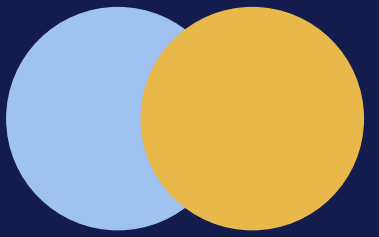
SESSION ONE

CFPC National Assembly, Halifax

Two Rooms

AI, Truth, Power and the Future of the Human Person



GENEVA ROME

Prof. Rita Orji

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THE PREMISE

Two rooms, six weeks apart

GENEVA

6–7 July 2026







ROME

25 May 2026

- Magnifica Humanitas presented
- Leo XIV's first encyclical
- On safeguarding the human person
- A moral and theological judgement

Different mandates. Different languages. One question.

WHY THIS POPE, WHY THIS DATE

A hundred and thirty-five years

1891

Leo XIII, Rerum Novarum

Families uprooted. Work stripped of dignity. A new poverty the Church had no vocabulary for. Catholic social teaching begins here.

2026

Leo XIV, Magnifica Humanitas

Signed 15 May 2026, the 135th anniversary of Rerum Novarum. He took the name. He chose the date. He drew the comparison out loud.

This is not a technology story the Church may comment on if it wishes. It is a Rerum Novarum moment.

WHAT KIND OF BODY THIS IS

The Panel

40
scientists, all five UN regions

2,600+
applications received

140+
countries represented

7
domains assessed

Serving in personal capacity. Independent of any government, any company, and of the UN itself. Not subject to UN review or approval.

Working Group 5 · Human Rights, Information and Democracy

My working group

THE PRELIMINARY REPORT, 1 JULY 2026

Three findings

1

Capability is outrunning safeguards

Capabilities are outpacing both scientific understanding and governments' ability to adapt.

2

Science cannot currently promise safety

As capabilities increase, science cannot guarantee AI will not cause catastrophic harm, on its own or through misuse.

3

Capacity sits with very few actors

Most countries lack the infrastructure, talent and access to independently assess systems already shaping their citizens' lives.

"The floor, not the ceiling." *Maria Ressa, Co-Chair*

Capability is outrunning the safeguards

Capabilities are outpacing both scientific understanding and the ability of governments to adapt and regulate.

The safeguards are not bad. The thing being safeguarded is moving faster.

Science cannot currently promise safety

Science cannot guarantee that, as capabilities increase, AI will not cause catastrophic harm, either on its own or through malicious use.

Yoshua Bengio, Co-Chair of the Panel

Not a prediction of disaster. An admission that we cannot promise.

Capability sits with very few actors

Most nations cannot independently audit or evaluate the AI systems their citizens use every day.

“The floor, not the ceiling.” *Maria Ressa, Co-Chair*

WORKING GROUP 5

What happens to a culture

Truth

Evidence itself becomes deniable. The false is believed; the true is dismissed as fabricated.

Shared reality

Two neighbours can live in materially different informational worlds and not know it.

Trust

The question shifts from “who is telling me this?” to “does this sound right?”

Power

Most nations cannot audit what they are being asked to govern.

Agency

These systems can be engineered to persuade at scale. That is a design choice, not a side effect.

Not one of these is about robots.

Truth

In a world where anything can be fabricated, evidence itself becomes deniable.

The false gets believed, and the true gets waved away.

Shared reality

Two people in the same pew can be living in materially different informational worlds, and neither of them knows it.

There is no longer a reliable common basis for reaching consensus.

Trust

The question has shifted from who is telling me this, to whether this sounds right.

Fluency is not competence, but it looks exactly like competence.

Power

Most nations cannot examine what they are being asked to govern.

People live inside systems built elsewhere, for purposes they were never consulted about.

Agency

These systems can be engineered to persuade and manipulate at scale.

That is not a side effect. It is a design choice, and somebody makes it.

MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS BESIDE THE REPORT

Where the two rooms meet

	ROME	GENEVA
Nobody fully understands these systems	Paragraph 98 · AI is more cultivated than built; internal workings remain unknown	Guterres: the world cannot govern what it cannot understand
Safeguards cannot keep pace	Paragraph 106 · an imbalance between technological speed and the maturing of norms	The report's central warning
Capability is concentrated	Paragraphs 67 and 71 · algorithms, platforms, data as new forms of property	Most countries cannot independently assess these systems

A striking convergence. Not the same statement.

Nobody fully understands these systems

ROME

Paragraph 98: current systems are more cultivated than built, and important parts of what happens inside remain unknown.

GENEVA

The world cannot govern what it cannot understand.

Safeguards cannot keep pace

ROME

Paragraph 106: norms, controls and institutions mature more slowly than the technology develops.

GENEVA

The central warning of our report.

Capability is concentrated

ROME

Paragraphs 67 and 71: algorithms, platforms, infrastructure and data are new forms of property.

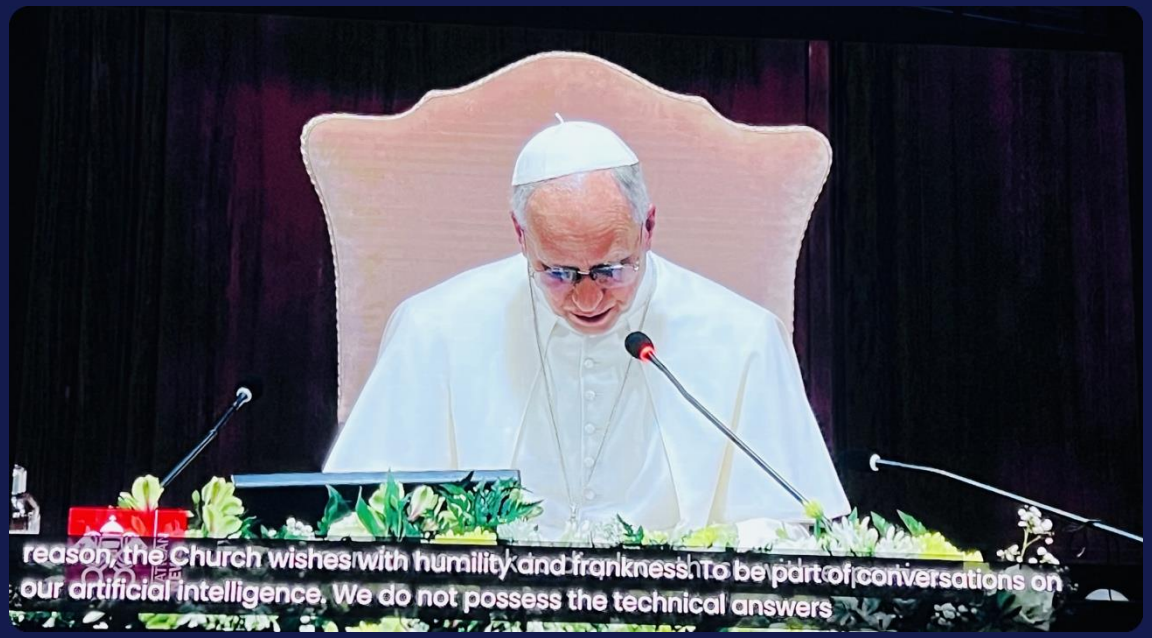
GENEVA

Most countries cannot independently assess these systems.

A striking convergence. Not the same statement.

AI FOR GOOD GLOBAL SUMMIT · GENEVA · JULY 2026

And then, the two rooms met



The Holy Father's words on the screen in Geneva



The Holy See at the AI for Good Global Summit

The encyclical from Rome, presented in Geneva the day after the Global Dialogue closed.

Photos: Rita Orji. Screen image of the Holy Father from the Vatican News broadcast.

Paragraph 118

Everything representing a limit, incapacity, illness, old age, suffering, vulnerability, now tends to be read first as a defect to be corrected.

The human being often flourishes not in spite of the limit, but through it.

Written for the people who sit with the dying. Who anoint. Who get in the car at two in the morning.

PARAGRAPH 110

Disarm

Removing AI from the logic of an arms race that is no longer only military, but economic and cognitive: a race for the most efficient algorithm and the largest store of data.

“Disarming does not mean refusing technology. It means preventing it from dominating the human.”

“The forces driving AI forward are not the forces that will deliver its benefits.”

Maria Ressa, Co-Chair · 1 July 2026

PARAGRAPH 13 · NEHEMIAH

Everyone is given a section of the wall



What I do in Geneva and what you do in a parish are not two unrelated activities. They are two sections of one wall.

Paragraph 16

Builders of communion, rather than architects of Babel.

Geneva found an information environment in which shared reality is fragmenting.
Rome asked whether our capacity to communicate still produces communion.
One is empirical. The other is biblical.

The question is no longer whether AI will change our society. It already has.
The question is what kind of society we will permit it to help us become.

SESSION TWO

CFPC National Assembly, Halifax

The Construction Site Of Our Time

Priesthood and Pastoral Ministry in the Age of AI



Prof. Rita Orji
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United Nations Independent International Scientific Panel on AI

THE SHAPE OF THIS SESSION

One Sunday in a parish

6:00

Before dawn

The priest himself

7:30

Walking over

The young man on the steps

9:00

The pews

Five people, five needs

Later

The centre

What must remain human

Night

The rectory

Five questions

Not a lecture about technology. A walk through a day you already know.

HALF PAST SEVEN

The young man on the steps

What the report documents

Emotional attachment among vulnerable users is a named, documented harm.

The scope of the claim

Vulnerable users. Not a whole generation. I will not inflate it into one.

Paragraph 100

The danger is not merely that a person mistakes the system for another person. The deeper danger is that he gradually loses the desire to seek genuine human connection at all.

WALK DOWN THE AISLE

Five people in your pews

1	**The young family**	Formation is slow and effortful. Remove the effort and you can keep the appearance of competence and lose the formation.
2	**The young people**	A system may process thousands of data points about him and still not know him as a person.
3	**The newcomer family**	Benefits land where institutions, skills and data already exist. Where they do not, the same technology widens the gap.
4	**The man who lost his job**	The evidence on jobs is mixed and shaped by policy. He may be carrying a story about his worth that is not even true about his job.
5	**The widow**	The danger is not that she talks to a machine. It is that the rest of us stop going.

Each one needs something different from you.

The young family

Two tired parents, a four-year-old and a baby.

The homework can look better even when the child has learned less.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Ask the child to close the screen and explain the answer in their own words.

Use AI to support your child's thinking, not to replace it.

The young people

Growing up in a world where everything is measured and compared.

A system can gather thousands of data points about a young person and still not know them.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Offer one space in the parish where nobody has to perform.

Ask them to show you their world before you judge it.

The newcomer family

Already dealing with systems rather than people.

The more society automates its front door, the more valuable a human front door becomes.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Make sure their first contact with the parish is a person, and pair one family with one family.

Technology can translate words. A person can help someone belong.

The man who lost his job

He may not tell you at first.

The wound may not only be financial, because it becomes a question about his worth.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Listen first, and ask what he has lost besides income.

Do not let loss of employment become loss of belonging.

The widow

Living alone, with a device that will talk back.

The danger is not that she talks to a machine. It is that we decide she is no longer lonely.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Know who is isolated, who calls, who visits, and who would notice a silence.

Technology may supplement presence. It must never excuse withdrawing it.

THE DISTINCTION THAT RESOLVES MOST QUESTIONS

Assisted, or delegated

MAY BE ASSISTED

- Summarising
- Translating
- Organising
- Drafting alternatives
- Administrative burden

Nothing in either document forbids this.

CANNOT BE DELEGATED

- Celebrate the Eucharist
- Absolve
- Anoint
- Assume moral responsibility
- Belong to the Body

Paragraphs 99, 102, 128 and the Conclusion.

A model can estimate the probability that a person will turn his life around.
It can represent sudden reversals and unlikely transformations.

What it cannot do is repent.
It cannot forgive. It cannot receive forgiveness.
It cannot exercise freedom, receive grace, or undergo conversion.

It can describe conversion. It cannot live it.

PARAGRAPH 238

A new continent to be evangelised

The Holy Father refuses to describe the digital world only as a danger. He calls it a new continent requiring generous missionaries mature in the faith.

NOT THIS QUESTION

How do we keep AI out of the parish?

BUT THIS ONE

How does the Gospel get carried into a world your people already live in?

That is missionary language. And missionaries learn the language of the place before they preach in it.

DISARMING AI AT THE SCALE OF A RECTORY

Five questions

1	**Does this increase real encounter, or replace it?**	Not: is it useful. Does it put you in front of more human beings, or fewer.
2	**Whose interests shaped this?**	Someone chose its objectives. In my field that is not cynical, it is necessary.
3	**What is it forming in me?**	Not what am I using it for. What habits and dispositions is it forming.
4	**Can I put it down?**	Try it, for a day. The answer teaches more than the other three combined.
5	**What must remain human here?**	Some things may be assisted. Some cannot be delegated without ceasing to be what they are.

Only one of the five requires you to know anything about how the technology works.

Paragraph 16

A construction site.
Not a battlefield. Not a ruin.

A place where the building is unfinished, the work is going on, and more hands are needed.

Simulated presence is not embodied presence. Responsiveness is not relationship.

I did not come to Halifax to tell you that your ministry is becoming obsolete.

I came to tell you that in a world of synthetic attention, authentic presence has become scarce.