DIGITAL EUCHARISTIC SYMPOSIUM
The Church and Technology
Facing our Digital Reality

PRESENTED BY THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF DIGITAL LIFE
WITH BISHOP FRANK CAGGIANO

St. Francis of Assisi Parish
Weston, Connecticut

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 5TH

9:00-9:15AM **Introduction**
9:15-10:30AM **Session One:** Digital Technology & the Church, presented by Mark Stahlman (Center for the Study of Digital Life)
10:30-10:40AM Break
10:40-11:10AM **Session Two:** The Eucharist and the Digital, presented by Tim O'Malley (University of Notre Dame)
11:10-11:30AM Discussion
11:30-12:30PM Lunch
12:30-1:30PM **Session Three:** Bringing the Upper Room to the Digital World, presented by Peter Berkman (Center for the Study of Digital Life)
1:30-2:30PM **Exercise**: Tetrads & Exegesis

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 6TH

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2:15-3:00PM **Exercise:** An Inventory of Effects

WHO WE ARE

The **Center for the Study of Digital Life** (CSDL) is a strategic research group dedicated to understanding the effects of digital technologies on the Three Spheres that now dominate global affairs -- East, West and Digital. The CSDL is privately funded and does not take an advocacy role. It supports scholarship across the full-range of disciplines, including the social sciences, biology/ecology and systems engineering. It provides research studies to the public and holds conferences while also advising corporations, NGOs and governments. Its scope is international, with a particular interest in China and other rapidly industrializing economies. The CSDL is a unique contributor to the strategic understanding of our digital future.

The **McGrath Institute for Church Life** partners with Catholic dioceses, parishes, and schools to address pastoral challenges with theological depth and rigor. By connecting the Catholic intellectual life to the life of the Church, we form faithful Catholic leaders for service to the Church and the world.

BACKGROUND

The industrialized city of Bridgeport is the poorest in Fairfield county. What is going to happen to all of these people when the robots -- or "artificial humans" -- come?

Under digital conditions, we now face a point in history where humanity could be completely overwhelmed by our own inventions. The Catholic Church teaches that humanity is created in the image and likeness of God, and that we have been charged with the responsibility to take care of the rest of God's creation, as stewards. What is urgently highlighted today is the need to take responsibility for the various technologies we have made in our own image. These technologies change who we are. Turning a blind eye is no longer an option.

We have already left behind a world dominated by Television, and are decades deep into a brand new Digital environment with completely opposed ground-rules and attributes.

THE TELEVISION WORLD	THE DIGITAL WORLD
Inner trip, endless fantasy	Perfect memory, total and exact
Secondary Orality	Secondary Literacy
Hero's journey	Fratelli tutti
Neopagan tribes, corporate idols	Cathedral schools, medieval guilds
Drugs	Robots
Advertisements / Memes	Programs / Intentions
Reach	Security

QUESTIONS

How have these media environments already played a role in shaping who we are, how we relate to the world and to each other? What can be done to ensure that human beings, born in the digital environment, develop integrally in a way consonant with their inherent human dignity?

QUOTATIONS

We must take into account man's new reality so we can continue to transmit the truth about man and the Gospel message to people today, using this new language, this new way of thinking and of seeing the world, life and history. This new culture is not simply an acquisition of technology, but real cultural change. Like the Apostles in the very beginning, we too are at the beginning of a "new history"; like them, we are custodians of the Lord's missionary command, missionaries of "the Digital Culture".

Msgr. Lucio Adrian Ruiz
Secretary for the Dicastery for Communication
New Evangelization, New Technologies: Evangelization in the Digital Age

SAINT POPE PAUL VI

This question of 'how to evangelize' is permanently relevant, because the methods of evangelizing vary according to the different circumstances of time, place and culture, and because they thereby present a certain challenge to our capacity for discovery and adaptation. On us particularly… rests the responsibility for reshaping with boldness and wisdom, but in complete fidelity to the content of evangelization, the means that are most suitable and effective for communicating the Gospel message to the men and women of our times.

Evangelii Nuntiandi, 40

POPE FRANCIS

ON THE "TECHNOCRATIC PARADIGM"
A certain way of understanding human life and activity has gone awry, to the serious detriment of the world around us. Should we not pause and consider this? At this stage, I propose that we focus on the dominant technocratic paradigm and the place of human beings and of human action in the world.

Laudato si', 101

ON THE CHALLENGE
In big cities, we need other "maps", other paradigms, which can help us reposition our ways of thinking and our attitudes. Brothers and sisters, Christendom no longer exists!   Today we are no longer the only ones who create culture, nor are we in the forefront or those most listened to. We need a change in our pastoral mindset, which does not mean moving towards a relativistic pastoral care. We are no longer living in a Christian world, because faith – especially in Europe, but also in a large part of the West – is no

longer an evident presupposition of social life; indeed, faith is often rejected, derided, marginalized and ridiculed.

ON "VIRTUAL MASS"

A familiarity without community, a familiarity without the Bread, a familiarity without the Church, without the people, without the sacraments is dangerous. It can become a 'gnostic' familiarity, a familiarity for me alone, detached from the people of God. The apostles' familiarity with the Lord was always communal, always at the table, a sign of the community. It was always with the sacrament, with Bread. I say this because someone has made me reflect on the danger of this moment that we are experiencing, this pandemic that has made us all communicate even religiously through the media, mediatically, even this Mass, we are all communicating, but not together, spiritually together. The congregation is small. There is a bigger congregation with whom we are together, but not together. Even the Sacrament of the Eucharist: today you have it, but the people who are connected with us only have a spiritual communion. And this is not the Church: this is the Church in a difficult situation, which the Lord allows, but the ideal of the Church is always with the people and with the sacraments. All the time.

ON TECHNOLOGY

We have to accept that technological products are not neutral, for they create a framework which ends up conditioning lifestyles and shaping social possibilities along the lines dictated by the interests of certain powerful groups. Decisions which may seem purely instrumental are in reality decisions about the kind of society we want to build.

Science and technology are not neutral; from the beginning to the end of a process, various intentions and possibilities are in play and can take on distinct shapes. Nobody is suggesting a return to the Stone Age, but we do need to slow down and look at reality in a different way, to appropriate the positive and sustainable progress which has been made, but also to recover the values and the great goals swept away by our unrestrained delusions of grandeur.

ON GLOBALIZATION

Life, for all its confrontations, is the art of encounter". I have frequently called for the growth of a culture of encounter capable of transcending our differences and divisions. This means working to create a many-faceted polyhedron whose different sides form a variegated unity, in which "the whole is greater than the part". The image of a polyhedron can represent a society where differences coexist, complementing, enriching and reciprocally illuminating one another, even amid disagreements and reservations. Each of us can learn something from others. No one is useless and no one is expendable. This also means finding ways to include those on the peripheries of life. For they have another way of looking at things; they see aspects of reality that are invisible to the centres of power where weighty decisions are made.

ON SUBSIDIARITY

Everyone needs to have the possibility of assuming their own responsibility in the healing processes of the society of which they are a part. When a project is launched that directly or indirectly touches certain social groups, these groups cannot be left out from participating — for example: "What do you do?" — "I go to work with the poor," — "Beautiful. And what do you do?" — "I teach the poor, I tell the poor what they have to do". No, this doesn't work. The first step is to allow the poor to tell you how they live, what they need: Let everyone speak! And this is how the principle of subsidiarity works. We cannot leave the people out of participation; their wisdom, the wisdom of the humbler groups cannot be set aside.

General Audience, Catechesis: Healing the World - Subsidiarity, 23 September 2020

MARSHALL MCLUHAN

ON THE "REAR VIEW MIRROR"

Because of the invisibility of any environment during the period of its innovation, man is only consciously aware of the environment that has preceeded it; in other words, an environment becomes fully visible only when it has been superseded by a new environment; thus we are always one step behind in our view of the world. The natural tendency is to use a new technology for the old job. Every executive or leader is expendable the moment he turns from announcing the new challenge to performing the old job. By the time he has learned the old job, the new one has fallen into other hands.

Playboy Interview, 1969

ON DISCARNATE HUMANITY

When man is "on the phone" or "on the air," moving electrically at the speed of light, he has no physical body. He is translated into information, or an image. When man lives in an electric environment, his nature is transformed and his private identity is merged with the corporate whole. He becomes "Mass Man." Mass man is a phenomenon of electric speed, not of physical quantity. Mass man was first noticed as a phenomenon in the age of radio, but he had come into existence, unnoticed, with the electric telegraph. At the speed of light, minus his physical body, man is discarnate, and discarnate man is not related to the "Natural Law." His sudden emancipation from Natural law, in a sense, makes him "greater than the angels." He can be everywhere at once, whereas they are subject to limitations of space and can only be in one space at a time. This anarchic elevation of nuclear man enables individuals to be dispensed, as it were, from the moral law, a fact which was strikingly manifested in the radio age by Stalin and Hitler (and in the TV age by the universality of abortion), and helps to explain the sudden indifference of the TV generation to private morality. Politically, the same discarnate factor of electric speed seems to dissolve all constitutional and legalistic bonds, both in the private and public sectors.

Rise and Fall of Nature, 1977

ROMANO GUARDINI

ON POWER & RESPONSIBILITY

Contemporary man has not been trained to use power well nor has he - even in the loosest sense - an awareness of the problem itself. He seems alert to the crisis of power today only in its limited external dangers, such as clearly arose during the recent War and were then publicly discussed. These observations imply that the risk is growing day by day that man will not use his power as he should. The present lack of an ethic - one both true and effective - for controlling power's use tends to breed further illusion. The use of power is accepted simply as another natural process; its only norms are taken from alleged necessity, from either utility or security. Power is never considered in terms of the responsibility for choice which is inherent in freedom.

The End of the Modern World, 1946

ON THE TASK AT HAND

One would like to fantasize a little - utopias have already become reality so often that this would be entirely legitimate: I would like to imagine a spiritual council of the people in which the best beyond all politics considered these questions with one another. Human existence has advanced so far, man has been given so much into his own hands, the possibilities of accomplishment as well as destruction have become so inconceivable that it is time for a new virtue: a spiritual art of government in which man, through so a lot of experience became serious, out of bias in the individual areas of thinking and life. So that would happen in these best. A living consciousness of humanity would enable them to see the whole of our existence, and with a truly sovereign objectivity they would consider the "res hominis".

The Machines and Humanity, 1959

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF DIGITAL LIFE

ON AN ADEQUATE ANTHROPOLOGY

Knowledge of Faculty Psychology, a topic which describes Western understanding of the psyche from 4th-century BC Aristotle's *Peri Psyche* through more than two millennia of commentary and application, was quickly replaced with "experimental" psychology in the 19th-century, a shift that persists through to today. In this process, many thought that the human "soul" was not suitable for empirical examination, so it was abandoned for this psychological research. As a result, psychology lost its philosophical/theological foundations and instead often turned into an effort to engineer "better" humans. New "images" of what it meant to be human were proposed and the goal of engineering a new society often became the motivation for psychological inquiry. Our view is that this shift has had mostly negative results, neither making humanity more sane nor more happy, while resulting in a society that increasingly seems consumed by chaos. Accordingly, we believe that a retrieval of Faculty Psychology is urgently needed for our current digital age.

BIOGRAPHIES

Bishop Frank Joseph Caggiano is an American prelate of the Roman Catholic Church who has been serving as the Bishop of Bridgeport since his appointment in 2013. Prior to his appointment to the Bridgeport diocese, Caggiano was an Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Brooklyn.

Mark Stahlman is President of the Center for the Study of Digital Life (CSDL). A retired Wall Street technology strategist, investment banker and serial entrepreneur, he launched his first software company – Computron Technologies, Inc. – in the early 1970s after leaving his study of Theology (University of Chicago) and Molecular Genetics (University of Wisconsin, Madison) to join the still nascent digital revolution. Stahlman started his digital career as a computer architect and programmer, designing computer and networking systems for Wang Labs, Citibank and the Diplomat Arabic word processor for Computron. He began his Wall Street career as a principal at Sanford Bernstein, and is credited with being the first to cover Sun Microsystems (SUNW) in 1986. He continued at Alex Brown and Sons, where he was a partner and he formed the New Media banking practice which managed the initial public offering for America Online (AOL) in 1992. Stahlman's work in computer architecture led him to coin the term "network computing," which Sun Microsystems adopted for their corporate motto "The Network is the Computer."

Peter Berkman performs in the digital music group Anamanaguchi. Their music has won the praise of The New Yorker, VICE, NPR, FADER, and more. Peter studied Music Technology at New York University. His current research is focused on medieval grammar, metaphysics, and the encyclopedic curriculum of the trivium. He is a scholar of media professor Marshall McLuhan and Catholic theologian Romano Guardini. He is an editor and contributor for the CSDL's *Dianoetikon* journal. In summer 2021 at the University of Notre Dame, he wrote and performed a play titled *The Church & Technology*, a drama which put Marshall McLuhan in dialogue with Romano Guardini.

Timothy P. O'Malley is the director of education at the McGrath Institute for Church Life and academic director of the Notre Dame Center for Liturgy. He holds a concurrent appointment in the Department of Theology at the University of Notre Dame. He received his undergraduate degree at the University of Notre Dame majoring in theology and philosophy. His M.T.S. is in liturgical studies also from the University of Notre Dame. And he completed a doctorate at Boston College in theology and education, focusing on an Augustinian approach to liturgical formation. He researches and teaches at Notre Dame in the areas of liturgical-sacramental theology, marriage and family, catechesis, and spirituality. He is the author of a number of books, most recently *Off the Hook: God, Love, Dating, and Marriage in a Hookup World* (Ave Maria Press, 2018) and *Lift Up Your Hearts: Liturgical Formation in the RCIA* (Liturgical Press, 2019). He is currently working on a multi-volume work on the history of liturgical formation beginning with St. Augustine. Dr. O'Malley is married and has two children. He is originally from Knoxville, TN

Brett Robinson, PhD, is the Director of communications & Catholic media studies for the McGrath Institute for Church Life at the University of Notre Dame. He has a Bachelor's in Business Administration from the University of Notre Dame and a PhD in Mass Communication from the University of Georgia. He has held various communications roles at for-profit and nonprofit institutions, including Textron and the RAND Corporation. Robinson taught media studies courses at Saint Vincent College before returning to Notre Dame where he also teaches in the Department of Theology and the Mendoza College of Business. He is the author of Appletopia: Media Technology and the Religious Imagination of Steve Jobs and his essays and commentary on technology and culture have been featured on CNN, Aleteia, Wired Magazine and the LA Times.

Kailash Duraiswami is a technology entrepreneur most recently in the Artificial Intelligence space as the founder of Pantenix. Pantenix was acquired by financial services software provider Orion Advisor Solution in Spring 2021. Kailash converted to the Catholic faith after discovering the Truth through online resources.

Shrikant Rangnekar is an autodidact based in New York. He is the founder of 52 Living Ideas conducting deep discussions on psychology, philosophy and personal growth in New York since 2017, and a partner at an immigration law publisher. He started his career at Microsoft working on user interfaces after getting a Masters in Computer science from NCSU and a Bachelors from IIT, Bombay. He runs 52 Living Ideas, a series of meetups on various topics. He is currently holding meetups on the Gospel of St. John, the Dao De Jing, and the Bhagvad Gita.