Organized Intelligence Conference 2026

Multifaith Leadership Forum on Artificial Intelligence

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Utah State Capitol Building

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The first day of the OI26 Multifaith Leadership Forum brought together faith leaders, scholars, policymakers, technologists, and civil society representatives to address one of the defining questions of the modern era, focusing on how humanity should respond to the rapid development of artificial intelligence. G20 Interfaith Forum was an organizational supporter of the event. The forum was designed not merely as an academic discussion, but as a collaborative effort to identify shared priorities, strengthen the capacity of faith communities to engage with AI, and lay a foundation for ongoing interfaith cooperation.

Participants focused on several central questions throughout the day. They explored what moral principles different faith traditions hold in common, what communities need to understand about AI, how faith leaders and policymakers can communicate more effectively about technology, and how religious communities can engage constructively in shaping AI's future. A recurring theme was that AI should not be discussed solely as a technical innovation. Rather, it represents a moral, social, and spiritual challenge that requires wisdom from multiple traditions and perspectives. The hope was that the conversations of the day would ultimately contribute to public discussions, policy development, and long-term collaboration among faith communities.

A Faith-Based Framework for Understanding AI

One of the central presentations proposed a theological framework for thinking about AI through the symbolism of sacred architecture and religious tradition. The speaker argued that modern discussions often focus on what AI can do while neglecting the deeper question of what AI ought to do and what kind of future humanity should build through technology.

The presentation emphasized that AI is not simply a collection of tools. It is part of a vast social and technological ecosystem involving natural resources, labor, data, institutions, and economic incentives. Because AI affects how people learn, work, form relationships, and understand themselves, its moral implications extend far beyond technical performance.

Six symbolic concepts were introduced to guide reflection on AI:

1. **The Sacred Gaze**

The sacred gaze emphasizes that human beings possess inherent dignity and divine purpose. From this perspective, people are not merely collections of data points or economic units. Human life exists within a larger framework of meaning, responsibility, and relationship with God. AI should therefore be evaluated according to whether it respects human dignity and supports authentic human flourishing. Technologies must be judged not only by efficiency but also by their impact on moral development, relationships, and stewardship of creation.

2. **The Cornerstone**

The cornerstone symbolizes the centrality of human worth and sacred identity. Human value does not arise from productivity, intelligence, or usefulness. Religious traditions teach that people have intrinsic worth independent of their economic contributions. Technology can improve human life, but it cannot replace the spiritual experiences, moral growth, relationships, and transformative processes that define human existence. AI should remain a servant of humanity rather than becoming a substitute for the meaningful aspects of life.

3. **The Keystone**

The keystone represents sources of moral discernment, including scripture, revelation, tradition, and community wisdom. Religious teachings do not provide a detailed manual for AI policy, but they do offer principles that can guide ethical reasoning. Participants stressed the importance of humility and ongoing learning, recognizing that AI's consequences are often unpredictable and that faith communities must continually reassess their understanding as technology evolves.

4. **The Compass**

The compass symbolizes the moral principles that should direct AI governance. Among these principles are stewardship, agency, relationality, embodiment, identity, and wisdom. These values remind society that human flourishing depends upon meaningful relationships, personal responsibility, physical presence, and opportunities for growth. AI should support rather than undermine these realities.

5. **The Square**

The square represents practical structures and responsibilities. Moral principles must ultimately be translated into rules, policies, and institutional practices. Participants emphasized the need for human oversight, accountability, transparency, privacy protections, and limits on AI systems. They argued that AI should never be treated as a source of spiritual authority or allowed to replace human moral responsibility.

6. **Clasped Hands**

Finally, clasped hands symbolize collective responsibility. No single religious tradition, government, company, or institution can build an ethical AI future alone. Cooperation among different faiths, policy communities, and civil society organizations is essential. Shared commitments to human dignity, justice, family, community, and care for the vulnerable provide a foundation for collaborative action.

Human Flourishing as a Shared Goal

Throughout the day, participants repeatedly returned to the concept of human flourishing. Although individuals disagreed about specific policies and risks, there was broad consensus that technology should ultimately serve human well-being.

Particular attention was given to conversations with younger people. Participants described gatherings with youth and young adults who expressed a significantly different relationship with AI than older generations. While younger participants acknowledged many of the risks associated with AI, they tended to view the technology more positively and saw ways it could enhance human flourishing by increasing access to information, improving healthcare, and creating opportunities for creativity and connection.

At the same time, younger participants voiced concerns about authenticity, creativity, and reality itself. They worried about the loss of genuine artistic expression, confusion between real and artificial content, and the possibility that AI-generated materials could undermine beauty and originality. Despite differences in perspective, both younger and older generations identified human flourishing as the ultimate goal. The debate centered less on whether flourishing matters and more on how technology affects it.

Concerns About Technology, Power, and Human Relationships

A major theme of discussion involved the relationship between AI development and economic incentives. Several participants argued that the companies leading AI development may prioritize profit, efficiency, and expansion over human flourishing. They expressed concern that many AI systems are designed to replace or weaken fundamental human relationships.

Examples included the potential replacement of teacher-student relationships, doctor-patient relationships, parent-child relationships, and faith leader-congregant relationships. Some participants described this trend as "disintermediation," the removal of human intermediaries from interactions traditionally grounded in trust and personal connection.

Others noted that many leaders within the technology industry appear to embrace a philosophical vision that differs significantly from traditional religious understandings of humanity. Concepts associated with transhumanism, extreme technological enhancement, or the pursuit of a post-human future were viewed with concern. Several

speakers warned that these visions often reject limitations, vulnerability, dependence, and mortality, whereas many faith traditions see these as important aspects of human growth and spiritual development.

At the same time, some participants urged caution against portraying all technology leaders negatively. They argued that many developers genuinely wish to improve human life and that constructive dialogue between faith leaders and technology leaders remains necessary.

The Generational Challenge

Much discussion centered on children, youth, and future generations. Participants expressed concern about the effects of digital technologies on developing minds and relationships. Many worried that children are increasingly growing up immersed in virtual environments that may affect their ability to form healthy social connections, engage in critical thinking, and participate meaningfully in communities.

Several speakers emphasized that AI is already becoming embedded within educational systems, often without extensive consultation with parents. While students may benefit from access to powerful tools, concerns were raised about overreliance on technology, declining attention spans, and the erosion of foundational skills such as writing, reasoning, and reflection.

At the same time, participants recognized that younger generations often view AI as a normal part of life. Therefore, the challenge is not simply to reject technology but to help young people use it wisely while preserving the qualities that contribute to human flourishing.

Faith Communities as a Response

A key question throughout the day was how faith communities should respond to these developments. Participants argued that religious communities possess resources uniquely suited to addressing many of AI's challenges.

Faith traditions can offer moral guidance, embodied practices, community belonging, and opportunities for reflection that technology cannot replicate. Religious rituals, worship services, service opportunities, and interpersonal relationships provide forms of connection that resist isolation and technological substitution.

Several participants stressed that faith communities must become more attentive to the real concerns and questions of their members. AI systems often reveal needs that people may hesitate to express directly to clergy. Questions such as how to pray, how to find purpose, and how to strengthen faith are increasingly being directed toward AI assistants. This reality suggests both a challenge and an opportunity for religious communities to create more open spaces for difficult conversations.

The discussion concluded with the idea that AI's greatest threat may not be technological intelligence itself, but the weakening of the human bonds that sustain families, communities, and spiritual life. Consequently, the most effective response may be strengthening precisely those relationships that AI cannot truly replace.

Conclusion

The first day of the OI26 Multifaith Leadership Forum highlighted broad agreement that discussions about artificial intelligence must move beyond technical questions and address deeper moral, spiritual, and social concerns. Participants consistently emphasized human dignity, agency, community, and flourishing as the proper standards for evaluating AI.

While opinions differed regarding the severity of risks and the motivations of technology developers, there was strong consensus that faith communities have an essential role to play. By providing moral frameworks, fostering authentic relationships, encouraging wisdom and discernment, and promoting collaboration across traditions, religious communities can help shape a future in which technology serves humanity rather than humanity serving technology.

The day concluded with a call for continued dialogue, greater public engagement, and renewed commitment to strengthening the human relationships that remain at the heart of a flourishing society.