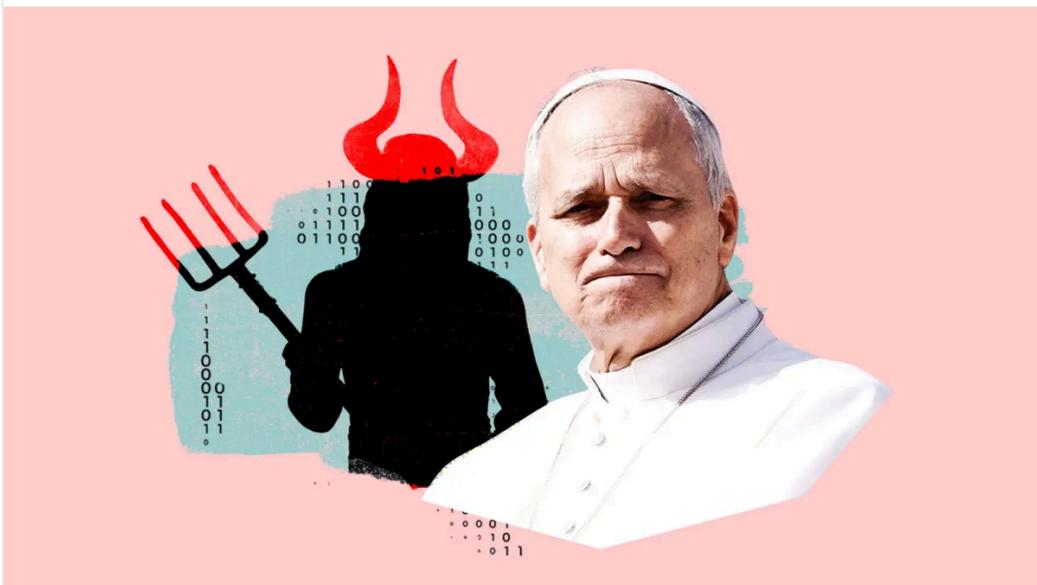# Devil worshippers are using AI, exorcists are warned

NEW

Priests, imams and rabbis will attend an exorcism course in Rome amid fears that paedophiles are using AI to create images of children involved in satanic rites

The Pope has warned that AI could rewrite human history

Tom Kington, Rome
Tuesday March 03 2026, 7.10pm GMT, The Times

⏹ Share   🔖 Save

E xorcists claim they get accustomed to being vomited on, sworn at and having nails spat at them by people possessed by the devil. But

experts lining up to teach them new tricks at an exorcism course in Rome say they now face a new threat: AI-fuelled satanism.

"Artificial intelligence is a great power — a force for both good and evil — and can therefore be used for devil worshipping," said Father Luis Ramirez Almanza, a Mexican priest who runs the annual training course for exorcists.

Speakers who are booked to address the audience at the May event include Father Fortunato Di Noto, a Sicilian priest who fights satanists who combine their devil-worshipping with paedophilia.

"We believe these groups are using AI to generate images of children involved in satanic rites," he said. "Using children appeals to them because it's a form of power being exercised over the innocent."

Priests at a previous exorcism training course
ALESSIA PIERDOMENICO/REUTERS

David Murgia, who runs Catholic Risk and Insurances Services, a research group which tracks cults, said: "Police tell us satanists are using AI to hide their content online and communicate with each other."

Father Ramirez said another speaker, Beatrice Ugolini, an academic, will discuss how occult groups in Italy — thought to total 263 — are using AI to generate the symbols they use in their rites.

Ramirez was speaking at a press conference on Tuesday to announce the event, the Course on the Ministry of Exorcism and Prayer of Deliverance, which draws up to 170 participants to the Ateneo Pontificio Regina Apostolorum, a Vatican-affiliated university.

• [Don't use AI to write homilies, Pope Leo tells priests](#)

This year the group will include Catholic exorcists as well as rabbis, imams and evangelical preachers interested in fighting the devil.

Ramirez was joined on Tuesday by a woman who spoke about her possession by the devil which made her speak in Arabic, a language she had never learnt. Exorcists say the possessed more often acquire the ability to speak Latin, Hebrew or Aramaic, as well as gaining physical strength and revulsion at the sight of the cross.

Artificial intelligence has long been considered by some as the devil itself, including Elon Musk, who likened it in 2014 to a demon being summoned with no plans to control it.

A priest takes notes during a satanism and exorcism lesson at the Regina Apostolorum pontifical university

Asked on Tuesday if it was Satan, ChatGPT, an AI programme, responded: "No — I'm not the devil. I'm just an AI created by OpenAI to answer questions and have conversations.

"I'm here to help, not to worry you," it added.

Some Silicon Valley moguls have seen AI as more of an all-knowing, god-like entity rather than the devil. Sam Altman, the chief executive of OpenAI, has described it as "magic intelligence in the sky".

Pope Leo has warned that AI risks robbing people of their privacy and their jobs. Just after his election last year the American pontiff explained he had taken the papal name Leo after the 19th-century Pope Leo XIII, who fought for workers' rights.

The Pope has said he would now renew the battle as AI threatened to strip workers of their "dignity". Leo has warned of "the extremely rich people who are investing in artificial intelligence, totally ignoring the value of human beings and of humanity".

• [Pope Leo challenges the gods of Silicon Valley over rise of AI](#)

That could lead, he has warned, to AI "rewriting human history — including the history of the Church — often without us really realising it."

At a seminar on AI, held at the Vatican this week, a leading bishop cited [Anthropic](#), the US AI firm, which denied the American government the chance to use its algorithms for mass surveillance and autonomous weapons.

Bishop Paul Tighe, a senior official at the Vatican's Dicastery for Culture and Education, said he wanted to avoid resorting to "apocalyptic rhetoric", but warned that AI could usher in an era of "biological weapons, propaganda, disinformation and systems which are beyond human control".