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CHAPTER II

Exploring the Social Work of the Catholic Church in an AI World: Minimizing the Digital Divide

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Abstract

In the context of the development of artificial intelligence technology, the Catholic Church has played an essential role in minimizing social inequality. Through its various social works, the Catholic Church is active in providing assistance to vulnerable communities and fighting for human rights. In addition, the church is also involved in empowering communities through training and extension programs to compete in the growing digital economy. With this approach, the Catholic Church has contributed to mitigating the negative impact of the development of AI technology that could increase social inequality.
The Catholic Church is raising awareness of the ethical use of AI and its role in ensuring social justice for all. Through its social teachings, the Catholic Church guides developing and applying AI technologies oriented towards the common good and general welfare. As such, the church is not only focused on assisting but is also active in raising awareness of moral responsibility in using AI technologies. Through these efforts, the Catholic Church helps ensure that the development of AI technologies can be used to promote social equality and the common good by the principles of the Church's social teachings.

Keywords: Impact of Digital Technology, Church Values in the Digital Age, Digital Challenges and Policies, Role of the Church in Social Gaps, Technology Utilization, and AI Ethics.

Introduction

In an era of rapid technological advancement, the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) is significant and affects various aspects of human life. The Catholic Church recognizes the importance of open and concrete dialogue on this matter, especially in the context of creating the common good. In his address entitled The Common Good in the Digital Age, Pope Francis recognized that

technological developments, including AI, have increasingly significant implications in all aspects of human life. (Benedict & XVI, 2008). Therefore, open and concrete discussions on this topic are increasingly important.

The Catholic Church also recognizes the importance of minimizing the digital divide using technology, including AI. In his message on the 43rd World Communications Day, Pope Benedict XVI said that digital technology should be accessible to all, including those already economically and socially marginalized. The purpose of this paper is to examine the extent of the Catholic Church's social role in the world of artificial intelligence (AI) and efforts to minimize the digital divide, invite dialogue with technology experts, inspire Catholic youth to bring the values of their faith into the digital world, and appreciate the contribution of Catholic universities in providing equitable access to education for all regardless of social background or religious beliefs.

Therefore, this study seeks to understand how the Catholic Church's contribution to public policy advocacy reflects efforts to uphold moral and ethical principles, especially in the context of electing leaders who support the common good, and how the Church, as a moral institution, actively invites its people to consider moral aspects in decisions related to public policy, and how this relates to the social responsibility of Catholics?

In the face of technological advances, particularly artificial intelligence, what is the role of the Catholic Church in dialoguing with technologists to promote a deeper understanding of the social and cultural impact of these technologies? How can the Church accommodate these advances without compromising the values of faith, and to what extent can the Church's ethical views on artificial intelligence guide society in utilizing these technologies? Moreover, in the face of ethical challenges in public policy, especially regarding social inequality, how does the Catholic Church respond and ensure solidarity in utilizing technology for the common good? How can the Church's views shape policies that support inclusiveness and social justice and address the ethical challenges of technological development?

Literature Review

Understanding the Impact of Digital Technology

Digital technology has a significant impact on our lives today. In his encyclical Christus Vivit, Pope Francis says that the digital environment has affected how we understand time and space, ourselves, others, and the world. The

predominant use of images over listening and reading has affected how people learn and develop their critical faculties. (Francis, 2019). In a pastoral reflection published by the Dicastery for Communications, it is mentioned that we no longer ask whether to engage with the digital world but how to engage with it.

Social media, as one of the digital environments, enables unprecedented interaction, sharing of experiences, and relationship building. However, in the development of technology increasingly influenced by artificial intelligence, we must rediscover the core of actual human encounters. (Presence, 2023).

Pope Francis also reminded us that the digital age has significantly changed how we communicate and share information. Digital technologies open up vast opportunities, but on the other hand, standards are increasingly becoming a significant factor in how we use these technologies. This makes it increasingly difficult to recognize and appreciate differences.

Digital technology has introduced increasingly complex socio-economic dynamics. Users are often perceived as consumers who are vulnerable to manipulation by a few individuals. While these digital technologies are a gift from God that can have a positive impact, using our data for commercial or political purposes is often without our understanding. (Benedict & XVI, 2008). This information gap inhibits critical thinking and threatens democratic societies and the unbalanced accumulation of knowledge and wealth. While it is essential to recognize the positive potential of digital technologies, as emphasized by Pope Francis and the dicastery for communications, we must also be aware of the associated risks. (Presence, 2023).

Companies that provide services in the digital world must also take legal and moral responsibility for how their services are used. The potential of digital technologies is enormous, but the possible negative impacts, including misuse in cases of human trafficking, planning terrorist activities, spreading hatred and extremism, manipulation of information, and abuse of children, are also significant. (Sullivan, 2008a). Thus, understanding the impact of digital technology includes its influence on how we learn, communicate, and build relationships.

Presenting Church Values in a Digital World

The church continues encouraging its followers to bring these values to the digital realm just as the apostles brought the Good News of Jesus to the Greek and Roman world. To make this happen, a deep understanding of the digital world is necessary so that technology can be a tool that serves the church's mission well.

(Sullivan, 2008a). In the face of the ever-evolving digital age, the importance of conveying church values in the online environment is increasing. Below are ways such values can be powerfully presented in the digital world.

First, the Church can use digital platforms such as podcasts, websites, or YouTube channels to disseminate sermons, teachings, and discussions that reflect the essence of church values. (Rusu, 2021). Furthermore, building active and engaged communities on social media platforms such as Facebook Groups or Discord is also an effective way for church members to interact, share experiences, and support each other. (Lee & Lee, 2010). In addition, the Church can also encourage online social activities, such as fundraising or volunteer programs, to assist those in need

Furthermore, online learning platforms can be adapted to expand knowledge about religious values, Bible study, and other religious education. (Sundar, 2020). Finally, spreading optimistic, motivational, and hopeful messages through social media is also an effective method that demonstrates the relevance of church values in everyday life. (Kristan, 2018). These references can serve as an initial guide to exploring practical ways of bringing church values into the digital world with relevance and accuracy. Through the implementation of these values in the digital realm, it is hoped that stronger relationships will be created among the congregation as well as significant positive impacts in daily life, in line with the teachings and goals of the church.

Like how the apostles brought the Good News of Jesus to the Greek and Roman world, the church continues encouraging its followers to bring religious values into the digital realm. To achieve this goal, a deep understanding of the digital world is essential for technology to effectively serve the church's mission (Sullivan, 2008). In the face of the development of the digital age, the importance of conveying church values online is increasing.

One approach is to use digital platforms such as podcasts, websites, or YouTube channels to disseminate sermons, teachings, and discussions that reflect the essence of church values (Rusu, 2021). In addition, building active communities on social media platforms such as Facebook Groups or Discord is effective for interaction and support among church members (Lee & Lee, 2010). Churches can also encourage online social activities such as fundraising or volunteer programs (Sundar, 2020).

Online learning platforms can expand knowledge of religious values, Bible studies, and religious education (Sundar, 2020). Spreading optimistic and

motivational messages through social media also effectively demonstrates the relevance of church values in everyday life (Kristan, 2018).

Catholic theology's scholarly and philosophical references can be a crucial guide to exploring practical ways of bringing church values into the digital world. Through the implementation of these values online, it is hoped to create stronger relationships among the faithful and make a positive impact in daily life by the teachings and goals of the church.

An approach that uses Catholic theology as a theoretical foundation in bringing the church's values to the digital world is essential. Catholic theology offers a rich guide of teachings and values that can be applied digitally. Concepts such as love, mercy, justice, and peace can be explained deeply based on Catholic teachings and traditions. By integrating these concepts into digital content, the church can positively contribute to shaping people's views and behavior in the digital world. In addition, applying values such as patience, forgiveness, and humility in online interactions can also reflect the church's moral teachings.

However, in presenting church values in the digital world, churches must also pay attention to the challenges and risks that may arise, such as the spread of incorrect information or unethical online behavior. Therefore, it is essential to maintain integrity and truth in conveying religious values in the digital world.

In addition, collaboration with technology experts and social media experts can also help churches develop effective strategies for presenting church values online. Thus, churches can remain relevant in spreading religious teachings and morality in this digital era. In presenting church values in the digital world, churches must also protect users' privacy and data security. Maintaining user trust and privacy in every online interaction is very important. Policies and measures prioritizing personal data protection are needed to ensure that the church can remain well-received in the digital world. In addition, efforts to create open and compassionate discussion spaces on online platforms are also a priority. This will enable church members and the general public to feel heard, supported, and engaged in dialog reinforcing the church's values.

By integrating all these aspects, the church can become more inclusive and relevant in the digital world, building a solid community and positively impacting the church's teachings and purpose. Collaboration with technology experts and policies that uphold digital ethics will also help the church to remain a source of inspiration and goodness in this digital world. We must integrate alternative education to bring church values to the digital world.

In addition, understanding how church values can be adapted to the digital context also requires a deeper understanding of the ethical use of technology. This could involve the study of digital ethics and how religious principles can be implemented in online interactions, privacy protection, and responsibility in the use of social media.

Catholic theological and philosophical resources, such as the Pope's encyclicals and the writings of the Church Fathers, can be a solid foundation for understanding how the church's values can be effectively presented in the digital world. As such, a solid theoretical foundation will enable the church to more effectively utilize digital technology and disseminate religious teachings in a relevant and impactful way.

Facing Digital Challenges Wisely

In the face of digital challenges, the Catholic Church teaches us to be wise in using social media and the digital world in general. The Church recognizes that technological advances have opened up new possibilities in human interaction, primarily through social media. However, we must also be aware of the dangers and pitfalls in this digital environment.

First, we must recognize that the digital world is part of our lives. The church says we should appreciate the digital world and recognize that it is part of our life journey. However, human life and journey continue to be built through complementary physical and digital experiences. (Presence, 2023). Then, we must be careful not to get caught up in self-defeating behaviors, such as being too self-focused, isolated, and enjoying something useless. The church reminds us that many young people are extraordinarily creative and intelligent despite the risks in today's internet world. (Vivit et al., n.d.). Therefore, we should strive to remain authentic and honest when interacting in the digital world and not get caught up in creating public profiles that are not genuine to ourselves. (Benedict & XVI, 2008).

In addition, the Church teaches that technology does not determine whether communication is authentic. What determines the human heart and our ability to use the means wisely? Social media and other digital communications can facilitate relationships and promote good in society, but can also lead to polarization and division. Therefore, we must use the internet wisely to build a society that is healthy and open to sharing. (Benedict & XVI, 2008). In the face of digital challenges, the Church teaches us to hold on to the values of truth, honesty, and authentic living. We should strive to avoid the pitfalls and dangers in the

digital world while remaining open to meeting others in person and building healthy and meaningful relationships. (Sundar, 2020). In facing digital challenges, we can also draw inspiration from examples of young Catholics who use social media wisely. One of them is Venerable Carlo Acutis, a young Catholic who is creative and talented in the digital world. (Aristana et al., 2021)

The Church encourages us to be wise in facing the challenges of the digital world. We need to recognize the importance of the digital world in our lives but remain vigilant of the potential risks and pitfalls. We are expected to remain honest and faithful in our interactions in the digital space and to use technology wisely to form a healthy society that is open to collaboration.

In the digital age, the Catholic Church encourages its faithful to adopt a prudent attitude in utilizing social media and the digital environment. The Church recognizes the positive potential of technological development, mainly through social media, but also highlights the dangers that come with it. Recognizing the presence of the digital world is considered an integral part of the human journey, complementing the physical experience. The church warns against people getting caught up in self-defeating behaviors, such as being too self-focused and experiencing isolation.(Koenig, 2020) Through teachings such as those expressed by Pope Benedict XVI, the Church emphasizes that the authenticity of digital communication depends on the human heart and the ability to use technology wisely. In addition, the Church encourages building healthy and open relationships in the digital world, using the internet wisely to facilitate sharing in society. (Darmawan et al., 2020).

The Church has conducted a thorough study of moral and ethical principles related to the use of technology to improve people's understanding of the social, psychological and moral impact of technology, as well as maintain relevant Christian values in the digital age (Zega, 2021). The Church's focus encourages individuals to be cautious in digital interactions and centers on a deep understanding of the fundamental aspects of morality in technology. (Bawazir et al., 2018). In addition, the Church emphasizes the role of technology as a tool to advance a healthy, inclusive, and cooperative society. The Church actively encourages communities to understand technology's social, psychological, and moral impacts while promoting innovative behavior in digital interactions. (Irwansyah, 2020)

The Church sees that the values of truth, integrity, and authentic presence must remain at the forefront amidst the challenges of the digital world. By

prioritizing moral and ethical principles, its members can utilize technology to spread goodness and strengthen Christian values daily.

Discussion

The Role of Church Advocacy in Public Policy

The Catholic Church is important in upholding public policies emphasizing moral and ethical principles. (U. S. C. of (C. Bishops, 2019) The Church also encourages its people to always consider moral aspects in all decisions related to public policy, including in the selection of leaders responsible for realizing political goals that strive for common welfare. (U. S. C. of (C. Bishops, 2019). In addition, the Church also encourages Catholics to ask ambitious leaders how they can play a role in achieving these critical goals. In the digital age, the Church knows the importance of technology for expected progress. (U. S. C. of (C. Bishops, 2019)

Pope Francis has welcomed the dialog between technologists and representatives of the Church in raising awareness of the social and cultural impact of digital technologies, especially artificial intelligence. He believes that dialogue between believers and non-believers on essential issues such as ethics, science, art, and the search for the meaning of life is the path to peace and holistic human development. The Church recognizes the urgency of an open and concrete discussion on using these technologies. (Dicastero per la Comunicazione, 2023)

By providing ethical guidance on using artificial intelligence (AI), the Church recognizes that these technological advances significantly impact various aspects of human life. The Church seeks to train individuals who are not only experts in science and technology but also knowledgeable in politics and humanitarianism to provide appropriate direction to Catholics and Church leaders in utilizing this technology. (Hume, 1996)

The Church also supports public policies rooted in moral and ethical principles; the Catholic Church also recognizes the importance of utilizing technology for the common good and provides ethical guidance in using artificial intelligence. This aligns with the Church's commitment to include the poor in society and promote community peace and dialog.

The Church's Role in Responding to Social Inequality

The Catholic Church has a vital role in responding to social inequality. Since the Industrial Revolution in the 19th century, the Church has responded forcefully to the injustices between the rich and the poor. The Church draws inspiration from the teachings of the Bible and the writings of saints and wise church scholars in church history. The church speaks on behalf of the poor and persecuted, especially exploited workers. The church opposes economic determinism in the form of Marxism on the left and the doctrine of unlimited free markets on the right. The church continues to update its teachings in line with the times, yet poverty and sharp inequalities still exist. The church is responsible for fighting for social justice and solidarity with the poor and persecuted. (Hume, 1996),(Sundar, 2020), (Ratzinger, 2021).

In addition, the Church also teaches the importance of solidarity. Solidarity means that we are all responsible for one another. The Church teaches that love should be the basis of our social actions. The Church invites its people to care for their brothers and sisters who need help, are oppressed, experience unemployment, and are deprived of their fundamental rights. The church reminds us that there are still many people who are hungry, uneducated, homeless, and deprived of human rights protection. The Church invites us not to be indifferent to the ecological crisis, the threat of war, and human rights violations. The Church invites us to act and fight for justice and common welfare.(Compend. Soc. Doctrine. Church, 2004).

The Church also has a role in promoting democracy and human rights. The Church teaches that democracy and human rights are essential for the common good. However, the Church also recognizes that democracy and human rights cannot be taken for granted. Both require struggle and protection. The Church invites its people to engage in political activities and fight for social justice.

The Church teaches that correcting injustice can also be a form of evangelization. The Church invites us to see that there is no clear boundary between politics and religion and that the Church's social teachings are essential in shaping a just social order. (Hume, 1996). In carrying out its role, the Church also teaches about the importance of love and respect for the dignity of every individual. The Church invites its people to assist those in need in a way that respects their freedom and dignity.

The Church invites us to establish loving personal relationships with those in need and to form the consciences of those who assist. The Church also teaches

about the natural law that shapes its social teaching. The Church's social teaching is based on principles that respect human nature and justice (Journey et al., 1979) (Compend. Soc. Doctr. Church, 2004). In conclusion, the Catholic Church is vital in responding to social inequality. The Church teaches about solidarity, love, and respect for the dignity of every individual. The Church fights for social justice and invites its people to engage in political activities for the common good. The Church's social teachings are constantly updated by the times, but the challenges of poverty and inequality still exist. The Church invites us to act and fight for justice, prosperity, and peace for all humanity.

Utilizing Technology for Shared Prosperity

In today's interconnected global era, technological advancements have significant potential and impact on the common well-being of humanity. Digital space provides a platform for free expression and exchange of ideas, bringing new challenges related to ethical concerns and protecting vulnerable individuals, especially children (James et al., 2017).

As we move forward in this era of rapid technological growth, we must address the ethical implications that arise. The wide availability of the internet has spawned heinous illegal activities, including the abuse of children and the violation of their dignity. Combating these crimes requires a concerted effort involving governments, law enforcement agencies, and the technology industry. It is essential to recognize that technological innovation should serve humanity and protect our typical home (Brey, 2018).

In addition, the unequal distribution of technology resources is an obstacle to shared prosperity. Access to high-performance computing and cloud capacity is still limited to a few technology companies and research institutions in high-income countries. Building an inclusive digital future requires equity in knowledge creation. Promoting collaboration and ensuring that local data serves local needs is essential. Only then can we truly create a digital domain that emphasizes the principles of inclusivity, diversity, and equal opportunity. (Gupta et al., 2020).

As Mahatma Gandhi once suggested, our actions should be judged by their impact on the weakest and most vulnerable individuals. This is a sobering reminder for those involved in shaping the technological landscape. The intersection of technology and the everyday reasonable demands an ethic inspired by a vision of the common good, freedom, responsibility, and brotherhood.

Ethical Coaching on the Use of AI

Artificial intelligence is a constantly evolving field with great potential to affect humanity significantly. The Rome Call for AI Ethics emphasizes the need for shared responsibility between international organizations, governments, institutions, and technology companies in ensuring that artificial intelligence serves humanity as a whole and respects the dignity of every individual. It underscores the importance of developing artificial intelligence that benefits everyone without excluding anyone or threatening areas of freedom due to algorithmic conditions. (Floridi et al., 2018).

The ethical imperative to prioritize the value of human life in the development and use of artificial intelligence is crucial. Anthropocentrism, which places humans at the apex of an organism's life, promotes human survival while limiting harmful interventions. However, anthropocentrism has challenges, especially in the context of ethical equivalence models that aim for a more inclusive and technocratic value architecture. (Al-Abdulkarim et al., 2015). In the healthcare context, integrating artificial intelligence (AI), also known as Healthcare 4.0, can strengthen prevention processes, increase the sustainability of health systems, and improve care services for chronic and elderly patients. Solidarity in the care process is crucial for the sustainability and effectiveness of the healthcare system (Sinibaldi et al., 2020).

The Role of the Church in the Prevention of Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery

The Catholic Church has a vital role to play in the prevention of human trafficking and modern slavery. Pope Francis has strongly condemned these new forms of slavery, such as human trafficking, forced labor, prostitution, and organ trafficking. He calls it an open wound in the body of contemporary society and a grave evil that everyone must fight. The church teaches that everyone has equal dignity and the right to decent work. Therefore, the church is firmly opposed to child exploitation, forced labor, human trafficking, restrictions on freedom of assembly, and discrimination based on gender, race, origin, religion, or political opinion. (Ley 25.632, 2002) .

The Church also teaches that all people, especially those suffering from the effects of modern slavery, are our brothers and sisters in greatest need. Pope Francis cites Jesus' teaching in the Gospel of Matthew that those who care for the least among their brothers are blessed by the Father and will see God. (Boeker,

2021). Therefore, the church invites everyone to care and love those who suffer from modern slavery. The church also plays a role in coordinating various pastoral initiatives against human trafficking. Pope Francis emphasized the importance of coordinating pastoral initiatives undertaken by local churches, religious congregations, and Catholic organizations in the countries of origin, transit, and destination of victims of human trafficking. (Hall, 2019). This shows that the church not only plays a role in providing direct assistance to victims but also in organizing joint efforts to prevent and stop human trafficking.

Since ancient times, the church has played a crucial role in the fight against slavery. At that time, the church continued to fight for the abolition of the practice of slavery, with its initial focus being to reduce the most despicable aspects of slavery through an emphasis on equality and freedom for all of God's children. (Compend. Soc. Doctrine. Church, 2004). Later, the church sought to improve the conditions of slaves and eventually achieved the abolition of slavery itself. Although there have been periods of moral decline in church history, the church has always strived to restore its strength and authentic flavor by teaching high morality and resisting evil.

In carrying out its preventive role against human trafficking and modern slavery, the church calls on the entire society to raise awareness of these crimes. The church also encourages support for legislative changes at national and international levels aimed at punishing perpetrators and improving recovery facilities and social integration for victims. (Universal Responsibility in the Modern World | The 14th Dalai Lama, 2023) . This effort also includes the church's call to society to jointly engage in this initiative at local and international levels to ensure effective coordination in the fight against human trafficking.

Overall, the church plays a vital role in efforts to prevent human trafficking and modern slavery. The church strongly condemns this new type of slavery and calls on all individuals to care and love those who suffer. In addition, the church is involved in coordinating pastoral initiatives and supporting legal changes needed to protect victims and punish perpetrators. The church's history also reflects its essential role in fighting slavery since ancient times. Therefore, the church continues to be committed to preventing and stopping human trafficking and modern slavery.

TThe Role of the Church in Handling Victims of Violence and Trafficking

The role of the church is vital in handling victims of violence and trafficking. The church is called to protect suffering individuals and communities and provide sanctuary for hurting people. The church is also committed to resolutely fighting these crimes and actively working to ensure justice for victims. First the church must recognize and confront the evil that is happening in the current situation. The church must not hide the fact that there are church members involved in violence and trafficking. (Sullivan, 2008a). The church must face this fact and be prepared to take the necessary steps to ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice and victims receive proper justice, and protect its victims, so that those who do evil have no place to do evil. (S. O. F. Bishops, n.d.). In addition, the church should be a refuge for victims and a haven for the wounded and persecuted. The church should show compassion and care to the victims in helping them through healing and reconciliation. (Sullivan, 2008b). The church should also work with the authorities to protect victims and prevent future violence and trafficking from occurring. (Sullivan, 2008a).

The church also has a vital role in providing moral education based on respect for human dignity, individual life, and freedom. The Church should work with society to raise awareness of these crimes and provide ways to prevent them. (Zavadilová, 2022). At the same time, the church also supports efforts to combat poverty and social inequality, which are often contributing factors to violence and human trafficking. The church must acknowledge and learn from past failures in dealing with this topic. The church must strive to improve and ensure these crimes are not repeated. It must commit itself to being a witness to truth and justice and a refuge for the wounded and persecuted. (Zavadilová, 2022)..

Overall, the role of the church is crucial in handling victims of violence and human trafficking. Churches are expected to respond decisively to these crimes, protect victims, collaborate with authorities, engage in education and prevention efforts, and learn from past experiences. In all these aspects, the church should prioritize the values of justice, mercy, and protection of human dignity. (Buckley, 2004).

Conclusion

The church has a crucial role to play in preventing and stopping human trafficking and modern slavery. Throughout its history, the church has been

actively involved in fighting slavery and continues to be committed to ensuring protection for victims and punishing perpetrators. Churches also play an essential role in providing moral education and raising awareness of this crime, as well as working with authorities to prevent future violence and trafficking.

In addition, churches are also expected to respond decisively to these crimes, protect victims, collaborate with authorities, engage in education and prevention efforts, and learn from past experiences. In all these aspects, the church must prioritize the values of justice, mercy, and protection of human dignity. Thus, the role of the church in handling victims of violence and human trafficking is vital and cannot be ignored.

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