Between Spirit and Silicon: Reflections on the Magisterium and Canon Law in the Interreligious Challenge of Artificial Intelligence

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Abstract: This paper analyses the relationship between the Catholic Church and artificial intelligence, with a focus on the magisterium, canon law and the pastoral dimension. After an ethical-theological framework, the contribution of recent magisterium and canon law in the light of emerging technological challenges is examined. It also examines the comparative perspective of other monotheistic religions, Judaism and Islam, which, albeit in different ways, emphasise the importance of ethics, human dignity and moral responsibility in the use of AI. Beyond a descriptive overview, the paper critically engages with the limitations and risks of integrating AI into ecclesial life, especially concerning sacramental authenticity, pastoral accompaniment, and ecclesiastical governance. While AI can offer valuable tools for administrative efficiency and educational support, it also raises questions of depersonalisation, algorithmic bias, and potential erosion of pastoral authority. The aim is to offer a systemic, interdisciplinary and interreligious view of how the major religious traditions are positioning themselves with respect to the impact of artificial intelligence on human and community life. In conclusion, the paper argues for the development of a theologically informed regulatory framework that safeguards human dignity, strengthens the pastoral mission of the Church, and fosters interreligious cooperation in global ethical governance of AI.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, Catholic Church, Canon law, Pastoral dimension, Interreligious view, Magisterium, Ethics, Risks, Governance

1. Introduction

This paper investigates the complex and evolving relationship between the Catholic Church and artificial intelligence (AI), focusing particularly on the Magisterium, canon law, and the Church's pastoral mission. The inquiry unfolds in three interrelated dimensions: a theological-ethical framework, a canonical-legal analysis, and an interreligious comparative approach that includes Jewish and Islamic legal traditions. The advent of artificial intelligence constitutes one of the most intellectually and morally demanding challenges of our era, raising profound questions about anthropological identity, human freedom, moral agency, and the eschatological horizon of salvation. Within this context, the Catholic Church is called to engage in discernment through its normative and doctrinal instruments, while remaining faithful to its identity and evangelising mission in an increasingly digitised world. The Church's formal engagement with AI began during the pontificate of Pope Francis, who has consistently emphasised the ethical implications of technological development. A landmark document in this regard is the Rome Call for AI Ethics, issued in 2020 by the Pontifical Academy for Life in collaboration with corporate and academic partners, which articulates foundational principles such as transparency, inclusion, responsibility, impartiality, reliability, and security in the deployment of AI technologies (Pontifical Academy for Life, 2020). While recent encyclicals such as Laudato Si' and Fratelli Tutti do not treat AI directly, they nevertheless provide essential hermeneutical keys—especially in their focus on integral ecology, the centrality of the human person, and social fraternity—that help shape a Catholic response to emerging technologies (Pope Francis, 2015; 2020). The Magisterium thus does not merely issue warnings or condemnations regarding digital culture; it seeks instead a constructive and dialogical engagement with the scientific and technological domains. However, this openness must not obscure the need for critical discernment: the integration of AI into ecclesial contexts presents risks of depersonalisation, dependency on opaque algorithmic systems, and a potential weakening of sacramental mediation. In fact, recent debates in pastoral theology have highlighted how digital mediation can sometimes replace rather than support human encounters, raising questions about the very nature of ecclesial communion. This pastoral openness is therefore oriented not only towards promoting integral human development and fostering a culture of ethical responsibility, but also towards ensuring that technological innovation remains firmly at the service of human dignity and the common good. From an interreligious perspective, the paper explores how other monotheistic legal traditions—particularly Islamic and Jewish law—have begun to reflect on AI, often through the shared lenses of moral responsibility (taklīf in Islamic law; ḥiyyuv in Jewish law), divine sovereignty, and the ethical primacy of human dignity. These traditions offer rich and nuanced perspectives that, while theologically distinct, intersect with the Catholic vision in their concern for the moral governance of technological power (Jacoba Rico, 2023). The inclusion of these perspectives not only broadens the comparative framework but also highlights the potential for shared action across religious boundaries in the development of normative principles for AI governance.

2. Canon Law, Pastoral Care and Artificial Intelligence: Future Perspectives

Canon law, as the juridical expression of the Church's theological and pastoral identity, must confront the novel and complex issues posed by artificial intelligence. Although the supreme law of the Church remains the salus animarum (can. 1752: «...the salvation of souls, which must always be the supreme law in the Church, is to be kept before one's eyes»), the integration of AI into ecclesial life—whether through pastoral tools, administrative systems, or communicative interfaces—raises delicate questions regarding legal responsibility, sacramental validity, data protection, and ecclesial governance.

A salient example involves the hypothetical use of AI-driven chatbots or virtual assistants to provide religious information or pastoral counsel. Can such technologies be licitly employed in the context of sacramental preparation or even spiritual accompaniment? While such instruments may offer preliminary guidance, organisational support, or dissemination of information to the faithful, they cannot replicate the relational and sacramental dimensions of pastoral care. The possibility of automating confession or replacing personal spiritual guidance with algorithmic responses must be categorically rejected, not only because of canonical prohibitions but also due to anthropological and theological reasons: the sacramental encounter is irreducibly personal, relational, and incarnational. Canonically, the sacrament of penance necessitates personal interaction between the penitent and an ordained minister (can. 960: «Individual and integral confession and absolution constitute the only ordinary means by which a member of the faithful who is conscious of grave sin is reconciled with God and with the Church»), and any technological mediation that compromises this personalist dimension is incompatible with the nature of the sacrament (Tarantino, 2021). Nevertheless, AI may have legitimate uses in non-sacramental contexts. For example, intelligent systems could facilitate archival management, digital communication, or even certain decision-making processes within diocesan structures. Such uses, however, must be regulated in light of canonical norms protecting the dignity and privacy of the faithful. Canon 220 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law («No one is permitted to harm the good reputation which a person possesses or to injure the right of any person to protect his or her own privacy») safeguards personal data and reputational rights, thereby setting legal limits on the use of algorithmic systems in ecclesiastical administration. Moreover, the principle of subsidiarity must be respected, ensuring that pastoral authority and discernment remain firmly rooted in human judgment rather than automated logic (Tarantino, 2017). In this respect, parallels may be drawn with civil legal frameworks on data protection, such as the GDPR, which already impose strict safeguards on algorithmic profiling and sensitive data. A similar canonical awareness could prevent ecclesiastical structures from inadvertently replicating invasive or discriminatory technological practices. On a broader pastoral level, the Church must invest in the formation of clergy and lay pastoral agents capable of understanding, evaluating, and engaging with digital technologies. This formation must include theological discernment, legal literacy, and technical competence. The aggiornamento of canon law, as urged by the Second Vatican Council, must therefore extend to the digital frontier, balancing fidelity to tradition with responsiveness to cultural and anthropological transformations (Second Vatican Council, 1965). This requires, for instance, the inclusion of courses on digital ethics and AI governance in seminaries and faculties of theology, as well as continuing education for pastoral workers already engaged in ministry. Such training would help to avoid both naïve enthusiasm and reactionary resistance, favouring instead a prudent discernment that recognises the complexity of emerging technologies. Far from constituting merely a threat, AI can also serve as a catalyst for ecclesial renewal. When ethically employed under human supervision, intelligent systems could support evangelisation, catechesis, liturgical formation, and parish administration. For instance, adaptive learning platforms might personalise catechetical content to the spiritual and cognitive needs of individual believers. Speech synthesis and machine translation could enhance accessibility for persons with disabilities or for multicultural communities. In spiritual accompaniment, AI tools might offer daily meditations, liturgical reminders, or messages of encouragement—always under the careful guidance of ordained ministers or trained pastoral personnel (Tarantino, 2025). Nevertheless, such applications remain experimental, and their efficacy should be assessed critically. Pilot projects in dioceses or Catholic universities could provide valuable data on the benefits and drawbacks of AI in catechesis, ensuring that technological enthusiasm does not outpace theological and pastoral prudence. Still, it is essential to reject any techno-utopian illusion that AI might replace the irreplaceable: the personal relationship at the heart of Christian ministry. Even in administrative matters—such as scheduling, correspondence, or resource allocation—technology must be subordinated to a pastoral vision inspired by the Gospel and committed to the integral dignity of every person. This principle is crucial, because without a clear theological orientation, ecclesiastical use of AI could risk drifting toward efficiency-driven models that undermine the Church's mission to serve persons rather than systems.

3.   The Thought of the Pontifical Magisterium on Artificial Intelligence

The contemporary Pontifical Magisterium has increasingly turned its attention to the moral and social implications of artificial intelligence (AI), particularly under the pontificate of Pope Francis. Far from adopting a technophobic or reactionary stance, the Magisterium articulates a vision in which AI is evaluated according to theological anthropology, human dignity, and the common good. The guiding principle is that AI must remain "human by design and by purpose," that is, developed with intentional ethical direction and centred on the person as the imago Dei (Pope Francis, 2020). In his address to the Pontifical Academy for Life on 28 February 2020, Pope Francis affirmed that technological innovation must not exacerbate social inequality or become an instrument of alienation but should be oriented toward integral development and the promotion of justice (Pontifical Academy for Life, 2020). The Rome Call for AI Ethics, strongly endorsed by the Holy See, outlines six foundational principles—transparency, inclusion, responsibility, impartiality, reliability, and security—intended to serve as a normative compass for AI governance (Pope Francis, 2024). These criteria reflect a theological vision rooted in Christian personalism, relational anthropology, and the universal vocation to communion. The Pope has also warned of the epistemological and political dangers posed by digital technologies, including the emergence of so-called "echo chambers" and algorithmic manipulation of information. In his message for the 54th World Communications Day (2020), he underscored the need for digital technologies to foster truthful dialogue rather than ideological polarisation or misinformation (Pope Francis, 2020). In a similar vein, his Message for the 2024 World Day of Peace—entitled Artificial Intelligence and Peace—emphasised that AI must be placed under the governance of moral conscience and oriented toward peaceful coexistence among peoples (Pope Francis, 2024). These interventions show that the Magisterium does not simply praise technological progress but subjects it to a critical hermeneutics, emphasising risks such as misinformation, manipulation of consciences, and the commodification of human relationships. Though the theological elaboration of AI is more recent, prior pontiffs laid the intellectual groundwork for this reflection. In Fides et Ratio (1998), Pope John Paul II urged the integration of scientific and theological rationalities into a coherent vision of the human person (Pope John Paul II, 1998). Benedict XVI, in his interventions on digital culture, stressed the non-neutrality of technology and the centrality of the human intellect in shaping its development. He warned that the loss of ethical orientation in technological power risks undermining both truth and freedom (Benanti, 2022). These teachings anticipate current debates on algorithmic bias, surveillance capitalism, and the reduction of human freedom to patterns of consumption, showing the continuity of the Magisterium's concern across different pontificates. The pontifical Magisterium does not adopt a technophobic stance, but rather proposes a hermeneutics of discernment—open to innovation, yet vigilant of the anthropological and spiritual consequences of delegating moral reasoning to machines. AI is thus viewed as a potentially positive instrument, but one that must be continually subjected to critical evaluation in light of the Gospel and the Church's social doctrine. The Catholic Church has issued several authoritative and interdisciplinary documents in recent years addressing AI from ethical, theological, and juridical perspectives. These texts represent an evolving magisterial corpus that seeks to articulate a coherent response to digital transformations while engaging in dialogue with the scientific and political communities (Spadaro, 2023).

Rome Call for AI Ethics (2020)

Published by the Pontifical Academy for Life and co-signed by major stakeholders in technology and ethics, the Rome Call sets forth six normative principles intended to govern AI development. The initiative was endorsed by leaders from IBM, Microsoft, and various religious traditions, reflecting a commitment to a human-centred, globally coordinated ethical framework (Pontifical Academy for Life, 2023). While this document represents an important step, its non-binding character raises questions about its effective implementation. Without juridical enforceability, the Rome Call risks remaining at the level of "soft law" or moral exhortation.

"Algor-ethics" (2019–2021)

Developed by Fr Paolo Benanti, TOR, the concept of algor-ethics articulates the moral imperative to integrate ethical reasoning within algorithmic design. Through conferences and publications under the aegis of the Academy for Life, this framework promotes the orientation of technological processes toward the common good, resisting technocratic determinism (Benanti, 2022). Yet, critics have noted that the implementation of algor-ethics requires not only moral exhortation but also technical collaboration with engineers and legislators, otherwise it risks being reduced to an abstract principle with little practical effect.

AI: Ethical Reflections (2023)

This working document, prepared for a Vatican symposium on AI and human dignity, identifies risks such as algorithmic bias, automated surveillance, and the erosion of human autonomy. It advocates a model of "humanised technology" (technologia humanizata), aligning innovation with the Church's vision of integral ecology and moral responsibility (Pontifical Academy of Sciences, 2016). However, the document remains exploratory and does not yet offer a clear set of juridical criteria for ecclesial institutions that may adopt AI.

Message for the World Day of Peace (2024)

Pope Francis' message for 1 January 2024 offers the most comprehensive magisterial statement to date on AI. The document calls for a global treaty on AI regulation grounded in ethical and spiritual principles, including solidarity, subsidiarity, and the dignity of the human person. AI, the Pope argues, must not be driven by commercial or military interests alone, but governed by justice and compassion (Pope Francis, 2024). This proposal opens a significant avenue for collaboration between the Holy See and international organisations, although practical mechanisms for such a treaty remain to be defined.

Proceedings of the Pontifical Academies

Numerous events organised by the Pontifical Academies of Sciences and for Life (notably in 2019 and 2023) have fostered dialogue between theologians, scientists, jurists, and ethicists. The proceedings of these symposia offer a multidisciplinary resource for understanding the interplay between AI, bioethics, social justice, and theological anthropology.

The note Antiqua et nova

In its concluding section, the note Antiqua et nova of Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith and for Culture and Education (28 January 2025) emphasises the need to recognise the distinctive character of human intelligence—embodied, relational, and open to truth—compared to artificial intelligence, which is limited to functional and statistical processes (Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2025). It strongly rejects the technocratic illusion that AI might replace human intelligence, warning that such a view risks reducing the person to a mere tool of efficiency and control. Rather, artificial intelligence should be conceived and developed as an aid to the human person, not as a substitute: a partner in promoting the common good, dignity, and human freedom. Finally, Antiqua et nova calls for an ethics of responsibility, urging designers, institutions, and communities to assess critically the anthropological implications of AI. It insists that the use of such technologies must be governed not only by technical criteria but also by ethical and social principles. In this sense, the note stands as an appeal not to 'create a substitute for God', but rather to integrate the new with ancient wisdom, so that technology remains at the service of the human person (Balsamo, 2025).

Recent Statements of Pope Leo XIV (2025)

In the Second Annual Conference on Artificial Intelligence, Ethics, and Corporate Governance (June 2025) and in his messages to the AI for Good Global Summit (July 2025), Pope Leo XIV emphasised that AI must be governed not merely by efficiency, but by justice and peace. He warned against reducing AI to a tool of mere instrumental rationality and reiterated that "AI cannot replicate moral discernment or genuine human relationships." Moreover, he stressed that the ethical force of AI is derivative, contingent upon the intentions and values of its creators. The Church, he affirmed, offers a unique contribution to the global ethical discourse by grounding technological governance in the inviolable dignity of every human being and the richness of cultural and spiritual diversity (Resta, 2021). These interventions are particularly important because they underline the continuity of papal teaching: AI is not only a technical issue but also a spiritual and anthropological one, requiring constant vigilance and humility.

4. Comparative Religious Approaches to Artificial Intelligence. A Monotheistic Perspective

As artificial intelligence (AI) increasingly shapes the contours of modern life, religious traditions are called to engage with its ethical, social, and spiritual implications. It's important to see how Judaism and Islam — two of the major monotheistic religions — are responding to the challenges and opportunities posed by AI.

As artificial intelligence (AI) increasingly permeates the structures of society, Judaism offers a dynamic and pluralistic ethical response rooted in its decentralized legal and interpretive tradition. Without a centralized magisterial authority, Jewish ethical thought is mediated through the rich corpus of responsa literature

(she'elot u-teshuvot), rabbinic commentary, and academic engagement. Jewish law (halakhah) is characteristically responsive, evolving through dialectical reasoning and historical contextualization (Arata and Bottecchia, 2022).

A foundational ethical tenet is Pikuach Nefesh—the imperative to preserve human life—which overrides nearly all other religious mandates. This principle is widely invoked in deliberations on AI applications in healthcare, including algorithmic triage, predictive diagnostics, and autonomous vehicles. However, these discussions do not merely assess utilitarian efficacy but interrogate whether such tools honour human dignity, autonomy, and relationality. Institutions such as the Shalom Hartman Institute, the Jerusalem Center for Ethics, and numerous yeshivot (religious academies) are fostering critical dialogue on AI's compatibility with values such as tzedek (justice), chesed (compassion), and tikkun olam (repairing the world).

The enduring rabbinic tradition of pilpul, characterized by rigorous debate and legal reasoning, is increasingly applied to AI's moral ambiguities, including concerns about data bias, ethical accountability in autonomous weapons, and the mechanization of care. Philosophical and mystical elements also enrich the debate. The doctrine of b'tzelem Elohim—that the human being is created in the image of God—grounds the ontological distinction between human moral agency and machine functionality. Thus, even the most sophisticated algorithms cannot replicate the divine-human vocation toward creativity, responsibility, and covenantal relationship. This conviction has been further strengthened by recent debates in Jewish bioethics concerning end-of-life decisions, where rabbinic authorities have underlined that only human judgment, informed by compassion and halakhic responsibility, can guide morally complex situations. Similar reasoning is now being extended to AI, reinforcing that technological tools can assist but never substitute covenantal discernment. As legal scholars have noted, the relational anthropology inherent in religious legal systems like halakhah provides a critical bulwark against technocratic reductionism (Nevins, 2021).

Islamic engagement with AI emerges from a jurisprudential tradition (fiqh) grounded in revelation and rational reflection. Drawing upon the Qur'an, hadith, and centuries of scholarly jurisprudence, Islamic ethics evaluates AI through the framework of maqāṣid al-sharīʿa—the higher objectives of Islamic law—which prioritize the protection of life (nafs), intellect (ʿaql), religion (dīn), lineage (nasl), and property (māl). The ethical reception of AI in Muslim contexts is shaped by the classical notion of stewardship (khilāfa): humanity bears the responsibility to use knowledge (ʿilm) and reason (ʿaql) for the common good (maṣlaḥa), under the guidance of divine will. AI is thus evaluated not solely on efficacy, but on alignment with moral and theological principles.

Legal scholars underscore that this stewardship model implies a theological boundary to technological autonomy (Dumbe, 2023). Institutions such as Al-Azhar University, the International Islamic Fiqh Academy, and the Research Center for Islamic Legislation and Ethics (CILE) are at the forefront of ethical engagement, particularly in Islamic finance (e.g., algorithmic compliance with sharīʿa), healthcare (e.g., AI-assisted diagnostics), and data ethics. Fatwas addressing AI underscore the moral imperative of niyyah (intention), which infuses technological decision-making with spiritual discernment.

While Islamic bioethics historically embraced scientific progress—as in the work of Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna) and Al-Khwārizmī—the challenge posed by AI lies in safeguarding the uniquely human capacities for intention, moral judgment, and divine accountability. For example, discussions on autonomous weapons in Islamic jurisprudence highlight the incompatibility of delegating lethal decisions to machines, since such delegation would negate the principle of accountability before God. Similarly, debates in Islamic fintech question whether algorithmic decision-making in lending or investment respects the prohibition of ribā (usury) and ensures fairness. As was recently noted, Islamic legal philosophy provides a theologically coherent paradigm in which the instrumental use of AI must serve—not supplant—human dignity and divine purposes (Tulenko, 2024).

Despite their divergent theological structures and legal methodologies, Judaism, Islam, and Catholicism converge on several foundational ethical convictions in relation to AI: the primacy of human dignity, the irreducibility of moral agency, and the necessity of ethical governance. Catholicism, through its centralized magisterium and the Church's social doctrine, offers a systematic and cohesive ethical vision grounded in the human person as imago Dei. Recent papal interventions—particularly under Pope Leo XIV—affirm that AI, while offering unprecedented possibilities, must remain subordinate to human flourishing, moral discernment, and the pursuit of the common good (Pope Francis, 2015; 2020). In particular, the Rome Call for AI Ethics (2020) promotes principles of transparency, inclusivity, and responsibility, echoing broader magisterial emphases on subsidiarity, solidarity, and the preferential option for the poor.

Authors have explored the canonical and pastoral dimensions of AI, noting the urgent need for ecclesial norms that articulate boundaries between technological mediation and sacramental or pastoral authenticity. The anthropological vision offered by Catholic theology resists both technocratic determinism and naïve optimism, promoting instead an integral ecology in which technology serves a relational, incarnational anthropology (Colacino, 2022). This comparative monotheistic framework shows that, despite theological differences, Judaism, Islam, and Catholicism share a prophetic responsibility to resist both idolatry of technology and resignation to its unchecked expansion. Their convergences can form the basis for common interfaith initiatives, such as shared ethical charters, dialogue platforms, and advisory roles in international regulatory bodies. In this light, Catholicism contributes to the interreligious discourse on AI by offering a nuanced synthesis of faith and reason, dogma and dialogue, tradition and innovation. Its legal tradition—both canonical and doctrinal—stands not merely as a regulatory framework but as a theological articulation of human dignity in the face of post-human temptations. As the doctrine observes, the ecclesial tradition, when properly attuned to digital realities, can serve as a prophetic voice amid the algorithmic age (Tridente, 2022).

5. Normative Proposals: Toward a Theologically Informed Regulation of Artificial Intelligence

Building on the ethical insights of the monotheistic traditions, several normative proposals can be advanced to guide the development and governance of artificial intelligence in a way that reflects shared anthropological, ethical, and spiritual concerns.

a) Recognition of Human-Centered AI in Legal Frameworks

A common concern across Judaism, Islam, and Catholicism is that AI must remain subordinate to the dignity and primacy of the human person. This anthropocentric vision should be translated into legal language through the codification of AI human dignity clauses in both national and international regulatory instruments. For instance, AI regulations—such as the EU AI Act—should explicitly affirm that AI systems must not replace, diminish, or simulate essential aspects of human moral agency (European Commission, 2021).

From a theological perspective, this means that algorithms must be evaluated not only in terms of efficiency or accuracy but in terms of their capacity to uphold the ontological uniqueness of the human person as imago Dei. A juridical framework that integrates these anthropological insights would prevent AI from being used in ways that undermine freedom, conscience, or community life.

b) Ethical Oversight Bodies with Religious Representation

To ensure pluralism and moral accountability, states and supranational entities should establish AI ethical oversight committees that include representatives from major religious and philosophical traditions. These bodies should be empowered to issue binding ethical guidelines on sensitive AI applications (e.g. health, surveillance, lethal autonomous weapons), ensuring that technologies align not only with democratic values but also with diverse cultural and spiritual traditions.

The inclusion of religious voices in such committees could prevent a purely utilitarian or technocratic approach to AI. For example, rabbinic, Islamic, and Catholic scholars might raise concerns that would otherwise be neglected—such as the protection of ritual integrity, the safeguarding of conscience rights, or the theological implications of simulating human cognition. As the doctrine suggests, the legal recognition of religious contributions to public ethics may reinforce the principle of normative subsidiarity in pluralist democracies (Fuccillo, 2023).

c) Interreligious Digital Ethics Charters

Theological convergence on AI ethics can be institutionalized through interreligious charters or multi-faith protocols on responsible AI. Such documents—akin to the Rome Call for AI Ethics—could serve as soft law instruments guiding private actors (especially tech companies) in adopting algorithmic practices that prioritize human welfare, transparency, and solidarity (Pontifical Academy for Life, 2020). These charters should be promoted not merely by religious bodies but in collaboration with civil authorities and international organizations.

A concrete example could be a joint Vatican–Al-Azhar–Jerusalem Council initiative to establish shared guidelines for AI in education, ensuring that algorithms used in schools respect not only pedagogical standards but also religious and cultural sensitivities. Such initiatives could also strengthen global cooperation, counterbalancing the dominance of corporate and military interests in AI development.

d) Digital Sabbath and Algorithmic Time Regulation

Inspired by the Jewish concept of Shabbat, the Islamic practice of Jumuʿa, and the Christian tradition of Sunday rest, policymakers should explore regulatory models that protect temporal boundaries in the digital economy—such as the right to disconnect, mandatory algorithmic downtime, or ethical use of biometric tracking during worship. These norms could serve both psychological well-being and spiritual integrity, echoing Antonio Fuccillo's call for a human ecology of time in the algorithmic age (Fuccillo, Decimo and Gravino, 2021).

Such proposals could also have a strong ecological dimension: limiting the "always-on" culture of AI systems reduces energy consumption and fosters sustainable use of digital infrastructures. In this sense, theological reflections on sacred time converge with ecological concerns about the sustainability of AI development.

e) Protection of Religious Data and Sacred Algorithms

With the growing use of AI in religious contexts (e.g., smart liturgy, digital prayer apps, Islamic fintech), there is a pressing need for laws ensuring the protection of sensitive religious data and preventing the commercial or manipulative use of sacred content by algorithms. This includes algorithmic transparency standards in religious digital platforms and ethical norms against the simulation of divine communication through AI chatbots or virtual avatars (Baldetti, 2025).

Without adequate regulation, there is a risk that AI applications could trivialise or exploit religious experience—for instance, by simulating confessions, generating automated sermons, or personalising devotional practices based on data mining. A theologically informed regulatory framework must set clear boundaries: technology may assist in communication and formation, but it must never usurp the place of authentic sacramental or spiritual mediation.

6.   Toward an Interreligious Ethical Framework

The comparative perspectives of Judaism, Islam, and Catholicism reveal not only theological richness but also normative potential for shaping a more humane, ethically robust AI ecosystem. Their shared insights on moral agency, divine image, and justice can inform concrete legal and policy frameworks—transcending mere cautionary tales to provide operational principles for regulators, developers, and users alike. The theological-legal traditions of Judaism, Islam, and Catholicism, though distinct in hermeneutical posture and institutional form, collectively assert that AI must remain a servant of humanity, not its substitute or master. Their shared resistance to technological idolatry and ethical relativism provides a robust foundation for interreligious collaboration in shaping global AI governance.

Judaism emphasizes pragmatic reasoning and legal pluralism, Islam foregrounds divine law and intention, and Catholicism stresses the common good and theological anthropology. Yet, all three affirm that technological innovation must be accountable to moral conscience, embedded within community, and directed toward justice, compassion, and peace. This convergence demonstrates that interreligious dialogue on AI is not merely theoretical but has practical implications for global governance. For example, interfaith councils could advise UN agencies or regional bodies on the ethical use of AI in humanitarian aid, refugee management, or conflict resolution. In this sense, theology directly contributes to shaping concrete policy.

In a time of unprecedented digital transformation, the contributions of these traditions offer not merely a critique of AI, but a constructive vision for a human-centered technological future. As the doctrine has persuasively argued, religious legal systems must reclaim their epistemological authority in public ethics—especially when secular norms fall short in confronting the spiritual, relational, and anthropological consequences of automation. At the same time, caution is necessary: interreligious charters or ethical declarations risk remaining aspirational if not supported by effective monitoring and accountability structures. For this reason, collaboration between religious institutions, universities, and civil regulators is essential. As the doctrine has argued, the contribution of religious traditions to the normative discourse on AI must be institutionally recognized in pluralist legal systems, not relegated to the margins of ethical consultation (d'Arienzo, 2019). The future of artificial intelligence, if it is to remain authentically human, must be governed by norms that reflect both technological responsibility and the spiritual depth of the human condition.

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