# Christian Faith and AI: A Theological Philosophical Analysis and its Relevance to the Existence of the Catholic Church

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*Abstract. This study analyzes the relationship between Christian faith and artificial intelligence (AI) through a theological-philosophical approach and assesses its relevance to the existence of the Catholic Church in the digital age. The background of this study stems from the rapid development of AI, which brings both opportunities and risks to the life of faith, such as the simplification of theological teachings, the reduction of personal relationships, and the emergence of a technocratic paradigm. The study uses qualitative methods with a literature review of the Holy Scriptures, Church documents, and literature on philosophy and technology ethics. The results of the analysis show that AI is a product of human creativity as the image of God, so it does not conflict with faith, but it remains instrumental and does not have moral or spiritual dimensions like humans. Therefore, AI cannot replace the role of humans in faith relationships. The Church is called to guide technological development through Christian ethical principles, upholding human dignity, being critical of the effects of dehumanization, and utilizing AI wisely for evangelization, catechesis, and faith education. With a reflective and critical approach, the Church can remain relevant amid technological advances without losing its identity and mission for the common good.*

*Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; Catholic Church; Ethics; Faith; Philosophy.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Understanding Christianity about faith cannot be separated from the Holy Scriptures. In essence, faith is humanity's response to God who reveals Himself tangibly in history. This response is manifested through obedience and acknowledgment of God's commands (Psalm 119:66), trust in His promises (Genesis 15:6; Jeremiah 39:18), and faithfulness in response to God's own faithfulness (Isaiah 26:2). Nevertheless, the Old Testament also records various forms of Israel's rejection of God's commands, promises, and faithfulness (Deuteronomy 9:23; Numbers 20:12; Amos 2). (Vincent, 2022). Thus, faith as a human response means total surrender to God, accompanied by complete trust, hope, and a constant longing for His presence (Martasudjita, 2013).

In the New Testament, especially after Jesus' resurrection, faith is placed in Jesus as Christ and Lord. Faith in this context brings humans into a new relationship. While Jesus was still working, He proclaimed the kingdom of God and repentance, but after His resurrection, Jesus no longer proclaimed but was proclaimed. Faith in Christ brings about a profound existential transformation, because humans are brought into new life in Him, share in His death and resurrection, and come to know the Father. In Paul's teaching, justification comes solely through faith, which is born of hearing the word of God and is manifested in obedience and surrender, not in human wisdom (Migliore, 2023). Meanwhile, John emphasizes faith as God's work that leads humans to light, life, and eternal salvation. Faced with heretical teachings, the Pastoral Letters emphasize the importance of maintaining the purity of the teachings of faith,

while James reminds us that true faith cannot be separated from concrete actions. Thus, Christian faith encompasses belief, obedience, steadfastness in doctrine, and concrete actions in daily life (Martasudjita, 2013).

In the 21st century, Christian faith is confronted with artificial intelligence (AI). The field of artificial intelligence (AI) is difficult to define precisely because it requires clarity about the meaning of both "artificial" and "intelligence." "Artificial" refers to something created through human engineering, not a natural biological process, so AI is understood as an artifact or machine designed to have properties normally possessed by living beings, namely intelligence. The main issue lies in how to define intelligence itself. Dictionary definitions refer to intelligence as the ability to learn, understand, solve problems, and adapt ("Definition of Intelligence," 2026), However, the definition must be broad enough to apply to machines, without being so loose that it includes ordinary inanimate objects. Therefore, determining the meaning of intelligence is equivalent to formulating a theory about the nature of intelligence. By comparing real examples, such as humans as the primary model, it is necessary to identify which aspects truly demonstrate intelligence, so that it can be assessed whether inanimate machines are also capable of possessing it (Fetzer, 1990). The meaning of AI in this study refers to the definition given by Rojabi, namely the ability of machines or computers to mimic human intelligence, such as learning, thinking, reasoning, and problem solving, so that they can act independently, make decisions, and adapt without being programmed in detail for each situation. The concept of AI is understood from various perspectives, namely as a system that thinks like humans by imitating cognitive processes, acts like humans through intelligent behavior that is difficult to distinguish from humans, thinks rationally using logic, and acts rationally as an intelligent agent that chooses the most effective actions to achieve goals (Rojabi, 2025).

Based on these definitions, a big question arises, namely how Christian faith relates to AI. Previous research by Makaromase highlights several significant risks in the use of artificial intelligence (AI) for spiritual learning. AI has the potential to simplify theological teachings, causing them to lose their depth and spiritual meaning. In addition, AI systems can favor certain traditions and ignore the diversity of universal Church teachings. The use of AI also risks replacing the personal relationships that are essential in the formation of faith and character. Ultimately, this technology can reduce the proclamation of faith to mere digital content, thereby diminishing the sacredness and meaning of religious experience (Makaromase, 2025). In addition, Silalahi's research highlights the importance of Christian education adapting to developments in AI to respond to the challenges faced by the younger generation in the digital

age. The integration of AI into the curriculum is considered capable of providing more personalized, responsive learning that is tailored to the spiritual needs of students, thereby increasing their understanding, motivation, and engagement. However, its implementation also raises ethical challenges in maintaining a balance between technology, spiritual values, and human relations in faith development. Therefore, Silalahi recommends the development of a holistic curriculum that combines traditional teaching, ethical use of AI, and training for educators, in order to shape a young generation with strong faith who are ready to face the challenges of the times (Silalahi & Pasaribu, 2025).

From these studies, it can be said that AI still has two sides. It can help and simplify humans in acquiring knowledge about faith. On the other hand, AI is not fully capable like humans. Therefore, it still has shortcomings. When humans are not intelligent and wise in using AI, they can receive information that does not have a strong basis. This research presents a theological analysis to strengthen and deepen the understanding of the Christian faith and the teachings of the Church. When believers have a good understanding of faith, they have a strong foundation or principles of faith. Meanwhile, philosophical analysis helps Catholics think critically in this era of AI. With a critical attitude, believers do not simply accept information or AI at face value. Both analyses are highly relevant and urgent for the lives of Christians who are facing rapid technological advances. Theological and philosophical analysis makes people wiser, smarter, and more critical in living their faith amid the advancement of AI. Based on this description and explanation, this study aims to answer the following questions. (1) How is the theological-philosophical analysis of faith and AI? (2) What is the relevance of this analysis for the existence of the contemporary Catholic Church?

## 2. METHOD

This study applies a qualitative method with a literature review approach. According to John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth, qualitative research is an activity that places researchers directly in the real world being observed to describe and interpret the world through various forms of representation, such as field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and personal memos. Thus, researchers seek to understand and interpret phenomena in their natural context (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Literature studies are an important part of qualitative research because they utilize various relevant previous studies as a foundation and support for the study being conducted (Klarer, 2023). Based on this understanding, in this study, the author collected data from various sources such as

journals and scientific books. These sources were accessed online and searched for directly or offline in libraries.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Theological-Philosophical Analysis**

The Catholic Church views technology as an expression of human intelligence created in the image and likeness of God, which enables humanity to manage creation responsibly. However, technology must always be guided by Christian ethical principles, serving human dignity, the common good, and God's will, while avoiding the risk of domination or a technocratic paradigm that disregards moral values (Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith and Dicastery for Culture and Education, 2025). The church openly embraces technological advances. This acceptance is a form of existence and an effort to continue to maintain existence. In the era of modern philosophy, Descartes said, "I think, therefore I am," as quoted by Auner (Auner & Majidi, 2021), and Hadirman said, "I click, therefore I am." (Hardiman, 2021), The same applies to the Church and AI. The Church is open to AI, therefore the Church exists. The Church recognizes that advances in science and technology are part of humanity's calling to perfect creation, as stated in Scripture: God gave His Spirit to humanity so that they might have skill, understanding, and knowledge in every kind of work (Ex 35:31) (Pope Francis, 2024). Long before the creation of AI, Descartes had already thought that it was possible to create a machine that could speak words, even words related to specific physical actions. For example, when touched in a certain part, the machine could ask someone's wishes, or scream when hurt, and perform various similar responses. However, such a machine would never be able to modify or adapt the expressions programmed into it to respond spontaneously to various questions or commands, something that even the simplest human being can do (Descartes, 1901). This shows that human faith in God and the belief that humans are noble creations are true. No matter how sophisticated AI is, it cannot completely surpass humans.

AI can only provide information based on patterns and information embedded in itself or its system, while humans are not bound by any patterns (Gut & Gut, 2020) because humans are capable of considering things morally and rationally. Therefore, humans cannot make AI the sole source of truth. In Laudato Si', Pope Francis criticizes the technocratic paradigm that makes science the sole measure of knowledge. 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 (Francesco, 2015).

Although AI has a positive influence, humans need to remain critical because AI also causes unemployment, inequality, and competition (Ramar, 2019). For the Church, technology must serve the integral development of humanity, respect human dignity, and be in harmony with God's will, while avoiding the temptation of excessive control that obscures our relationship with God (Ramelow, 2024). Since the Second Vatican Council, the Church has emphasized that humans and humanity are more valuable than technological progress (Gaudium et Spes article 35, 1962)

The advancement of science and technology today, with its methods, has not been able to penetrate the essence of reality in the most profound way. However, if the scientific method is misunderstood as the only highest benchmark for discovering all truths, it can pave the way for the development of phenomenism and agnosticism. There is even a risk that humans, because they rely too much on various modern discoveries, feel as if all their needs have been met, so that they no longer seek or long for higher and more meaningful values (Gaudium et Spes, 1962 article 57). In this case, the Church emphasizes the importance of ethics in facing technological advances. Therefore, it is also important to pay attention to what Mainzer said. The relationship between science, technology, and society needs to be analyzed through three main perspectives. First, in the study of Science and Technology, social scientists and humanities scholars are required to examine the social dimensions inherent in the development of science and technology. Second, from the perspective of Ethics and Responsibility, moral experts need to make assessments, both in the medical field concerning the morality of life and in the economic field related to social morality, in order to evaluate research and development of artificial intelligence. Third, from the perspective of Communication and Media Studies, communication experts examine the role of artificial intelligence in enhancing the exchange of ideas and information in society. (Mainzer, 2019).

**Relevance to the Existence of the Catholic Church**

The analysis of faith and AI is relevant to the existence of the Catholic Church. First, in theological-anthropological terms, this study affirms that technology, including AI, is the fruit of human intelligence. Therefore, AI does not contradict faith, but is part of humanity's calling to manage creation. However, human dignity remains higher than technology. This emphasis is important for the Church so that it does not fall into "technology worship" or a technocratic paradigm, but rather continues to place humans as moral and spiritual subjects.

The Second Vatican Council rejected the technocratic paradigm that replaces virtue, contemplation, and human relationships with the illusion of technological mastery alone (Gaudium et Spes, 1962). The Church is called to deploy business and scientific creativity for the common good and the care of our common home, with faith as the basis for wise decisions (Naughton & Alford, 2012).

Second, in terms of ethics, this study highlights that AI is not morally neutral and can shape lifestyles, social relations, and even ways of believing. Therefore, the Church is called to be a prophetic voice that criticizes negative impacts such as dehumanization, the loss of personal relationships, social inequality, and the reduction of faith to mere digital content. This relevance is in line with the spirit of Gaudium et Spes and Laudato Si', which reject the dominance of the technocratic paradigm. Third, in the field of pastoral care and evangelization, the Church's openness to AI is seen as a form of missionary existence and adaptation. Just as Paul proclaimed the Gospel across cultures (Abraham, 2025), Today's churches need to utilize digital technology for evangelism, catechesis, and faith formation in order to reach younger generations more broadly and contextually. This means that AI can be a means of evangelization, not a substitute for pastoral relationships (Kurnia, 2023; Sipayung & Derung, 2024).

Fourth, in the field of faith education, this study emphasizes the need for critical integration of AI in the curriculum, accompanied by ethical and philosophical guidance (Pabubung, 2021). The goal is for the faithful, especially young people, not to passively accept digital information, but to be able to evaluate it rationally and theologically. In this way, faith becomes mature, reflective, and not easily distorted. In short, the main relevance for the Catholic Church is: (1) affirming human dignity above technology, (2) building an ethics of AI use, (3) utilizing AI for mission and evangelization, and (4) forming a critical and deeply faithful community. With this attitude, the Church does not reject progress, but directs it for the common good and the salvation of humanity.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Christian faith and artificial intelligence (AI) are not in conflict, but rather in a critical dialogue. Faith is understood as the total response of human beings to God, involving reason, obedience, and concrete action, while AI is the result of human creativity as the image of God that can assist in the stewardship of creation. However, AI remains instrumental in nature, lacking the morality and existential depth of humans, and therefore cannot replace the role of humans in the relationship of faith. For this reason, the Catholic

Church is called to guide technological development with Christian ethical principles, upholding human dignity above the technocratic paradigm, and taking a critical stance toward the risks of dehumanization, distortion of doctrine, and reduction of religious experience. At the same time, AI can be wisely utilized as a means of evangelization, faith education, and pastoral ministry. With a reflective theological-philosophical approach, the Church is able to be relevant in the digital age without losing its spiritual identity and mission for the common good and the salvation of humanity.

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