



Current Issues in Prayer

November 2020

Welcome! The Pope invites people of good will to come together and pray **that the progress of robotics and artificial intelligence may always serve humankind.**



Getting started:

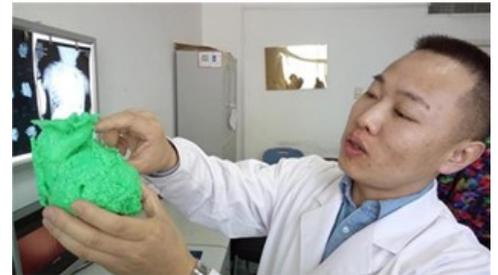
I sit down comfortably and calm down. I breathe in and out gently. In silence, I recognize that God is with me and that He loves me. I recognize God as my creator who has given me my intelligence to use for the benefit of others. I thank him for all the gifts with which he has endowed humankind.



Short story:

Chen, a Chinese baby, had a rare condition. He was born with a fatal heart defect that was extremely difficult to operate on.

In March 2016, when he was nine months old, Chen was in a critical condition after a heart failure and severe pneumonia. His chances of surviving after his first birthday were low, unless treatment was carried out. "He was so young and small, and needed treatment immediately", said Dr. Xueqin, the director of the paediatric cardiac surgery centre at the People's Hospital of Jilin. The doctors completed the extremely risky and complicated surgery. They were successful and the little boy survived the intervention.



In preparation for the surgery, the team of experienced doctors built a model of Chen's tiny heart with the help of a 3D printer. This was the first time someone had used this method in China. "With the model, we were able to know precisely where and how we should cut, and how big the incision should be. And with such a thorough plan, we spent only half the time we had expected to complete the surgery," Dr. Xueqin said. Luckily for Chen, digital health technology saved his life, gave him better health prospects for the future and by far improved his quality of life.



Time to reflect:

Artificial intelligence has advanced to a point that soon it can replace humans or worse, cause them harm. But how can artificial intelligence, robotics and other innovations contribute to the service of humanity?



Let us pray:

Dear Lord, thank you for giving humans the intelligence to create machines and computer systems which enable us to help others. Help us to realise that humans, in contrast to machines, are endowed with a heart and a conscience to help them decide and choose how to use their inventions, to help and not to replace or hurt other humans.



Inspiration:

Artificial intelligence is neither good nor evil. It's a tool. It's a technology for us to use.

Oren Etzioni



Hands on:

Search on the internet and then discuss with your family how artificial intelligence can be used in favour or against humanity. Alone or in a community, pray for the conscientious use of artificial intelligence within society.