SAGRADO

Universidad del Sagrado Corazón

Theological and Magisterial Basis

of the Manual for the Responsible Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

A supplementary document that compiles the ecclesial and magisterial sources underpinning the institutional Manual, developed as a conceptual framework for internal use

> *"[I] would like to encourage academies and universities to revitalize these principles [the common good, the universal destination of goods, subsidiarity, solidarity, and social justice], reconsidering them so that they are adapted to the present times and effective in addressing the digital revolution."*
> **— Leo XIV, *Magnifica Humanitas*, no. 47**

Universidad del Sagrado Corazón

October 2026

Introductory Note: Purpose of This Document

The Manual for the Responsible Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence was drafted, in its institutional reference version, without explicit ecclesiastical citations or references. However, Sagrado's approach to artificial intelligence does not arise out of thin air nor is it limited to a secular ethical consensus. It stems from the University of the Sagrado Corazón's identity as a Catholic university founded by the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and draws directly from the Church's recent magisterium on artificial intelligence, particularly from two documents: the note *Antiqua et nova* (2025) and the encyclical letter *Magnifica Humanitas* (2026) by Pope Leo XIV.

This document brings together these sources and explicitly links them to each section of the Manual, so that the university community, the Society of the Sacred Heart, the accreditation processes tied to the institution's Catholic identity, and any other interested audience can verify the complete doctrinal foundation of each principle, without needing to refer to the version of the Manual intended for other audiences.

This is neither a parallel policy nor an alternate version of the Manual: it is its conceptual framework. Each section of this document corresponds to a section of the Manual and should be read in conjunction with it. The citations included here are the same as those that appeared in the original draft, prior to the preparation of the version without ecclesial references.

1. The Two Central Magisterial Sources

The Church's recent magisterium provides the framework through which the Sagrado engages with artificial intelligence. Two documents articulate this with particular clarity.

1.1 Antiqua et nova (2025)

A joint note from the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Dicastery for Culture and Education, published on January 28, 2025, on the relationship between artificial intelligence and human intelligence. It sets forth the anthropological and ethical criteria—the dignity of the person, the distinction between human and artificial intelligence, and the vocation of the Catholic university—that structure much of this document.

1.2 Magnifica Humanitas (2026)

The first encyclical letter of Pope Leo XIV, dated May 15, 2026, on the protection of the human person in the age of artificial intelligence, published on the 135th anniversary of *Rerum novarum*—the social encyclical of Leo XIII from which the new Pope takes his name. It articulates a call to universities to revitalize the principles of social doctrine—the common good, the universal destination of goods, subsidiarity, solidarity, and social justice—in the face of the digital revolution, and warns against the risk of reducing the person to a means or a resource.

> *The magnificent humanity that God has created faces a decisive choice today: to erect a new Tower of Babel or to build the city where God and humanity dwell together.*
> **— *Magnifica Humanitas*, no. 1**

Together, these two documents—one doctrinal and anthropological in nature, the other magisterial and pastoral—constitute the common foundation from which the convictions, principles, and criteria that guide the Manual are derived.

2. Four Fundamental Convictions (the basis for Section 1.1 of the Manual)

Four convictions are derived from *Antiqua et nova* and *Magnifica Humanitas* that inform the Manual as a whole.

First conviction: AI as a product of human intelligence

Human intelligence is exercised in relationships, shaped by experience, and is a gift from God. Artificial intelligence is a product of human intelligence. For this reason, Sagrado understands it as an instrument that complements the richness of human thought, without replacing it.

> *[A]I should not be viewed as an artificial form of intelligence, but rather as one of its products.*
> **— *Antiqua et nova*, no. 35**

Second conviction: the intrinsic dignity of the person

A person's value does not depend on their performance or abilities, but on their intrinsic dignity, grounded in having been created in the image of God. Every assessment of AI at Sagrado is based on this principle and must protect it.

> *[T]he value of a person does not depend on the possession of unique abilities, cognitive and technological achievements, or individual success, but on their intrinsic dignity based on having been created in the image of God.*
> **— *Antiqua et nova*, no. 34**

Third Conviction: The Risk of Functionalist Logic

Technological developments run the risk of giving rise to a functionalist logic that reduces the person to a means for obtaining results. Pope Leo XIV warns of this risk and calls for vigilance in the face of advances in artificial intelligence.

> *[T]he person ends up being reduced to a means to an end, to a resource to be used and exploited, and is not recognized as an end in themselves, never to be instrumentalized.*
> **— *Magnifica Humanitas*, no. 51**

Fourth Conviction: The Unique Vocation of the Catholic University

The Catholic university has a unique mission. The apostolic constitution *Ex corde Ecclesiae* describes it as the pursuit of truth in the service of the individual and society. *Magnifica Humanitas* encourages universities to revitalize the principles of social doctrine in the face of the digital revolution, and *Antiqua et nova* calls on them to be laboratories of hope at this crossroads of history.

> *Catholic universities are urged to step forward as great laboratories of hope at this crossroads of history.*
>
> **— *Antiqua et nova*, no. 83**

True to the charism of the Society of the Sacred Heart—to manifest the love of the Sacred Heart through education—Sagrado evaluates any use of artificial intelligence by asking, in the words of Pope Leo XIV, whether it contributes to helping people grow in humanity and fraternity.

> *Do [technological innovations] truly contribute to helping individuals and peoples grow in humanity and fraternity, in respect for our Common Home and for future generations?*
>
> **— *Magnifica Humanitas*, no. 85**

From these four convictions emerges the guiding principle of the Manual: the dignity of every person, the exercise of responsible judgment, and the common good.

3. Openness to Technological Innovation (Foundation of Section 1.2 of the Manual)

The Manual's commitment to periodic revision—and to remaining open to the developments that technology brings—also has a magisterial root: the tradition of the Catholic university to address advances in science and technology with urgency.

> *As St. John Paul II recalled, "In today's world, characterized by such rapid progress in science and technology, the tasks of the Catholic University take on ever-greater importance and urgency."*
>
> **— *Antiqua et nova*, no. 83 [quoting John Paul II, Apostolic Constitution Ex corde Ecclesiae (August 15, 1990), no. 7]**

4. Foundation of Institutional Governance (basis for Section 2 of the Manual)

The governance structure established by the Manual—a multidisciplinary Institutional Committee, with transparent processes and genuine community participation—is in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity as articulated in *Magnifica Humanitas*.

> *Subsidiarity requires that these processes [...] be oriented toward the common good through transparency, accountability, and genuine forms of participation...*
>
> **— *Magnifica Humanitas*, no. 71**

5. Foundation of Ethical Principles (Foundation of Section 3 of the Manual)

The ten ethical principles of the Manual—beneficence, non-maleficence, human dignity, transparency, truthfulness, proportionality, justice and equity, environmental awareness, security and privacy, and accountability—are in harmony with the social doctrine of the Church and with initiatives such as the Rome Call for AI Ethics, which in 2020 proposed six principles of "algor-ethics"

—transparency, inclusion, responsibility, impartiality, reliability, and security and privacy—that are similar to those in the Manual.

> *[B]oth the ends and the means employed in a given AI application, as well as the overall vision it embodies, must be evaluated to ensure that they respect human dignity and promote the common good.*
> **— *Antiqua et nova*, no. 42**

The Manual's principle of transparency also finds explicit and specific support in the Vatican document itself.

> *[A] key guiding principle is that the use of AI must always be transparent and never ambiguous.*
> **— *Antiqua et nova*, no. 84**

On a continental scale, the Technological Frontier Working Group of the Latin American and Caribbean Episcopal Council (CELAM) reaches convergent conclusions: its study *Artificial Intelligence and Integral Human Development* (2026) positions human dignity and the common good—in contrast to the "technocratic paradigm"—as criteria for discerning the use of AI in Latin America and the Caribbean, thereby reinforcing from within the region the very principles outlined here.

A Theological Interpretation of the Principles

The following table offers an interpretive reading—not an official correspondence with the Magisterium—that helps situate each principle of the Manual within the categories of the Church's social doctrine that Leo XIV invites us to revitalize.

Principle of social doctrine	Magisterial Source	Principles in the Manual that it underpins
Dignity of the human person	Antiqua et nova, no. 34; Magnifica Humanitas, no. 51	Non-maleficence · Human Value · Justice and Equity
Common good	Antiqua et nova, no. 42; Magnifica Humanitas, nos. 47 and 85	Beneficence · Justice and Equity · Environmental Consciousness
Subsidiarity	Magnifica Humanitas, no. 71	Transparency · Accountability
Solidarity	Magnifica Humanitas, nos. 47 and 85	Proportionality · Justice and Equity
Social Justice and the Universal Destination of Goods	Magnifica Humanitas, no. 47	Justice and Equity · Environmental Awareness

6. Pedagogical Foundation (Foundation of Section 4 of the Manual)

The educational purpose that guides the pedagogical guidelines of the Manual—to protect academic integrity, promote critical thinking, and recognize both the potential and the

limitations of AI—directly reflects a recurring concern in recent Church teaching.

> *[E]ducation in the use of forms of artificial intelligence should focus above all on promoting critical thinking.*
>
> **— *Antiqua et nova*, no. 82 [quoting Pope Francis, Message for the 57th World Day of Peace (January 1, 2024), no. 2]**

7. Closing Horizon

The Manual concludes with a provisional institutional commitment, intended to be reviewed frequently while the Institutional Committee on Artificial Intelligence develops the formal policy. That commitment finds its ultimate horizon in the warning and hope articulated by *Magnifica Humanitas* for the present time.

> *In the age of artificial intelligence, in which human dignity risks being overshadowed by new forms of dehumanization, we have an urgent duty to remain profoundly human, lovingly safeguarding that magnificent humanity that has been given to us and fully revealed in Christ—a humanity that no machine will ever be able to replace in all its splendor.*
> **— *Magnifica Humanitas*, no. 15**

That, in short, is the ultimate foundation of the Handbook: not a list of technical rules, but the safeguarding of human dignity in the age of artificial intelligence.

References

Key Magisterial Sources

- Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith and Dicastery for Culture and Education. (2025). *Antiqua et nova*. Note on the Relationship Between Artificial Intelligence and Human Intelligence. Vatican City.
- Leo XIV. (2026). *Magnifica Humanitas*. Encyclical Letter on the Protection of the Human Person in the Age of Artificial Intelligence. Vatican City.

Other Magisterial Sources

- John Paul II. (1990). *Ex corde Ecclesiae*. Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities. Vatican City.
- Pope Francis. (2015). *Laudato si'*. Encyclical Letter on Care for Our Common Home. Vatican City.
- Pontifical Academy for Life. (2020). *Rome Call for AI Ethics*. Vatican City.
- Pope Francis. (2024). *Artificial Intelligence and Peace*. Message for the 57th World Day of Peace. Vatican City.

- Pope Francis. (2024). *Artificial Intelligence and the Wisdom of the Heart*. Message for the 58th World Day of Social Communication. Vatican City.
- Working Group on Technological Frontiers of the Latin American and Caribbean Episcopal Council (CELAM). (2026). *Artificial Intelligence and Integral Human Development*. Study on Artificial Intelligence and Integral Human Development from the Perspective of the Social Doctrine of the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean. Bogotá, Colombia: CELAM.

*The citations from *Antiqua et nova* correspond to its 117 numbered paragraphs; those from *Magnifica Humanitas* correspond to the encyclical's official numbering. All were cross-referenced with the official Spanish text published at www.vatican.va.*

Document from the Catholic University Network

Unlike the previous sources, the following document does not come from the ecclesiastical hierarchy but from the international network of Catholic universities to which Sagrado belongs; it is included here because of its direct relevance to institutions such as ours.

- IFCU. (2026). *Humans at the Heart of Artificial Intelligence*. White Paper of the International Federation of Catholic Universities on Artificial Intelligence and the Catholic University World. IFCU, CIREAD, Paris.

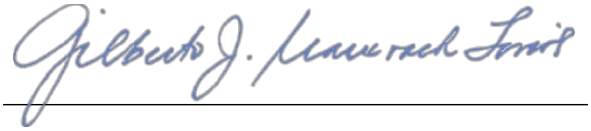
Note on the Relationship Between This Document and the Manual

This document does not replace the Manual nor does it need to accompany it in every instance of use or distribution. Its purpose is to preserve, in a single location, the theological and magisterial foundation of each section of the Manual, for internal reference, the formation of the university community, communication with ecclesial sources, and processes related to the institution's Catholic identity.

It is recommended that both documents—the Manual and this conceptual framework—be kept in the institutional archive, with cross-references between them, and that this document be reviewed each time the Manual is updated.

Note on the Preparation

In the preparation of this manual, artificial intelligence tools were used solely to improve the design, formatting, and visual presentation; to assist in verifying figures and calculations; and to correct editorial errors. The content, analysis, conclusions, and recommendations are the work of the authors, who reviewed and validated all the material and are fully responsible for it. The manual and its content are the property of the University. No confidential, personal, or student information was entered into artificial intelligence tools outside of the platforms approved by the University. The University does not waive, and reserves, all legal rights and privileges conferred upon it by law. This use is consistent with the Universidad del Sagrado Corazón's commitment to transparency, integrity, and the responsible use of technology.



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Date: October 15, 2026