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Conference on the Human Face of the Xaverian Missionary



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Delegation House

Xavier Knoll
4500 West Xavier Drive
Franklin WI 53132-9066
414-421-0831

Our Lady of Fatima Shrine
101 Summer Street
Holliston, MA 01746-2207
508-429-2144

missionmedia@xaverianmissionaries.org
worldcatholic.us

Publisher

Fr. Alex Rodriguez, sx

Communications Board

Fr. Carl Chudy, sx
Br. Kornelius Glossanto, sx
Fr. Rocco Puopolo, sx
Fr. Alex Rodriguez, sx

Editor, Layout, Design
Mary Aktay

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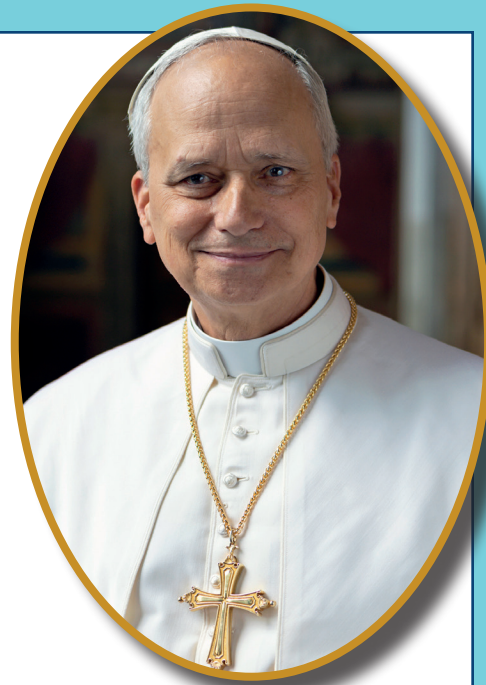
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MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS

ENCYCLICAL LETTER
OF HIS HOLINESS
POPE LEO XIV

ON SAFEGUARDING THE HUMAN PERSON
IN THE TIME OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



Excerpts from the Introduction:

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. Each generation inherits the task of shaping its own era, of guiding history to become a place where the dignity of every person is safeguarded, justice is promoted and fraternity is made possible. Yet every era also runs the risk of creating an inhumane and more unjust world. Whenever humanity is in danger of marring its true identity, we Christians lift our eyes to the Incarnate God, knowing that it is “only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of humanity truly becomes clear.” [*Gaudium e Spes*] In Jesus Christ, this humanity in its grandeur becomes the Way, the Truth and the Life, opening the path for each of us to grow toward fullness.

Founded on Christ, the living stone, we experience the powerful and mysterious action of the Holy Spirit, and we believe that every authentic human effort to cooperate with him for the good will be blessed by our heavenly Father, in whom we place our hope. For this reason, we can diligently contribute to every initiative that builds a more just world, and we can call others to collaborate in promoting the integral development of every human being.

...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.” ...Many decades have passed since then, and the Magisterium, pastors, theologians and faithful have continued to reflect on social issues in the light of the Gospel. Today, the Social Doctrine of the Church is a legacy of wisdom, where we find principles for thought, criteria for discernment and judgment, and concrete guidelines for action. Founded on Sacred Scripture and Tradition, and in engagement with the sciences, it helps us clearly interpret the challenges of the present and identify appropriate ways for living out a clear Christian witness, with joy and in service to the world. It is not an inert set of concepts, but a living corpus of truth that safeguards and interprets humanity’s vocation to a full and just life. I therefore wish to add my own voice to this living tradition, invoking the help of the Spirit of wisdom, who has dwelt in the world since its beginning (cf. Prov 8:22-31).

...[W]e 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. Technology should not be considered, in itself, as a force antagonistic to humanity. On the contrary, it has formed part of our history since the beginning as “a profoundly human reality, linked to the autonomy and freedom of man.” [*Caritas in Veritate*] Over the centuries, technological development has significantly improved the living conditions of humanity...

It now falls to us to face the challenges of our time with clarity of thought and responsibility. It is necessary to establish adequate regulatory tools capable of upholding justice and curbing the distorting effects of technological power...

[C]ritical 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?

My Heart Echoes Your Invitation

Final Message of the Conference on the Human Face of the Xaverian Missionary

"My heart echoes your invitation: 'Seek my face!' Your face, Lord, I seek" (Psalm 27:8).



My Face

My face is first of all a face to be recognized, even before it is shown.

In these days we learned that affectivity is neither a luxury nor a risk for consecrated life, but the dimension that runs through every gesture, even of those who consider themselves "insensitive": a humanity that does not feel is a mute humanity. To recognize oneself means having a good relationship with oneself, knowing that each of us is the only person who will remain with us until the end, and giving names to one's feelings instead of remaining illiterate in them.

It also means coming to terms with one's own stones: self-sufficiency, self-deprecation, victimhood, narcissism, the habit of "it's always been done this way." It is not a matter of eliminating them, but of seeing them: what matters is not whether they are there, but whether I recognize them.

It is a face that bears the marks of its own fragilities, of advancing age, of illness, of loneliness, and which precisely in this finds the courage to ask for help, knowing that no one is self-sufficient or self-referential. It is a face that needs time for itself, silence, care, because only a free heart can truly encounter the other.

The Face of Christ

The face of Christ is the face of one who comes among his own and is not always welcomed yet never ceases to draw near.

Jesus is born "unknown" according to the logic of the world, son of the gratuitousness of a woman before any lineage, and for this reason opens for us a fatherhood and a family different from what we would expect.

We see him weep before the tomb of Lazarus, because nothing is more human than tears; we see him stop at the well with the Samaritan woman and allow himself in turn to be revealed by her, who becomes the first missionary. We see him, at the Last Supper, experiencing loneliness in the midst of his own, and precisely there he says: "among you it shall not be so," girding himself with the apron as one who serves. On the cross he feels in his body the pain of the other, and in the moment of greatest weakness he builds a new family around himself, the mother and the beloved disciple.

To gaze upon Him, and to let ourselves be gazed upon by Him, remains the starting point of our every human face. This face has not remained closed in a distant time: it has continued to take shape in the faces of those

who, by contemplating it, allowed themselves to be shaped by Him.

It happened in our Founder, who as a child before a crucifix experienced a gaze that preceded him and called him, and from that gaze learned no longer to fear himself and to embrace the bold project.

It happened in many confreres whom we recalled in these days: concrete men, with their limits, who did not seek the stage but knew how to be bridge-builders rather than protagonists, capable of entering a culture without colonizing it, of serving without demanding recognition.

The Face of the Other

The face of the other is always greater than we can comprehend: it is infinite, it does not allow itself to be reduced to our categories.

The commandment written on every face is simple and radical: do not kill me, do not close me in your schemes, do not make me a number. It is a face that questions us even before we question it, because the other is always, in some way, our lord: we are responsible for him even before we have decided to be.

From a missionary point of view this means that a culture, a people, a confrere are always greater than our understanding of them; for this reason, Conforti left us a prayer that remains timely: "look, Lord, upon so many brothers", a prayer for "the distant brothers" we do not yet know...

And so that the face of the other may remain real and not dissolve in the digital age where everything seems to be everywhere and no one's, we need to meet in person, in a shared place and time. Only in this way does the face remain what it is: not an idea we form of the other, but a free person, who surprises us and asks us to serve them.

In Conclusion

The human face of the Xaverian is not a goal achieved once and for all, but a journey that renews itself every day: in my face to be recognized and cherished, in the face of Christ to be contemplated and let be configured in us, in the face of the other to be welcomed as a gift and not as a threat.

And this is our path of holiness: we have rediscovered that our humanity will always walk together with our faith. What is human in us is made fuller by the Spirit, and what is spiritual takes shape precisely in our humanity, in a bond that cannot be dissolved...

"We have the urgent duty to remain deeply human, lovingly guarding that magnificent humanity that has been given to us and shown to us in its fullness in Christ" (*Magnifica Humanitas*). This is the duty we feel called to bring home, to our communities and our missions: not a perfect humanity, but a true one.

"May God have mercy on us and bless us; May he make his face shine upon us; so that your way may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations" (Psalm 67:2-3). May the face of God, shining upon us, make us capable of becoming in our turn a credible face of the Gospel for the brothers and sisters we encounter, near and far.

May our Lord Jesus Christ be known and loved by all,

The Participants in the Conference on the Human Face of the Xaverian Missionary 2026

From June 17 to 28, 2026, Parma, birthplace of the Xaverian family, hosted the international convention "The Human Face of the Xaverian Missionary Vocation". For twelve days, 40 missionaries, sisters, lay people and friends from every continent gathered to reflect together on what makes the face of those sent on mission human – and therefore credible.

We came to Parma, Italy from our different missions, bringing with us different stories, languages, cultures, ages and sensibilities. Some already knew each other, others met for the first time. Yet, from the very first moments, we rediscovered ourselves as part of a single family, welcomed into the Mother House, that womb that gave life to the mission of our Institute.

We listened to the voices of confreres, lay people and sisters from different continents; we retraced stories of fidelity, fragility, dedication and hope; we remembered men and women who, with the concreteness of their lives, made visible the human face of the Xaverian missionary dreamed of by St. Guido Maria Conforti.

Rather than seeking a definition, we have learned to recognize a face: a humanity that allows itself to be shaped by the Gospel and that, precisely for this reason, becomes a credible sign of mission.

And as so many names, so many stories and so many testimonies flowed in front of us, we realized that the mosaic would not be complete without the faces of those who read these lines today.



FRANKLIN MISSION



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Pictures provided by Fr. Alex Rodriguez, sx

Protection and Mission: the Human Face that Protects the Most Vulnerable



Fr. Pietro Rossini, sx

A story of shared vulnerability

The Xaverians have experienced firsthand what it means to be oppressed: the Chinese prisons, the martyrs of the Congo, the child soldiers of Sierra Leone.

From these painful memories emerges a profound lesson: those who have suffered oppression have a moral responsibility to become custodians of the dignity of others.

“How can we, heirs of this history, not be the primary custodians of the sanctity of the body and the dignity of minors?” The speaker concluded.

Concrete commitments for the future

The intervention concluded with a clear road map:

- Before COSUMA 2027, the Institute will present new updated guidelines on protection;
- Before the next General Chapter, a shared protocol for all constituencies.

Protection is not emergency management, but rather the building of a culture of care, mutual stewardship, and restorative justice—rooted in the Xaverian charism and the example of Christ, the “vulnerable one par excellence” whom Conforti encountered in the Crucified One and from whom he learned how to embrace the frailties of humanity itself. Our humanity.

MOTHER HOUSE – The congress on the “Human Face of the Xaverian” concluded today with a presentation that touched the heart of the Xaverian missionary identity. Father Faustino Turco, delegate of the Congregation for the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Persons, led the participants in a reflection on the link between the missionary charism and the commitment to protecting the most vulnerable.

Protection as part of the missionary DNA

“If a missionary does not commit to protecting the youngest among us, his message loses all credibility.”

With this forceful statement, Father Turco presented protection not as a corollary of Xaverian life, but as one of its constitutive dimensions.

The Congregation has embarked on a concrete path: in 2023 the General Chapter instituted the Commission for Protection, assuming a collective responsibility towards the victims of

abuse and committing itself to preventing all forms of violation of personal dignity.

Recognizing vulnerability to avoid becoming abusers

At the heart of the reflection, a common Xaverian grammar: vulnerability.

“If I acknowledge that I am vulnerable, I accept the security protocols. If I believe that I am strong, I become a subject at risk of becoming an abuser.”

Father Turco recalled how the Congregation's own history was born from fragility: the Founder, Saint Guido Maria Conforti, marked by illness since his youth, transformed his own limitations into missionary fruitfulness: his inability to go on mission, due to his physical health, led him to found an institute in which he would prepare others to go where he could not.

Similarly, Father Silvio Turazzi, confined to a wheelchair for fifty years, did not experience it as a condemnation but as a new mission territory, becoming a spiritual center of attraction for all.

Magnifica Humanitas: Safeguarding Human Dignity in the Age of AI

Fr. Nicolindo Putra Gowin, sx

The publication of Pope Leo XIV's encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas* represents a crucial turning point in reflection on the destiny of humanity. Amid the digital revolution, the document offers a profound philosophical and theological meditation on our future, placing us before an epochal crossroads illustrated by two biblical icons.

On one side, there is the risk of raising a modern "Tower of Babel," where technology becomes an instrument of arrogance, homogenization, and dominance that excludes God and sacrifices human dignity on the altar of efficiency. On the other, the path traced by Nehemiah in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, which demands shared responsibility, listening, and the awareness that human frailties are overcome only by building together a just and fraternal coexistence in the presence of God.

This encyclical is a living and vital development of the Social Doctrine of the Church. Just as Pope Leo XIII addressed the injustices of the industrial revolution with *Rerum Novarum*, today the Church interprets the *res novae* (new things): artificial intelligence, robotics, and digitalization.

The core of the pontifical teaching is the vigorous defense of the "ontological" and infinite dignity of every person.

The Pope extends the principles of the common good to the new digital scenarios. Patents, algorithms, technological infrastructures, and big data cannot be monopolized to enrich a narrow elite but must serve the development of all humanity. Algorithmic decisions must be transparent and not divest the initiative and freedoms of local communities. The encyclical criticizes the spread of the "technocratic paradigm", an ideology that reduces reality to an object of manipulation and imposes profit and control as the sole measures of judgment. Delegating crucial



decisions to AI, such as hiring workers, granting credit, or judicial verdicts, means stripping society of empathy, mercy, and forgiveness. Machines may imitate behaviors, but they do not possess a moral conscience and cannot bear the weight of the consequences. Furthermore, the Pope forcefully rejects the illusions of transhumanism and posthumanism, which consider biological limitation as a defect to be eliminated through technological hybridization, and reminds us that an uncritical adoption of AI has an unsustainable ecological impact, consuming enormous amounts of water and energy, threatening our common Home.

Truth as a common good is under attack due to misinformation, manipulated content, and algorithmic polarization, which corrode the very foundations of democracy. It is necessary to promote an ecology of communication and an educational alliance, to teach new generations to develop critical thinking.

Automation must not aim solely at maximizing profits and de-skilling workers. Generating mass unemployment not only takes away income but destroys human dignity and disrupts the family and social fabric. Freedom is threatened by new and invisible forms of slavery linked to the digital economy. AI relies on the silent work of underpaid content moderators,

on the cruel extraction of rare earth minerals, and on a new "data colonialism" that plunders the most fragile populations.

In a new arms race, entrusting lethal decisions to autonomous weapon systems represents a profound moral aberration, as it degrades the sacredness of human life to mere "collateral damage" calculated by a cold algorithm. Pope Leo XIV launches a vibrant appeal to "disarm" AI, removing it from armed and monopolistic competition and return it to the plurality of human cultures. Pope Leo calls for the building of a "Civilization of Love", founded on the relaunch of dialogue, on a renewed diplomatic multilateralism, and on the courage to look at history starting from the perspective of the victims.

Magnifica Humanitas leads us back with gentleness and power to the radiant mystery of the Incarnation. The fact that the Word became Flesh unequivocally demonstrates that our vulnerable body and our human condition are immensely sacred and worthy of redemption. This encyclical stands as a prophetic manifesto: it urges us to ensure, with tenacity and love, that every technological innovation is always and perpetually bowed before an absolute and untouchable value: the magnificent dignity of the human person.

WORLD MISSION NEWS

“Making of the World One Family...”

Zhengzhou Diocese Annual Assembly: Synodality on the common path of proclaiming the Gospel



Zhengzhou (Fides News Agency) – “Synodality: working together for a better future for the Diocese”: Bishop Thaddeus Wang Yuesheng of Zhengzhou, Henan Province, addressed this theme during the annual diocesan assembly on April 24 at Our Lady of Lourdes Church on Qinghuayuan Street – the same church where Thaddeus Wang was ordained Bishop on January 25, 2024.

A total of 58 people, including priests, religious sisters, and lay people from the various parishes of the diocese, participated in the assembly. The past year’s pastoral work was reviewed, and future steps for proclaiming the Gospel in the Diocese of Zhengzhou were outlined.

In his annual report, Bishop Wang Yuesheng outlined the diocese’s pastoral plan for 2026 and emphasized the urgent need to foster a new vision of the mission entrusted to the local Church through a “qualitative leap” at the spiritual level. This includes sharing

pastoral responsibilities, especially among parish priests, and managing activities and resources transparently and with discipline.

During the meeting, Bishop Wang presented letters of appointment to a total of 14 parish priests. Two years ago, the Diocese of Zhengzhou received a resident ordinary bishop, after the episcopal see had been vacant for over seventy years.

Zhengzhou is the capital of Henan, a province in central China where Jesuits, Vincentians, and missionaries of the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions (PIME) have been active throughout history.

In the 20th century, Xaverian missions from Parma played a particularly important role in Zhengzhou. The installation of a new bishop in Zhengzhou, in communion with the Bishop of Rome, is a visible sign of the apostolic nature of this local Church’s mission and has given new missionary impetus to parish life.

Despite the ongoing difficulties, and even divisions and conflicts, that burden pastoral care in the Chinese Church, the Catholic community of Zhengzhou has never ceased to walk the path of the universal Church in communion with the Successor of Peter. It is celebrating the Extraordinary Year of Mercy with great devotion, promoting priestly vocations, ordaining new priests, and engaging in works of mercy. Following his episcopal consecration, the new Bishop Wang began an extensive program of pastoral visits to various parishes, celebrating the sacraments in each parish during these visits.

USA NEWS

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We are so grateful for the great weather, the volunteers, and everyone who helped make this year's festival happen!

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Email Fr. Alex for more information. fralex@xaverianmissionaries.org



OUR LADY OF FATIMA SHRINE, HOLLISTON, MA

Office Update

We bid a fond farewell to our office manager, Eydie Cullen (right), as she moves on to new things in her life, and we say welcome to our new office manager, Mariane Murray (left). Eydie has done a marvelous job in our office for almost three years, and we wish her the best of all grace. Marianne, who comes to us from San Jose, California, will continue Eydie's good work. Thank you both!

We enjoyed celebrating our nation's 250th birthday with the Xaverian Sisters.



Congratulations!

Xaverian Missionary, Fr. Joeven Matugas, (4th from the left/front), together with other newly assigned Vocations Directors from different religious orders, gathered for two weeks for training. More will be forthcoming on a new vocation program for the US Delegation.



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