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For all its benefits, AI can never replicate humanity's capacity to suffer, grow and love

By Fr Fred

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the development of computer systems capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as reasoning, learning, decision-making and perception.

AI encompasses a wide range of technologies and has many potential benefits such as greater accuracy, the ability to perform repetitive tasks with high precision – such as assembling vehicles or computers – decreased operational expenses and increases efficiency, all combining to reducing costs.

AI further improves decision-making and can analyse large amounts of data to make informed decisions. And while it is a powerful technology with the potential to transform various aspects of our lives, it also poses significant challenges that need to be addressed responsibly.

AI can lead to job losses, with increased automation likely to lead to job displacement, bias and

discrimination. AI systems can perpetuate biases present in the training data, and all AI systems can be vulnerable to hacking and misuse, raising cybersecurity concerns.

On this subject with its authoritative teaching, Pope Leo wrote his first encyclical, '*Magnifica Humanitas*' ("Magnificent Humanity"), which significantly boosts the Catholic Church's position as an active voice in discussions over artificial intelligence, autonomous weapons, labour, human dignity and the concentration of technological power among a handful of corporations.

Pope Leo XIV warned that artificial intelligence must be "disarmed", urging governments, tech leaders and society to confront the rapidly growing technology before it weakens human relationships, critical thinking and peace itself.

Continued on page 2



St Matthew's
Bridgewater



St Joseph's
Lobethal



St Matthew's
Birdwood



Our Lady of the Rosary
Stirling



St Catherine's
Stirling

Candidates commit at Ritual of Choosing



The children on the 2026 Sacramental Programme made a commitment to their preparation to receive the Sacraments at a special Mass at St Matthew's Church in Bridgewater on Sunday 17 May.

The Ritual of Choosing also saw the 11 children on the programme ask for the blessings and prayers of both their parents and the broader parish community.

Candidates joined Fr Fred on the altar during the homily centred on their preparation for the Sacraments of Confirmation, the Eucharist and Reconciliation

Continued from page 1

No replicating humanity's capacity to suffer, grow, love

"Peace, not merely the absence of war, is justice at work," Pope Leo said during his presentation unveiling the document in the Vatican's Synod Hall to an audience filled with members of the Roman Curia, reporters and special guests.

The Pope said he wrote the encyclical after hearing from scientists, engineers, political leaders, parents and teachers about the promises and dangers posed by artificial intelligence. While some were enthusiastic about the technology, he said others expressed fears over future generations and increasingly autonomous weapons systems.

And while he acknowledged the benefits of AI, Pope Leo was clear in saying more scrutiny needs to be applied to this developing technology.

"Artificial intelligence needs to be disarmed," the Pope said. "The word is strong, I know, but deliberately chosen because this moment needs words capable of attracting attention, awakening consciences and indicating paths forward for humanity."

Pope Leo has frequently cautioned against the unchecked development of AI since the beginning of his pontificate, warning that the technology risks weakening human discernment, distorting reality and replacing authentic relationships with simulations of human interaction.

Cardinal Michael Czerny, prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, said the pace of this new technology is unparalleled, while the stakes are deeper, concerning "the very nature of human coexistence."

He went on to say that the most original contribution the Christian faith brings to the discussion on AI is the "conviction that human beings always transcend the sum of their achievements, their data profiles and any possible technical simulation, because they are called to a fullness of life that finds its truth in relationship and its fulfillment in a constant and sincere gift of oneself."

Cardinal Victor Manuel Fernández, prefect of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, added that "every human being possesses infinite dignity and never loses that sublime capacity for love which God bestowed upon humanity when He created us." He further emphasised one of the encyclical's central arguments: that artificial intelligence cannot replicate humanity's capacity to suffer, grow and love.

Pope Leo's encyclical states that humanity carries within itself "the lessons that are etched like scars, a memory of the journey taken between freedom and falls, dreams and disappointments."

St Catherine's Catholic School News

Our role in caring for creation was very much in focus at St Catherine's in recent weeks, with students taking part in Walk Safely to School Day, Laudato Si' Week and Kitchen Garden lessons. APRIM, Krystina Dawe, shares these and the recent Liturgical celebrations

Liturgical Celebrations

Our Year 2 students have been exploring two important events in the Church's story: the Ascension of the Lord and Pentecost. Through Scripture readings from Acts 1 and Acts 2, prayer, music and discussion, students learned how Jesus returned to the Father while promising to remain with His followers, and how the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples at Pentecost. They explored the rich symbols associated with Pentecost, including fire, wind, the dove, water, oil and the colour red, and reflected on their meaning for Christians today. Students expressed their learning creatively through collaborative artwork depicting Jesus' Ascension and by creating flame crowns representing the tongues of fire received at Pentecost. It was wonderful to see such enthusiasm, creativity and thoughtful engagement as students deepened their understanding of these key moments in our faith.



Striding Out for healthy living, planet

Our students enthusiastically participated in Walk Safely to School Day, a national initiative that encourages children and families to build healthy habits through walking and active travel. It was wonderful to see so many students and families demonstrating their commitment to healthy lifestyles and sustainable choices. The day provided an excellent opportunity to discuss the benefits of active travel, including improved physical health, road safety awareness, and reducing our impact on the environment. At St Catherine's, we recognise that small actions can make a big difference. By supporting such actions, students not only look after their health but help to care for our common home. A big thank you to our families for supporting this initiative. We hope the day inspires everyone to consider walking, riding or scooting whenever possible – not just on Walk Safely to School Day, but throughout the year.

oooooooooooooooooooo

Laudato Si' Week

During Laudato Si' Week, students engaged in activities to deepen their understanding of our shared responsibility to care for creation. Students reflected on the Laudato Si' message through discussions and learning experiences that explored the responsible use of resources and caring for our common home. Students created personal pledges outlining actions they could take to contribute to the environment within their school, homes and wider community. Our ECO leaders also created a 'plant-able' earth which is now growing and features in our school library. While a lot of fun to make, it also prompted some valuable discussions about the earth's resources and our careful use of these.



From Our Kitchen Garden to Great Sweet Treats

What a fabulous time we have been having in our Kitchen Garden lessons this term. Our Year 5 and 6 students have been working hard behind the scenes to repurpose materials, creating additional garden beds. We have also been cooking some amazing sweet treats. It was with great excitement that pumpkin scones and zucchini bread were made for our Volunteers Morning Tea. We were also grateful when a family brought in excess apples which we quickly turned into a lovely Apple Danish (see right). Our thoughts now turn to what else we can create as our next delicious cooking item.





Our Vinnies Winter Appeal needs your support

By Vinnies Stirling Conference President, Marianne Berry

This weekend (13 and 14 June), various St Vincent de Paul Conference members will speak at the Mass Centres of our parish, their purpose being to promote the annual Vinnies Winter Appeal and to ask for donations for its “good works”.

It's hard to appeal for money; it feels like there's always someone asking you for money for a good cause.

And it's hard to relate to something that seems a bit removed from our own lives. So, I want to tell you about David. It was an ordinary day for Vinnies Store Manager, Deb, until a man approached the counter to collect a suitcase.

Deb recalls...

“He proceeded to transfer his belongings from one busted and broken suitcase into the new one out the front of the shop. I noticed the sleeping bag and something in my gut told me I needed to ask if this man was ok.”

Deb offered him a hot drink and they got chatting. She quickly discovered his name was David – and he was homeless.

“He mentioned he'd never been in this situation before and wasn't sure what to do.”

But Deb knew exactly what to do. She rang the local Vinnies emergency accommodation and asked if they had a room for David. And there was a room ready and waiting.

“Within seconds, I was passing the phone over to David so they could give him the next steps to check in. We had found help for my new friend within half an hour! David was crying, I was crying! David was more than thrilled to have a safe place to sleep and figure out his next move.”

Just two weeks after moving into the emergency accommodation, David was offered his very own permanent home. For David, it was a chance to

start rebuilding his life thanks to a friendly woman named Deb.

This is just one example of the impact that donations can have to help those who need a hand up. In your own back yard, it's our very own Stirling Conference.

Following the example of Frédéric Ozanam, we go out confident that we have the financial capability to be able to provide food hampers or food vouchers, fuel vouchers, clothing and furniture using Vinnies Gift cards, or ad hoc financial assistance to individuals and families in need living in the Adelaide Hills. We can't do that without your help.

If you've still got your donation envelope, please consider completing it and posting it off. If you don't have one, visit vinnies.org.au and choose the DONATE button on the top right hand side of the screen (and if you wish to direct your donation to our Stirling Conference please type 'Stirling Conference' in the Comments/Conference Name (if applicable) box just above the PAYMENT OPTIONS button. Alternately, you can call 13 18 12 to donate.

As a little background, did you know the small group led by Frédéric Ozanam in Paris in 1833 decided to adopt the name the organisation after St Vincent de Paul, the Patron Saint of Christian charity? Our Society was established in Australia in 1854, with the first conference in Melbourne. 'Vinnies', as it's known today, has over 45,000 members and volunteers across every state and territory, providing support through over 200 programmes and services.

NEWSFLASH...

We're looking for a financially-minded parishioner to join our Conference as Treasurer. On-the-job training is provided. Please email me at stirlingconf@svdpsa.org.au if you are interested.



The well attended Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at OLOR on 5 June had the altar beautifully decorated with two angels, the generous donation from Barbara and Eddie Domin in memory of their friend and parishioner, Gabrielle Morgan

Parishioners spend quiet, reflective time with our Lord at OLOR's Adoration of Blessed Sacrament

By Debbie Somers

With the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ, better known as Corpus Christi, celebrated on Sunday 7 June, parishioners prepared for the occasion with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at Our Lady of the Rosary (OLOR) church in Stirling East on Friday 5 June.

The day began with Mass at 11.00am, with Adoration following from 11.30am to 5.00 pm and concluding with Benediction.

This solemn occasion was well supported, with many parishioners, on a rotation basis, attending throughout the period to spend quiet, reflective time

with our Lord.

After Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday, the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and the celebration of God in three persons on Trinity Sunday, we celebrated this solemnity of Jesus among us.

The feast of Corpus Christi was instituted by Pope Urban IV in 1264, and the altar at OLOR was decorated with the generous donation of two angels from Barbara and Eddie Domin in memory of their friend and parishioner, Gabrielle Morgan.

Truly blessed by all the work volunteers do across parish

Pentecost Sunday on 24 May also marked Volunteer Appreciation Weekend across the parish, with Fr Fred calling all volunteers forward at each Mass to receive a special blessing. He also used the occasion to thank all volunteers for their selfless and unwavering dedication, noting that the parish thrives because of their time, talent and heart.

"We are truly blessed by all you do," he said.





Ricki's journey to the Catholic faith

What started, in his words, as “tagging along with my wife to support her” at Mass at St Matthew's Bridgewater some two-and-a-half years ago culminated earlier this year in what Ricki Irons recalls as a pinnacle moment in his life, when, at Easter, he was baptised a Catholic at Annunciation Church, Hectorville.

“Thankfully, it did not take long before I also found God and started attending as a true believer,” he says, adding that while his family stopped going to the local Baptist Church when he was about eight years old, he always felt there was something more to life, someone of a higher power who created us.

“I just couldn't at the time connect it to God.”

“But as I moved through adolescence and into my 20s and 30s, events started pointing me towards God. Initially, my loving and supportive wife Nathalie – she works two days a week at the Hectorville parish – sparked my interest as she was on her own path to God via an Alpha course.

Ricki set about doing what he terms his “own due diligence” by researching historical and biblical texts and better acquainting himself with Christianity and Catholicism.

“In addition, I started to have personal experiences with God, which heightened when Nathalie and I experienced several unexplained and recurrent miscarriages. We found a source of strength, peace and fortitude that could only have come from God and led me to the conclusion that God is real.

“I wanted to live a life with Him by my side and at the centre of all we do,” he adds.

Ricki soon signed up for an Alpha course, too, and believes it was the catalyst for instilling in him a thirst to know more. With the help of wonderful mentors, Joey Newnes and Mark Jaksa, he became hooked, with Joey ending up being his baptism sponsor and now close friend.

Ricki, Nathalie and their son Leo, aged five, and daughter Eva, almost one year old, live locally in Bridgewater and feel completely at home in the parish.

“We have met so many lovely people here who we now consider our friends,” he says. “Leo, for example, attends St Benedict School, where fellow parishioner and friend, Fernando Farrugia, is the principal, while his daughter Verity is Eva's Godmother and his wife Mel, along with other lovely ladies in the parish, attends Sisterhood with Nathalie.

Beyond the parish, Ricki credits God for giving his mum, Carol, six years of life after she was



Ricki Irons, left, was baptised on Easter Saturday by Hectorville parish priest Fr Jeevan Gabriel, right, while his sponsor, Joey Newnes, looks on

diagnosed with two aggressive forms of cancer and given just six months to live. Sadly, Carol died in February, but Ricki is forever grateful for this added time as she was able to spend many beautiful moments with Leo. And while his relationship with his father had lapsed over the past three years, Carol's death has prompted both parties to work to rebuild the father-son bond.

“While so many people and so many events have helped me in so many ways to better understand the faith, I believe it is God who has been steering the ship and putting the right people and situations in front of me along the journey,” he stresses.

“It's now over to me to be of service to others, live a moral life with the guidance of God, be inspired by the saints to become the best person, father, husband and friend I can possibly be, have a sense of purpose in God's plan for me, belong to a like-minded community and keep the faith always, no matter what comes my way!”

A-plus effort from small team at Working Bee
 By Ecology Group's John Leeton



During his troubleshooting, Ben Sugars discovered the old, disconnected irrigation system

In keeping with suggestions from the global Laudato Si network for Laudato Si Week, we used our St Matthew's Bridgewater Working Bee on Saturday 23 May to attend to a general clean-up and plant something new.

Although low in numbers, the 'Bee-team' delivered an A-plus performance as those in attendance got stuck into using the product of our three-bay composter installed and filled early March 2026.

About five cubic metres of compact pruning, leaves and other compostable waste had been reduced to about 1.5 cubic metres of mulch over eight weeks and, after extensive weeding (at this time of year, weeds multiply and grow before your eyes!), the mulch was placed on the rose garden alongside the path.

At the same time, we moved the newer compost from the second to the third bay of our three-bay composter, making way for bays one and two to be filled with fresh leaves and cuttings.

A lot of time was also spent cleaning up the 'droppings' from the large trees south of the carpark and between the carpark and parish house. The trees had this year produced literally tens of thousands of almond-sized pods which, when stepped on in rainy conditions, produce a large amount of mucous that sticks to the bottom of shoes

like clay. This is how it spreads its seeds.

We also used the morning to replace a piece of the garden shed roof that leaked, remove an old rosemary bush and replace it with three new plants.

Our next Working Bee is scheduled for Saturday 20 June from 9.30am, when aside from our work in the grounds – where one of the primary tasks is to hopefully fix the irrigation system in the garden (ironic, now that the rains are plentiful!) – we will also catch up over a cuppa with Fr Fred to discuss other parish ecology ideas.

World Environment Day 2026:
 Theme, Significance and How Recycling Can Help

We all have a role to play
 By Ecology Group's Paris Huffman

World Environment Day is observed annually on 5 June and serves as a rallying point for millions of people, organisations and governments to focus intensely on climate action, with the emphasis on the urgent need to reduce emissions, protect vulnerable populations and push for sustainable systematic change.

Here in the Adelaide Hills, we can participate in impactful ways. We can join local initiatives like the Parish Ecology Group, help out at parish Working Bees or connect with the Adelaide Hills Council to support community tree plantings or attend sustainability workshops.

We can also support nature by participating in a local clean-up, planting native species in our gardens to support biodiversity or learn more about land management through Landcare SA.

Pope Leo XIV calls for a conversion that shapes both personal and communal life as we protect what is fragile and wounded and care for our common home together.

In his words, "we must shift from collecting data to caring and from environmental discourse to an ecological conversion."



It's absolutely essential to complete the Safeguarding Essentials course!

By Mark McGeough, Safeguarding Contact Officer

One of the first questions I get asked as the parish's Safeguarding Contact Officer is, "Why do I have to undergo training in Safeguarding, especially when I have no contact with children in my role as a volunteer in the Adelaide Hills Parish?"

Under the Children and Young People (Safety) Act, 2017 (Chapter 5, parts 30 and 31), it is a legal requirement for clergy, religious, employees and volunteers in the Catholic Church in South Australia to report all suspected cases of when a child has been harmed and/or is at risk of harm to the Department of Child Protection.

So, the simple answer is that volunteers must report as directed above, under the Act. Failure to report is an offence and currently carries a maximum penalty of \$10,000.

The individual is fined, not the organisation that employs them. Notification is mandatory under the Act and is not regarded as a breach of professional etiquette, ethics or conduct. You are not helping the child/young person if you agree not to tell anyone.

The Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide is committed to ensuring that the inherent dignity and safety of all is upheld. It has a zero tolerance to any form of abuse or harm and we are committed to ensuring that all who are vulnerable feel included, safe, respected, protected and supported while in our care.

The Safeguarding Essentials course (it takes about 90 minutes to complete online) is designed to help volunteers understand their obligations as a mandatory notifier. It uses examples to help explain where and how to report any harm, abuse or neglect towards a child, young person or an adult.

At the time of writing, 39 volunteers had completed the course, a 37% completion rate, and as Fr Fred announced at Mass on Sunday 7 June, he will be left with no option but to suspend volunteers yet to



complete the course until they do so..

So, please help us to keep our vibrant parish ticking – thanks in no small measure to the work of volunteers – by completing the course. For those who have yet to do so, please go to www.caasava.com and follow the prompts to access the online course.

If you have any problems, please contact the Safeguarding operations team on 8210 8150 or email caasafeoperations@adelaide.catholic.org.au for assistance..

Remember, anyone in the parish with concerns or doubts about the wellbeing of a child, vulnerable adult or senior citizen should feel comfortable approaching either Fr Fred or me, or even just passing on my contact details.

My mobile number is 0491 150 758, my email address mcgeough@internode.on.net.



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Upcoming Parish Activity

Saturday 13 June –
Sacramental Workshop, St
Matthew’s Bridgewater,
1.00pm

Wednesday 17 June –
Parish Pastoral Council
Meeting, St Matthew’s
Bridgewater, 6.00pm

Saturday 20 June –
World Refugee Day

Saturday 20 June –
Ecology Group Working
Bee, St Matthew’s Bridge-
water, 9.30am

Sunday 21 June – Souper
Sunday Social Justice
Fundraiser, St Joseph the
Worker, 8.30am and St
Matthew’s
Bridgewater, 10.30am

Friday 26 June –
Sacrament of
Confirmation, St Matthew’s
Bridgewater, 7.00pm

Monday 29 June – Feast
of St Peter and St Paul,
Mass at OLOR Stirling
East, 9.00am

Tuesday 30 June – Liturgy
Group Meeting, St
Matthew’s Bridgewater,
11.00am

Tuesday 30 June – Social
Justice Group Meeting, St
Matthew’s Bridgewater

Naturally inspired learning in the Adelaide Hills

A Catholic primary
school for Reception
to Year 6 in Stirling.



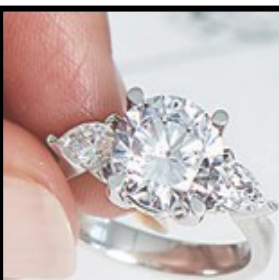
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As this directory changes from time to time, anyone wishing to volunteer for any of the parish activities listed below is asked to please contact the parish office.

1 Wembley Avenue (PO Box 713), Bridgewater SA 5155

P: 08 8359 0674 W: www.adelaidehillsparish.com.au E: stmatthew@adelaidehillsparish.com.au

PARISH OFFICE

Parish Priest

Fr Alfred Farrugia 8359 0674

Parish Pastoral Coordinator

Cathie Oswald 8359 0674

Parish Secretary

Baptism Teams

Helen Cantwell 8390 3290
 Maria Thompson 0408 898 357
 Anne Moore 0417 861 373
 Eric Toome 0418 896 695
 Deb Stapleton 0408 835 990
 Pam Broadbridge 8339 5013

Catholic Women's League

Barbara Mott (Bridgewater) 8339 1083
 Gayle Raven (Birdwood) 0419 807 463

Children's Liturgy

Jane van Mierle 0438 723 259

Choir

Damien Mansfield 8339 4133

Christian Life Communities

Paris Huffman 0400 283 683

Ecology Group

John Leeton 0419 243 814

Faith Formation Team

Fr Fred (Chair) 8359 0674
 Paris Huffman (Secretary) 0400 283 683

Finance and Maintenance (F&M) Committee

Paul Howe (Chair) 8388 5281

F&M Birdwood Contact

Gayle Raven 8389 8410

Hills Combined Christian Churches

Maria Thompson 0408 898 357

Liturgy

Birdwood and Lobethal - Fr Fred 8359 0674

Men's Spirituality Coordinators

Paul Somers 8339 5118
 Dan De Fazio 8339 3393

Our Lady of the Rosary Community

Representative

Debbie Somers 8339 5118

Parish Atrium

Sue Sachse 0431 117 840

Parish Facebook Page

www.facebook.com/adelaidehillsparish

Parish Pastoral Council

John Leeton (Chair) 0419 243 814

Rosary Group

Paul Anderson 0416 032 925

Sacraments

Call Parish Office 8359 0674

Baptisms
 Weddings
 Reconciliation
 Communion to the Sick
 Religious Education

Safeguarding (formerly Child Protection)

Mark McGeough 0419 150 758

St Catherine's Catholic School

22 Ayers Hill Road
 Stirling SA 5152 8238 8238

Principal - John Low
 School Board Chair - Ben Clements

St Matthew's Sewing Group

Stasia Duszynski 8339 4396

St Vincent de Paul Society

Marianne Berry (Stirling) 0407 903 382
 Lea Crosby (Northern End) 0431 092 725

Social Justice Group

Cathie Oswald 0428 244 958

The Bridge

Paul Robinson (Editor) 0408 855 178

WHS Volunteer

Marianne Berry 0407 903 382