

Pope Leo: Technology must serve the human person, not replace it

In his message for the 60th World Day of Social Communications, Pope Leo XIV highlights the importance of ensuring that technological innovation, particularly artificial intelligence, serves the human person rather than replacing or diminishing human dignity.

Face and voice are unique traits of every person and form the foundation of human identity and relationships. Reflecting on this truth, Pope Leo XIV introduces his Message for the 60th World Day of Social Communications, which will be celebrated on 17 May 2026, with a focus on digital communication and artificial intelligence, highlighting the need to protect human dignity in an age increasingly shaped by technological innovation.

Human beings, the Pope recalls, are created in the image and likeness of God and called into relationship through the Word. Preserving human faces and voices, therefore, means preserving the divine imprint present in each person and upholding the irreplaceable vocation of every human life.

"Preserving human faces and voices, therefore, means preserving this mark, this indelible reflection of God's love. We are not a species composed of predefined biochemical formulas. Each of us possesses an irreplaceable and inimitable vocation, that originates from our own lived experience and becomes manifest through interaction with others," he writes.

The anthropological challenge of technology

The Pope warns that digital technologies, especially artificial intelligence systems capable of simulating voices, faces, and emotions, risk altering essential dimensions of human communication.

The challenge, he stresses, is not primarily technological but anthropological; it is a matter of protecting human identity and authentic relationships.

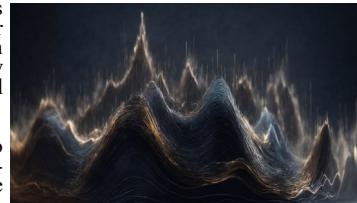
He draws attention to the impact of social media algorithms that prioritise rapid emotional reactions over reflection, weakening critical thinking and fostering social polarisation.

"By grouping people into bubbles of easy consensus and easy outrage, these algorithms reduce our ability to listen and think critically, and increase social polarisation," the Pope explains.

The growing reliance on artificial intelligence for information, creativity, and decision-making, he adds, also risks diminishing analytical skills, imagination, and personal responsibility.

Reality, simulation, and social impact

Pope Leo highlights the difficulty of distinguishing between reality and simulation in digital environments ... To read more: [Pope Leo: Technology must serve the human person, not replace it - Catholic Bishops' Conference](#)



The Blessed Path



In the readings since Christmas, Jesus has been revealed as the new royal son of David and Son of God.

He is sent to lead a new exodus that brings Israel out of captivity to the nations and brings all the nations to God.

As Moses led Israel from Egypt through the sea to give them God's law on Mount Sinai, Jesus too has passed through the waters in baptism. Now, in today's Gospel, He goes to the mountain to proclaim a new law—the law of His Kingdom.

The Beatitudes mark the fulfillment of God's covenant promise to Abraham—that through his descendants all the nations of the world would receive God's blessings (see Genesis 12:3; 22:18).

Jesus is the son of Abraham (see Matthew 1:1). And through the wisdom He speaks today, He bestows the Father's blessings upon "the poor in spirit."

God has chosen to bless the weak and lowly, those foolish and despised in the eyes of the world, Paul says in today's Epistle. The poor in spirit are those who know that nothing they do can merit God's mercy and grace. These are the humble remnant in today's First Reading, taught to seek refuge in the name of the Lord.

The Beatitudes reveal the divine path and purpose for our lives. All our striving should be for these virtues—to be poor in spirit; meek and clean of heart; merciful and makers of peace; seekers of the righteousness that comes from living by the law of Kingdom.

The path the Lord sets before us today is one of trials and persecution. But He promises comfort in our mourning and a great reward.

The Kingdom we have inherited is no earthly territory but the promised land of heaven. It is Zion where the Lord reigns forever. And, as we sing in today's Psalm, its blessings are for those whose hope is in the Lord.

Scott Hahn



English Martyrs
Vale of White Horse
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4TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A

Entrance Antiphon:

Save us, O Lord our God!
And gather us from the nations,
to give thanks to your holy name,
and make it our glory to praise you.

First Reading: Zephaniah 2:3, 3:12-13

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 146

Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia.
Rejoice and be glad,
for your reward is great in heaven.
Alleluia.

Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12a

Communion Antiphon: Ps 30:17-18

Let your face shine on your servant. Save me in your merciful love. O Lord, let me never be put to shame, for I call on you.

SATURDAY 31st January ... St John Bosco

9:30 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... **Confession after Mass** ... Javier Quinones's Birthday (A Ola)
4:30 pm Adoration and confession before Vigil Mass St John Wallingford
5:00 pm Vigil Mass St John Wallingford ... Weronika Szymanska's RIP (Aleksandra Ola)
5:50 pm Adoration before Vigil Mass English Martyrs Didcot
6:30 pm Vigil Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Holy Souls Especially Deceased Members of F.O.S.S. (Deborah Kennedy)

SUNDAY 1st February

9:00 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Martin Kirk RIP (Anna Richardson)
11:00 am Mass St John Wallingford ... Zeke Ajakaiye's Birthday (Jude A)

MONDAY 2nd February ... NO MASS ... THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

TUESDAY 3rd February ... St Blaise

12:00 noon Mass St John Wallingford ... Antonia Kevin's Good Estate

WEDNESDAY 4th February

9:30 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Confirmation Class

THURSDAY 5th February ... St Agatha

9:30 am Mass St John Wallingford ... First Holy Communion Class

FRIDAY 6th February ... St Paul Miki & Companions

9:30 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Stanley Pereira RIP (Sonia Francis)

SATURDAY 7th February ... Our Lady on Saturday

9:30 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... **Confession after Mass**
4:30 pm Adoration and confession before Vigil Mass St John Wallingford
5:00 pm Vigil Mass St John Wallingford
5:50 pm Adoration before Vigil Mass English Martyrs Didcot
6:30 pm Vigil Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Weronika Szymanska's RIP (Aleksandra Ola)

SUNDAY 8th February

9:00 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Jim Gidding's Health (Joshua Gidding)
11:00 am Mass St John Wallingford

In your prayers, please remember: Margaret O'Conner, Jenny Evans, Mary Guinan, Ann Tomline, Joan Walker, Joan Russell, Joan Turner, Nina Oakes, Jacob Oakes, Pat McLoughlin, Barry Molloy, Annie Furlong, Canon Peter Turbitt and all the sick and housebound.



Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes 2026

Bishop Philip Egan wrote: I am thrilled to be able to announce our 2026 pilgrimage and to invite you to join me once more in Lourdes. Our pilgrimage will start at London Heathrow Airport on Monday 6th July and run until Friday 10th July and it would be wonderful if you could join me and my fellow pilgrims. We will be staying at the Hotel La Solitude, which is close to the Sanctuary itself. Our rooms are all ensuite and contain tea and coffee making facilities. The food is plentiful and varied, served in a very comfortable restaurant.

During our pilgrimage we will be able to enjoy all that Lourdes has to offer, taking part in all the usual Pilgrimage activities. We also visit many places that were important to St Bernadette during her lifetime as well as offering the opportunity to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick. There will be moments of quiet reflection and peace, and others when we will be able to hear the chanting and singing of hundreds of voices.

If you would like to know more about joining me in Lourdes this year, download the application form from [here](#), apply online from [here](#), or email to lourdes@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk (assisted booking available).



Catholic Young Writer and Catholic Young Artist Award 2026

The Catholic Young Writer Award is open to all young Catholics (and pupils at Catholic schools) in England and Wales in secondary years 8-11 inclusive. There is a cash prize for the best essay, plus a number of runner-up book prizes. The topic for writing is: Why do we go for confession? For more information, [click here](#). Deadline for entries: 30th June 2026. The Catholic Young Artist Award is open to primary school aged children. A cash prize is available for the winner and runners up will be recognised. The theme is Forgiveness – What does this look like to you? For more information, [click here](#). Deadline for application: 22nd May 2026



Seeker Saturdays

Our Diocesan Vocations Promotion Team invites those discerning a calling to the priesthood, diaconate or religious life to join them for the next Seeker Saturday on 28th February. Seeker Saturdays take place from 11am-3pm, at Sacred Heart Church, Fareham. PO16 0NQ. Why not sign up for the next Seeker Saturday on [28th February](#)?

If you are discerning if the Lord is calling you to the priesthood, diaconate or religious life, then spending time with like-minded people can be really beneficial to any vocational journey. Our time together includes prayer, discussion, Mass, Adoration and lunch too. Pope Francis once reflected on the significance of discernment, "Discernment is demanding and requires listening to the Lord, to oneself, and to others. It is a process that calls for prayer, reflection, patient expectation, and, ultimately, courage and sacrifice!" Future Seeker Saturday dates for your diary are: [21st March](#), [25th April](#), [16th May](#) and [13th June](#).

Bosco Boys Camp Experience & Summer Camp

This year's Bosco Experience & Reunion Afternoon will be held on Sunday 22nd February from 2-4pm at St Peter's Catholic Church, Winchester SO23 8RY. A chance for new boys who want to find out more and have a 'taste' of the Bosco Experience and for those who have been on camp to meet with old friends. Fun activities and a chance for parents to find out more and sign up for camp. There is no cost for the afternoon.

The 2026 Portsmouth Diocesan Don Bosco Boys' Camp will run from Sunday 26th July to Saturday 1st August. We are delighted that camp will once again be held this summer at St. Cassian's, Kintbury for boys who are currently in Year 6 Primary school to Year 11 Secondary school. There will be plenty of sport, outings, competitions and fun and games to ensure that boys will have a fantastic time. This will continue to take place within the context of the celebration of the Catholic Faith, including daily Mass and morning prayer. The cost of the camp is £280 which includes all food and activities for the week. For more information please see our website <https://www.portsmouthdiocesedonboscocamp.co.uk> or email dbcamps@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk



Registration For All Parishioners on New Online Portal -- ChurchSuite

Due to the end of contract with our long-term parishioners' portal provider PAMIS, our Diocese has initiated a new parishioner registration exercise in all the parishes across the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth. We are now going to register with ChurchSuite, our new online parishioners' portal.

We would like to now invite all our parishioners in Didcot and Wallingford to register or re-register with us on ChurchSuite. The online registration process is simple and quick. Please [click here](#) to register every **adult** in your family, and [here](#) to register your **children**. Or you may simply scan the QR code which will take you directly to the online registration form. (Links and QR Codes can also be accessed from our parish website). Weekly Newsletter will be emailed to you if you give us your consents to receive newsletters by email in your registration. You can also take this opportunity to update us with your address and other contact details, and add new members of your family in your registration. As members of the parish, you will be on our record and allow us to stay in touch with you and your family when you register with us. Your personal data will be kept strictly confidential by the policies and procedures of our Diocese.

If you have problems in your online registration, please contact the Parish Office for support. Paper copies and PDF files of Parishioner Registration Form are NO LONGER AVAILABLE or used. Weekly newsletters will now be emailed via ChurchSuite [starting next week](#). You can still obtain printed copies of the weekly newsletters from Didcot and Wallingford when you attend our weekend masses. Thank you.



CAFOD Lent Family Fast Day

Lent Family Fast Day is on Friday 27th February. This Lent, live out the Gospel call to love your neighbour. By fasting and giving what you save, you join in Christ's compassion and help another family put food on the table. Your donation can help families around the world grow food in difficult conditions – such as on flood-resistant floating gardens or using solar-powered water pumps in times of drought. Collect a CAFOD envelope to bless others with your support or donate online at cafod.org.uk/envelope. There will be an appeal that will highlight this year's campaign on Saturday evening mass on 21st and Sunday mass on 22nd February in both Didcot and Wallingford.

Seniors' Lunch 12th February 1200 Noon

The Seniors Lunch Team will be making a special meal to celebrate Lunar New Year. There will be a fusion of flavours: Cantonese Noodles, British Chicken, Chinese Spring Rolls and a Japanese Pudding. Something for everyone! Please sign up on the sheet at the back of church. We look forward to seeing you.



Helpers Needed for Sunday Tea Group of English Martyrs

Can you help in serving tea or coffee and biscuits after our Sunday masses? Our Tea Group needs more hands every Sunday. All you will need is to come before Sunday mass to set up, serve tea and coffee after mass, and clean up afterwards. Trainings will be provided. If you can help, please contact the Parish Office or speak to Eve and Simon Marshall. Thank you.

Training for Children Liturgy Leaders

Wantage parish has booked the Dominican Sisters of Sway for training for children's liturgy leaders. The training is for existing leaders as well as those who are new to the role or considering joining the Children's Liturgy team. The training is on Saturday 14th February, in the hall, at St John Vianney Wantage after Mass. Mass is at 10 am and the training will run from 10.30am until 1pm. This is very high-quality training and Wantage parish have generously opened it up to all parishes in the Pastoral Area. If you would like to attend please email the [Parish Office](#) to enrol you interest.

Parish Safeguarding

Our Safety Officer for all adults and children safeguarding issues is Stefania Harford. Please contact Stefania via the parish office on 01235 812338. If there is no response and in an emergency, dial 999.