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Pope Leo XIV answers a question from Elise Allen, senior correspondent at Crux, during an interview at the pope's residence inside the Vatican's Palazzo Sant'Uffizio July 30, 2025. The biography of the pope is titled, *Leo XIV: Citizen of the World, Missionary of the XXI Century*, and it will be published in Spanish by Penguin Peru Sept. 18. (CNS/Courtesy of Crux)

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Pope Leo XIV said a proposal to create an AI-version of him so people could have a virtual audience with the pope pretty much horrified him.

"If there's anybody who should not be represented by an avatar, I would say the pope is high on the list," he said in an interview with Elise Allen, a journalist and author.

Allen's July 30 interview with Leo is the last chapter of her biography, "Leo XIV: Citizen of the World, Missionary of the XXI Century," which was published in Spanish by Penguin Peru Sept. 18. The text of the interview, in English and Spanish, was given to reporters.

Leo, who has made his concerns about the potential pitfalls of artificial intelligence clear since immediately after his election in early May, gave some concrete examples about why.

"Someone recently asked authorization to create an artificial me so that anybody could sign on to this website and have a personal audience with 'the pope,'" he told Allen. "This artificial intelligence pope would give them answers to their questions, and I said, 'I'm not going to authorize that.'"

While human creativity can be amazing, and artificial intelligence already has proven its usefulness in some fields, "there's a danger in this because you do end up creating a fake world and then you wonder, what is the truth?"

At the core of his concern, the pope said, is AI's impact on human dignity and on jobs.

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"Our human life makes sense not because of artificial intelligence," he said, "but because of human beings and encounter, being with one another, creating relationships, and discovering in those human relationships also the presence of God."

"The danger is that the digital world will go on its own way, and we will become pawns, or left by the wayside," particularly when it comes to employment, he said.

"Human dignity has a very important relationship with the work that we do," the pope said. "The fact that we can, through the gifts that we've been given, produce, offer something in the world and earn a living," is a sign of human dignity.

Leo said he believes there is a crisis looming of not having enough decent jobs for people because of technology and artificial intelligence.

"If we automate the whole world and only a few people have the means with which to more than just survive, but to live well, have meaningful lives, there's a big problem, a huge problem coming down the line," he said.

"That was one of the issues in the back of my mind in why I chose the name Leo," the pope said. His choice honored Pope Leo XIII, author of the encyclical Rerum Novarum, which addressed issues of labor and workers' rights during the Industrial Revolution.

"The church is not against the advances of technology, not at all," he said, but it also insists on maintaining a relationship between faith and reason, and science and faith.

"I think to lose that relationship will leave science as an empty, cold shell that will do great damage to what humanity is about," Leo said. "And the human heart will be lost in the midst of the technological development, as things are going right now."