

Mission Intention

NOVEMBER

2020 - 2021

Education for
Community Life

Country Focus: Germany

Pope Francis' November Prayer Intention

We pray that progress in robotics and artificial intelligence may always serve humankind.

In the fields of robotics and artificial intelligence, Germany is considered a leader.

Regarded by many as Europe's most industrious country, Germany has long been at the forefront of automotive innovation. World-renowned companies like Porsche, Audi, and Volkswagen are all based in Germany, and have been working on inventing self-driving cars for decades, owning many worldwide patents on self-driving cars.

Germany has its own center for technology research, called Cyber Valley. Similar to Silicon Valley in the United States, Germany's Cyber Valley focuses on developing robotics and artificial intelligence. In addition to inventing advanced technology with cars, Germany was also one of the first countries to develop a collaborative robot, designed to work

with humans in manufacturing.

The Catholic Church wants to make sure that all new technology serves the entire human family, and earlier this year published "Rome Call for AI Ethics" to guide technological development. We will learn more about this document in the Catholic Social Teaching section of this newsletter. Let us join with Pope Francis in November and pray that technology will always serve humankind.



CENTER for MISSION

Society for the Propagation of the Faith / St. Paul and Minneapolis

Promoting Knowledge
of Faith

God's Word for Mission

"Now more than ever, we must guarantee an outlook in which AI is developed with a focus not on technology, but rather for the good of humanity and of the environment, of our common and shared home and of its human inhabitants, who are inextricably connected...It is time to begin preparing for a more technological future in which machines will have a more important role in the lives of human beings, but also a future in which it is clear that technological progress affirms the brilliance of the human race and remains dependent on its ethical integrity." ("Rome Call for AI Ethics," February 28, 2020)

Saint Spotlight: Saint Isidore of Seville



Saint Isidore of Seville valued education. He is even sometimes called the "Schoolmaster of the Middle Ages" because his writings were widely used in schools and seminaries for centuries.

Saint Isidore of Seville was born around 560 in Spain to a family very devoted to their Catholic faith. Three of his siblings also became saints! His older brother, Saint Leander of Seville, was responsible for his education and Saint Isidore followed him as the bishop of Seville around the year 600.

A prolific writer, Saint Isidore wrote brief biographies of historical figures, a history of world events starting with creation, a dictionary of synonyms, and perhaps his most famous work, the Etymologies, an encyclopedia of grammar, history and mathematics. Saint Isidore also founded many schools, and was instrumental in making sure every diocese established a school that taught a wide variety of subjects. In addition to his dedication to education, Saint Isidore was also known for his works of charity, giving many of his possessions to the poor.

His commitment to learning is an example of how knowledge can be used to help build the Kingdom of God here on Earth, and reminds us of the importance of Pope Francis' November prayer petition. Let us ask Saint Isidore of Seville to intercede with us as we pray that technology may always be used to benefit humanity.

Saint Isidore of Seville died peacefully when he was about 75 years old. His feast day is April 4.

Rome Call for AI Ethics



Pope Francis
La Cancillería de Ecuador: Wikipedia

Today's technology is changing how we communicate, work and live. We can instantly communicate with one another through social media, shop and watch TV and movies all by using the apps on our phone. But as advancements in technology continue, we have an obligation to use these developments responsibly. That is why the Church has issued the "Rome Call for AI Ethics," to help guide us in our use of technology, specifically robotics and artificial intelligence.

The "Rome Call for AI Ethics" teaches us that three things must be considered when designing robotics and artificial intelligence: ethics, education, and rights. To develop robotics and artificial intelligence ethically, we must make sure that advancements in technology are designed and used to serve and protect human beings and the environment ("Rome Call for AI Ethics," February

2020). When considering education, we should make sure that students not only have access to and learn how to use technology, but also that students are taught to think critically about the social and ethical affects of robotics and artificial intelligence. Finally, when developing robotics and artificial intelligence, it is important to remember that all humans have rights when using technology. Societies must consider what policies might be necessary to direct the use of robotics and artificial intelligence so that systems are explainable, reliable, developed responsibly, "do not create or act according to bias," and benefit all humankind ("Rome Call for AI Ethics," February 28, 2020).

In this month's video, we'll learn more about Saint Isidore of Seville. As you watch the video, think about what Saint Isidore can teach us about how we use technology responsibly.

St. Isidore of Seville: Click Here>>

1. What is the difference between knowledge and wisdom? Why is wisdom important when using robotics and artificial intelligence?
2. How can Saint Isidore's example help us use technology responsibly?
3. Name two ways society can use robotics and artificial intelligence to benefit humankind.
4. Name two ways you can use technology to benefit others and the environment.



Statue in Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España:
Luis García

Mission Petitions

- ✚ Let us pray that we may promote human dignity in laws and policies relating to artificial intelligence.
- ✚ Let us pray that artificial intelligence will help us treat our planet with the care of a good steward.
- ✚ Let us pray that developments in robotics and artificial intelligence will have the good of humankind at heart.
- ✚ Let us pray that the rights and freedoms of individuals are safeguarded from biased algorithms.

Dear God,

Thank you for those who are gifted in the creativity and technological skills needed to develop robotics and artificial intelligence. Please guide our use of these innovations so that they may be used for the benefit of humanity. Amen.