



Applications of AI and experiential marketing in Catholic ephemeral spaces

Aplicaciones de la IA y el marketing experiencial en
espacios efímeros católicos

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Abstract

This research examines how AI can enhance the immersive, sensory, and ephemeral experiences that the Catholic Church seeks to create at its international events. A qualitative content analysis was conducted on the stages of recent events, including World Youth Day 2023, the papal visit to Corsica in 2024, the funeral of Pope Francis, the enthronement of Pope Leo XIV, and the Jubilee of Youth. To this end, various

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generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot, Dall-E and MidJourney were consulted to propose improvements for the stage design, technology, audience participation, and sustainability of these settings. The results show that AI can enhance visual impact, interactivity, and emotional connection, redefining the spectator's role from a passive observer to an active participant in the experience.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, catholic church, digital communication, ephemeral spaces, experiential marketing.

Resumen

La presente investigación se centra en cómo la IA puede reconfigurar las experiencias inmersivas, sensoriales y efímeras que la Iglesia Católica busca generar en sus eventos internacionales. Se llevó a cabo un análisis de contenido cualitativo de los escenarios de eventos recientes: la Jornada Mundial de la Juventud 2023, la visita papal a Córcega 2024, el funeral del Papa Francisco y la entronización del Papa León XIV y el Jubileo de los Jóvenes. Para ello, se consultaron diversas herramientas de IA generativa como ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot, Dall-E o MidJourney para proponer mejoras en la escenografía, la tecnología, la participación del público y la sostenibilidad de dichos escenarios. Los resultados muestran que la IA permite potenciar el impacto visual, la interactividad y la conexión emocional, redefiniendo el papel del espectador, que pasa de ser pasivo a convertirse en un participante activo de la experiencia.

Palabras clave: comunicación digital, espacios efímeros, iglesia católica, inteligencia artificial, marketing experiencial.

1. INTRODUCTION

Contemporary society is immersed in a profound transformation driven by the development of new technologies, among which Artificial Intelligence (AI) plays a highly significant role (Micaletto-Belda et al., 2023; Sáenz-Torralba & Vázquez-González, 2025). This tool has established itself as a strategic agent in redefining communication dynamics, both at institutional and commercial levels, and particularly in the field of experiential marketing (Labib, 2024). AI not only allows for the automation of processes and the analysis of large volumes of data but is also reconfiguring the ways in which organizations design and execute immersive, sensory, and ephemeral experiences (Sundar et al., 2017).

In the realm of creative disciplines, the use of AI in the design of ephemeral architecture has opened new possibilities for aesthetic and emotional experimentation. These spaces—whether physical, digital, or hybrid—are designed to impact the viewer at a specific time and place, with the goal of generating a meaningful experience, a lasting

memory, or even a perception of transcendence (Herrera-Ortiz et al., 2024). In this way, ephemeral environments become strategic platforms for symbolic communication, where narrative, technology, and emotions converge to serve brand and institutional objectives.

Even in liturgical contexts, historically linked to traditional forms of communication and ritual, transformations derived from the use of emerging technologies and trends are beginning to manifest. The Church, as a millennial institution, has incorporated digital tools in the preparation of major religious events, evolving its communication strategy to adapt to new audiences and formats (Sáenz-Torralba & Polo-Serrano, 2025). The creation of a digital replica of St. Peter's Basilica using scanning and 3D modeling techniques, aimed at offering an innovative spiritual experience, is a clear example of AI's potential to expand the symbolic and experiential reach of the religious message (Doménech, 2024). At the same time, it has included the figure of influencers, an "innovative and strategic tool for organizations, capable of strengthening reputation and connecting emotionally with audiences" (Duque-Cardona, 2025, p. 34).

In order to analyze how AI can contribute to the creation and dissemination of such environments in the Catholic Church by modifying public perception and behavior, this study defines its Main Objective (MO) as: analyzing the use of Artificial Intelligence in creating ephemeral spaces with a liturgical aesthetic, treating them as both a marketing communication tool and a method for generating immersive experiences.

In turn, the following Secondary Objectives are proposed:

- SO1: To understand how settings, their visual codes, and their scripts (both within and outside the liturgical context) adapt to audiences and build meaningful and memorable experiences.
- SO2: To identify the creative and communicative potential of generative AI tools (image, audio, narrative) in the conceptualization and design of these ephemeral spaces.

Furthermore, the Main Hypothesis (MH) is stated as follows:

- MH: The use of AI in ephemeral spaces within Catholic Church environments allows for the generation of highly effective immersive experiences for strategic communication.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Experiential and Emotional Marketing

The term experiential marketing emerged as a response to a 'hyper-digitalized' environment saturated with advertising stimuli (Azor-Oliver, 2025), in which consumers no longer respond solely to the functional attributes of products (García-Medina & Salinas-Vázquez, 2025), but instead seek meaningful, memorable, and emotionally resonant experiences (Hosany & Witham, 2009). Schmitt (2000) defined this

perspective as the creation of sensory, affective, cognitive, physical, and social experiences that connect the consumer with the brand holistically. Based on this logic, marketing shifts its focus from the product to the experience itself, that is, the construction of a narrative in which the consumer becomes the protagonist (Jiménez-Marín et al., 2019; Munuera-Alemán & Rodríguez-Escudero, 2012).

Experiential marketing is closely related to neuromarketing, as it analyzes the mental and emotional processes that influence decision-making (Manzano et al., 2012). Thus, companies must design experiences with symbolic, aesthetic, and emotional value, relying on technologies such as Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), and AI (Muñoz-Osores & Orrego-Morales, 2015; Olguín-Martínez et al., 2024). These tools allow for the personalization and real-time adaptation of experiences, generating greater engagement (Sundar et al., 2017).

At the same time, experiential marketing has been strengthened by the rise of 'transformative experiences,' which cause lasting emotional or cognitive changes in audiences (Lawler, 2022). In this sense, the design of events or environments that appeal to symbolic, aesthetic, or spiritual values has gained relevance, especially in a post-pandemic context where consumers increasingly value the intangible: well-being, meaning, and connection with others. These experiences, mediated by emerging technologies like AI, acquire an almost ritualistic character, updating ancient mechanisms of collective communion and individual catharsis through new sensory devices (Quezada-Tello, 2024).

2.2. Ephemeral Spaces as a Communication Tool

Ephemeral spaces constitute a communication strategy of growing relevance in experiential marketing, allowing for the creation of temporary environments that facilitate direct, emotional, and sensory interaction between brands and their audiences (Salinas-Vázquez et al., 2025). Their transitory nature does not limit their impact; rather, it enhances the urgency of the experience and the memorability of the message transmitted (Pugliese, 2013). Nor does it limit their expressive capacity; on the contrary, it fosters the symbolic intensity of the message by generating a unique, unrepeatable, and emotionally resonant experience. In this regard, ephemeral spaces have consolidated as a strategic tool in the fields of educommunication (Silva-Robles & Elías-Zambrano, 2011) and contemporary communication (Vélez Ochoa & Oquendo Valenzuela, 2023).

From a theoretical perspective, ephemeral spaces can be understood as symbolic communication devices that articulate corporate, cultural, or social narratives through the spatialization of values, emotions, and meanings. Their design responds not only to aesthetic or functional criteria but also to strategic objectives of positioning, differentiation, and engagement (Keller & Swaminathan, 2019).

This logic is linked to the *framing* approach proposed by Entman (1993), who argues that communication frames select aspects of reality to make them more salient, promoting a causal interpretation, a moral evaluation, and a recommendation for action. Thus, the consumer moves from a passive receiver to an active protagonist (Liu-Thompkins et al., 2022), strengthening the image transfer between the event and the brand (Getz, 2007). This experiential logic is reinforced by the phenomenological approach developed by Pallasmaa (2012), who maintains that architectural space communicates through sensory activation, generating an emotional experience that transcends the visual and is inscribed in the visitor's bodily memory. Likewise, from Goffman's (1959) sociological perspective, ephemeral spaces can be interpreted as performative stages where organizations represent their identity before the public.

2.3. Artificial Intelligence in the Creation of Immersive Experiences

In the development of immersive experiences, the integration of AI as a transformative element in ephemeral spaces represents a significant advancement in both technological and expressive terms. Design methods driven by these new tools allow for the adaptation of settings according to user behavior, real-time content generation, the optimization of experiences based on perceived reactions, and the analysis of audience emotions. Through various techniques, highly effective improvements are achieved, with a level of detail crucial for generating a visual impact that creates a lasting impression on the viewer. (Dutta, 2024).

AI facilitates dynamic interaction within immersive environments. It fosters communication, redefining the relationship between the audience and the work, and transforming the viewer's role into a more active state (Clancy, 2022). This adaptability ensures a fluid and responsive experience, essential in settings designed for exploration and participation. Communication is one of the primary human tools, enhancing contact between individuals and establishing strong, integrative communicative bonds (Camacho-Escobar, 2017). Furthermore, depending on user involvement, each experience is unique and personalized according to the perceived and received response (Hageback & Hedblom, 2021).

Within this framework of experiences, participants seek a more human touch and personalized service (Roberts, 2005). Through the analysis of consumer behaviors, AI becomes a substantial tool capable of shaping exceptional events (Rivera-Montaño, 2023). From the moment of implementation, it changes the user's experience and perception (Gilardini Ricci, 2022), enhancing the generation of intense emotional responses, a higher level of commitment, and message memorability (Mazza, 2024). Stimulating the consumer's senses is essential to creating an integrative link between the customer and the experience (Dutta, 2024).

Historically, this logic connects with the communication strategy of the Catholic Church, which “seeks to adapt to current digital trends” (Sáenz-Torralba et al., 2025, p. 234) and has traditionally employed sacred architecture, liturgy, and staging to create sensory impact and strengthen the sense of community. Today, AI reinterprets this legacy under contemporary immersive formats (Campbell et al., 2021).

2.4. Staging of Church Events from a Communicative Point of View

The extraordinary events organized by the Catholic Church from the Vatican—such as Jubilees, papal visits, or World Youth Days (WYD)—serve not only a pastoral function but also act as powerful mass communication devices capable of articulating narratives with global reach. In these settings, the liturgical dimension expands beyond traditional ecclesiastical spaces, adopting temporary, mobile, and performative forms that transform entire cities into transitory symbolic landscapes (Sáenz-Torralba, 2025).

The structure and staging of these events reveal a deeply communicative logic. Every element—from the choice of location to the design of the Pope’s route, liturgical furniture, music, or vestments—responds to a narrative construction aimed at reinforcing identity bonds, projecting doctrinal messages, and generating a shared experience of faith. Unlike ordinary celebrations, these events are conceived to be seen, felt, and remembered by millions, both in person and through the media. Thus, the liturgy is transformed into a visual and auditory choreography designed to resonate symbolically in the public sphere (Sánchez-López, 2020). Its exceptional nature generates an intensified experience that combines ritual, strategic communication, and temporary architecture (Casaña-Carabot, 2015).

In this context, the study of these events as ephemeral expressions of liturgy opens an interdisciplinary field of analysis connecting temporary architecture, strategic communication, ritual, and emerging technologies. Understanding their performative dimension allows them to be recognized as acts of meaning transmission, where the theological message is updated through sensory, collective, and temporally defined experiences (Jiménez-Morales & de-San-Eugenio-Vela, 2009).

3. METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for this study (see Table 1) is qualitative, focusing on content analysis to understand the phenomena under study (Bernete, 2013; López-Noguero, 2002). First, a search was conducted regarding the latest editions of events organized by the Catholic Church. Simultaneously, information was sought on upcoming editions and how their stages are planned. Once this information was obtained, various AI tools were consulted to suggest how to design these stages.

Table 1. Research Methodology Phases (Source: Prepared by the authors)

	Technique	Corpus	Objectives
Fase 1	Content Analysis	Search for recent Catholic Church events where ephemeral stages were used.	SO1
Fase 2	AI Application	Creation and improvement of settings using AI tools.	MO, SO2

3.1. Phase 1: Content Analysis

A search was conducted to identify ephemeral settings in recent events—occurring between 2023 and 2025—that stand out for their global, symbolic, and logistical relevance within the context of the Catholic Church and its international projection. For this purpose, communication agencies specializing in Holy See content and other reference sources were consulted, resulting in the following scenarios:

1. Eduardo VII Park and Tejo Park in Lisbon (Portugal), for World Youth Day (WYD) 2023.
2. Place d'Austerlitz in Ajaccio (Corsica, France), for Pope Francis's visit in 2024.
3. St. Peter's Square in Vatican City, for the funeral of Pope Francis and the subsequent inauguration of Pope Leo XIV in 2025.
4. Tor Vergata Stadium in Rome (Italy), for the Youth Jubilee 2025.

The choice of these milestones is based on their status as key moments of mass congregation and high media visibility, allowing for the analysis of scenarios where religious, social, cultural, and security factors converge, offering a comprehensive framework for impact and strategy evaluation. Once these events were identified, a descriptive analysis of the scenography, programming, and media coverage was performed to gain a complete view of their respective developments.

3.2. Phase 2: AI Applications

Once the scenarios were identified, AI tools were selected following the criteria proposed by Padilla (2025), choosing: ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot, DALL-E, and Midjourney. To provide these tools with the necessary information to propose improvements to the stage designs, the "5 Ws of journalism" methodology (Who, What, When, Where, Why) proposed by authors like Salaverría (2019) was used.

Subsequently, the practical application of AI was structured into five phases:

1. Select a generative AI tool as a starting point.
2. Provide it with information about the ongoing research and a definition of the event concept.
3. Request that it recommend a different AI tool to implement improvements to the event.

4. Ask it to create an instruction or prompt to generate a specific result or content for the other AI.
5. Generate images directly with the same tool or, alternatively, use a generative AI specialized in image creation.

This procedure allows for an iterative and complementary analysis, where different AIs cooperate in optimizing stage design, favoring both conceptual coherence and creative exploration.

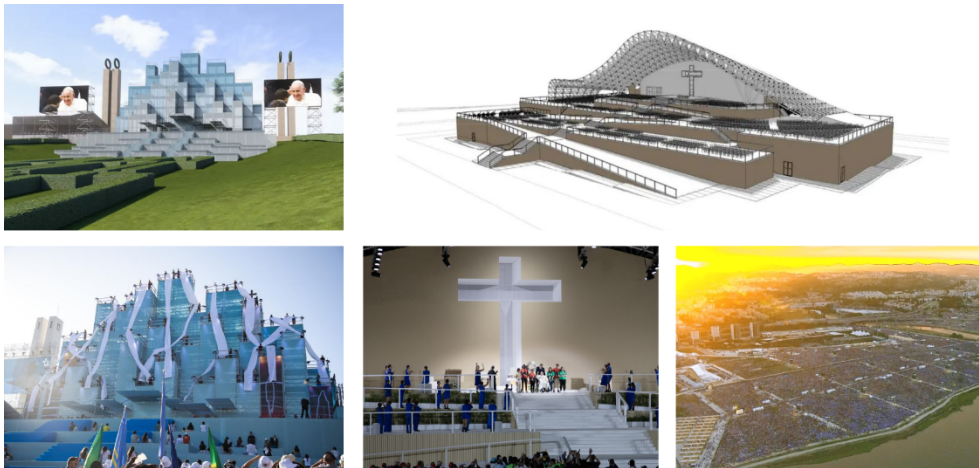
4. RESULTS

4.1. WYD 2023 Scenarios

World Youth Day 2023 in Lisbon, which gathered over 1.5 million young people, had two main meeting points: Colina do Encontro in Eduardo VII Park and Campo da Graça in Tejo Park (WYD, 2023) (Figure 1). The first space was used for the Opening Mass, the Holy Father's arrival, and the Stations of the Cross. The second was the setting for the Prayer Vigil and the Closing Mass.

In the Colina do Encontro setting, the design was adapted for each event: a central altar for the Eucharist, a space for the Pope's arrival with musical and flag performances, and the use of the entire scenography for a visual representation during the Stations of the Cross. In Campo da Graça, an altar was placed in the center for the Vigil and Sending Mass, along with different zones for celebrities and musicians. Additionally, advanced technological elements like drones forming words were incorporated, a spectacular effect that complemented the prayers.

Figure 1. WYD 2023 Scenarios (Source: Educris, 2023; Infovaticana, 2023; Ruiz & González, 2023; Religión Digital, 2023)



Once the information about the event was provided to Gemini, it created a prompt for ChatGPT (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Prompt created by Gemini for ChatGPT (Source: Gemini, 2025)

 **Prompt MJJ 2023 – Lisboa (de Gemini para ChatGPT)**

¿Qué? Diseñar un espacio efímero inspirado en los escenarios de la MJJ 2023 (Colina do Encontro y Campo da Graça) que integre liturgia, espectáculo y oración, respetando la tradición pero aportando un lenguaje escenográfico renovado.

¿Quién? Miles de peregrinos, jóvenes de todo el mundo, el Santo Padre, cardenales y obispos, junto con artistas, músicos y voluntarios.

¿Dónde? Espacios abiertos y monumentales de Lisboa, transformados en lugares de encuentro y celebración: un escenario central con prolongaciones que permitan la cercanía.

¿Cuándo? Durante la misa de apertura, la llegada del Papa, el viacrucis y la vigilia de oración, momentos clave del encuentro mundial.

¿Por qué? Para generar una experiencia espiritual, emocional y comunitaria que combine la fe con el impacto visual y participativo.

 **Claves para la mejora del espacio efímero:**

Escenografía y Puesta en Escena: Escenarios que no sean solo plataformas, sino espacios narrativos con capas de altura, proyecciones y símbolos reconocibles (cruces, caminos, luz).

Participación y Cercanía: Integrar al público en la acción mediante recorridos procesionales, interacción visual y auditiva, y espacios inclusivos alrededor del altar.

Tecnología y Emoción: Uso de drones, mapping y espectáculos de luces que refuercen la oración colectiva (como en la vigilia con drones que formaban palabras).

Sostenibilidad y Accesibilidad: Escenarios modulares, reutilizables y accesibles a personas con movilidad reducida; materiales reciclados; integración con el paisaje sin dañarlo.

ChatGPT proposed the following improvements (Table 2):

Table 2. ChatGPT Response (Source: OpenAI, 2025)

Category	Proposed Improvement	Description
Scenography and Staging	Modular and dynamic stages	Adaptable to each type of event (mass, stations of the cross, concerts, vigil).
	Increased height and visibility	Elevated platforms and mobile screens to focus attention.
	Lighting and artistic atmosphere	Use of mapping, symbolic lights, and fabrics to reinforce the spiritual atmosphere.
Participation and Proximity	Greater proximity to the Pope	Secure walkways, 360° cameras, immersive screens.
	Youth with greater prominence	Active participation in performances, testimonies, readings, and prayers.
Technology and Emotion	Impactful visual elements	Drones, projections, immersive music to generate emotional impact.
	Immersive zones	Spaces before and after the event for interactive faith experiences.
Sustainability and Accessibility	Reusable and ecological materials	Scenography built with sustainable materials.
	Full accessibility	Interpreters, subtitles, ramps, technology adapted for people with disabilities.
Proposed Visual Design	Single-level stage	Rear circular screen, simple design favoring focused attention.

Additionally, ChatGPT proposed a single-level stage (Figure 3), closer to the crowd and with a circular screen with lights at the back. This stage is simpler than those

proposed and allows less room for different scenes; however, the viewer's gaze is centered on a single point, reducing distractions from the surroundings.

Figure 3. Proposal for a WYD stage created by AI (Source: OpenAI, 2025)



4.2. Scenario for the Pope's Visit to Corsica 2024

This event was held on the occasion of Pope Francis's visit to the French island of Corsica in December 2024 (Figure 4). It was the Pontiff's 47th apostolic journey, a trip of less than 12 hours that included three main acts (Cernuzio, 2024). The focus of the analysis was on the Eucharist at Place d'Austerlitz, a large park called 'U Cason,' in memory of Napoleon Bonaparte, a native of the island. The Mass focused on the main stage, although the Pope crossed the square twice in the popemobile.

The original stage for the Mass, as seen in the figure, was located under the pedestal of Napoleon's statue. The scenography included an altar with the word 'A pace' in the Corsican language, broadcast screens, a cross, and carpets with maritime shapes. The ceremony featured traditional Corsican chants and the presence of representatives of local brotherhoods with their banners (Martínez-Bordiú, 2024). The main colors used were pink and blue.

Figure 4. Scenario of the Pope's visit to Corsica in 2024 (Source: Berdejo, 2024; Clarín, 2024; EFE, 2024; El Día, 2024)



Once the information was collected, Gemini was asked for instructions to create a prompt for ChatGPT Plus (Figure 5):

Figure 5. Prompt created by Gemini for ChatGPT Plus (Source: Gemini, 2025)

El prompt está estructurado en base a las "5 W del periodismo" y las áreas de mejora identificadas en la investigación (escenografía, tecnología emocional, participación del público, y sostenibilidad y accesibilidad).

Prompt para ChatGPT 5

Contexto del Evento: Visita del Papa a Córcega 2024

Analiza el siguiente evento y, basándote en los principios del marketing experiencial y las aplicaciones de la IA, propón mejoras concretas y creativas para el escenario y la experiencia general.

Quién: El evento fue una visita del Papa Francisco a la isla de Córcega, en Francia, en diciembre de 2024. Asistieron más de 7,000 personas en la misa en la Place d'Austerlitz. El público estaba compuesto por fieles y locales, incluyendo a representantes de las cofradías corsas.

Qué: El evento principal fue una eucaristía en la Place d'Austerlitz, un parque en Ajaccio. El escenario consistió en un altar colocado bajo el pedestal de la estatua de Napoleón, con la palabra en corso "A pace" (la paz), pantallas para la retransmisión, una cruz y un altar con formas marítimas, y alfombras. Durante la homilía hubo cantos corsos, y el Papa recorrió la plaza en el papamóvil tanto a la llegada como a la salida. El ambiente del evento incluyó atuendos renacentistas, cantos a cappella, banderas y estandartes.

Cuándo: El evento fue un viaje relámpago de menos de 12 horas en diciembre de 2024.

Dónde: La eucaristía principal se celebró en la Place d'Austerlitz, un parque en Ajaccio, la capital de Córcega.

Por qué: El propósito del evento era la visita del Papa Francisco a la isla, siendo la primera vez que un Pontífice visitaba Ajaccio.

Solicitud de Mejoras (Usando IA como herramienta)

A partir de la información anterior y basándote en los principios del marketing experiencial, te pido que propongas mejoras para el evento en las siguientes áreas, utilizando como base las capacidades creativas y visuales de la inteligencia artificial:

Escenografía y Puesta en Escena: ¿Cómo se podrían utilizar elementos modulares y dinámicos para transformar el escenario y adaptarlo a los distintos momentos del acto? ¿Qué elementos simbólicos se podrían integrar visualmente, más allá de los ya presentes, para reflejar la cultura corsa y el mensaje de paz?

Tecnología Emocional: Más allá de las pantallas de retransmisión, ¿qué tecnologías inmersivas (Realidad Aumentada, proyecciones interactivas, sonido envolvente) podrían amplificar el impacto emocional y sensorial del evento? ¿Cómo podría la IA personalizar la experiencia para los asistentes?

Participación del Público: ¿Qué estrategias, mediadas por la tecnología, podrían transformar a los asistentes de espectadores pasivos en participantes activos? Piensa en cómo crear un momento de participación colectiva que deje una impresión duradera.

Sostenibilidad y Accesibilidad: Propón soluciones basadas en la tecnología para mejorar la sostenibilidad del evento (materiales, gestión de residuos) y la accesibilidad para personas con movilidad reducida, sordas o con otras necesidades especiales.

ChatGPT Plus responded with the following proposals (Table 3):

Table 3. ChatGPT Plus Response (Source: OpenAI, 2025)

Category	Proposed Improvement	Description
Scenography and Staging	Landscape integration	Projections of waves and sky on transparent LED screens.
	Symbolic lighting	Mapping over the Napoleon statue with symbols of peace.
	Eco-ephemeral altar	Recyclable materials and native Corsican vegetation.
	Colorimetry	Use of warm gradients in blue and pink to connect liturgy and environment.
Participation and Proximity	Interactive faithful zones	Side corridors for the popemobile's approach.
	Community choral intervention	Popular choirs with lyrics projected for mass participation.
	Space for children and families	Special area for youth and children in the front zone.
Technology and Emotion	Augmented Reality	Liturgical symbols synchronized with key moments.
	Silent drones	Capture of aerial views to reinforce collective emotion.
	Immersive sound	360° speakers for chants and readings without echo.
	Itinerant camera	Projection of the Pope's gestures on giant screens.
Sustainability and Accessibility	Sustainable materials	Certified wood, recycled fabrics, reusable structures.
	Waste management	Visible recycling points.
	Inclusive access	Wide ramps and central areas for people with reduced mobility.
	Accessible translation	Subtitles and sign language on screens.
	Renewable energy	LED lighting and portable solar panels.

The visual improvement proposals developed by AI focused on landscape integration, symbolic lighting, and immersive technologies. The proposed stage (Figure 6) incorporated scenography with mapping on the statue, an eco-ephemeral altar, semi-transparent LED screens, and native vegetation elements. Additionally, it proposed several renders, including one with a different color proposal to reinforce the solemnity of the act:

Figure 6. Stage proposal for the Pope's visit to Corsica created by AI (Source: OpenAI, 2025)



4.3. Scenarios for Francis's Funeral and Pope Leo XIV's Enthronement in 2025

This extraordinary event was held in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican and combined the solemnity of a funeral rite with the institutional celebration of apostolic continuity. The ceremony, which gathered over 300,000 people in the square and was broadcast to millions worldwide, took place in two parts.

During the funeral of Pope Francis (Figure 7), the altar was placed in the center of the square, with an elevated structure under a white and gold canopy. The scenography included a monumental cross, sober floral arrangements, and warm lighting that reinforced an atmosphere of recollection. The ceremony was accompanied by Gregorian chants and moments of ritual silence. The visual and symbolic environment was completed with Vatican flags and giant screens projecting images of Francis's pontificate.

Figure 7. Scenario of Pope Francis's funeral 2025 (Sources: De Cárdenas, 2025; El País, 2025)



Subsequently, the enthronement ceremony of Pope Leo XIV (Figure 8) was held from the central balcony of the Basilica. The setting was adapted to include a front platform from which the *Urbi et Orbi* blessing was performed. The music shifted to more festive tones, and visual elements such as gold banners, ascending lights, and immersive sound effects were incorporated.

Figure 8. Scenario of Pope Leo XIV's enthronement 2025 (Sources: AiresOnLine, 2025; Archdiocese of Lima, 2025; De Barrón, 2025; Telecinco, 2025)



Using the event information, Copilot was asked—as in the previous cases—to recommend a different AI to perform improvements according to the research guidelines, as well as to generate a prompt. Copilot selected Gemini and developed the following prompt (Figure 9):

Figure 9. Prompt created by Copilot for Gemini (Source: Copilot, 2025)



Prompt para Gemini – Mejora del evento efímero religioso

Hola, Gemini. Necesito que me ayudes a generar propuestas de mejora para un evento religioso que ya ha tenido lugar. El evento es el funeral del Papa Francisco y la entronización del Papa León XIV, celebrado en 2025 en la Plaza de San Pedro del Vaticano. A continuación te facilito las 5 W del evento para que puedas entenderlo y proponer mejoras desde el punto de vista escenográfico, tecnológico, emocional, participativo y sostenible.

Who (Quiénes asistieron):
Más de 300.000 personas presentes en la Plaza de San Pedro.
Participación de cardenales, obispos, líderes religiosos de otras confesiones, representantes diplomáticos y fieles de todo el mundo.
Audiencia global conectada por televisión, redes sociales y plataformas digitales.

What (Qué se hizo):
Ceremonia fúnebre del Papa Francisco con misa solemne, procesión del féretro, homilía y cantos gregorianos.
Proyección de imágenes del pontificado en pantallas laterales.
Entrega simbólica del anillo papal y entronización del nuevo Papa León XIV.
Bendición Urbi et Orbi desde el balcón central de la Basílica.

When (Cuándo fue):
Evento celebrado en abril de 2025, en horario matutino y vespertino.
Duración aproximada: 6 horas, incluyendo la misa, la procesión y la entronización.

Where (Dónde se celebró):
Plaza de San Pedro, Ciudad del Vaticano.
Organizado por la Santa Sede, con apoyo de medios internacionales y equipos técnicos litúrgicos.

Why (Por qué se realizó):
Evento único que marca el final de un pontificado y el inicio de otro.
Tiene una función litúrgica, institucional y comunicativa: transmitir continuidad, esperanza y renovación espiritual.

✦ ¿Qué necesito de tí?
Por favor, propón mejoras creativas al evento en los siguientes aspectos:
Escenografía y puesta en escena (estructura, diseño, iluminación, simbolismo).
Tecnología emocional (uso de RA, drones, sonido envolvente, pantallas interactivas).
Participación del público (zonas activas, interacción, momentos comunitarios).
Sostenibilidad y accesibilidad (materiales, inclusión, energía, señalética).
Puedes incluir ideas visuales, simbólicas, tecnológicas o narrativas que refuercen el impacto emocional y comunicativo del evento. Las propuestas deben ser coherentes con el contexto religioso y respetuosas con la solemnidad del acto.

These are the improvements proposed by Google’s AI (Table 4):

Table 4. Gemini Response (Source: Gemini, 2025)

Category	Proposed Improvement	Description
Scenography and Staging	Dual narrative scenography	Left side: Francis’s legacy; right side: future with Leo XIV.
	Symbolic path	Carpet or light connecting both parts of the square.
	Dynamic lighting	Dim blue for the funeral, bright gold for the enthronement.
Technology and Emotion	AR and projections	Images of the pontificate projected onto the Basilica.
	Sound narrative	Spatial sound with prayers in different languages and natural sounds.
	Multisensory transmission	360° streaming with digital immersive experience.
Public Participation	Digital memory walls	Interactive screens with messages and memories of Pope Francis.

Sustainability and Accessibility	Active silence	Flashlights lit as a collective starry sky.
	Prayer spaces	Audiovisual installations with inspiring content.
	Ecological materials	Biodegradable structures and digital signage.
	Integral accessibility	Ramps, simultaneous translation, sign language.
	Intelligent signage	Real-time information on services and location.

Finally, Copilot generated a similar prompt for the Midjourney tool to create the visual result. The image evokes the duality of the event with light beams and elements suggesting a transition, demonstrating that the image generation tool successfully interpreted Copilot’s strategic guidelines. The result offered by Midjourney was as follows (Figure 10):

Figure 10. Stage proposal for the celebrations in St. Peter's Square created with AI (Source: Midjourney, 2025)



4.4. Scenarios for the Youth Jubilee 2025

The Jubilee of Hope (2025) is an international event convened ordinarily every twenty-five years, although extraordinary jubilees also exist. Throughout the jubilee year, pilgrimages to Rome take place, with notable advances in communication and technology. The analysis focused on the Youth Jubilee, which was held at the Tor Vergata esplanade (Rome).

The stage used for the vigil and closing mass, similar to that of the WYD, was designed to accommodate a large number of pilgrims. The scenography prioritized functionality and visibility for a massive crowd, as shown in Figure 11.

Figure 11. Scenario for the Youth Jubilee 2025 (Sources: Diocese of Santander, 2025; Martínez López, 2025; Piras, 2025; Vatican News, 2025)



ChatGPT was instructed to design the prompt, in this case for Copilot, resulting in the following (Figure 12):

Figure 12. Prompt created by ChatGPT for Copilot (Source: OpenAI, 2025)

Prompt Jubileo de los Jóvenes 2025 – Roma (de ChatGPT para Copilot)

¿Qué? Imaginar un espacio efímero para el Jubileo de los Jóvenes en Tor Vergata que combine tradición y vanguardia tecnológica, pensado para la vigilia y misa de clausura.

¿Quién? Jóvenes peregrinos de todo el mundo, comunidades locales de Roma, el Papa y los voluntarios que sostienen la experiencia jubilar.

¿Dónde? La explanada de Tor Vergata, un lugar histórico de grandes concentraciones, transformado en un escenario monumental y simbólico.

¿Cuándo? Durante la última semana de julio y la primera de agosto de 2025, con un clímax en la vigilia y misa de envío.

¿Por qué? Porque el Jubileo de la Esperanza busca actualizar la experiencia espiritual de los peregrinos, generando un puente entre fe, juventud y nuevas tecnologías.

Claves para la mejora del espacio efímero:

Escenografía y Puesta en Escena: Un altar central con brazos que se abren hacia los peregrinos, pantallas que envuelven el espacio sin distraer, elementos visuales que simbolizan la esperanza.

Participación y Cercanía: Espacios circulares o radiales que rompan la barrera escenario-público, caminos procesionales donde los peregrinos puedan integrarse.

Tecnología y Emoción: Integrar inteligencia artificial en la iluminación, mapping inmersivo que acompañe los cantos y oraciones, experiencias sonoras 360° para reforzar la espiritualidad compartida.

Sostenibilidad y Accesibilidad: Energía solar para iluminación y sonido, estructuras ligeras y desmontables; accesos fluidos para grandes multitudes y espacios inclusivos para todas las capacidades.

These instructions prompted Copilot (2025) to generate the following proposal (Table 5):

Table 5. Copilot Response (Source: Copilot, 2025)

Category	Proposed Improvement	Description
Scenography and Technology	Programmable LED lighting	Theme colors synchronized with music and testimonies.
	Interactive signage	Luminous totems with real-time information.
	Modular structure	Platform adaptable to different parts of the program.
Participation and Meeting	Dialogue islands	Spaces near the stage for group reflection.
Technology and Accessibility	Augmented Reality	App with subtitles, translations, and biographies when focusing on the stage.

Additionally, it made the following proposal (Figure 13) regarding the stage, where the AI adds various technological complements, such as side screens.

Figure 13. Proposal for the Youth Jubilee stage created with AI (Source: Copilot, 2025)



5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The study of paradigmatic events within the Catholic Church has revealed a fundamental conclusion: artificial intelligence is a strategic tool that transcends mere technical optimization. It not only allows for the analysis and recreation of past structures but also, notably, demonstrates a growing sensitivity toward the symbolic, spiritual, and community values that define the institution. By evaluating the communicative, visual, and emotional effectiveness of events, AI contributes to the creation of future proposals with more measurable criteria oriented toward the audience experience.

One of the study's main contributions is the demonstration that AI can detect spatial and narrative patterns in previous events, identifying those elements that promote focused attention, participation, and emotional connection. Based on this analysis, the technology generates predictive models or structural suggestions that, while coherently simple and functional, reinforce the liturgical narrative and reduce visual noise in contexts of high symbolic concentration. The resulting proposals, although limited in their structural complexity, validate AI's ability to generate efficient solutions adapted to public behavior. This convergence between technology and spirituality suggests that AI can become a strategic ally for the Church, allowing it to connect with new generations without sacrificing the depth of its rituals.

In this sense, AI acts as a mediator between liturgical tradition and contemporary communicative demands. Its proposals respect the Church's symbolic codes while updating them through immersive, sustainable, and participatory technologies. This reconfiguration of the viewer's role—from a passive observer to an active participant

capable of interacting emotionally, symbolically, and technologically—strengthens the spiritual and communal bond, aligning with the institution's pastoral objectives.

The use of generative AI as a tool for analysis and scenographic design represents a methodological innovation in the study of religious institutional communication. This approach allows not only for the evaluation of past events but also for the anticipation of future scenarios with greater precision and aesthetic sensitivity. Although the study has focused on the Catholic Church, its conclusions can be extrapolated to other institutions that manage symbolic, cultural, or spiritual events.

For future research, the corpus could be expanded to incorporate sociological and semiotic variables into the analysis models. Additionally, more advanced AI tools could be explored to integrate not only visual data but also crowd flows, real-time reactions, and audience emotions, consolidating artificial intelligence as an invaluable partner in creating memorable, inclusive, and emotionally resonant experiences.

6. AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT ACCORDING TO CRediT TAXONOMY

Carlos Sáenz-Torralba: Conceptualization; methodology; software; validation; formal analysis; investigation; resources; data curation; writing-original draft; writing-review and editing; visualization; supervision; project administration.

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