperceptibly. (#206)

Building the civilization of love (#210-211)

The memory of the saints, righteous people and the oft-forgotten peacemakers, show us that grace does not magically eliminate conflict, but instead it inspires active resistance to evil and an astonishing creativity in doing good. Christians see the darkness and acknowledge it for what it is, yet they do not merely gaze upon it passively, for they know the light and understand that the darkness has not overcome it and cannot defeat it (cf. Jn 1□5□. For this reason, even when suffering seems to have the last word, Christians serve the good and are sustained by a theological hope that gives reality both meaning and direction. (#211)

- ***We can all do our part (#212-213)***
- ***The need to disarm words (#214)***

The first contribution we can make toward a more humane civilization is to be mindful of our words. "Let us disarm words and we will help to disarm the world." … We have a real opportunity to contribute to the common good each time we speak the truth, offer wise advice, support those in need of comfort, denounce injustice and give a voice to the voiceless. (#214)

1. IN #213 Leo even quotes J.R.Tolkien from Lord of the Rings: "It is not our part to master all the tides of the world, but to do what is in us for the succour of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth to till."

Building the civilization of love

- ***Building peace through justice (#215)***
- ***Adopting the perspective of victims (#216-217)***

In some conflicts, it is unjust to remain neutral, nor is it enough merely to claim that we are not complicit. 192 When we witness the bombing of civilians, attacks on hospitals, schools or vital infrastructure, and violence that affects children, we are confronted with scandals that wound humanity itself. (#216)

It helps us to reject the normalization of conflict; not to turn away when human dignity is violated; and to restore to victims the dignity of being recognized and heard. (#217)

- ***Cultivating a healthy realism (#218)***
- ***Reviving dialogue (#219-223)***

"The peoples of our world desire peace, and to their leaders I appeal with all my heart: Let us meet, let us talk, let us negotiate! War is never inevitable. Weapons can and must be silenced, for they do not resolve problems but only increase them. Those who make history are the peacemakers, not those who sow seeds of suffering. Our neighbors are not first our enemies, but our fellow human beings; not criminals to be hated, but other men and women with whom we can speak. Let us reject the Manichean notions so typical of that mindset of violence that divides the world into those who are good and those who are evil."

1. #215 peace through justice he references St. Augustine, his mentor, who commented on Ps.84.11: , Saint Augustine wrote: "There is no one who shuns the desire for peace, yet not everyone is willing to practice justice… But perform the works of justice, keeping in mind that justice and peace have embraced; they are not at odds with one another. Why do you set yourself against justice? Here, for example, is justice telling you not to steal, but you pay no heed; not to commit adultery, and you turn a deaf ear; not to do to others what you would not want done to yourself; not to say about your neighbor the things you would not want said about yourself… Do you therefore wish to attain peace? Then practice justice!"
2. #218 healthy realism: We are in need of a healthy realism that avoids both political idealism and cynicism. There is a kind of idealism that, in order to preserve its own worldview, tends to choose facts selectively, distorting and renaming them. Its proponents eventually, inhabit a reality constructed to fit their own convictions. Conversely, there is also a debased form of realism that confuses observation with resignation, arguing that since force prevails, it will always prevail. Authentic realism does not give up on changing the world; indeed, it starts by clearly identifying interests, fears, constraints and power dynamics, precisely in order to determine what can be achieved, and the measures needed

to achieve it. It does not reduce politics to morality; neither does it surrender to violence. Instead, it seeks viable paths for making peace more than a mere word, through credible institutions, verifiable guarantees, patient negotiations, conflict prevention and the protection of civilians.

3. #221 from a culture of dialogue to a culture of negotiation and Leo repeats his powerful words when first becoming pope: ""The peoples of our world desire peace, and to their leaders I appeal with all my heart: Let us meet, let us talk, let us negotiate! War is never inevitable. Weapons can and must be silenced, for they do not resolve problems but only increase them. Those who make history are the peacemakers, not those who sow seeds of suffering. Our neighbors are not first our enemies, but our fellow human beings; not criminals to be hated, but other men and women with whom we can speak. Let us reject the Manichean notions so typical of that mindset of violence that divides the world into those who are good and those who are evil."

Building the civilization of love

- ***The necessity of diplomacy and multilateralism (#224-227)***

Cyberspace too has become a battleground. Cyberattacks, data manipulation and campaigns of influence, orchestrated with the help of AI, can destabilize entire countries even before open armed conflict erupts. Moreover, in this area, the attribution of responsibility is often uncertain. When it is unclear who carried out an attack, the risk of disproportionate reaction, miscalculation and escalation increases. (#225)

- ***Praying and hoping (#228)***

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CONCLUSION (#229-248)

- ***The Word became flesh (#230-233)***

The flesh of the Son, poor and vulnerable, evokes the flesh of so many brothers and sisters stripped of their dignity and reduced to silence. Through the Lord's closeness, the gift of peace enters into the world in a paradoxical way. It does so through the power to become children of God, and is awakened when we allow ourselves to be moved by the tears of the little ones, the fragility of the elderly, the silence of victims and the struggle of those who fight against the evil they do not wish to commit. In this wounded yet beloved flesh, the Father shows us the true humanity of a life fulfilled through openness and communion, which leads us to desire that his will be done on earth as it is in heaven. (#231)

One body in Christ (#234-235)

The spirituality that we need is a Eucharistic spirituality, that is, a spirituality of ecclesial unity in love. (#234) The Eucharist opens us to justice and sharing, with a preferential concern for those who are burdened by poverty or marginalization. And while new economic and technological networks can generate exclusion, isolation and dependencies, the Church — nourished by the Eucharist — is called to make visible a different paradigm, one that preserves human connections, gives a voice to the invisible and ensures that processes are aimed at respecting people's dignity. (#235)

1. In #234 Leo quotes the full context of St. Augusine's famous quote about it is your mystery on the altar and let your Amen be true

- ***The construction site of our time (#236-242)***
- ***The song of hope: the Magnificat (#243-245)***

  Mary suddenly sees all of history through the lens of this revelation. Nothing has changed around her; the socio-political situation of her time remains the same. The Romans continue to control her land, and her people are still subjugated and humiliated. Yet, everything has changed within her, and this allows her to see what is invisible. God has already shown the strength of his arm; he has already scattered the proud, cast down the mighty, lifted up the lowly, filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty-handed. He has already helped Israel, his servant. (#243)

  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. In the humble fidelity of daily life, even the era of AI can become a time in which the Holy Spirit brings about the civilization of love in our lives. (#245)

1. The construction site is our time , now, able to find a way to work together toward building the civilization of love. Adopt a relational incarnational view, quoting Pope Francis on a ‘situated anthropocentrism’ as opposed to a selfish one: “We must lay aside an individualistic and technical view of humanity, as if reality were mere matter to be shaped according to selfish interests, whether individual or collective. 219 Instead, let us cultivate what Pope Francis called a “situated anthropocentrism,” which recognizes the human being as a creature embedded in a network of relationships with other living beings and with all of creation. “

2. Mary’s Magnificat interpreted in a new eschatological way. The already but not yet with emphasis not simply on what is not there but what has already been decided.
3. End with his quote and image of being "weavers of hope". I love that image.