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INSPIRATIONS OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING FOR
EDUCATION IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.
REFLECTIONS ON POPE LEO XIV'S ENCYCLICAL
MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of artificial intelligence – AI is transforming contemporary societies and increasingly influencing educational systems. AI based technologies are now widely used to support teaching, assessment, content generation, personalized learning, and educational management.¹ While these developments create new opportunities for improving educational processes, they also raise important questions concerning the purpose of education, the role of educators, and the place of the human person in technologically mediated learning environments.

As the use of artificial intelligence in education expands, debates increasingly extend beyond technical considerations and encompass broader anthropological, ethical, and social concerns. Among the issues most frequently discussed are the risks of reducing education to the efficient trans-

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¹ Guidance for Generative AI in Education and Research, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000386693> [accessed: 05.06.2026].

mission of information, weakening interpersonal relationships, and limiting opportunities for the development of critical thinking, moral responsibility, and personal autonomy. In this context, Catholic Social Teaching offers an important framework for evaluating technological innovation in light of human dignity, the common good, and the integral development of the person.²

The publication of *Magnifica humanitas*³ may be viewed within the broader historical development of Catholic Social Teaching. Since *Rerum novarum*,⁴ papal social encyclicals have sought to respond to changing social realities and to interpret new historical circumstances in the light of Christian anthropology. If Leo XIII addressed the challenges of industrial society and the emerging social question of the nineteenth century, Leo XIV confronts a new set of questions arising from the rapid development of artificial intelligence.⁵ In this respect, *Magnifica humanitas* represents an attempt to discern the anthropological, ethical, social, and educational implications of one of the defining technological transformations of the contemporary world (MH 17-18).

While acknowledging the opportunities created by technological progress, the encyclical reaffirms the centrality of the human person and warns against reductionist interpretations of human beings based solely on efficiency, functionality, or algorithmic predictability. By emphasizing human

² Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (2004) [hereinafter: Compendium], https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html [accessed: 05.06.2026], nos. 105-108.

³ Leo XIV, Encyclical letter *Magnifica humanitas* on safeguarding the human person in the time of artificial intelligence (15.05.2026) [hereinafter: MH], <https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/encyclicals/documents/20260515-magnifica-humanitas.html> [accessed: 05.06.2026], nos. 17-18.

⁴ Leo XIII PP., *Litterae encyclicae Rerum novarum de conditione opificum* (15.05.1891), ASS 23 (1890-1891), p. 641-70 [hereinafter: RN].

⁵ Presentation and promulgation of the Encyclical Letter “Magnifica humanitas” (25.05.2026). Address of Pope Leo XIV, https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/speeches/2026/may/documents/20260525-presentazione-enciclica.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com [accessed: 05.06.2026]. See also: Discorso di Apertura Sua Em. Card. Pietro Parolin (materials of Dicastery for promoting integral human development from the presentation of encyclical – Magnifica humanitas), https://www.humandevlopment.va/en/news/2026/intelligenza-artificiale-disarmata-papa-leone-magnifica-humanitas.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com [accessed: 05.06.2026]; “Magnifica humanitas”: the first encyclical of Pope Leo XIV, https://www.cgfmanet.org/en/infosphere/magnifica-humanitas-the-first-encyclical-of-pope-leo-xiv/?utm_source=chatgpt.com [accessed: 05.06.2026].

dignity, freedom, responsibility, and relationality, *Magnifica humanitas* provides valuable insights for contemporary discussions on education and human formation (MH 46-49).

The educational significance of the encyclical is further reinforced by its connection with the Church's juridical tradition. The principles articulated in *Magnifica humanitas* find normative expression in the 1983 Code of Canon Law,⁶ particularly in the provisions concerning the right to Christian education, the integral formation of the human person, and the educational responsibilities of parents and teachers (Canons 217, 795, 796 § 2, 1136) [Sitarz 2016, 196-204; Idem 2019, 85-99].

The purpose of this article is to examine the educational implications of *Magnifica humanitas* in the context of artificial intelligence. Particular attention is given to the anthropological foundations of the encyclical, its vision of education, its relationship to the fundamental principles of Catholic Social Teaching, and its normative expression in selected provisions of canon law. Methodologically, the study is based on a qualitative analysis of magisterial and canonical sources, interpreted within the broader context of the Church's social and educational tradition.

The article consists of four sections. The first examines the anthropological foundations of *Magnifica humanitas*. The second analyses its educational implications. The third discusses selected principles of Catholic Social Teaching relevant to education in the age of artificial intelligence. The fourth explores the canonical foundations of Christian education and their significance for the responsible use of AI in educational settings.

1. THE HUMAN PERSON AT THE CENTRE OF TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT: THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF *MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS*

The encyclical *Magnifica humanitas* stands within the tradition of Catholic Social Teaching which, since the time of Leo XIII, has reflected on social and cultural transformations in the light of the Gospel (Compendium 87-104). Its point of departure is not technology itself, but the human person and

⁶ *Codex Iuris Canonici auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II promulgatus* (25.01.1983), AAS 75 (1983), pars II, p. 1-317 [hereinafter: CIC/83].

his or her place in a world increasingly shaped by digitalization. Leo XIV argues that artificial intelligence should not be regarded merely as another technical or social issue, but rather as a phenomenon that “challenges the categories of Catholic social doctrine from within” and calls for their further development in fidelity to the Gospel (MH 17).

In this sense, *Magnifica humanitas* is primarily a reflection on humanity in the age of emerging technologies. Its very title indicates that the central concern of the document is the human person, his or her dignity, freedom, and vocation to life in community. Artificial intelligence serves as the context in which these questions acquire renewed urgency.

1.1. Human dignity as the foundation of social order

The anthropology of the encyclical is grounded in the classical principle of Catholic Social Teaching that the human person is the subject, foundation, and end of social life.⁷ Leo XIV recalls that the development of the Church’s social doctrine has always been rooted in “an integral vision of the human person created in the image of God” (MH 29). Consequently, social, economic, and technological processes must be evaluated according to their impact on the human person and his or her integral development.⁸

The Pope emphasizes that reflection on artificial intelligence must begin with a renewed appreciation of “the inalienable dignity of the human person” (MH 46). Human worth does not depend on efficiency, competence, or social status, but on the very fact of being a person (CA 11; Compendium 105-159). This dignity also possesses a theological and transcendent dimension. The human being is not merely a biological individual or a social actor, but an image of the Triune God. As Leo XIV states, “if the mystery of God as Love is the source of social doctrine, its most concrete expression is the face of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word” (MH 48-49).

From this perspective, the encyclical criticizes approaches that reduce the human person to data, behavioural patterns, or predictable computational processes. In a world increasingly shaped by algorithms, the funda-

⁷ Ioannes XXIII PP., Litterae encyclicae *Mater et magistra* de recentioribus rerum socialium processibus ad christiana praecepta componendis (15.05.1961), AAS 53 (1961), p. 401-64, no. 219.

⁸ Ioannes Paulus II PP., Litterae encyclicae *Centesimus annus* saeculo ipso peracto ab editis encyclicis litteris Rerum novarum (01.05.1991), AAS 83 (1991), p. 793-867 [hereinafter: CA], no. 11.

mental criterion for evaluating modern technologies remains whether they contribute to the protection and promotion of human dignity.

1.2. “Magnificent Humanity” as a response to technological reductionism

One of the most distinctive features of the encyclical is its positive vision of humanity, already expressed in its title. Rather than focusing solely on the risks associated with artificial intelligence, Leo XIV proposes an anthropology capable of resisting contemporary forms of reductionism.

According to the Pope, many of the problems affecting contemporary culture stem from the belief that reality can be fully described and controlled through technical means.⁹ As a result, human beings are often viewed primarily as users of technology, producers of data, or components of economic systems. In contrast, the human person possesses characteristics that cannot be reduced to algorithmic processes, including freedom, conscience, the capacity for love, moral responsibility, and openness to transcendence.¹⁰ From a personalist perspective, these dimensions are rooted in the deepest identity of the human person, understood in the Christian tradition as the image of God (*imago Dei*). Contemporary pedagogical reflection emphasizes that education should assist individuals in discovering and realizing this “inner image,” rather than merely adapting them to external social or technological expectations [Jeziorański 2024]. These dimensions constitute what the encyclical describes as “magnificent humanity.”

Particular importance is also attached to the relational character of the person. Human fulfilment is achieved not through isolation or self-sufficiency, but through participation in community life.¹¹ As Leo XIV observes, the Church exists as a “sign of the unity of the whole human family” (MH 19), while Catholic Social Teaching may be understood as a “theology of

⁹ Franciscus PP., Litterae encyclicae *Laudato si'* de communi domo colenda (24.05.2015), AAS 107 (2015), p. 847-945 [hereinafter: LS], nos. 106-114.

¹⁰ Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith and Dicastery for Culture and Education, *Antiqua et Nova*. Note on the Relationship Between Artificial Intelligence and Human Intelligence (28.01.2025) [hereinafter: AN], https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_ddd_doc_20250128_antiqua-et-nova_en.html [05.06.2026], nos. 29-35.

¹¹ Franciscus PP., Litterae encyclicae *Fratelli tutti* de fraternitate et amicitia sociali (03.10.2020), AAS 112 (2020), p. 969-1074 [hereinafter: FT], no. 94.

communion in history” (MH 27). The appropriate response to technocratic visions of society is therefore not the rejection of progress, but a deeper appreciation of the relational nature of the human person.

From an educational perspective, this means that education cannot be reduced to the transmission of technical skills. Its task is to form persons capable of exercising freedom responsibly, building meaningful relationships, and participating actively in social life.

1.3. Artificial intelligence as an opportunity and a challenge for contemporary culture

The anthropology presented in *Magnifica humanitas* does not lead to a rejection of artificial intelligence. Leo XIV distances himself both from uncritical technological enthusiasm and from catastrophic views of technological development. Artificial intelligence is presented as one of the most significant *res novae* of the present age, requiring careful discernment (MH 17).

The Pope acknowledges the potential of new technologies to contribute to advances in science, communication, medicine, and education. At the same time, he stresses that technology is never entirely neutral, since it influences social organization, interpersonal relationships, and the very way human beings understand themselves. For this reason, the evaluation of artificial intelligence cannot be limited to questions of efficiency or performance but must also consider its anthropological and ethical implications.

In continuity with the tradition inaugurated by *Rerum novarum*, Leo XIV reminds readers that authentic social development requires maintaining the primacy of the person over the logic of productivity and profit (RN 1-3; MH 30). This principle also applies to systems of artificial intelligence, which must not become instruments of concentrated power, manipulation, or restrictions on human freedom.

As a result, the encyclical proposes a vision of technological culture founded upon the primacy of the human person, the common good, and moral responsibility. Artificial intelligence can contribute to human flourishing as far as it remains ordered to the integral good of the person. Otherwise, it risks reinforcing processes of dehumanization against which the Church has consistently warned throughout the development of its social teaching.

2. EDUCATION IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF *MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS*

Although *Magnifica humanitas* is not a document devoted specifically to education, it contains important anthropological, ethical, and social insights that make it possible to formulate a coherent vision of education for the age of artificial intelligence. Leo XIV's reflections are rooted in the broader tradition of the Church's educational teaching, reflected in such documents as *Gravissimum educationis*,¹² *Laudato si'*, *Fratelli tutti*, and *Antiqua et Nova*. The starting point is the conviction that technological development should serve the human person and promote integral human flourishing rather than lead to forms of instrumentalization. Consequently, education cannot be reduced to prepare individuals for participation in a digital society. Its primary task is to form persons capable of exercising freedom responsibly, making moral decisions, and building communities grounded in solidarity and mutual respect.¹³

2.1. Educating for the fullness of humanity

One of the central messages of the encyclical is that human beings cannot be defined solely by their technical skills, cognitive abilities, or economic functions. Leo XIV consistently emphasizes the inalienable dignity of the human person, rooted in creation in the image of God and in the vocation to communal life (MH 29 and 48-49). For this reason, education should be directed toward the integral development of the whole person (GE 1). This approach is consistent with the personalist philosophy of education inspired by Jacques Maritain, according to which education should foster the integral development of the person and prepare individuals for the responsible exercise of freedom [Allard 1982].

This perspective is fully consistent with the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, which states that the aim of education is the formation of the human person in view of his or her ultimate vocation and the good of society

¹² Concilium Oecumenicum Vaticanum II, *Declaratio Gravissimum educationis de educatione christiana* (28.10.1965), AAS 58 (1966), p. 728-39 [hereinafter: GE].

¹³ Francis, Video Message on the Occasion of the Meeting Organized by the Congregation for Catholic Education: "Global Compact on Education. Together to Look Beyond" (15.10.2020), https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/pont-messages/2020/documents/papa-francesco_20201015_videomessaggio-global-compact.html [accessed: 05.06.2026].

(GE 1). Education therefore extends beyond the transmission of knowledge or professional preparation [Sitarz 2016, 196-204]. In a world increasingly shaped by efficiency and productivity, particular importance must be given to the moral, social, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of human development. In this respect, Leo XIV develops the intuition expressed by Francis in *Laudato Si*, warning against reductionist views of the person associated with contemporary technocratic culture (LS 106-114). Contemporary pedagogical research likewise emphasizes that authentic education should be oriented toward the integral formation of the human person, encompassing intellectual, moral, social, and spiritual dimensions of development [Król 2025].

2.2. The formation of conscience and responsibility in the digital world

The development of artificial intelligence raises fundamental questions concerning human responsibility in decision making processes increasingly supported by algorithmic systems. Leo XIV emphasizes that no technology is capable of making genuinely moral choices because it lacks conscience, freedom, and the capacity for ethical discernment. Responsibility for the use of artificial intelligence always remains with the human person (AN 29-35).

A similar perspective is presented in *Antiqua et Nova*, which argues that artificial intelligence does not possess intelligence in the proper human sense and therefore cannot replace human moral judgment. Consequently, one of the primary tasks of contemporary education is the formation of conscience and the development of ethical competencies that enable responsible participation in digital culture.¹⁴ This includes the critical evaluation of information, the recognition of manipulation, and reflection on the social consequences of emerging technologies.

2.3. Education as the building of relationships and community

A central element of the anthropology of *Magnifica humanitas* is the conviction that human beings are inherently relational. Persons fulfil their vocation through relationships with others and participation in community

¹⁴ Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000380455> [accessed: 05.06.2026].

life. Leo XIV describes the Church as a “sign of the unity of the whole human family” (MH 19) and presents Catholic Social Teaching as a “theology of communion in history” (MH 27).

This perspective closely corresponds to the vision proposed by Francis in *Fratelli tutti*, which highlights the importance of a culture of encounter and the renewal of social bonds (FT 30-55). Although digital technologies expand opportunities for communication and access to education, they cannot replace personal encounter, which remains one of the most crucial factors in the educational process. Education is not only a cognitive activity but also a social and communal one. It takes place through dialogue, cooperation, and participation in relationships through which individuals learn responsibility, solidarity, and concern for the common good.

2.4. The role of the teacher in the age of artificial intelligence

The development of artificial intelligence has prompted questions concerning the future role of teachers. Although new technologies can effectively support teaching and learning, they cannot replace the personal dimension of education (AN 50-55). If education is understood as the integral formation of the person, encompassing moral, social, and spiritual development, it necessarily requires educators capable of offering guidance, dialogue, and personal commitment.

In this context, the teacher remains not merely a transmitter of knowledge but above all a mentor who assists students in the search for truth, the development of critical thinking, and the formation of moral attitudes. Similar conclusions have been reached in contemporary studies of Catholic education, which emphasize the formative, moral, and communal dimensions of the teacher’s vocation [Grace 2002]. A similar understanding can be found in *Gravissimum educationis*, where teachers are presented as participants in an educational process conducted in cooperation with families and the wider community (GE 5). In the light of *Magnifica humanitas*, this mission acquires renewed significance. The more advanced educational technologies become, the greater the need for teachers capable of interpreting reality through the lens of values and helping students use new tools responsibly. This understanding is consistent with the personalist conception of education, according to which the school and the educational process

should remain focused on the person and his or her integral development rather than on purely technical or utilitarian goals [Nowak 1997].

The development of artificial intelligence therefore does not diminish the need for teachers. On the contrary, it highlights their irreplaceable role in the formation of conscience, the building of relationships, and the cultivation of mature humanity.

3. INSPIRATIONS FROM CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING FOR EDUCATION IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The anthropological and educational insights contained in *Magnifica humanitas* invite a broader reflection on the relevance of the fundamental principles of Catholic Social Teaching for contemporary education. These principles serve both normative and interpretative functions, providing criteria for evaluating new social and technological phenomena in light of human dignity and the common good (Compendium 160-208). Although they predate the digital revolution, they remain highly relevant to the challenges posed by artificial intelligence. In this respect, *Magnifica humanitas* offers a significant example of their application to contemporary social and technological realities.

3.1. The primacy of the human person over technology

One of the fundamental principles of Catholic Social Teaching is the primacy of the human person over all social, economic, and technological structures (CA 11; Compendium 160-208). In *Magnifica humanitas*, Leo XIV applies this principle directly to artificial intelligence, emphasizing that technological development must not lead to the subordination of human beings to the logic of efficiency, optimization, or algorithmic management (MH 46-49). The decisive criterion for evaluating modern technologies remains their contribution to the integral development of the person.¹⁵

In education, this principle reminds us that artificial intelligence may support teaching and learning, but it must not reduce students to collections of data, performance indicators, or measurable outcomes. As Francis

¹⁵ Paulus VI PP., *Litterae encyclicae Populorum progressio* de populorum progressionem (26.03.1967), AAS 59 (1967), p. 257-99, no. 14.

observes in *Laudato si'*, the problem lies not in technology itself but in the dominance of the “technocratic paradigm” (LS 106-114). Education must therefore preserve its personalist character and remain oriented toward the formation of persons rather than the optimization of educational processes alone.

3.2. The common good and the responsible use of AI

A second fundamental principle is the common good, understood as the set of social conditions that enable individuals and communities to achieve their fulfilment more fully and easily.¹⁶ Contemporary interpretations of Catholic Social Teaching continue to emphasize the central role of the common good as a moral criterion for evaluating social institutions and public policies [Hollenbach 2002; Fel 2021]. Pope John Paul II, writing as Karol Wojtyła, maintained that the common good is not simply the aggregate of individual goods; rather, it constitutes a “distinct good”, intrinsically and closely linked to society [Hordecka and Żuk 2024, 10]. Leo XIV repeatedly stresses that the development of artificial intelligence should serve the entire human family rather than merely economic or political interests (MH 19 and 30).

In the educational sphere, this requires the responsible use of AI technologies. Artificial intelligence can enhance access to knowledge and support personalized learning, but it may also contribute to the commercialization of education, the erosion of institutional autonomy, or the widening of educational inequalities. The principle of the common good therefore calls for careful consideration of the social consequences of technological innovation and for ensuring that educational technologies serve the flourishing of both individuals and communities.

3.3. The principle of subsidiarity in digital education

Another important criterion for evaluating new technologies is the principle of subsidiarity,¹⁷ according to which higher social structures should

¹⁶ Concilium Oecumenicum Vaticanum II, Constitutio pastoralis *Gaudium et spes* de Ecclesia in mundo huius temporis (07.12.1965), AAS 58 (1966), p. 1025-115, no. 26.

¹⁷ Pius XI PP., Litterae encyclicae *Quadragesimo anno* de ordine sociali instaurando et ad Evangelii normam perficiendo (15.05.1931), AAS 23 (1931), p. 177-228 [hereinafter: QA], no. 79.

support rather than replace the activity of individuals and smaller communities. Applied to artificial intelligence, this principle implies that technology should remain a tool at the service of the human person rather than assume responsibilities that properly belong to human agents (MH 17 and 46).

In education, AI systems may assist teachers, students, and parents, but they cannot replace their essential educational functions (Compendium 185-188). The principle of subsidiarity helps avoid both technophobia and the belief that education can be fully automated. The appropriate use of artificial intelligence consists in supporting educational processes while preserving the significant role of teachers, families, and school communities.

3.4. Solidarity and the prevention of digital exclusion

Particularly relevant to education in the age of artificial intelligence is the principle of solidarity, understood as a commitment to the common good and a concern for those most vulnerable to marginalization.¹⁸ Leo XIV repeatedly emphasizes the communal dimension of human life and responsibility for the weakest members of society (MH 19 and 27).

Although artificial intelligence creates new educational opportunities, access to technological infrastructure, digital tools, and digital competencies remains uneven. As a result, new forms of educational and social exclusion may emerge. The principle of solidarity requires active efforts to address these inequalities through educational policies that ensure equitable access to technology and support groups at risk of marginalization.

This perspective is reinforced by *Fratelli tutti*, where Francis warns that technological progress must not deepen existing social divisions (FT 137-138). Education inspired by Catholic Social Teaching should therefore employ the potential of artificial intelligence to promote inclusion and expand educational opportunities for all members of society.

Consequently, the principles of Catholic Social Teaching provide not only criteria for the ethical evaluation of artificial intelligence but also practical guidance for educational practice. They make it possible to view technological development as a means of promoting integral human development,

¹⁸ Ioannes Paulus II PP., Litterae encyclicae *Sollicitudo rei socialis* vicesimo expleto anno ab editis Litteris Encyclicis a verbis Populorum progressio incipientibus (30.12.1987), AAS 80 (1988), p. 513-86, no. 38.

safeguarding human dignity, and strengthening communities founded on responsibility and solidarity.

4. THE NORMATIVE DIMENSION OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN THE LIGHT OF CANON LAW

The educational vision presented in *Magnifica humanitas* finds its normative expression in the provisions of canon law. Although the 1983 Code of Canon Law was promulgated long before the emergence of contemporary digital technologies and artificial intelligence, it contains principles that remain fully relevant to current educational challenges. These principles concern the right to Christian education, the integral development of the human person, and the responsibilities of parents, educators, and the ecclesial community in the educational process [Sitarz 2016, 196-204].

In this context, the norms of canon law may be understood as the juridical embodiment of the anthropological and social principles found both in Catholic Social Teaching and in *Magnifica humanitas*. In the age of artificial intelligence, they provide important criteria for evaluating the use of technology in education and help define the limits that must not be crossed without undermining human dignity.

4.1. The right of the faithful to a Christian education (Can. 217 CIC/83)

A fundamental point of reference for the Church's understanding of education is Can. 217 CIC/83, which affirms the right of the faithful to a Christian education directed toward the integral maturity of the human person and participation in the mystery of salvation. The canon thus emphasizes that education extends beyond the acquisition of knowledge and skills, encompassing the moral, spiritual, and social formation of the individual.

This canon formulates one of the fundamental rights of all the faithful. Particularly noteworthy is the connection established between Christian education and the attainment of "the maturity of the human person." Education therefore encompasses not only the religious dimension of life but also human and social development [Sitarz 2016, 201; Idem 2019, 94].

Such an understanding is consistent with the anthropology of *Magnifica humanitas*, which emphasizes the integral development of the person and the protection of human dignity in the face of technological change (MH 46-49). In the context of artificial intelligence, Can. 217 CIC/83 reminds us that education cannot be reduced to the transmission of technical knowledge or digital competencies. Rather, it should form persons capable of exercising freedom responsibly and participating fully in community life.

4.2. Integral human formation as the goal of education (Can. 795 CIC/83)

Particular importance is attached to Can. 795 CIC/83, which identifies the complete formation of the human person as the primary goal of Christian education. The canon stresses the harmonious development of all dimensions of human life, the formation of responsible freedom, and preparation for active participation in society, thereby reflecting the Church's integral and personalist understanding of education.

This canon constitutes one of the most comprehensive normative expressions of the personalist vision of education found in the Church's teaching. Education is understood not as the transmission of information or preparation for employment, but as a process encompassing all dimensions of human life [Sitarz 2016, 201-203].

In this respect, a clear convergence can be observed between Can. 795 CIC/83 and the message of *Magnifica humanitas*. Like Leo XIV, the legislator emphasizes the harmonious development of the person, responsibility, and the proper exercise of freedom. Canon law thus provides a normative affirmation of the anthropological principles that underlie the Church's reflection on education in the age of artificial intelligence.

4.3. The responsibility of parents and teachers in the educational process (Can. 796 § 2 and 1136 CIC/83)

An integral vision of education also requires identifying those responsible for its implementation. In this regard, Can. 796 § 2 and Can. 1136 are of particular significance.

Canon 796 § 2 emphasizes the close cooperation that should exist between parents and teachers in the educational process. Canon 1136, in turn, affirms that parents have "the most grave obligation and possess the pri-

mary right” to provide for the education of their children in physical, social, cultural, moral, and religious matters.

These norms express a fundamental principle of Catholic pedagogy according to which the family remains the first and primary environment of education, while schools and teachers perform a complementary and supportive role [Sitarz 2019, 93-96]. In the context of increasing digitalization, this requires cooperation between parents and educators in fostering responsible attitudes toward new technologies. This interpretation is also reflected in contemporary canonical scholarship, which emphasizes that the educational mission is carried out through the cooperation of the family, the Church, and public institutions, while preserving the primary responsibility of parents for the upbringing of their children [Romanko 2018].

This perspective reflects the principle of subsidiarity, which occupies an important place both in Catholic Social Teaching and in the Church’s legal order. Digital technologies may support educational processes, but they cannot assume the responsibility that belongs to those directly involved in the formation of the young person.

4.4. Artificial intelligence as a supportive instrument in the educational mission of the Church

Although the current norms of canon law do not refer directly to artificial intelligence, the principles they contain make it possible to identify basic criteria for its use within the Church’s educational mission. Of particular importance is the principle of subsidiarity, according to which technical means should support human persons rather than replace their freedom and responsibility (QA 79).

In the light of *Magnifica humanitas*, artificial intelligence may serve as a valuable tool for teaching, school administration, and access to educational resources. It may also facilitate personalized learning and improve educational accessibility. At the same time, both the teaching of Leo XIV and the norms of canon law establish clear limits to its use. Artificial intelligence cannot replace the personal dimension of education because it lacks the capacity for moral responsibility, authentic interpersonal relationships, and personal witness.

Consequently, AI should be regarded as a supportive instrument serving the educational mission of the Church. Its use must remain subordinate to

the objectives defined by canon law: the integral development of the person, the formation of conscience, the responsible exercise of freedom, and preparation for participation in community life.

Although the norms of the Code of Canon Law were formulated before the emergence of contemporary AI systems, they provide enduring criteria for evaluating new technologies in education. Together with the reflections contained in *Magnifica humanitas*, they offer a coherent framework for the responsible use of artificial intelligence within the Church's educational activity, preserving a proper balance between openness to technological progress and the protection of human dignity.

CONCLUSION

The rapid development of artificial intelligence is among the most significant processes shaping contemporary social and educational realities. As digital technologies become increasingly integrated into everyday life, there is a growing need for deeper reflection on the place of the human person in a technologically mediated world and on the goals that should guide educational development in the digital age.

The analysis conducted in this study demonstrates that *Magnifica humanitas* offers a coherent personalist vision of the human person and education that provides a key point of reference for contemporary debates on artificial intelligence. At the center of this vision stands the human person, endowed with inherent dignity, freedom, and the capacity for responsible action. Human beings cannot be reduced to economic functions, cognitive abilities, or data processed by technological systems. Consequently, technological development must remain ordered to the integral good of the person.

From Leo XIV's perspective, education is far more than the transmission of knowledge and the development of technical competencies. Its purpose is the formation of persons capable of seeking truth, exercising freedom responsibly, building meaningful relationships, and participating actively in social life. Although artificial intelligence can support teaching and learning, it cannot replace the formation of conscience, the transmission of values, or the cultivation of authentic interpersonal relationships.

The study has also shown that the anthropological and educational insights contained in *Magnifica humanitas* find normative expression in

canon law. Canons 217, 795, 796 § 2, and 1136 CIC/83 consistently emphasize the integral formation of the human person and the responsibility of parents, educators, and the ecclesial community for the educational process. In this way, canon law safeguards the same vision of the person that underlies both Catholic Social Teaching and the papal reflection on the challenges posed by artificial intelligence.

An additional outcome of the analysis is the demonstration of the continuing relevance of the fundamental principles of Catholic Social Teaching in the face of technological change. The primacy of the person over technology, the common good, subsidiarity, and solidarity provide important criteria for evaluating both the opportunities and the risks associated with the use of artificial intelligence in education. These principles indicate that technological innovation should serve integral human development, strengthen social participation, and contribute to the creation of more just and inclusive communities.

In light of these findings, *Magnifica humanitas* may be regarded as a significant contribution to the Church's reflection on the future of education in the age of artificial intelligence. Together with the rich heritage of Catholic Social Teaching and the normative framework of canon law, the encyclical offers a coherent foundation for the responsible use of emerging technologies in education. Its central concern remains the protection of human dignity and the promotion of integral human development, affirming the fundamental personalist principle that the human person must always remain at the end, and never merely the means, of social and technological processes.

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Inspirations of Catholic Social Teaching for Education in the Age of Artificial Intelligence. Reflections on Pope Leo XIV's Encyclical *Magnifica humanitas*

Abstract

The rapid development of artificial intelligence has created new opportunities for education while simultaneously raising significant anthropological, ethical, and social challenges. In this context, the Catholic Church's reflection on the relationship between human beings and technology acquires particular relevance. The aim of this article is to examine the educational implications of Pope Leo XIV's encyclical *Magnifica humanitas* and their significance for education in the age of artificial intelligence. The analysis focuses on the anthropological vision of the human person presented in the encyclical, grounded in human dignity, freedom, moral responsibility, and the relational character of social life. On this basis, the article identifies key educational themes, including integral education, the formation of conscience, moral responsibility, and the preservation of the personal dimension of educational relationships in an increasingly digital environment. The discussion is situated within the framework of Catholic Social Teaching, particularly the principles of human dignity, the common good, solidarity, and subsidiarity as criteria for evaluating the use of artificial intelligence in education. The article also examines the juridical dimension of these issues through selected provisions of the 1983 Code of Canon Law, especially Canons 217, 795, 796 § 2, and 1136, concerning the right to Christian education, integral human formation, and the responsibilities of parents and educators.

Keywords: *Magnifica humanitas*; artificial intelligence; education; Catholic Social Teaching; canon law.

Inspiracje katolickiej nauki społecznej dla edukacji w epoce sztucznej inteligencji. Refleksje na kanwie encykliki *Magnifica humanitas* Leona XIV**Abstrakt**

Dynamiczny rozwój sztucznej inteligencji otwiera przed edukacją nowe możliwości, jednocześnie rodząc istotne pytania natury antropologicznej, etycznej i społecznej. W tym kontekście szczególnego znaczenia nabiera refleksja Kościoła katolickiego nad relacją między człowiekiem a technologią. Celem artykułu jest ukazanie edukacyjnych implikacji encykliki *Magnifica humanitas* papieża Leona XIV oraz ich znaczenia dla edukacji w epoce sztucznej inteligencji. Analiza koncentruje się na antropologicznej wizji człowieka przedstawionej w encyklice, zakorzenionej w godności osoby ludzkiej, wolności, odpowiedzialności moralnej oraz relacyjnym charakterze życia społecznego. W tej perspektywie omówiono najważniejsze wątki pedagogiczne obecne w dokumencie, takie jak edukacja integralna, formacja sumienia, kształtowanie odpowiedzialności moralnej oraz zachowanie osobowego wymiaru relacji wychowawczych w coraz bardziej cyfrowym środowisku edukacyjnym. Rozważania zostały osadzone w szerszym kontekście katolickiej nauki społecznej, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem zasad godności osoby ludzkiej, dobra wspólnego, solidarności i pomocniczości jako kryteriów oceny wykorzystania sztucznej inteligencji w edukacji. Artykuł podejmuje również analizę normatywnego wymiaru omawianych zagadnień poprzez odwołanie do wybranych przepisów Kodeksu Prawa Kanonicznego z 1983 roku, zwłaszcza kan. 217, 795, 796 § 2 oraz 1136, dotyczących prawa do wychowania chrześcijańskiego, integralnej formacji osoby ludzkiej oraz odpowiedzialności rodziców i nauczycieli za proces wychowawczy.

Słowa kluczowe: *Magnifica humanitas*; sztuczna inteligencja; edukacja; katolicka nauka społeczna; prawo kanoniczne.

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