

Letter to the Editor

In Defense of Catholic AI: A Reply to “Beware of Catholic AI”

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Abstract: This Letter to the Editor responds to Dr. Lily M. Abadal’s essay “[Beware of Catholic AI](#),” published in *Public Discourse* (November 11, 2025). While affirming the shared goal of forming souls in truth, the author argues that Catholic AI projects such as Magisterium AI are necessary evangelical tools in an increasingly digital and secular world. Abandoning them, he contends, would forfeit a vital mission field to relativist technologies.

Keywords: Catholic Artificial Intelligence; Digital Evangelization; Faith and Technology

The author and I share the same ultimate goal: to bring souls to the truth of Jesus Christ and His Holy Church. However, the article’s conclusion—that we should be hesitant to deploy tools like Magisterium AI in catechesis—is a position that, if adopted, would be a tragic abdication of our duty in the digital age.

The concerns raised about “hallucinations” and AI fallibility are understandable, but they miss the larger, more dangerous reality.

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1. The Secular Alternative is Far Worse

The author’s critique exists in a vacuum. It ignores the fact that millions of people, including young Catholics, are *already* using LLMs to ask questions about faith, morality, and God.

The choice is **not** between “Magisterium AI” and “sitting down with a priest.” For most people online, the choice is between “Magisterium AI” and “a secular, relativist, and often anti-Catholic LLM.”

If we abandon the Catholic AI project, we are not protecting users. We are willingly ceding the most significant new mission field to secular models that will actively “exasperate the problem.” When a seeking soul asks a secular AI about the morality of abortion, the nature of marriage, or the divinity of Christ, what answer do we think they will receive?

We built Magisterium AI precisely because the secular alternatives are an active danger to faith. To abandon our own tools is to surrender.

2. The Uncomfortable Truth About Human Fallibility

The article correctly identifies that LLMs can “hallucinate.” But it holds the AI to a standard of infallibility that **no human catechist** could ever meet.

The author says to “Actually go to the Catechism for that.” This is a wonderful ideal, but the entire purpose of catechesis is *interpreting* and *explaining* the Catechism.

Are we to believe that every human is “wholly accurate”? That no layperson, deacon, or priest has ever given a poor explanation of the Trinity? Humans “hallucinate” constantly—we call it error, opinion, or poorly formed conscience.

The reality is that Magisterium AI, trained directly on the Magisterium and canonical sources, demonstrates a capability and fidelity to Church teaching that **far exceeds** the average layperson and, unfortunately, even many clergy. We are mitigating the risk of error, not introducing it into a system that was otherwise perfect.

3. The Urgency of the Mission

We are facing a crisis of scale. There are billions of people with deep, existential questions and a severe, global shortage of priests and trained catechists.

The article’s ideal of a personal, face-to-face encounter for every question is beautiful, but it is not the reality for the vast majority of the world.

If we abandon the Catholic AI project, where will these people go?

They will go to Google, which serves them secular relativism. They will go to secular LLMs, which tell them truth is subjective. Or they will go to *nothing*, and their questions will curdle into doubt and despair.

We *need* the help of faithful Catholic AIs. We need tireless, 24/7 digital missionaries that can meet people where they are, in their own language, at the exact moment their heart is open to a question.

4. We Are an ‘Off-Ramp,’ Not a ‘Roundabout’

Finally, the article misunderstands the core philosophy of Magisterium AI.

It worries that AI “erod[es] virtuous habits.” This is a valid concern for secular LLMs, which are **optimized to keep people chatting**. They are designed to be a replacement for human community.

5. Magisterium AI is built to do the exact opposite.

We are not optimized for “engagement.” We are optimized as an “**off-ramp**.” Our entire purpose is to answer a question with truth and then immediately point the user *away* from the screen and *toward* real, tangible community. We are built to off-ramp people to their local parish, to the Sacraments, to finding a spiritual director, and to reading the Catechism itself.

We are not trying to be the encounter. We are the digital signpost pointing the way to the **true** encounter with Christ in His Church.

To turn our back on this technology is not caution; it is a failure of evangelical courage. We are called to be fishers of men, and the sea is now digital. We must be willing to cast our nets there.

References

Abadal, L. M. (2025, November 11). *Beware of Catholic AI*. *Public Discourse*. <https://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2025/11/99435/>