



Chapitre du Luxembourg

Meeting of the Luxembourg Chapter of the Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice Foundation

7 October 2026 · Luxembourg · Hosted at Woluwe-Saint-Pierre

On 7 October 2026, the Luxembourg Chapter of the Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice Foundation generously hosted at the home of its member, Irini de Saint Sernin, to reflect on the theme *“Builders of Communion in the Age of AI: Between Connection and Communion.”*

The main speaker was **Professor Dominique Baron Lambert**, physicist and philosopher, Professor Emeritus at the University of Namur, Belgium. Known for his work on Georges Lemaître and for fostering dialogue between science and faith, he brought a perspective shaped by years of engagement with scientific and religious institutions, including the Holy See. The Chapter is grateful to H.E. Mr Thomas Antoine, Honorary Ambassador and Chapter member, for initiating the encounter and bringing his experience in diplomacy and philosophy to the discussion. Contributions from other participants connected the debate with ecology, African development and the wider social responsibilities of science and technology.

Professor Lambert began with a distinction at the heart of the evening: **artificial intelligence can create connections, but it cannot create communion**. Digital systems connect people, information and institutions at extraordinary speed; they can calculate, predict, translate, generate and optimise. Communion, however, requires presence, encounter, freedom, responsibility and openness to another person.

Reflections inspired by Magnifica Humanitas : From Babel to Jerusalem: unity without Uniformity

This distinction resonates with the anthropological vision of Magnifica Humanitas and its movement “from Babel to Jerusalem”. Babel evokes a perfectly organised system in which everything is measurable, predictable and controllable, with differences at risk of being treated as inefficiencies. Jerusalem offers another vision: unity without uniformity, where differences are not erased but brought into relationship.

The question for the age of AI is whether technology will make people interchangeable or help create conditions in which their freedom, dignity and uniqueness can flourish. The principle expressed in the discussion was that **unity should differentiate and differences should become united — a definition of love** offered by Professor Lambert. The common



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good must not require the suppression of individual identity. The danger lies not in technology itself, but in making efficiency, optimisation and control the ultimate measures of progress.

The limits of calculation and the need for human judgement

Professor Lambert challenged the idea that reality can ultimately be reduced to what is calculable. The work of Kurt Gödel and Alan Turing revealed fundamental limits within formal systems and computation; greater computing power does not remove every limit of formal reasoning. Human judgement remains indispensable when circumstances escape a model, values conflict, responsibility must be assumed or the literal application of a rule would betray its purpose.

The example of Soviet officer Stanislav Petrov, who in 1983 refused to interpret a false nuclear warning as the beginning of an American attack, made the point vivid. His decision helped avert a potentially catastrophic escalation. The lesson is not that intuition should replace reason, but that reason must be accompanied by judgement, discernment and responsibility. **Sometimes, we must step outside the rule to remain faithful to its spirit,** and only a human being can do so in conscience. Preserving peace can require the courage not to follow a system blindly: the human person is more than an information-processing system.

I was reminded of the works of Austrian thinkers **Ludwig von Bertalanffy** and **Alfred Locker** on open systems and the relationship between scientific inquiry and transcendence. An open system does not find its meaning entirely within itself, but through exchanges with what lies beyond its boundaries. Thomas Antoine developed a related insight through the Latin root of “exist”: **ex-sistere**, to stand outside or go beyond oneself. Human beings become themselves not by closing in on themselves, but through relationships with others, society and creation, and through openness to what transcends them.

Georges Lemaître: scientific excellence and spiritual depth

Georges Lemaître’s life offered a compelling example of scientific achievement and spiritual commitment within one person. During his years at the seminary, he was influenced by **Cardinal Désiré-Joseph Mercier** and joined the priestly fraternity known as the “Friends of Jesus”, whose commitments included a daily hour of Eucharistic adoration. This practice nourished the interior life that accompanied his dual vocation as priest and cosmologist. Lemaître’s example shows that scientific rigour and openness to transcendence, wonder and the mystery of existence need not belong to separate worlds. The encounter between scientific competence and spiritual life can take place within the human person only.

The point is not to oppose science and spirituality. Scientific reason is essential to understanding the world, but it does not encompass the whole of human experience.



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Spirituality can nourish our search for meaning and sustain us as human beings; openness to transcendence need not limit scientific inquiry and may enrich our understanding of what it means to be human. And science is a human project. Such a dimension is not only something to understand intellectually, but also a treasure to be lived, deepened and shared.

What AI reveals about the human person

Human existence brings together physical, intellectual (mental) and spiritual dimensions. AI can increasingly assist people — and in some fields outperform them — in physical and intellectual tasks. It can process vast quantities of information, recognise patterns, calculate, generate content and optimise complex processes. But reproducing an activity is not the same as living its human meaning.

AI can describe love, recognise expressions of trust, reproduce the language of friendship and simulate empathy with great sophistication. Yet it does not experience these realities as a person does. It cannot offer friendship, make a human act of trust involving vulnerability, or embody love through a free and responsible commitment to another.

Paradoxically, these limitations may help us rediscover what makes us human. From a Christian perspective, human beings are created in the image of God, and their dignity does not depend on intelligence, productivity, usefulness or technological superiority. It is intrinsic to the person. The debate about AI is therefore not merely technical or economic; it touches the foundations of our understanding of humanity.

From matter to mystery

Ody-Marc Duclos, Vice-President of Fondation Cœur Vert and Secretary of Cœur Vert Luxembourg, offered another perspective by drawing attention to the structure of matter. The nucleus occupies an extraordinarily small volume compared with the overall dimensions of an atom; simplified representations often describe the atom as overwhelmingly empty space. The point was less a lesson in physics than an invitation to humility before the reality we seek to understand.

What science can measure and describe does not necessarily exhaust the reality of existence. This insight returns us to the encounter with another person, whose face reminds us that every human being is unique and cannot be reduced to a function, a category or a set of data.

Science as a bridge for peace

The evening also highlighted science's potential as an instrument of diplomacy and peace. Institutions such as CERN and international space cooperation show that researchers from countries divided by political conflict can still work together towards a common purpose.



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Thomas Antoine's contribution connected this possibility with the broader relationship between science, diplomacy, ethics and international affairs.

Science can provide a shared framework for cooperation even when political relations are difficult. This reflects the vocation of the Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice Foundation: to create spaces where people from different professional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds can meet, build trust and work towards the common good. The challenge is to ensure that scientific and technological progress strengthens cooperation rather than deepening rivalries and dependencies.

From ideas to integral human development

The discussion also moved from philosophical reflection to practical action. Ody-Marc Duclos presented work connected with the **Great Green Wall Project** in Africa, illustrating how, through the spirit of service, reforestation can contribute to environmental restoration, education, women's empowerment, economic opportunity and social cohesion.

This is an expression of integral human development: ecological restoration cannot be separated from human dignity, social justice and peace. Development should not be measured solely by economic growth or technological progress, but by the flourishing of the whole person and the whole community. The spirit of *Magnifica Humanitas* offers a clear orientation: progress must serve humanity rather than turn human beings into instruments of a system.

A question for the age of AI

The meeting returned to a central question: **what is the human person that a machine, however intelligent, cannot become?**

The answer cannot be found in greater computing power alone. It lies in the capacity to love, trust, befriend, discern, assume responsibility, encounter another person and open oneself to transcendence. A truly human society must preserve space for freedom, difference, vulnerability, relationship and spiritual depth, resisting the temptation to equate efficiency with wisdom, connection with communion, or intelligence with the fullness of human existence.

AI may become an extraordinary servant, but a dangerous master if it begins to define what the human person is. By showing how much of our activity can be calculated, automated or reproduced, it may paradoxically help us recognise more clearly what cannot be reduced to computation: human dignity, the mystery of existence, the gift of relationship and the capacity for communion.



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As members of the Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice Foundation, we are grateful to be part of a community that brings together perspectives from faith, reason, science and spirituality, and invites us to consider how they may illuminate one another. Such encounters help us reflect on how economic and technological progress can serve the good of the human person while remaining attentive to the uniqueness and dignity of every life.

The real challenge of the age of artificial intelligence may not be to make machines more human, but to ensure that human beings do not forget what it means to be human.

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