# David Tennant’s remark on Trump’s AI pope image sparks debate on faith, politics and deepfakes



David Tennant's recent quip during a broadcast of *Have I Got News for You* has ignited debate around the intersection of politics, religion, and technology. The former *Doctor Who* star took aim at Donald Trump after the ex-President shared an AI-generated image of himself clad in papal attire across social media platforms, including Truth Social and the White House’s official account. The image, which prominently features an unsmiling Trump in white vestments, has since stirred reactions from various sectors, particularly within the Catholic community.

During the episode aired on 9 May, Tennant cleverly remarked, “There was quite a week for the Catholic Church as they got a new Pope and a new antichrist.” This biting comment highlights not only Tennant's comedic prowess but also the absurdity of Trump's post, which has been condemned by numerous Catholic leaders. For instance, Cardinal Timothy Dolan expressed concern over the blurring line between jest and disrespect, particularly during a time of mourning for Pope Francis. The New York State Catholic Conference further urged Trump to refrain from mocking the Church, given the sensitive context surrounding the recent papal conclave.

The discussions surrounding this fictitious portrayal of Trump as the Pope underscore a growing concern regarding the implications of AI technologies in generating realistic images and potential misinformation. Experts have pointed out that AI's capacity to create plausible yet entirely fabricated content can easily mislead the public. This dilemma is compounded by rapid advancements in AI, with capabilities that can produce images so authentic-looking that identifying their true nature becomes increasingly difficult.

Indeed, the image of Trump in papal garb is not an isolated incident. It reflects broader trends in the digital landscape, where figures like the Pope have been depicted in various outlandish scenarios, including the notable example of an AI-generated Pope in a puffer jacket. As the boundaries of reality and digital fabrication continue to blur, the need for critical media literacy becomes more pressing. Individuals are urged to develop the skills necessary to assess the authenticity of digital content, especially as the sophistication of AI-generated images advances.

While Trump’s post may have been intended as lighthearted or provocative, it raises important questions about the responsibility of public figures in an era where misinformation can proliferate unchecked. As discussions unfold about the role of AI in shaping perceptions, the importance of discernment in evaluating online imagery and narratives cannot be overstated. What may have started as a satirical jab from Tennant now serves as a commentary on the evolving discourse surrounding technology, ethics, and faith.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: Sources 1, 3
2. Paragraph 2: Sources 2, 3
3. Paragraph 3: Sources 4, 5
4. Paragraph 4: Sources 6, 7
5. Paragraph 5: Sources 2, 3, 4

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/david-tennant-hignfy-donald-trump-pope-b2748296.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.ksmu.org/2025-05-04/catholic-leaders-criticize-trump-for-posting-apparent-ai-photo-of-himself-as-the-pope> - Catholic leaders have criticized President Trump for sharing an AI-generated image of himself dressed as the pope on social media. The image, which shows Trump in traditional papal attire, was posted on Truth Social and later shared by the White House. Cardinal Timothy Dolan expressed hope that Trump was not involved in creating the image, stating it was 'not good.' The New York State Catholic Conference also condemned the image, urging Trump not to mock the church during the mourning period for Pope Francis and the upcoming papal conclave.
3. <https://www.wbng.com/2025/05/03/trump-posts-ai-generated-photo-him-pope/> - President Donald Trump shared an AI-generated image of himself depicted as the pope on Truth Social. The image was subsequently shared by the official White House account. This post followed Trump's recent attendance at Pope Francis's funeral and his comments about desiring to be the next pope. The AI-generated image shows Trump in traditional papal attire, including a white cassock and gold cross, sparking discussions and reactions from various quarters.
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2023/apr/01/misinformation-mistakes-and-the-pope-in-a-puffer-what-rapidly-evolving-ai-can-and-cant-do> - The article discusses the challenges posed by rapidly evolving AI technologies in generating realistic fake images, such as the Pope in a puffer jacket. Experts warn that AI's ability to create convincing images can lead to misinformation and confusion. The piece highlights the need for critical media literacy and awareness to discern AI-generated content from reality, emphasizing the importance of understanding AI's capabilities and limitations in the context of digital media.
5. <https://www.indy100.com/science-tech/trump-pope-fake-ai-photos> - This article provides guidance on identifying AI-generated fake images, particularly those involving public figures like Donald Trump and the Pope. It highlights common flaws in AI-generated images, such as unnatural hands and facial imperfections. The piece also emphasizes the importance of critical thinking and intuition in assessing the authenticity of digital content, given the increasing sophistication of AI technologies in creating realistic-looking images and videos.
6. <https://www.presshub.ro/3-fake-images-created-by-artificial-intelligence-trump-in-handcuffs-the-pope-in-luxury-clothes-and-putin-on-his-knees-269045/> - The article examines three notable AI-generated fake images: Donald Trump in handcuffs, the Pope in luxury clothing, and Vladimir Putin on his knees. It discusses how these images were created using AI tools and the implications of such deepfakes in spreading misinformation. The piece underscores the challenges in combating AI-generated fake news and the importance of media literacy in the digital age.
7. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2023/03/31/tips-spot-ai-fake-images/> - This article offers tips on identifying AI-generated fake images, such as those depicting Donald Trump and the Pope. It provides practical advice on spotting inconsistencies in AI-generated content, including issues with hands, inanimate objects, text, backgrounds, and overall image quality. The piece aims to equip readers with the tools to critically assess digital images and recognize potential deepfakes, highlighting the importance of media literacy in the age of AI.