



Rationale

Mary, Pope Leo says, reveals God's transformative vision for the world. In an instant, even though nothing changed around her, everything changed within her, allowing her to comprehend the 'civilisation of love' that is within our reach.¹ In this civilisation, 'love becomes the guiding principle of economic, political and cultural life'.²

This 'poet and prophetess' teaches us 'to look at the world from a lower position: through the eyes of those who suffer, rather than the mighty; to view history through the eyes of the little ones, rather than through the perspective of the powerful', this view will guide us and change us from within so that we may know this 'civilisation of love'.³

At the heart of the **Mission: one heart, many voices** Conference 2027 is a central conviction: having the **Courage to Love** as we live and lead God's Mission is the essential element for healing and transformation. Love, is not abstract or sentimental. It is fierce, it is courageous, it is lived. It works for justice, heals what is broken, and takes form in real decisions, practices, and systems. It is the way of Jesus.

We are living through what many have described as a civilisational turning point. The cultural historian and theologian, Fr Thomas Berry, described it as being 'between stories'⁴. The frameworks and assumptions of yesteryear have crumbled, and the new has not yet fully emerged, yet the pace of change demands response. This moment calls for courageous leadership and communal dreaming. All are called to be transformed for mission.

To respond to this moment requires living a *fully human* life⁵. The life and witness of Jesus Christ, as told in the Gospel stories, points toward this path. It is one marked by healing, inclusion, and radical forgiveness. Richard Rohr writes, 'love is the only thing that transforms the human heart' and it is Jesus' ministry, mission and passion that shows the world the kind of transformation that sacrificial love makes possible. This insight extends beyond individuals and communities, to the systems we co-create, to our institutions which reflect the depth of our relationships, our awareness, and ultimately, our capacity to love.

¹ Pope Leo XIV, Encyclical Letter *Magnifica Humanitas: On safeguarding the Human Person in the Time of Artificial Intelligence* (2026) n. 243

² Pope Leo XIV, Encyclical Letter *Magnifica Humanitas: On safeguarding the Human Person in the Time of Artificial Intelligence* (2026) n. 186

³ Pope Leo XIV, Encyclical Letter *Magnifica Humanitas: On safeguarding the Human Person in the Time of Artificial Intelligence* (2026) n. 244

⁴ Berry, Rev Thomas, *The Dream of the Earth*, 1988

⁵ John 10:10b 'I have come, that they may have life to the full.'

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The conference will take place on the traditional land of the Cammeraygal and Gadigal people.

Pope Leo reminds us that we are anointed by baptism to co-create a church that is grounded in open-hearted listening, authentic dialogue, and Spirit-led discernment. Synodality offers a way forward, inviting collaboration across difference and a renewed attentiveness to the Spirit within the collective. Indeed, a plurality of voices and visions becomes a resource. Flourishing is not achieved by eliminating weakness, it needs everyone, 'no one is so weak that they cannot play their part'.⁶

The practices and ways of synodality, resonate with contemporary frameworks such as TheoryU, which emphasise deep listening, letting go of ego and limiting assumptions, and opening ourselves to enable new possibilities to emerge.

Poised as deeply formative preparation for the Eucharistic Congress²⁸, the **Mission: one heart, many voices** Conference 2027 will be an experience of cross-sector, multi-ministry mission. It will be a concrete experience of synodality in practice and provide moments of rich encounter with one another, with God, and with all of creation. Each person is called into collaborative participation and creativity throughout the program.

The conference will open with a national event of reflection and healing, grounded in the Australian context, acknowledging land and people, and inviting a shared commitment to renewal. In the evening, inspired by the words of Pope Francis and recognising that the *'Eucharist...is not a prize for the perfect, but a powerful medicine for the weak.'*⁷ all are invited to gather for the Conference Mass.

Participants will engage a rich and diverse program of keynote dialogues, workshops, and communal experiences designed to deepen understanding and strengthen practice. Attending this gathering, will energise and equip all people who are living and leading mission, facilitating formation for mission, contributing to synodal processes and strengthening capacities for leadership and service.

The **Mission: one heart, many voices** Conference 2027 is an open invitation and warmly welcomes all who are living and leading mission. It is a call, challenging every person to respond, to heal, to participate, to collaborate and to be transformed.

Together, we have the **Courage to Love**.

⁶ Pope Leo XIV, Encyclical Letter *Magnifica Humanitas: On safeguarding the Human Person in the Time of Artificial Intelligence* (2026) n.12,13

⁷ Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013) n.47

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