

DAY 2: MONDAY 6TH MAY



First Reading: Acts 16:11-16.

**Responsorial Psalm: Psalms
149, 1b -2, 3-4, 5-6a and 9b.**

Alleluia: John 16: 26b, 27a.

Gospel 15: 26-16:4

In today's reading, we read about how Paul sailed from Troas to Samothrace, Neapolis, Philippi, Macedonia, and beyond, encountering women like Lydia. It was a challenging and tedious journey. knowing how slow a ship moves; it was not a speed boat. But that was the available means possible then for the work of evangelisation. Today, media tools, especially internet-powered ones, are used to transport the message of the kingdom, replacing ships for evangelisation. The Catholic Church views social media as a gift that has to be used for evangelization and the betterment of society, and it has acknowledged social media as an important instrument for advancing the Christian message. The mission of the Church is not limited to those within the Church alone, but also to those outside the fold (cf. Jn 10:16), with digital media, social media, and Artificial intelligence (AI) as the new Areopagus (public places where the Church encounters or interacts with the outside world).

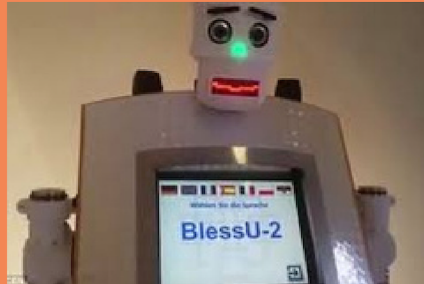
Today, AI is essential as most internet users are eager to read the Bible.

THREE INSTANCES OF AI BEING USED IN RELIGIOUS CONTEXTS INCLUDE:

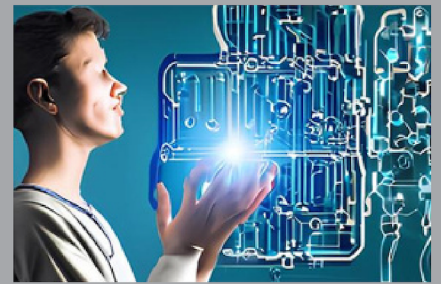


Virtual reality churches:

Religious groups like the VR Church and Islam VR offer virtual services on AltspaceVR, allowing people worldwide to join and simulate visiting mosques, promoting inclusivity and accessibility.



Robot priests: Artificial intelligence is transforming religions, with the German Catholic Church using BlessU-2 for blessings in five languages, and the Japanese Buddhist temple using Mindar for teaching the Heart Sutra.



AI-generated sermons and prayers:

Religious groups like Aleph Beta and The Prayer Engine are using generative AI to create personalized prayers and sermons, utilizing tools like Bard and The Prayer Engine for various occasions.

If the message of Christ is to be heard and the mission is to be fruitful, AI is indispensable today. There are millions of people out there on the internet who, like Lydia, are hungry for the word of God. Truly, Catholics may benefit from AI in several ways, including the teaching of the faith and the provision of individualised and engaging learning programmes on catechism, pre-marriage courses, retreats, sermon aids, and theology courses. Additionally, it can assist pastoral workers in their responsibilities, making it easier for priests and other church officials to carry out their duties. When using AI in religion, there are risks to be aware of, including the potential to undermine or violate religious norms and values, challenge or contradict fundamental Catholic teachings, and cast doubt on religious authority and authenticity.





In the words of the Holy Father, Pope Francis for 2024 World Communications Day, he emphasises the value of a spiritual outlook and inner discernment for navigating the modern technological age. The virtue that allows us to combine our decisions, feelings, wants, dreams, and

personality is the heart, which is perceived as the location of freedom, decision-making, integrity, oneness, and experience with God. His message equally highlights how important it is to connect with others, communicate in a really human way, and make deliberate decisions by using both our intellect and our hearts. Even while AI contradicts our belief that humans are created in God's image and likeness, it also highlights our special ability to love, be creative, and have moral responsibility. Depending on how it is developed and used, it may either strengthen or weaken human skills. But humans are not simply the inventors of AI; they are also the moral beings in charge of its use and advancement.

To sum up, AI has the power to revolutionise religion by offering individualised and engaging educational materials, assisting pastoral counsellors, and advancing moral and standards. But, in order to make sure the mission is successful and the gospel is heard, it is crucial to exercise caution around any threats and maintain vigilance when using AI.

