

Holy Mass
with the participants in the International Congress
AI AND MEDICINE: THE CHALLENGE OF
HUMAN DIGNITY

Tuesday 11 November 2025, 8:00

Basilica of Saint Peter, Altar of the Chair of Saint Peter

Homily

Dear brothers in the Episcopate,

Dear priests and religious,

Dear brothers and sisters,

Today the Church remembers Saint Martin of Tours, whose simple act of sharing his cloak continues to inspire us to this day. His promptness, the spontaneity of his generosity and his selflessness are an invitation to reflect on our own actions. For Martin, giving a part of his cloak to the beggar meant acknowledging that the beggar's life was of equal value to his own. This

gesture echoes the words of the Gospel: Love your neighbour as yourself.

His quick response is inspired by the teachings of Jesus, whom we recognize in the Good Samaritan. The Samaritan was capable of stopping to help a man who was almost dead. He was willing to change his plans because he did not place his own interests first. He allowed himself to be challenged and unsettled by the pain of others.

The Gospel story of the Good Samaritan and the act of Martin of Tours, centuries later, present a vision of compassion. They speak of the human ability to experience the suffering of others as one's own and to alleviate it through selfless and gratuitous intervention.

Christianity teaches that every person possesses this capacity for love and the talent for effective compassion that can make the world a better place. True compassion is certainly not the exclusive heritage of Christians.

The word of God, however, contains a secret that, when undiscovered or forgotten, can lead

humanity away from the path of mercy and towards a path marked by indifference, distance and cruel apathy.

But, as we well know, Martin's gesture is not only the fruit of spontaneous generosity but also of conversion. He was set free from the evil lurking in every heart that hardens us and makes us distant, unable to share others' pain or discover new, creative ways to alleviate it. Ways such as the divided cloak or the oil, wine and money given by the Samaritan. In contrast, every day we see how the tendency is to act against others rather than in their favour. We bear witness to the tragic consummation of the devil's envy around us, envy through which death entered the world.

The wisdom of God's word invites us not to blindly trust in what comes "from within a man." Sin prevents people from embodying and showing forth the greatness of God's original plan. Sustained by grace, by the example of the saints and guided by the word, each person can rediscover the sublime heights of a great vocation, bending to care for the wounded: serving humanity with gratuitous compassion. As

today's Gospel parable tells us, this is the service to which we are all called: "So you also, when you have done everything you were told, say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have done only what we ought to have done.'"

Ultimately, Jesus Christ commands only this: not to seek our own interests. In the present moment, we are called, like Martin, to seek the way of love that leads to life for our brothers and sisters.

Dear friends gathered from Catholic Physicians throughout the World and the Pontifical Academy for Life on the occasion of the International Congress on Artificial Intelligence and Medicine: the Challenge of Human Dignity, these days are placed under the precious "cloak" of Saint Martin, whose testimony sheds light on your work. Martin used the weapon given to him by the army to make two cloaks out of one. He used the instrument at his disposal to increase love in the world, to bear witness and to foster compassion. In the third millennium, it is also up to us — the Church and all people of good will — to find new and creative ways to ensure that

technology and progress are placed at the service of those wounded by life, the sick and those who, like the beggar, are at risk of dying from the cold.

The Church has always viewed scientific and technological progress with mixed feelings. On the one hand, she admires human ingenuity and the creative spark that reflects the image of the Creator. As *artifex*, human beings are capable of wonderful works, and technology is an expression of our vocation to “cultivate and care for” the world (cf. *Gen* 2:15).

On the other hand, the Church also views progress with the caution that comes from the awareness of human frailty. Technology is never neutral. Like every powerful tool, it can be used to build up or to degrade, to include or to discard, to serve life or to plan death. As Pope Francis recalled: “The use of our tools, however, is not always directed solely to the good. Even if human beings feel within themselves a call to the beyond, and to knowledge as an instrument of good for the service of our brothers and sisters and our common home, this does not always happen.”

Artificial intelligence is a horizon brimming with promise, but it is also a crossroads that presents us with a crucial choice. We can opt for a technology that, in pursuit of an efficiency beyond human capacity, results in marginalising the most vulnerable and commercializing care. Alternatively, we can choose to develop and use artificial intelligence that is truly “intelligent” because it is guided by ethics, and truly “at the service” of humanity because it is directed towards the integral well-being of each individual person.

Faithful to its mission, the Holy See will continue to engage in dialogue with all men and women of good will to ensure that technology remains what it should be: not an end in itself, but a powerful means to build a more just, fraternal and humane world.

Saint Martin chose to use something that was artificial, the equipment provided by the army, to serve the greater good and the beauty of the divine image that shines in humanity – the foundation of every person’s dignity. This image can never be erased by any “artifice.” On the

contrary, science, creative intelligence, culture and technology become expressions of an even clearer and more evident vocation of the human person: to be the hand of God in the world, covering humanity with his grace. Amen.