



GRAND MAGISTERIUM – VATICAN
EQUESTRIAN ORDER OF
THE HOLY SEPULCHRE OF JERUSALEM

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

Choosing the Path of Nehemiah

“Let’s not fear artificial intelligence, but constantly keep the question of the human in play.”



For the first time, a Pope personally attended the official presentation of an encyclical he himself had written — likely a sign of Leo XIV’s desire to lead by example, since the aim is **“to find the way for humanity, in this time of artificial intelligence,”** as he said in the Paul VI Audience Hall on May 25, Pentecost Monday and the Feast of Mary, Mother of the Church.

The central message of the encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas* — “Magnificent Humanity” — is first of all that “artificial intelligence must be disarmed.” “I know the word is strong, but it was chosen deliberately, because this moment calls for language capable of capturing attention and awakening consciences,” the Holy Father emphasized. **“Artificial intelligence now demands to be “disarmed,” freed from logics that turn it into an instrument of domination, exclusion and death,”** he explained, before adding that disarming alone is not enough, because “we must also build.”

At the heart of his message, the Pope points to the example of the biblical prophet Nehemiah who, faced with the ruined walls of Jerusalem, gathers a discouraged people in order to begin again. “Nehemiah’s effort speaks to our time. Artificial intelligence can be a construction site of history from within a horizon of communion, in which technical progress learns to serve human life,” the Pope writes, before concluding: **“Let’s not fear artificial intelligence, but constantly keep the question of the human in play.”**

In the introduction to the encyclical, Leo XIV draws on two biblical images: the construction of the Tower of Babel (Gen 11:1–9) and the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem (Neh 2–6). Speaking of Babel, he observes that “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.” In contrast to this fragmentation, he highlights what leads toward unity, describing how, after the Babylonian exile, the prophet Nehemiah rebuilt Jerusalem, then lying in ruins:

“He did not impose solutions from above. He convened the families, assigned each of them a section of the wall to rebuild, listened to their concerns, coordinated their efforts and addressed any opposition. The 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. Thus, ancient Jerusalem rediscovers a common language — not one of uniformity, but one of communion, namely the harmony that arises when all persons assume their own role and recognize that their strength comes from the Lord.”

For the Pope, in relation to technology and the ongoing digital revolution, the choice before us is therefore “**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.”

In this spirit, Leo XIV makes a passionate appeal to all Catholics, to all Christians, and to all men and women of good will:

“Like Nehemiah, let us pray, plan wisely and work perseveringly, placing God at the forefront of our actions and the human person at the center of our choices. Thus, the “rejected stones” — the poor, the sick, the migrants and the least among us — will become the cornerstone, and a solid, welcoming common home will emerge on the earth, where love and faithfulness will finally meet, and righteousness and peace will embrace (cf. *Ps* 85:10). **This is the blessing we implore from God; and the task that stands before us is that of being builders of communion, rather than architects of Babel. We are to be servants of the coming Kingdom, instead of lords of towers destined for ruin.** With the heart of a shepherd and a father, I ask everyone to abandon the construction of yet another Tower of Babel and to join forces in building up the common good, so that humanity will never lose its beauty, and the world once again will come to recognize the human heart as the place where God desires to dwell.”

Magnifica Humanitas also develops in depth the history, foundations and principles of the Church’s social doctrine. The encyclical explores the promises of artificial intelligence while firmly placing them within the framework of Christian humanism, insisting especially on the need to preserve the dignity of work during the digital transition.

More broadly, the text outlines **a horizon of commitment for all people**, centered on that “civilization of love” envisioned by Saint Paul VI, which the Pope describes as a true “**worksite of hope**”: “the civilization of love is no naïve utopia, but a demanding project, which consists in translating charity into structures of justice, giving institutional form to fraternity and regarding others — whether individuals or peoples — as allies necessary for building the common good.”

In its conclusion, the encyclical presents the Virgin of the Magnificat as a model, because “**hope, which sustains our actions in the world, (...) is prayer.**”

“Before Elizabeth who announces to her that she has become the mother of the Lord, Mary bursts into a hymn of praise and joy. Her soul magnifies the Lord, and her spirit rejoices in God her Savior, for he chose a young, poor and humble girl for his plan of salvation. Mary suddenly sees all of history through the lens of this revelation,” Leo XIV writes, adding, from an eschatological perspective, that “**God 'takes the part of the lowly. His plan is one that is often hidden beneath the opaque context of human events that see 'the proud, the mighty and the rich' triumph. Yet his secret strength is destined in the end to be revealed'.**”

In this age of artificial intelligence, the Pope calls on all people to become “weavers of hope,” with the same faith as Mary.

François Vayne

(May 2026)