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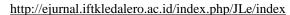http://ejurnal.iftkledalero.ac.id/index.php/JLe/index

Engaging with Stakeholders of the Technological Future through Prophetic Dialogue: A Catholic Perspective

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DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.31385/jl.v23i2.582.105-125

Abstract: This paper explores the role of the Catholic Church in the cognitive revolution driven by science and digital technology, and its engagement with stakeholders in technological development. Using qualitative analysis, it proposes an approach of "prophetic dialogue" from the Catholic perspective to effectively engage with stakeholders. The approach is developed from the teachings of the Catholic Church on mission engagement, and the ideas of theologians Stephen Bevans and Walter Brueggemann, focusing on mission, prophetic dialogue, and prophetic communication. Analyzing the approach in the digital context reveals that prophetic dialogue is an appropriate and effective approach for engaging with stakeholders, including innovators, policymakers, and consumers. By employing prophetic dialogue, the Church can shape the future of technology while safeguarding against potential negative consequences. The paper highlights the Church's proactive role in influencing technological development and offers insights for other religious stakeholders in navigating the challenges and opportunities of the digital future.

Keywords: prophetic dialogue, digital technology, digital future, stakeholders, religious communication

Introduction

Humanity stands once again on the brink of a cognitive revolution, propelled by the forces of science and digital technology. This forthcoming era harbors immense potential, boasting unprecedented advancements across diverse domains, encompassing medicine, transportation, artificial intelligence, and space exploration. This revolution holds the pledge of catapulting the world into uncharted territories, fundamentally reshaping the very fabric of human existence in ways previously inconceivable.[1] When examining history, the cognitive revolution that transpired over 70,000 years ago enabled *Homo Sapiens* to overhaul their modes of communication and socialization, yielding groundbreaking progress in agriculture, industry, and science.[2] At present, science and technology assume the role of the driving catalysts behind this ongoing revolution.

Navigating this emerging era necessitates a re-evaluation of the human-technology relationship and its implications. While profound inquiries into this matter have long preoccupied disciplines such as

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[1] Gerd Leonhard, *Technology Vs. Humanity: The Coming Clash Between Man and Machine* (UK: Fast Future Publishing Ltd., 2016).

[2] Yuval Noah Harari, *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2016), epub version.

philosophy, religion, and interdisciplinary studies, the present study directs its attention to the Catholic Church's role within this novel milieu. Specifically, it explores the Church's potential engagement with diverse stakeholders involved in technological advancements. Rather than scrutinizing the legitimacy of religion amidst this profound transformation, this paper investigates the Church's capacity to assert its presence by advocating an approach of "prophetic dialogue" as a mode of religious interaction. This approach entails a mutually respectful and constructive discourse among various stakeholders, encompassing technology innovators, policymakers, and ordinary consumers.

This paper aims to introduce and apply the concept of prophetic dialogue as an approach for religious engagement with diverse stakeholders in the digital future. The proposed approach of prophetic dialogue draws upon the notion of prophetic dialogue in mission advocated by the Society of the Divine Word (2000) and Catholic theologian Stephen Bevans (2015, 2021, 2022). Additionally, insights regarding prophetic speech from Protestant theologian Walter Brueggemann (2001) will be incorporated. The paper will outline how the Church can effectively engage in prophetic dialogue with various stakeholders. The central thesis posited in this study asserts that the adoption of prophetic dialogue as an approach empowers the Church to actively participate in shaping the trajectory of technology, while also assuming control over how technological advancements impact the life of the Church itself. This proactive attitude and strategic engagement with diverse sectors serve to ensure that the Church maintains its rightful influence over the course of human development in line with Catholic social teachings.

Identifying Stakeholders as Dialogue Partners

Freeman and McVea define a stakeholder as "any group or individual who is affected by or can affect the achievement of an organization's objectives."[3] However, in the context of digital advancement in society, the term "stakeholder" is used as a whole to refer to individuals or groups that have an interest in the development and use of digital technologies.[4] Thus, technological development involves a broad range of stakeholders.[5] Examples include technology developers and companies, governments and regulatory bodies, consumers and users, communities and society at large, environmental organizations and advocacy groups, and religious institutions and adherents. While these stakeholders can vary depending on the specific technology and its intended use, it is essential to recognize that their interests may not always align with each other. In this section, we briefly identify and describe some stakeholders as potential dialogue partners for the Church.

Technology developers and companies invest significant resources in research and development to create new products and services. As major players in the industry, these companies have significant influence over the direction of technological development.[6] They make decisions about which technologies

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[3] R. Freeman and J. McVea, "A Stakeholder Approach to Strategic Management," *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2001, 2, https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.263511.

[4] M. L. Barnett, I. Henriques, and B. W. Husted, "The Rise and Stall of Stakeholder Influence: How the Digital Age Limits Social Control," *Academy of Management Perspectives*, vol. 34, no. 1, 2020, https://doi.org/10.5465/amp.2017.0080.

[5] G. J. Miller, "Stakeholder Roles in Artificial Intelligence Projects," *Project Leadership and Society*, vol. 3, 2022, 100068.

[6] S. Alexander, "How Tech Companies Can Help Promote Digital Inclusion in 2021," *Forbes*, 8 Feb. 2021, https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2021/02/08/how-tech-companies-can-help-promote-digital-inclusion-in-2021/?sh=d207b6551d5f. Accessed 1 June 2023.

to prioritize for research and development and which to bring to market. However, oftentimes, their focus is on profitability and growth rather than social or environmental impact.[7] It is crucial to ensure that technological development is guided by principles of social responsibility and democratic governance,[8] with the interests of all stakeholders taken into account. This approach will help ensure that technological advancements benefit society as a whole while minimizing any adverse effects.

Governments and regulatory bodies play a crucial role in shaping the future of technology.[9] They have the power to influence the development and use of technology through policies, laws, and regulations. For instance, regulatory bodies such as the US Federal Communications Commission (FCC) oversee the use of technology in specific areas such as telecommunications, broadcasting, and internet services. Consumers and users are the end-users of technology, and their needs and preferences are the driving force behind technological development.[10] As technology becomes more integrated into our daily lives, it is increasingly important for developers and companies to consider the impact of technology on consumers and users. Moreover, consumers and users are becoming more aware of the social and environmental impact of technology. They are interested in products and services that are environmentally friendly, socially responsible, and contribute to the betterment of society. As a result, there is a growing demand for ethical and sustainable technology that not only meets the needs of consumers but also aligns with their values.[11]

Communities and society are the architects of future technological development, as they have the power to transform how people live, work, communicate, and interact with each other.[12] Society at large also has a stake in future technological development as technology can impact issues such as inequality, privacy, security, and job displacement.[13] Environmental organizations and advocacy groups are important stakeholders in future technological development.[14] As technology continues to advance and become more ubiquitous in our lives, it can have significant impacts on the environment, both positive and negative. Environmental organizations and advocacy groups such as the Coalition for Digital Environmental Sustainability (CODES) work to raise awareness of these issues, advocate for more sustainable technological practices, and push for government regulations to mitigate negative environmental impacts.[15]

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[7] R. Klar, "Advocacy Groups Say Tech Giants Need to 'Step It Up' on Sustainability," *The Hill*, 15 Apr. 2021, https://thehill.com/policy/technology/548329-advocacy-groups-say-tech-giants-need-to-step-it-up-on-sustainability/.

[8] *Study on the Impact of Digital Transformation on Democracy and Good Governance*. CDDG, Council of Europe, 2021, https://rm.coe.int/study-on-the-impact-of-digital-transformation-on-democracy-and-good-go/1680a3b9f9.

[9] W. D. Eggers, M. Turley, and P. Kamleshkumar, "Regulating Emerging Technology: Examining Trends, Challenges, and Strategies," *Deloitte Insights*, 19 June 2018, https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/industry/public-sector/future-of-regulation/regulating-emerging-technology.html.

[10] F. Randelli and B. Rocchi, "Analysing the Role of Consumers Within Technological Innovation Systems: The Case of Alternative Food Networks," *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions*, vol. 25, 2017, pp. 94-106.

[11] A. Martins, "Most Consumers Want Sustainable Products and Packaging," *Business News Daily*, 22 Feb. 2023, https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/15087-consumers-want-sustainable-products.html.

[12] Pieter Vermaas et al., "The Role of Social Factors in Technological Development," in *A Philosophy of Technology: Synthesis Lectures on Engineers, Technology, & Society* (Cham: Springer, 2011), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-79971-6_7.

[13] J. Manyika and K. Sneader, "AI, Automation, and the Future of Work: Ten Things to Solve For," *McKinsey Global Institute*, 1 June 2018, https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/ai-automation-and-the-future-of-work-ten-things-to-solve-for.

[14] N. Hall and P. Ireland, "Transforming Activism: Digital Era Advocacy Organizations," *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 6 June 2016, https://ssir.org/articles/entry/transforming_activism_digital_era_advocacy_organizations.

[15] UNEP, "Global Digital Coalition Presents Plan for a Green Digital Revolution," *UNEP*, 2 June 2022, https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/global-digital-coalition-presents-plan-green-digital-revolution.

Finally, religious institutions and adherents are important stakeholders in the digital future because technology has the potential to impact religious practices, beliefs, and traditions.[16] While some religious institutions and leaders may be concerned about the impact of digital technologies on traditional religious practices and authority structures, many religious adherents and organizations have embraced digital technologies as a way to spread their message and connect with followers around the world.

Prophetic Dialogue as a Concept on Church Mission

The concept of prophetic dialogue emerged from discussions on Christian mission and was formally recognized as a significant missiological concept at the 2000 General Chapter of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD), where it was adopted as a viable approach to mission in the contemporary world. SVD is a male missionary religious congregation within the Catholic Church. The phrase "prophetic dialogue" was first mentioned in passing by Indian missiologist Michael Amaladoss in one of his essays prior to the 2000 SVD General Chapter.[17] However, it was only after being adopted by the SVD Chapter documents that theologians Stephen Bevans and Roger Schroeder further developed the concept in their books, *Constants in Context* and *Prophetic Dialogue*. The concept has since been widely embraced by other authors from diverse denominational backgrounds.

According to Bevans, prophetic dialogue is both a theology and practice that requires a "deep listening to the movement of the Spirit, deep reverence for the context in which one witnesses and proclaims the gospel, the cultivation of a habit of contemplation, deep conversation among whom and with whom a person or a community is working." Moreover, it finds its foundation in a practice of meditative discernment, collaborative examination, and theological exploration, which strives to bridge the gap between current experiences and the profound biblical and doctrinal traditions of Christianity. Bevans asserts that because prophetic dialogue entails doing theology in specific contexts, it has to be discerned and undertaken by individuals who are directly involved in mission situations where Christians proclaim and bear witness to the gospel.[18]

Before delving further into the particular meaning of prophetic dialogue, it is important to emphasize at the outset that dialogue itself is fundamental to the mission of the Church. Pope Paul VI states in the encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam*, "[Dialogue] is demanded nowadays.... It is demanded by the dynamic course of action which is changing the face of modern society. It is demanded by the pluralism of society, and by the maturity man has reached in this day and age. Be he religious or not, his secular education has enabled him to think and speak, and to conduct a dialogue with dignity."[19] Paul VI acknowledges that dialogue is the primary mode of engaging with individuals from diverse contexts. The Church affirms that Christians must adopt a dialogical approach in living out their Christian vocation. "Dialogue is … the norm and necessary manner of every form of Christian mission, as well as every aspect of it, whether one speaks

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[16] J. K. Alexander, "Introduction: The Entanglement of Technology and Religion," *History and Technology*, vol. 36, no. 2, 2020, 165-186, https://doi.org/10.1080/07341512.2020.1814513.
[17] Michael Amaladoss, "La Mission Comme Prophétie," *Spiritus*, vol. 128, 1992, 275.
[18] Stephen Bevans, "Witness and Proclamation as Prophetic Dialogue," in *Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World*, edited by I. J. K. Kodithuwakku (Vatican: Libreria Editrice, 2022), 245-255.
[19] Pope Paul VI, *Ecclesiam Suam*, Vatican, 1964, https://www.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_06081964_ecclesiam.html.

of simple presence and witness, service or direct proclamation. Any sense of mission not permeated by such a dialogical spirit would go against the demands of true humanity and against the teachings of the gospel."[20]

Thus, Christians have to approach their mission with dialogue as the fundamental "mental attitude," that is carried out based on "respect and friendship" with dialogue partners.[21] This is why Pope Francis, in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, emphasizes that "[d]ialogue is much more than the communication of a truth. It arises from the enjoyment of speaking and it enriches those who express their love for one another through the medium of words. This is an enrichment which does not consist in objects but in persons who share themselves in dialogue."[22] The human dialogue receives its inspiration from God's own Trinitarian dialogue of love and with humanity. According to Chiara Lubich, the founder of the Focolare Movement, God, who is entirely fulfilled and requires nothing from creation, selflessly offers Himself out of mercy to bring happiness to humanity. The crux of God's love is uncovered in the notion of "Jesus Forsaken," where the Father gives His Son to humanity, and the Son gives us the Father, both offering themselves to the Holy Spirit. Consequently, we are received into the heart of God's love and existence.[23] "Such a God is a God of dialogue, a God who understands, a God who listens with compassion and feels people's pain. The dialogue to which the Church is called is a dialogue practiced by God as such."[24]

Dialogue as an approach to mission has not only been emphasized at the top levels of the Church but also at the local level. For example, the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) emphasizes the pursuit of "new ways of being Church," which involves a threefold dialogue with Asian religions, cultures, and poverty.[25] Over the decades, this commitment has not waned. In October 2022, when the FABC gathered in Bangkok on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of its establishment, Cardinal Charles Maung Bo, then FABC president, affirmed, "We realize that dialogue has become not only relevant but also indispensable to a world that has grown more fragmented and prone to violent conflict."[26] The FABC asserts that only through dialogue can the Church in Asia become peacemaker and peace-builder.

Dialogue is not an isolated phenomenon, but a natural part of life. According to Mikhail M. Bakhtin, "To live means to participate in dialogue: to ask questions, to heed, to respond, to agree, and so forth."[27]

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[20] Secretariat for Non-Christians, *The Attitude of the Church Toward the Followers of Other Religions: Reflections and Orientations on Dialogue and Mission*, Vatican, 1984, https://www.pcinterreligious.org/the-attitudes-of-the-church-towards-the-followers-of-other-religions.

[21] The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, *Dialogue and Proclamation*, Vatican, 1991, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/documents/rc_pc_interelg_doc_19051991_dialogue-and-proclamatio_en.html.

[22] Pope Francis, *Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium*, 2013, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html, no.142.

[23] Chiara Lubich, *Patrzeć na wszystkie kwiaty* (Kraków: Fundacja Mariapoli, 1996), 72.

[24] Stephen Bevans and Cathy Ross, editors, *Mission on the Road to Emmaus: Constants, Context, and Prophetic Dialogue* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2015), 14.

[25] Gaudencio B. Rosales and Catalino G. Arevalo, editors, *For All the Peoples of Asia: Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences, Documents from 1970 to 1991*, vol. 1 (Manila: Claretian Publications, 1992), 14.

[26] Jose Torres Jr., "FABC 50: 'Dialogue Is Not an Option, It's a Necessity'," *Licas News*, 4 Nov. 2022, https://www.licas.news/2022/11/04/fabc-50-dialogue-is-not-an-option-its-a-necessity/.

[27] Mikhail M. Bakhtin, "Toward a Reworking of the Dostoevsky's Book," in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, edited by C. Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 293.

Therefore, it is essential to develop the ability to engage in respectful and reverential dialogue if we want to succeed in our lives. Further, since life is not a continuous series of conflicts or debates, but an effort to build meaningful relationships, dialogue should be seen as a way to recognize and accept the other person's identity by being willing to listen, learn, and collaborate with dialogue partners.[28]

How is dialogue prophetic? The SVD General Chapter Document gives us a clue. It states, "It is in dialogue that we are able to recognize 'the signs of Christ's presence and the working of the Spirit' in all people, that we are called to acknowledge our own sinfulness and to engage in constant conversion, that we witness to God's love by sharing our own convictions boldly and honestly, especially where that love has been obscured by prejudice, violence, and hate. It is clear that we do not dialogue from a neutral position, but out of our own faith. Together with our dialogue partners, we hope to hear the voice of the Spirit of God calling us forward, and in this way our dialogue can be called prophetic."[29]

A prophet is defined by their ability to listen and their commitment to their community.[30] It is impossible to speak prophetically if one is removed from the real conditions of the people and the situation on the ground. Therefore, it is crucial that the prophetic voice is not that of an outsider or bystander but of someone who is genuinely invested in the well-being of the community and the common good. Prophets express their message with boldness, precision, and at times, with indignation. This is not because they are opposed to the people, but rather because they unwaveringly support them. The anguish in tone or demeanor that emanates from the prophet does not reflect hatred, condescension, or disrespect towards the people, but rather a deep concern for their lives.

The prophetic message can take various forms, including both words and deeds. According to Bevans, there are two types of prophetic communication — "speaking forth" and "speaking out." "Speaking forth" has the power to energize people towards positive attitudes and actions, inspiring hope for the future. As Walter Brueggemann notes, "It is the task of the prophet to bring to expression the new realities against the more visible ones of the old order. Energizing is closely linked to hope. We are energized not by that which we already possess but by that which is promised and about to be given."[31]

Prophetic energizing is essential in freeing us from the mindset that genuine change is illusionary. As Brueggemann explains, "If there is any point at which most of us are manifestly co-opted, it is in this way. We do not believe that there will be newness but only that there will be merely a moving of the pieces into new patterns. It is precisely the prophet who speaks against such managed data and who can energize toward futures that are genuinely new and not derived."[32] In addition to hope, the prophet can energize people towards repentance for sin, courage in the face of oppression, and resistance to the destructive forces of death.

The second type of prophetic content is "speaking out" or "speaking against." This entails criticizing, not in a scolding or reprimanding manner, but "so as to cut through the numbness, to penetrate

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[28] Michael Amaladoss, "Identity and Harmony: Challenges to Mission in South Asia," in *Mission in the Third Millennium*, edited by R. Schreiter (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2001), 34.
[29] Society of the Divine Word (SVD), *Documents of the XV General Chapter* (Rome: SVD Publications, 2000).
[30] Stephen Bevans and Cathy Ross, *Mission on the Road to Emmaus: Constants, Context, and Prophetic Dialogue* (New York: Orbis Books, 2015).
[31] Walter Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination* (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2001), 14.
[32] Brueggemann, 14.

the self-deception, so that the God of endings is confessed as Lord."[33] In this task, the prophetic voice aims to find ways to help the people "confront the horror and massiveness of the experience that evokes numbness and requires denial." Moreover, "the prophet must speak evocatively to bring to the community the fear and the pain that individual persons want so desperately to share and to own but are not permitted to do so." The prophetic message underscores the notion that death becomes evident through disconnection, deprivation of heritage, seeking fulfillment through futile means, and the "ultimate consumerism" is "consuming each other." In addition, the prophet articulates a sense of unease with the prospect of things coming to an end, the collapse of our self-imposed constructs, the systems of inequality and oppression that perpetuate at the expense of others, and the unsettling practice of exploiting the vulnerable by "eating off the table of a hungry brother or sister."[34]

In essence, prophetic dialogue facilitates the recognition of the Holy Spirit's presence in all individuals, fostering continuous self-transformation, bearing witness to God's love, and attentively listening to the Spirit's guidance, propelling collective progress. Prophetic communication, whether in the form of assertive expression or courageous advocacy, sparks positive attitudes and behaviors, nurtures hope for the future, and aids in confronting overwhelming experiences that may otherwise lead to apathy and denial. Engaging in prophetic dialogue necessitates bold and precise speech, while offering unwavering support to the community, with a steadfast commitment to unveiling new realities that challenge the established order.

Prophetic Dialogue with Stakeholders of the Digital Future

Based on the established approach of prophetic dialogue, in this section a series of communicative actions are proposed for the Church to undertake with stakeholders of the digital future, categorized as either "energizing" (speaking forth) or "critical" (speaking against) communication. These proposed actions can be seen as building upon the Church's existing engagement with technological issues, emphasizing certain aspects that require further attention, or extending its involvement from other domains of life to the specific matter under consideration. While it is not possible to detail how the Church can engage with all the various stakeholders listed above, this section will highlight some examples of engagement with specific stakeholders in various relevant matters. Moreover, it will propose ways in which the Church can further its engagement within the approach of prophetic dialogue.

Energizing Prophetic Communication

Embracing. Embracing technology and stakeholders of the technological future is an important component of the engagement. By embracing the stakeholders, the Church shows respect to every individual who is involved in the process of technological advancement—scientists, innovators, distributors, and consumers. Embracing these individuals demonstrates the Church's recognition that everyone has a crucial role in co-creating a future where technology does not lead to the diminishment of

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[33] Brueggemann, 45.
[34] Brueggemann, 45.

the human person but the promotion of human dignity and integrity. In particular, Pope Francis has called on theologians to enter into dialogue with members of the scientific community on behalf of the Church.[35] In calling for this dialogue, Pope Francis affirms the disposition of the Second Vatican Council in declaring the Church to be a friend of the sciences.[36] This is seen in the election of Demis Hassabis, head of Google DeepMind and a prominent AI pioneer, to the Vatican's Pontifical Academy of Sciences in March 2024.[37] The Academy, a nonreligious institution inside the Vatican, focuses on the ethical intersection of science and technology. This move affirms the Church's commitment to engaging with modern scientific advancements and carrying out dialogue to ensure technology promotes human dignity rather than undermining it.

Embracing the stakeholders is closely connected to embracing technology. Catholic social teachings since Pope Leo XIII to the present Pontiff have consistently highlighted the potential of science and technology to benefit all of humanity, helping to achieve a shared vision of human flourishing.[38] *Gaudium et Spes* affirms the "legitimate autonomy of human culture and especially of the sciences,"[39] and that we can use technology as an aid to develop the Earth and make it a fruitful and habitable place for everyone in accordance with God's original plan since the time of creation.[40] By continuing to affirm the value of technology as God's gift to humanity,[41] the Church enables technology to be seen not as an instrument to be used to advance selfish purposes, facilitate the domination of individuals and groups over others, cause death and destruction, but to be used to achieve the common good.

The Church's stance towards technology is not one of blindly accepting all its aspects without discernment. Rather, it acknowledges the need to separate the negative elements from the positive ones. By doing so, the Church demonstrates its hope for a future that embraces the benefits of technology while remaining vigilant against its potential pitfalls. This perspective is not simplistic but rather prophetic, as it envisions a future where God's gifts are used in genuine service to humanity and the world. It recognizes that technology, when harnessed responsibly and guided by moral principles, has the capacity to enhance human existence and contribute to the betterment of society. The Church's approach is rooted in wisdom and discernment, ensuring that the valuable aspects of technology are embraced while safeguarding against any harm that may arise from its misuse.

Collaborating. Prophetic dialogue involves active engagement with "people on the ground,"[42] requiring the Church to move beyond a detached observational role. Instead, the Church participates in the

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[35] Pope Francis, *Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 133.
[36] AI Research Group of the Centre for Digital Culture. "Encountering Artificial Intelligence: Ethical and Anthropological Investigations." *Journal of Moral Theology*, vol. 1, 2023, 150, https://doi.org/10.55476/001c.91230.
[37] "Google AI Expert Named to Pontifical Academy of Sciences." *Aleteia*, 12 Mar. 2024, https://aleteia.org/2024/03/12/google-ai-expert-named-to-pontifical-academy-of-sciences.
[38] AI Research Group of the Centre for Digital Culture," 150.
[39] Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, Vatican, 1965, https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html, no. 59.
[40] Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, Vatican, 1965, https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html, no. 57.
[41] Pope Francis, *Fiftieth World Communications Day Message*, 2016, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/communications/documents/papa-francesco_20160124_messaggio-comunicazioni-sociali.html.
[42] Stephen Bevans, "The Shift of Mission Paradigm in the Church and SVD," *Verbum SVD*, vol. 62, 2021, 21-33.

developmental process by fostering encounters between itself and various stakeholders. Given the diversity of stakeholders, these encounters are shaped by the specific contexts in which they occur. For example, programs designed for technology innovators may differ from those for consumers, with further differentiation within consumer demographics to address varying needs and circumstances.

The Rome Call for AI Ethics (2020), initiated by the Pontifical Academy for Life in collaboration with the Vatican's RenAIssance Foundation, exemplifies the Church's capacity to collaborate with diverse stakeholders, including technology companies and developers. This initiative seeks to guide AI development and use along ethical lines, prioritizing human dignity, environmental sustainability, and social inclusion. Its vision is grounded in six key principles: transparency, inclusion, responsibility, impartiality, reliability, and security and privacy. The Call advocates for explainable, unbiased AI systems designed to benefit all, with special attention to vulnerable populations.

Beyond these principles, the Rome Call emphasizes the need for widespread education on the societal impacts of AI. This includes promoting inclusive and equitable learning opportunities for all generations. Notably, the Call advocates for robust regulations to safeguard individuals and ensure transparency, traceability, and accountability in AI decision-making processes. The initiative introduces the concept of "algor-ethics," which promotes the integration of ethical principles from the very outset of AI system design. It ultimately calls for global cooperation among governments, organizations, and the private sector. This collaborative approach aims to ensure AI contributes to peace, inclusion, and sustainability, reflecting a shared commitment to ethical innovation.[43]

In response to this call, dozens of prominent international companies and organizations have become signatories. Microsoft and IBM are two of the five original signatories along with the Pontifical Academy for Life, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the Italian Ministry for Technological Innovation and Digitalisation.[44] On its website, IBM recognizes that the Rome Call is "a document where the signatories committed to pursue an ethical approach to AI development and promote the human-centric and inclusive development of AI, rather than replacing humanity."[45] IBM reaffirmed its commitment to the call in 2023 when it joined other leaders in industry, and representatives from many of the world's major religions in Hiroshima, Japan, to discuss developing AI ethically.

The CEO and President of Cisco, Chuck Robbins, signed the call following an audience with Pope Francis in April 2024. At the signing ceremony, Robbins commented, "The principles of the Rome Call are in line with Cisco's core belief that technology must be built on a foundation of trust at the highest levels, in order to power an inclusive future for all."[46] The fact that a multinational digital communications technology company such as Cisco as well as Microsoft and IBM lend their voices to the Rome Call

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[43] Vatican, *Rome Call for AI Ethics*, 2020, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_academies/acdlife/documents/rc_pont-acd_life_doc_20202228_rome-call-for-ai-ethics_en.pdf.

[44] Renzo Pegoraro and Elisabetta Curzel, *Rome Call for AI Ethics: The Birth of a Movement / Convocatoria de Roma por la Ética de la IA: El Nacimiento de un Movimiento*, *Medicina y Ética*, vol. 34, no. 2, 2023, pp. 333–349, https://doi.org/10.36105/mye.2023v34n2.01.

[45] IBM, "IBM Reaffirms Its Commitment to the Rome Call for AI Ethics," July 15, 2024, https://research.ibm.com/blog/ibm-ai-ethics-japan-rome-call.

[46] Linda Bordoni, "Cisco Signs the 'Rome Call for AI Ethics,'" *Vatican News*, April 24, 2024, https://www.vaticannews.va/en/vatican-city/news/2024-04/cisco-pontifical-academy-life-rome-call-ethics-pope-audience.html.

demonstrates that there is a growing recognition among global technology leaders of the critical need for ethical frameworks to guide AI development and deployment. By joining the Rome Call, these companies signal a willingness to collaborate across sectors to address the profound ethical, societal, and environmental challenges posed by AI, fostering a future where technology is a force for peace, equity, and sustainability.

As can be seen, the Rome Call is not a one-time event by the Church but an ongoing initiative that engages the collaboration of stakeholders within and beyond the technology industry. This is also reflected in the Minerva Dialogues, which is a high-level annual gathering of scientists, engineers, business leaders, lawyers, philosophers, Church officials, theologians, and ethicists, organized by the Vatican's Dicastery for Education and Culture. This event aims to study and foster greater awareness of the social and cultural impact of digital technologies, particularly artificial intelligence.[47]

While the Church has been active in its collaboration with industry leaders and experts in various fields, the Church can expand its engagement with other stakeholders, especially end users of technology. In this regard, the Church not only organizes encounters with these stakeholders but also facilitate encounters among various stakeholders themselves. It is important to recognize that technology is often designed without considering the specific needs and perspectives of certain groups, but rather *for* them.[48] For instance, technology is often created targeting children, the elderly, individuals with disabilities, students, individuals from diverse cultures and ethnicities, and so on. Consequently, these individuals become passive recipients of technology, lacking agency and influence over whether it aligns with their desires or requirements. Rather than focusing solely on this mode of technological innovation, a collaborative process can involve innovators and the individuals most affected by the technology. This perspective emphasizes a "with" approach rather than a "for" approach. The Church has the capacity to contribute to and support such collaborative efforts towards a co-creative technological future. By applying the synodal approach[49] to the context of technological development, the Church has the potential to amplify the voices of various groups whose culture, livelihood, and well-being are impacted by technological innovations one way or another.

In addition, the Church's global presence, encompassing 1.3 billion members across all continents, includes individuals deeply engaged in various fields, including technology. According to the Second Vatican Council, the mission of the Church involves not only clergy and religious but all Christians.

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[47] Deborah Castellano Lubov, "Pope Francis Urges Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence," *Vatican News*, 27 Mar. 2023, https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2023-03/pope-francis-minerva-dialogues-technology-artificial-intelligenc.html.

[48] Lauren McCann, "Building Technology with, Not for Communities: An Engagement Guide for Civic Tech," *Medium*, 31 Mar. 2015, https://medium.com/organizer-sandbox/building-technology-with-not-for-communities-an-engagement-guide-for-civic-tech-b8880982e65a.

[49] The synodal approach of the Catholic Church is a process of listening, dialogue, and discernment that involves the entire People of God. It is a way of being Church together, walking together in communion, participating in the mission of the Church, and listening to the Holy Spirit. The current synodal process, initiated by Pope Francis in 2021, is focused on the theme "For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission." It invites all members of the Church, including laity, clergy, and religious, to share their experiences, insights, and hopes for the future of the Church. The synodal approach is seen as a way to revitalize the Church and make it more responsive to the needs of the world. It is a process that is rooted in the teachings of the Second Vatican Council and aims to foster a deeper sense of communion, participation, and mission among all members of the Church. Cf. Vatican, "Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church," 2020, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_cti_20180302_sinodalita_en.html#:~:text=While%20the%20concept%20of%20synodality,the%20Church%2C%20the%20concept%20of

Prophetic dialogue, as a contextually informed process, positions Catholic laypeople working in technology as effective dialogue partners representing the Church. The vision of Vatican II reflected in the synodal process encourages the laity to pursue universal holiness and actively proclaim the Gospel within their daily lives.[50] This calling aligns with their potential role in addressing global matters such as the digital future. Many Church members are already leaders and participants in the technological field, serving as people on the ground so to speak, and are well-acquainted with its current dynamics. Their role can expand to include serving as dialogue partners for the Church, collaborating with other stakeholders in shaping the digital future.

Modeling best practices. Dialogue is not only a verbal process but can be carried out through witnessing actions.[51] Pope Francis writes, "Technological products are not neutral, for they create a framework which ends up conditioning lifestyles and shaping social possibilities along the lines dictated by the interests of certain powerful groups."[52] In other words, the design and development of technology inherently reflect the values, priorities, and interests of its creators, influencing how it is used and what outcomes it produces in society. Moreover, the moral implications of technologies are not inherent to the technology itself. Technologies can be used for both good and ill, often in ways unintended by their designers. For instance, a technology designed for destruction could be repurposed for constructive use, and vice versa. Ultimately, it is people who are responsible for how technologies are used.[53]

Thus, it is imperative for the Church to study and adopt practices involving technology that highlights their socially, culturally, religiously, and spiritually beneficial potentials. This requires Church leaders at various levels to not only be prophets of doom and gloom but also demonstrate by example how to put God's gifts to use in their own ecclesiological governance, pastoral outreach, and evangelizing work. The Church can model informed use of technology to inspire best practices among its members. By showcasing these practices, the Church helps promote positive trends in technology use, countering those that may be divisive or harmful.

Best practices can be gathered not only from the leaders of the Church but also from the lay sector as well as secular organizations who have taken advantage of technological means to address environmental degradation, mitigate hunger, reduce poverty, and promote life. For example, as AI-driven apps can be used by women to track their fertility,[54] this has the potential to contribute to more effective natural family planning by married couples. This technology enhances the precision and ease of NFP by analyzing data in real-time, offering personalized insights, and helping women and couples better understand and track their fertility patterns. These technologies can potentially support couples in their efforts to responsibly manage family size while respecting the Church's ethical teachings, as they promote a natural and non-invasive approach to family planning. By actively highlighting these best practices, the Church promotes the life-

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[50] Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, 1964, no. 39, file:///C:/Users/arcst/OneDrive/Documents/FR%20ANTHONY/Digital%20Humanism/lumen%20gentium.pdf.
[51] Stephen Bevans, "Witness and Proclamation as Prophetic Dialogue," in *Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World*, edited by I. J. K. Kodithuwakku (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2022), 245-255.
[52] Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 2015, no. 107, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html
[53] AI Research Group of the Centre for Digital Culture. "Encountering Artificial Intelligence," 153.
[54] AI Research Group of the Centre for Digital Culture. "Encountering Artificial Intelligence," 169.

giving potential of technology over the death-dealing practices that are equally possible when these powerful tools are misused.

In terms of witnessing actions, the Church can actively support individuals affected by the adverse consequences of technological development. One avenue is to utilize its extensive social service programs and humanitarian organizations to provide assistance to workers facing displacement due to automation or unjust labor practices within the technology industry. For instance, the Church can leverage its global network of charitable entities, such as Caritas Internationalis, to offer vocational training and job placement support to individuals who have been displaced by automation.

Moreover, the Church can leverage its various platforms and pastoral programs to engage with individuals and provide resources and support on responsible technology usage, internet safety, digital literacy, and digital citizenship. It can also utilize technology to promote formation programs that educate its members about the moral and ethical implications of technology and guide them in aligning their use of technology with Catholic values. Furthermore, the Church can develop its own technology products and services that contribute to the common good. Examples could include ethical social media platforms, secure and private communication tools, and educational software that emphasizes Catholic social teaching and values.

Lastly, the Church can foster a digital humanism by promoting a culture of discernment and reflection among its members and the broader society. This can involve encouraging practices such as spiritual direction, retreats, and contemplative prayer that facilitate introspection regarding the role of technology in individuals' lives and its potential for promoting societal well-being.

Critical Prophetic Communication

In the contemporary world, technology possesses the capacity to yield both life-giving and life-dealing consequences, necessitating the Church's obligation to advocate for the former and denounce the latter. In addition to energizing prophetic communication, engaging in critical prophetic communication with stakeholders of the digital future is essential. Critical prophetic communication entails: (1) opposing the technocratic paradigm and scientism that marginalizes religion as a legitimate stakeholder; (2) calling for changes in technological development that perpetuate unjust structures; and (3) mobilizing for accountability and responsibility by entities for innovations and ways of implementation that are unethical, undermine human dignity, and have negative impacts on life. Through such prophetic communication, the Church can play a vital role in shaping the direction of technological progress towards greater equity, justice, and flourishing for all.

Opposing the technocratic paradigm and scientism that sidelines religion as legitimate stakeholders. In his book *Homo Deus*, Yuval Harari presents a viewpoint that undermines the role of religion, including the Church, in the contemporary landscape of scientific progress.[55] While Harari acknowledges the historical contributions of Christianity, such as the development of administrative systems and the utilization of data processing techniques during medieval times, he contends that religions have become passive actors rather than active catalysts in the face of advancements in technology and ideas

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[55] Yuval Noah Harari, *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2016), 458-460 (epub).

championed by other movements. According to Harari, religions have fallen behind the accelerating scientific trajectory towards the digital future as they no longer actively contribute to scientific development. He asserts that religious narratives have been rendered incompatible with modern scientific knowledge, and religions are no longer generating novel concepts or discoveries. Harari's perspective resonates with a common belief that religion has been supplanted within the contemporary scientific milieu.

Regrettably, the portrayal of religion and the Church in relation to science and technological advancement as presented by Harari overlooks their significant contributions. Contrary to the notion that religions lack creative vigor, they continue to exert a meaningful influence on scientific discovery. While religious institutions may not have the primary goal of making scientific breakthroughs, they offer a supportive framework that fosters and advances scientific progress as an integral facet of human advancement. It is crucial to acknowledge the numerous Catholic institutions around the globe that serve as centers of cutting-edge research. These universities exemplify the Church's ongoing active engagement in scientific development, which traces its roots back to the earliest Church-affiliated universities.

Moreover, the perception of an inherent conflict between science and religion reflects a Western-centric perspective, as noted by Alister McGrath, and fails to capture the collaborative relationship observed in non-Western cultures like India.[56] Scientists from diverse religious backgrounds draw inspiration and conviction from their faith while engaging in research. Additionally, religion's capacity for reflection can contribute to comprehending the social and spiritual implications of scientific advancements. The Catholic Church has a long-standing tradition of fostering scientific inquiry and maintains its support for scientific research and dialogue. Already in the First Vatican Council's dogmatic constitution *Dei Filius* (1870), the Church affirms that it "is neither ignorant nor contemptuous of the advantages which derive from this source for human life, rather the Church acknowledges that those things flow from God, the lord of the sciences, and if they are properly used, lead to God by the help of his Grace."[57] The profound influence of religious beliefs on individuals engaged in scientific pursuits should not be underestimated. Given their vested interest in the societal impacts of technological progress, religions can play a pivotal role in promoting reflective and introspective decision-making concerning scientific knowledge and technological innovations.

It is imperative for the Church to challenge the domination of scientism, which promotes scientific knowledge as the exclusive or superior means of comprehending reality while dismissing other forms of knowledge, such as those emanating from philosophy, religion, or the arts, as less valid or inferior.[58] It is crucial to recognize that science is not an all-encompassing force capable of dissolving all other forms of knowledge and unveiling the ultimate truth of reality. This perspective disregards the inherent limitations of science and oversimplifies the complexity of human existence. Science alone cannot provide answers to all existential questions, and alternative forms of knowledge, such as personal experiences, intuition, cultural traditions, and spiritual insights, are equally significant in shaping our understanding of the world.

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[56] Alister E. McGrath, *Science and Religion: A New Introduction*, 3rd ed. (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2020), 9.

[57] Vatican I, *Dei Filius*, 1870, no. 4.

[58] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis in Modern Man* (Chicago: ABC Publisher, 2000), first published 1967.

Derived from scientism ideology is what Pope Francis calls the "technocratic paradigm," which entails an undifferentiated and one-dimensional worldview that prioritizes efficiency, productivity, and control without due consideration for human dignity and the common good.[59] According to Francis, the technocratic perspective distorts human beings by reducing them to mere agents of technological intervention, focused on manipulating life's material aspects. Additionally, it distorts the world, including its people, by viewing it as raw material to be controlled and manipulated through technology. The widespread adoption of this paradigm has resulted in detrimental consequences, such as environmental degradation, the marginalization of disadvantaged communities, and the erosion of social and cultural values. Francis calls for a transformative shift towards a more holistic and sustainable approach to development, one that places the flourishing of individuals and the planet at the forefront, rather than prioritizing narrow economic interests.

Overcoming scientism and the technocratic paradigm requires the Church to actively engage in dialogue with scientists and philosophers, both within and outside its own ranks, who acknowledge the boundaries of science and appreciate the value of diverse forms of knowledge and inquiry. By fostering dialogue and cooperation with these individuals, the Church can effectively challenge the hegemony of scientism and promote a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to understanding reality and addressing the pressing issues of our time.

Call for change to directions in technological development that perpetuates unjust structures. Critical communication in prophetic dialogue often includes the act of speaking truth to power.[60] The advancement of technology carries inherent risks that demand careful consideration. AI development can reinforce unjust social structures in multiple ways, primarily through the perpetuation of bias and inequality. This is due to the fact that AI systems often rely on data sets influenced by societal prejudices and structural inequalities. For example, crime data may reflect biased policing practices, disproportionately impacting minority communities. When AI systems are trained on such data, they may reproduce these biases, which result in discriminatory outcomes. Additionally, AI can reinforce stereotypes by misrepresenting certain groups, as demonstrated by instances where search engines fail to depict women as medical doctors. In the context of social programs or financial institutions, AI systems may disproportionately limit benefits for disadvantaged groups, such as through biased fraud detection algorithms or resource allocation decisions in welfare programs.[61]

The widespread use of surveillance technology also presents its own set of challenges, eroding privacy rights and deepening social divisions. Governments and corporations can exploit surveillance mechanisms to monitor individuals, their activities, and movements, thereby stifling dissent and suppressing political opposition.[62] Furthermore, the digital divide compounds these unjust structures, as unequal access to technology further entrenches social inequalities. Limited access prevents individuals from fully participating in the digital economy and accessing essential services such as healthcare and

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[59] Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, no. 106.

[60] Stephen Bevans and Roger Schroeder, *Prophetic Dialogue: Reflections on Christian Mission Today* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2011), 43-48.

[61] AI Research Group of the Centre for Digital Culture. "Encountering Artificial Intelligence," 33.

[62] Abi Olvera, "How AI Surveillance Threatens Democracy Everywhere," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, June 7, 2024, https://thebulletin.org/2024/06/how-ai-surveillance-threatens-democracy-everywhere/.

education.[63]   Since AI systems frequently mirror and intensify existing structural inequalities, their development and deployment must extend beyond merely addressing bias. It necessitates a deliberate focus on promoting equity and inclusion.

Given its rich legacy of advocating for social justice and confronting inequality, the Catholic Church assumes a crucial role in persisting with its advocacy against unjust structures, placing strong emphasis on ethical considerations and the promotion of the common good. *Gaudium et Spes* insists, "If methodical investigation within every branch of learning is carried out in a genuinely scientific manner and in accord with moral norms, it never truly conflicts with faith, for earthly matters and the concerns of faith derive from the same God."[64] Through the modality of prophetic dialogue, the Church engages in conversations with key stakeholders in the technology sphere, policymakers, and diverse actors, illuminating the ethical implications inherent in technology. In doing so, the Church exposes unjust systems that hinder human flourishing and undermine the dignity and well-being of all, especially marginalized and disadvantaged individuals. By leveraging its moral authority in this manner, the Church assumes a critical role in advocating for policies that address the adverse effects of technological progress on the common good, which in Pope Francis' understanding, extends to the Earth as humanity's common home.[65] Francis has also pointed out that "it is not enough simply to trust in the moral sense of researchers and developers of devices and algorithms."[66] Indeed, while technology developers possess significant technical expertise, they may exhibit a deficit in ethical sensibility. Consequently, the Church contributes to promoting the common good by conducting rigorous social analysis to safeguard against the potential for AI to be employed in ways that reduce individuals to mere consumers, exacerbate inequality, and erode democratic norms.[67]

Mobilize for accountability and responsibility by entities for innovations and ways of implementation that are unethical, devalue human integrity, and are death-dealing rather than life-giving. While technological innovations hold numerous potential adverse effects on various dimensions of human life, including the social, cultural, and spiritual realms, the current landscape of technology development often witnesses the hasty release of products, lacking refinement and necessitating community feedback and collective intelligence for improvement. The relatively short time between the releases of ChatGPT-3.5 and ChatGPT-4.0 serves as a poignant example of the ethical dilemmas that may not have been adequately anticipated by technology innovators and distributors.[68] Due to great uncertainties regarding the LLM (large language model), Steve Wozniak, Elon Musk, Andrew Yang along with over 1,300 experts, including prominent figures in technology and ethics, signed an open letter in March 2023 calling for a six-

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[63] Caroline Kuhn, et al., "Understanding Digital Inequality: A Theoretical Kaleidoscope," *Postdigital Science and Education*, vol. 5, 2023, 894–932, https://doi.org/10.1007/s42438-023-00395-8.

[64] *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 36.

[65] AI Research Group of the Centre for Digital Culture. "Encountering Artificial Intelligence," 157.

[66] Pope Francis, "To Participants in the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Academy for Life," 28 February 2020, www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2020/february/documents/papa-francesco_20200228_accademia-perlavita.html.

[67] AI Research Group of the Centre for Digital Culture. "Encountering Artificial Intelligence," 158.

[68] Lex Fridman, "Sam Altman: OpenAI CEO on GPT-4, ChatGPT, and the Future of AI," *Lex Fridman Podcast*, episode 367, YouTube, 26 Mar. 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_Guz73e6fw&t=3333s. Accessed 1 June 2023

month pause in the development of AI systems more powerful than GPT-4.[69] The letter emphasizes the potential risks associated with advanced AI technologies, including societal and ethical concerns such as privacy violations, bias, and threats to democratic norms. It advocates for establishing ethical safeguards and regulatory measures before proceeding with further advancements in AI development.

In light of its moral authority, the Church can actively raise awareness and unequivocally denounce unethical technological innovations that compromise human dignity. This can be achieved through the issuance of statements or pastoral letters, leveraging the extensive network of parishes, schools, and universities to educate individuals about the adverse consequences of unethical technological developments. Additionally, the Church can advocate for regulatory measures that hold technology giants accountable for their actions. By lobbying for government regulations that safeguard human dignity, privacy, and fundamental rights, as well as supporting initiatives that foster ethical innovation and responsible technology development, the Church plays a vital role. In these actions, the Church does not have to act alone but rather collaboratively with various advocacy groups and NGOs who share the Church's concern about technology's impact on human and environmental flourishing. Organizations such as Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) and Privacy International can be valuable partners in this endeavor.

The Electronic Frontier Foundation is a nonprofit dedicated to defending civil liberties in the digital world. The EFF's work spans several critical areas, including advocating for digital privacy, free expression, and transparency in the use of technology. Through legal challenges, public campaigns, and educational initiatives, the EFF strives to limit governmental and corporate overreach in digital spaces.[70] Similarly, Privacy International plays a crucial role in protecting human rights in the digital age by focusing on privacy issues, particularly in the context of state surveillance and corporate data collection. Privacy International campaigns for better data protection laws, transparency in surveillance practices, and equitable access to privacy rights across the globe.[71] By forming partnerships with organizations such as the EFF and Privacy International, the Catholic Church can ensure that its teachings on the sanctity of human dignity and the importance of ethical responsibility resonate in the discourse surrounding technological development. The collaboration would enable the Church to actively contribute to policy debates, highlight shadows in technological development, support legislative efforts aimed at regulating tech giants, and assist in educating the public about the ethical implications of new technologies. This cooperative approach ensures that the advancement of technology serves humanity's well-being, aligns with moral principles, and protects vulnerable populations from exploitation and harm.

Conclusion

Prophetic dialogue offers a vital approach for the Church to engage in meaningful discussions and exchanges of ideas within the digital age. By involving key stakeholders in technological advancements—such as scientists, policymakers, innovators, distributors, and consumers—the Church can collaboratively shape a future where technology upholds human dignity. Central to this engagement is the Church's call

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[69] Future of Life Institute, "Pause Giant AI Experiments: An Open Letter," March 22, 2023, futureoflife.org/open-letter/pause-giant-ai-experiments.

[70] Electronic Frontier Foundation, https://www.eff.org/.

[71] Privacy International, https://privacyinternational.org/about-us.

for reforms in technology that address unjust structures, with an emphasis on ethical principles, the common good, and respect for human dignity. Through public statements, educational initiatives, advocacy, and support for policy changes, the Church ensures that technology aligns with moral imperatives and serves the well-being of individuals and communities.

The role of prophetic dialogue is particularly significant in fostering common ground and shared goals, promoting a vision of digital humanism where technology serves humanity while advancing societal and environmental flourishing. This paper highlights existing ways through which the Catholic Church engages with stakeholders, as well as proposing additional ways the Church can further its engagement within the approach of prophetic dialogue. Given the wide range of stakeholders involved in shaping the digital future, engagement with each group requires tailored approaches. While this paper does not aim to address every specific mode of engagement, it proposes a comprehensive framework for the Church to envision and lead the way forward. Whether through energizing or critical communication, the Church's prophetic dialogue possesses the potential to profoundly influence the trajectory of technological development, ensuring that it contributes to the flourishing of humanity and the environment both now and in the future.

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