

From Pontiff to Pew:

Indeed, from as early as the second century AD, the celebration of the weekly Easter was joined by that of the annual Easter, the “most solemn festival” (SC, 102), extending over the most joyful period of fifty days, culminating in Pentecost, and prepared for by the season of Lent with its penitential character (cf. SC, 109). The development of the Christmas cycle, which took place later and was modelled on the Paschal cycle, has made it possible to relive the mysteries of the Incarnation of the Word of God, of His birth and of His manifestation to the world. The Church then incorporated into the various times the veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary, “joined by an inseparable bond to the saving work of her Son” (SC, 103), and “the memory of the martyrs and the other saints” who “sing God’s perfect praise in heaven and offer prayers for us” (SC, 104).

The liturgical year thus repeats, in sacramental form, the teaching of the history of salvation, guiding the faithful from the expectation of the Messiah to the fullness of the Paschal Mystery and to the anticipation of future glory. In it, the Church celebrates the salvific relevance of the mystery of Christ, enabling believers to participate in it ever more deeply. For this reason, the liturgical year constitutes the guiding principle and the essential framework for all pastoral action.

Ice Cream Crawl - The 2nd Annual Visitation Parish Ice Cream Crawl will be meeting at the different stops at 7:00 PM unless otherwise stated. The schedule for the upcoming dates and locations are as followed:

August 16th – Shaffer’s on Somerset Pike (**6:00 PM**)

August 23rd – Ice Cream Social in the school café (**POSTPONED DUE TO SCHEDULE CONFLICT**)

If you have any questions, please contact Kristyn Amendola at (814) 248-2942. Thank you and we hope to see you there.

2026 Wedding Anniversary Celebration Information - Bishop Mark Bartchak and the Family Life Office cordially invite all couples celebrating 1, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60+ years of marriage in 2026 (and their families) to attend the Annual Wedding Anniversary Liturgy. Couples may attend Sunday, September 13 in ALTOONA at Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament or Sunday, September 20 in JOHNSTOWN at St. John Gualbert Cathedral. Both locations are handicap accessible. Liturgies in each location begin at 2:00 p.m. Most Rev. Bishop Mark will be the celebrant and homilist at each celebration. Refreshments/snacks will be available after the mass for anniversary couples and their families. Reservations must be made through your parish for either celebration by Friday, September 11th.

If anyone is interested in attending, please call the rectory to either pick up or have the form mailed to you.

There have been some people who have purchased gas ticket numbers # 514 and 791, who returned the wrong half of their tickets, so if they would be able to call the rectory and let Catherine, our secretary know, we would appreciate it. She can schedule a time for them to bring the other half of the ticket with their information on it over and take the half they need.

From the Pastor's Desk

January 1, 2027 will mark the 60th World Day of Peace. To celebrate this day, Pope Leo XIV has chosen the theme, "**Disarming Technology, Serving Peace: Politics as Preventive Responsibility**", according to a press release from the Dicastery for the Service of Integral Human Development. The Pope wants to highlight the "moral responsibility of those called to act in the political sphere" the statement continued. Furthermore, Pope Leo is encouraging humanity to promote dignity for every person to help foster peace, beginning with the "disarming of technology." Referencing his encyclical **Magnifica Humanitas** no. 198 – "there is no algorithm capable of making war morally acceptable" – while also warning of the risks tied to using AI to make military decisions, Pope Leo offers a heartfelt appeal to the entire international community. He calls for "shared agreements capable of safeguarding human responsibility and humanitarian principles in contexts where human lives and peaceful coexistence among peoples are at stake." Given my recent interest in the morality of AI, I thought I might share some further reflections on the document and the Church's stance on Artificial Intelligence.

At the presentation of his document on 25 May in the New Synod Hall – an unprecedented document in the history of the Church – the Pope had recalled that those nearly 200 pages were the fruit of reflection within the Holy See on new technologies and Artificial Intelligence, which today touches "many areas of our lives," influences decisions, and is "radically changing the way in which war is waged." From all this emerged a conviction that Pope Leo himself described as "disturbing" and which provides the guiding thread of the encyclical: "Artificial Intelligence must be disarmed." "I know the word is strong," he acknowledged, "but it was deliberately chosen because this moment needs words capable of attracting attention, awakening consciences, and pointing humanity towards paths to follow."

Pope Leo emphasized that, for some time, the Church has been committed to nuclear disarmament as a "service to peace and the dignity of the human family." In a similar sense, "artificial Intelligence now needs to be disarmed," because "like nuclear energy, it must serve everyone and the common good." And "decisions about technology must never be separated from conscience and responsibility." In **Magnifica Humanitas**, the Pope reflects on how peace, not merely the absence of war, is justice put into action. But when technology weakens our critical sense, peace itself is put at risk. Disarming, however, is not enough. We must build.

Here the Pope recalled his experience during his years of missionary work in Peru, following the floods. There, he confided, "I learned that rebuilding does not simply mean replacing what has been destroyed. It means repairing bonds, restoring trust, and rekindling hope for the future. Moreover, no one rebuilds alone." Only with such an integral vision can Artificial Intelligence be directed towards the common good. Only together – those who design the systems and those who bear their consequences, richer and poorer countries, institutions and individuals, centers of power and the peripheries – will we be able to build a future not for a privileged few, but for the entire human family. We would all do well to remember these words.