

Application of Ecological Theological Reflection Based on the Biblical Passage Col 1:15-20

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ABSTRACT

This study examines Colossians 1:15–20 to articulate a Christocentric theology of creation and reconciliation in response to the ecological crisis. Employing exegetical analysis, the research identifies Jesus Christ as the cosmic center and fullness of God, integral to both creation and the restoration of peace. This research suggests that ecological conversion must be grounded in a theology that recognizes nature as part of God’s salvific mission. Drawing inspiration from Pope Francis’s Encyclical Letter *Laudato Sí*, the study proposes a holistic ecological education model based on eco-spirituality and practical initiatives such as the RBE model (Renewable energy, Biodiversity, and Education). This model fosters environmental stewardship, promoting justice, solidarity, and sustainable living. This paper concludes that missionary-oriented ecological education can cultivate a transformative relationship with creation and restore harmony between humanity and the environment.

INTRODUCTION

The growing ecological crisis has sparked a deep and urgent reflection among theologians and faith communities in recent years. Climate change, biodiversity loss, and the degradation of the natural world are not only scientific or political issues—they are deeply spiritual and theological concerns. Against this backdrop, the Letter to the Colossians, particularly the hymn in Colossians 1:15–20, speaks with remarkable relevance and clarity. Although written in a very different time and context, this ancient text addresses a question that remains deeply modern: What is the place of Christ in relation to the whole creation?

As scholars widely affirm, the Colossians lived in a world full of conflicting ideas—Jewish traditions, ascetic practices, angelic worship, and Greco-Roman philosophies swirled together in a kind of religious and philosophical mixture. Amid that syncretistic confusion, Paul (or a Pauline disciple) writes to reorient them around one central truth: Christ is not only the head of the Church—He is the center of the cosmos. The hymn in Colossians 1 lifts our gaze from earthly concerns to a cosmic vision in which all things were created in, through, and for Christ.

But what does this mean for us today—especially when the earth seems to groan under the weight of human greed and indifference?

This paper explores how Colossians 1:15–20 can form a Christian ecological theology—a theology that not only celebrates Christ’s supremacy over all creation but also calls for a renewed relationship between humans, the cosmos, and the Creator. Through exegetical insights, theological reflection, and ecological application, this study seeks to uncover how the ancient hymn to the Cosmic Christ might inspire a new path rooted in reconciliation, ecological conversion, and missionary education.

This study contributes to the growing field of eco-theology, offering both scholarly insight and practical direction. It proposes that the Church, through holistic ecological education and a deepened awareness of Christ’s presence in all creation, is uniquely positioned to lead in the healing of our wounded world.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Aligning with Colossians’ vision of Christ as creation’s origin and goal, Johannes Nissen highlights the universal scope of Christ’s reconciliation in the *New Testament and Mission*. As cited by Nissen, Barth critiques anthropocentric salvation, stressing Christ’s lordship over all creation. Ukpong contributes by emphasizing engagement with systemic powers, extending its mission to include ecological systems.

Denis Edwards’ *Ecology at the Heart of Faith* presents a deep incarnation, where Christ’s embodiment includes all life. Richard Bauckham in *Bible and Ecology* emphasizes interdependence within creation under Christ’s lordship, echoing Colossians’ cosmic Christ. Joseph Sittler’s reflections, cited by Bauckham and Jürgen Moltmann’s cosmic Christology, affirm nature’s inclusion in redemption.

Patricia McDonald’s exegesis of Colossians critiques syncretism and emphasizes Christ’s fullness (pleroma). Han Chandra interprets the hymn as

foundational for Christian education. Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'* calls for ecological conversion rooted in the Gospel. Deneulin and Kureethadam advocate for integrating theology, ethics, and science for sustainability.

Numerous scholars have contributed to the Eco-Theological Implications: 1) Christocentric Cosmology – Christ as creation's source and goal (Nissen, Edwards, Bauckham), 2) Ecological Reconciliation – Redemption extends to all creation (Sittler, Moltmann, McDonald), 3) Integral Mission – the Church's role in ecological and systemic renewal (Ukpong, Francis), and 4) Educational Implication – Christian formation rooted in ecological awareness (Han).

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a multi-disciplinary theological approach integrating biblical exegesis, contextual analysis, and eco-theological reflection. First, it explores the historical and socio-religious background of the Colossian community to understand the original context of the epistle. Then, it conducts an exegetical analysis of Colossians 1:15–20, focusing on key Christological themes such as creation, reconciliation, and cosmic Christ. This exegetical work forms the foundation for a series of ecological theological reflections, drawing connections between the cosmic Christ and contemporary environmental challenges. The methodology further engages in systematic theology to explore implications for Christian eco-spirituality, ecological conversion, and reconciliation with creation. Finally, it proposes a practical pastoral response, including a model for holistic ecological education and a renewable agricultural farm, grounded in missionary vision and inspired by Pope Francis' integral ecology.

RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Situation of The Colossians

Most scholars agree that the audience of Colossians lived in a syncretistic milieu. To understand clearly, the section of Col 2:6-23 illustrates that this syncretism was probably a mixture of Jewish ideas, angelic worship, asceticism and Hellenistic speculations about the cosmic powers. Additionally, Colossians were influenced by a philosophy that relied solely on human tradition, and worldly elements rather than on Christ.

"This passage is usually called a hymn, and it certainly has a poetic quality that invites us to read it as a structured and concentrated embodiment of meaning, while its pervasive focus on Jesus Christ makes it almost doxological in character." This letter belongs to the Deutero-Pauline letters. Many scholars believe that the hymn in Colossians already existed before Paul incorporated it into his letter, making some editorial adaptations in the process.

Most scholars agree that the structure of this hymn is divided into two strophes: (1) verses 15-17 and (2) verses 18-20, dealing respectively with the creation of all things in Christ and the reconciliation of all things in Christ. As scholar Johannes Nissen asserts, the hymn in Colossians 1:15-20 is significant for its focus on cosmic Christology. Similarly, scholar Chandra Han states,

“The theme of this particular passage is the supremacy of Christ over all creation and over his body, the church, which is the new creation.”

Exegetical Comments

1. *The Cosmic Scope of Creation and Reconciliation*

Through the phrases “all creation,” “all things,” especially “all things” is repeated six times, as well as the further characterization of all things as both visible and invisible, the hymn conveys to readers the cosmic breadth of both creation and reconciliation. This means that the scope of reconciliation is as vast as the scope of creation. As Denis Edwards puts it, “Here the cosmic Christ is celebrated as both the source of creation and its goal: all things have been created in Christ and all things are reconciled in him.”

In addition, Universal reconciliation is achieved through the death and resurrection of Jesus, extending not only to humanity but to “all things,” including nature. As Joseph Sittler writes: “These verses sing out their triumphant music between two huge and steady poles –“Christ” and “all things”. Thus, everything in creation including all creatures are created in Christ, sustained in him, and reconciled in him.

Christ is the firstborn of all creation, in the sense that he precedes all creation. Moreover, Jesus Christ has such an intimate relationship with creation that he holds the status of firstborn over all creatures: “I will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth” (Psalm 89:27). Additionally, Christ is the firstborn from the dead, in a distinct sense, as the one who, having risen from the dead, pioneers the resurrection and new creation for all of existence. There is a parallel between his role in creation and his role in the new creation, reinforced by the designation “Genesis” or “the beginning” –a term often associated with the inception of creation (see Gen 1:1; Ps 102:25; Prov 8:22; John 1:1; Heb 1:10; Rev 3:14) (Richard Bauckham, 2010). This parallel is further developed in the prepositional phrases: *in him, through him, for/to him*. In other words, God is both the origin and the culmination of all creation. Specifically, Jesus Christ is fully integrated into God’s divine relationship with the world. He participates in God’s role in both creation and reconciliation while also serving as the visible representation and embody of God within creation. Furthermore, Denis Eward believes that the meaning of the incarnation, of becoming flesh, is not restricted to humanity, It contains the entire interrelated world of fleshly existence and, in some ways, the whole cosmos to which flesh is attached and on which it depends (Denis Edwards, 2006).

2. *Jesus Christ: The Fullness of God*

The crucified Jesus, not just Jesus, is the symbol of the unseen God in the second strophe. More than anything else, his humiliating and self-sacrificing death reveals his importance to all of creation. As a result, the song challenges us to think about the global importance of Jesus Christ, the man who was delighted to embody the fullness of God. Richard Bauckham raises the question following: What the first strophe says about the created world concerns its relationship to the man Jesus Christ, because the agent of its creation was the one destined to be, and so already identifiable as, Jesus Christ. (Richard

Bauckham, 2010). Moreover, in verse 19, Saint Paul actually proclaims that in Christ alone “all the fullness (Greek: *pleroma*) of God was pleased to dwell” (see Col 1:19).

What is Paul’s theological insight regarding the term “fullness”? The concept of “fullness” played a significant role in Colossians, particularly in the context of its critique of syncretism. The citizens of Colossae assumed that God was holy and unapproachable, that people were imprisoned by earthly desires and cut off from God by their physical bodies, and that between God and humanity existed angelic powers, the *pleroma*. These powers were believed to be mediators between God and humanity, necessitating their appeasement through adherence to the law (which, according to tradition, was given by angels) and rigorous ascetic practices. In contrast, Saint Paul argues that the fullness of God is already present in Christ and that it has bodily form. Scholar Patricia M. McDonald exegetes that: “the cosmic ‘fullness’ (*pleroma*) refers to the fullness of God.” That is the reason why, the Colossians have no reason to fear the rulers and powers.

3. *Christ’s Supremacy Over All Powers and Reconciliation*

All things were made through and for Christ, who is the reason they exist. He upholds everything and promotes harmony, whether they be thrones, dominions, rulers, or powers. Specifically, the hymn emphasizes that no power in the world exists apart from Christ—everything was created through him, and thus, all things have been reconciled by him and to him. Patricia comments on verse 16: “it is probable that ‘visible and invisible’ and the references to thrones, dominions, rulers, powers are the author’s expansion to cover explicitly the kinds of forces whose influence underlay the writer’s concern for the community” (Richard Bauckham, 2010).

4. *The Gospel centers on Jesus, who is the fulfillment of all creation*

Since Christ is the creator of all things, their ultimate purpose is connected to him. Since everything was made for him, he will guide all creation toward its intended fulfillment. This underscores that the Gospel—the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus—is central, culminating, and decisive for all of creation. The entire story is therefore both comprehensive in its embrace of the entire creation and extremely specific in its concentration on the life of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, Richard Bauckham asserts that any Christian endeavor to comprehend the entirety of creation must also see everything in the context of Jesus Christ and the gospel narrative (Richard Bauckham, 2010).

The fulfillment of destined all creation in this hymn also means that Christ’s death and resurrection are the beginning of the transformation of the whole of creation. This idea also resonates in Ephesians chapter 1 verses 9-10, 20-30, where all things will be gathered up in the risen Christ.

Ecological Reflections

1. *The Christ as the Center and Cosmic Peace of the whole Creation*

To begin, the song provides a comprehensive view of all of creation as it is incorporated into Jesus Christ. The prepositional words (in him, through him, and for him) express relationship. All animals are interrelated, and they are

closely tied to Jesus Christ. He is their objective in the sense that this relationship with Christ is what will eventually form the peace of the entire creation. Therefore, to perceive creation in its entirety, we must see it in relation to the crucified and risen Jesus. Contextualizing this approach for the contemporary world, According to theologian Jürgen Moltmann, today's cosmic Christology must confront Christ the redeemer with a nature that humans have thrown into chaos, infected with poisonous waste, and condemned to universal death; for it is only this Christ who can save men and women from despair and nature from annihilation (Jürgen Moltmann, 1990).

2. *Jesus Christ: Reconciler and Renewal of All Things*

Secondly, in today context, Jesus Christ is compared to the world as the one who, through his cross, reconciles all things and, through his resurrection as the firstborn from the dead, renews everything. In this regard, to understand creation as a whole interconnected world, we must see it in relation to the crucified and risen Jesus, who is the Reconciler and Renewal of all things not only restricted to humanity. Reconciler and Renewal of All Things through incarnation that evokes us to a deeper appropriation of the meaning of God-with-us in Christ. Accordingly, the Christ-event as God entering the evolutionary history of life on Earth, embracing limited creaturely existence from inside. This viewpoint raises further issues concerning the theological relationship between Christ and evolutionary history, urging us to continue our investigation.

3. *Violence, Evolution, and the Struggle for Harmony*

Thirdly, only from the creation itself alone, it cannot be said that its destiny is peaceful and the path to that peace must be through the absence of violence and just only self-sacrificing love (Richard Bauckham, 2010). From a positive perspective, modern science—particularly Darwin's theory of evolution—has revealed a dynamic and ongoing process in which violence is an inevitable aspect of existence. Thomas Berry remarks on Darwin's theory of evolution, which states that life begins and evolves as species battle for more complete life manifestation. Berry also underlines that humans have navigated their way through the harshness of the natural world and imposed their brutality on it. Humans have been at odds with one another throughout history (Thomas Berry, 1988). In response to this, Pope Francis call for a recover serene harmony with creation, "An integral ecology includes taking time to recover a serene harmony with creation, reflecting on our lifestyle and our ideals, and contemplating the Creator who lives among us and surrounds us, whose presence 'must not be contrived but found, uncovered'." (Laudato Sí, no. 225)

4. *Christ's Victory Over Hostile Powers and the Call to Action*

Lastly, the hostility and violence present in the world today parallel the challenges faced by the Colossian community, particularly concerning "the powers"—whether political, social, or spiritual. These forces remain tangible today in the form of natural disasters, illness, pandemics, and oppressive political and social structures. Whatever hostile powers may exist, in heaven or on earth, Christ has pacified them. Through his death and resurrection, he inaugurated the peace that creation was originally intended to embody.

Notably, Christ's pacification of these powers takes effect through humanity, as people actively work toward peace between themselves and the rest of creation. Applying this insight, all peoples are called to engage with contemporary challenges, including pollution, climate change, water scarcity, biodiversity loss, and global inequality.

Implications of Eco-Theological Reflections on Col 1:15-20

In short, the hymn contributes to Eco-theological interpretation which is relevant in today's religious and cultural situation. God's economy of salvation reaches out far beyond that world of Christians, even beyond the human world, that mean include all creatures.

1. Ecological conversion ground on Christocentric salvation

Theologian M. Barth rightly criticizes a tendency in biblical scholarship to reduce salvation to only human sphere (Johannes Nissen, 2007). Christ is the Lord of the universe, not only of humans but of all creatures. Salvation operates not only at the level of individual redemption but also in terms of social solidarity, addressing the broken interconnectedness between humanity and nature. Therefore, a paradigm shift is necessary for theological approaches – one that includes ecological conversion at both individual and communal levels, ecological pastoral care, and Christian ecological education. Above all, these shifts must remain rooted in Christocentricity.

2. Theology of Reconciliation: Embracing Nature in God's Mission

Opening for vision of theology of reconciliation that include nature. Johannes Nissen says that "theology of reconciliation which is of great significance for today's mission." This theological paradigm can be discerned on three levels: (1) a Christological level, in which Christ is the mediator through whom God reconciles the world to Himself; (2) an ecclesiological level, in which Christ reconciles Jews and Gentiles; and (3) a cosmic level, in which Christ reconciles all powers in heaven and on earth. From this perspective, eco-theology promotes theological studies that not only focus on the role of nature in God's creation and salvation but also research the threefold harmonious relationship between God, humanity, and nature.

3. Approaching Ecological conversion from Christian education

The concept of the pre-existent Christ affirms that His presence precedes all things. This signifies that Christ is not a created being but is equal to God, making Him the foundation of everything. If Christian education seeks to uncover God's truth, it must begin with Christ, who is both the center and the firm foundation of Christian education. Replacing Christ with mere human morality would diminish the purpose of Christian education, shifting its focus away from knowing God through Christ. Moreover, Christian education – particularly catechesis – must remain connected to the role of nature in God's plan of salvation. As Pope Francis teaches: "The ultimate destiny of the universe is in the fullness of God, which has already been attained by the risen Christ, the measure of the maturity of all things."

4. Mission to "foreign" structures

Scholar Ukpong opines that the “powers” in the New Testament letters can have various meanings instead of seeing as intrinsically evil. According to Nissen, the word translated “subsist” (NRSV: “hold together”) in verse 17 has the same roots the modern word “system”. Thus, it can be said that in Christ everything “systematizes,” everything holds together. And Nissen proposes that this observation invites a reflection on the parallel between the ancient concept of “powers” and modern societal structures. These structures include religious frameworks that underpin stable societies, moral structures embedded in customs and cultures, and, importantly, environmental and ecological systems that maintain balance in nature and sustain biodiversity. These are areas where the Church must actively engage, addressing new and peripheral challenges in the contemporary world as “foreign” structures.

Eco-Theological Implications on Reflections Drawing from Col 1:15-20

Ecological conversion and reconciliation are deeply connected in Christocentric salvation (Cosmic Christ), emphasizing that salvation is not just for humanity but for all creation. As the Lord of the universe, the Christ (risen Christ) calls for healing the broken relationship between humanity and nature. This requires a shift in theology—one that embraces ecological pastoral care, catechism focused on ecological awareness, and Christian education rooted in Christ. As Pope Francis reminds us, since the fullness of creation is already realized in the risen Christ: “The ultimate destiny of the universe is in the fullness of God, which has already been attained by the risen Christ, the measure of the maturity of all things.” (Laudato Sí, 83) Thus making ecological conversion an essential part of Christian faith journey: “[ecological conversion] whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them.” (LS 217)

Reconciliation in Christ restores harmony at every level—between God and humanity, among people, and within creation itself. Eco-theology highlights this by showing that salvation isn’t just about individuals but about the whole world being brought back into balance. Recognizing nature’s role in God’s redemptive plan, the Church must promote holistic ecological education, teaching that caring for creation is part of our mission of reconciliation. In order to fully embrace this calling, the Church must engage with social, moral, and environmental structures that shape our world. These systems are not separate from faith but are part of Christ’s sustaining and redeeming work. By addressing today’s ecological challenges with justice, ethical stewardship, and holistic education, the Church fulfills its mission of reconciliation—bringing healing to humanity, nature, and the entire creation.

Reconciliation in Christ evokes the terms recycling, reuse, renewal, and re-establishment. Meanwhile, and salvation in Christ evokes the rediscovery Christ in the midst of Nature, through encounters with people, discovering that the natural energy is from God. In general, each person, each parish community, and school is invited to become an ambassador of Christ to reconcile the relationship between people, nature, and God.

The aim of this section is to develop the ideas drawn from the theme “Cosmic Christ – Reconciliation and salvation for whole creation” that draw from biblical and theological reflection on passage Colossians 1:15-20. These ideas that need to be implemented with more concrete programmatic directions, or at least applied in the context of not only the environmental crisis but also the crisis in the relationship between humans and creation as well as with the Creator. The project as an approach and suggestion for mission of the church, specifically this theme will emphasize the area of holistic ecological education and put that idea into practice with a model. As the command for all Christians in *Laudato Si* evokes: “all creatures are moving forward with us and through us towards a common point of arrival, which is God, in that transcendent fullness where the risen Christ embraces and illumines all things. Human beings, endowed with intelligence and love, and drawn by the fullness of Christ, are called to lead all creatures back to their Creator.” (LS 83) specifically, in this section the way of holistic ecological education as a approach for mission of the Church.

Missionary Orientation for Ecological Education: Training Environmental Peacemakers

Setting goal for Ecological Education: Ecological Education is about re-thinking and re-designing curricular and institutional reform in the spirit of integral ecology in order to foster ecological awareness and transformative action.

1. Ecological Education need ecological spirituality

Base on the principle of all creatures are interconnected. Thus it is necessary a kind of ecological spirituality of solidarity or another name might be called as spirituality of accompaniment in terms not just spiritual counselling but broader to possess the sense of belong to web of life. Ecological spirituality must become a way of life for the eco-peacemakers of reconciliation, whose primary target learners are children and young people.

2. Spirituality of accompaniment in education and transformation

As Encyclical *Populorum Progressio* On The Development of Peoples on March 26, 1967, Pope Paul VI teaches: “An ever more effective world solidarity should allow all peoples to become the artisans of their destiny.” (PP 65). And *Laudato Si* highlights on humans as beings of “the ability to work together in building our common home.” (LS 13)

In conclusion of the second world meeting of popular movements in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, July 2015, Pope Francis affirms that: “the future of humanity does not lie solely in the hands of great leaders, the great powers and the elites. It is fundamentally in the hands of peoples and in their ability to organize. It is in their hands, which can guide with humility and conviction this process of change. I am with you.” In this vein, Séverine Deneulin explains that ‘Accompaniment’ is the term that has been used within the work of Catholic organizations, and other faith-based organizations, to describe this ‘I am with you’, as an expression of solidarity with the lives of the marginalized. Accompaniment actually is instead of doing something for the marginalized, is

to being with them and sharing with them by simply being present to them such as visiting them in their homes, and sharing their commitment to be artisans of their destiny through the organizations that they form. Furthermore, accompanying with them as they are as agents of structural change, sometimes at the cost of their lives.

The effect of accompaniment is not only to increase the efficiency of work, but also to be a concrete manifestation of the spirit of solidarity. Psychologically, the accompaniment of church leaders with all Christians or of Christians and non-Christians helps to create trust and opens the way for religious dialogue, social dialogue, and spiritual support. Moreover, the eco-peacemakers must be experienced in accompaniment from family, teachers, parish; then they will become companions for their friends, their families, and for those threatened by the environmental crisis.

3. *Spirituality of accompaniment need to attach ecological spirituality (Eco-Spirituality)*

Eschatological character in ecological spirituality (Eco-spirituality) that is founded ultimately on the eschatological destiny of all creation to be recapitulated in Christ. God is the eschatological point of arrival of all creatures: "All creatures are moving forward with us and through us towards a common point of arrival, which is God, in that transcendent fullness where the risen Christ embraces and illumines all things" (LS 83)

Catechism should emphasize and add this eschatology in curriculum: It is important to remember that it is the whole creation, the entire physical universe, and not just humanity alone that is destined to be redeemed and transformed in Christ. Since "Jesus says: 'I make all things new' (Rev 21:5). Eternal life will be a shared experience of awe, in which each creature, resplendently transfigured, will take its rightful place and have something to give those poor men and women who will have been liberated once and for all." (LS 243)

4. *The vision of education for the Transition*

The ecological and social transform demands community education that innovative methods to both formal learning and lifelong civic engagement education. The comprehensive viewpoint given in this guide supports an education that enables each individual choose their own path for participate in and contribute to common goods. It identifies in six different pedagogical and competency axes: (1) Systems thinking - Oikos, (2) Ethics and responsibility - Ethos, (3) Changing mental models - Nomos, (4) Shared images and narratives - Logos, (5) Collective learning and action - Praxis, and (6) Sense of self and connection to others - Dunamis (Renouard, 2021).

Some Suggestions and oriented implications in Catholic education and Catechism which these orientations help train soft and hard skills for behavior, action, and for thinking as well:

1. Systems Thinking- Teach about the interconnectedness of the whole creation through biblical stewardship and ecological projects.

2. Ethics and Responsibility- Instill moral responsibility for the environment by integrating Laudato Si' and sustainable practices into catechism.
 3. Changing Mental Models- strengthening critical mindset on materialism and promote ecological conversion through retreats and lifestyle changes.
 4. Shared Images and Narratives- Use biblical stories, saints' lives, and creative expression to inspire the spirit of taking care for creation.
 5. Collective Learning and Action- Encourage hands-on ecological initiatives like eco-clubs, service projects, and advocacy for nature.
 6. Sense of Self and Connection to others- Foster a deep spiritual and communal identity through prayer, reflection, and environmental leadership.
5. *Ecological spirituality towards "change in lifestyle"*

In front of the collapse of our common home and the declining state of social relationships, "we are faced with an educational challenge" (LS 209) such as throw-away culture and excessive consumerist culture. Therefore, the way of education is the road that will lead everybody, especially young generation, to become responsible citizens of our earth. Education in general or educational activities are mainly aimed at raising awareness in students. Education not only brings knowledge to people about the living environment around them but above all, it also educates about environmental ethics, from awareness to creating a sense of responsibility in students.

Theoretical education needs to go hand in hand with vivid visual principles, especially for children and young people. Theoretical education is meaningless if it does not help children practice changing their lifestyle and holistic ecological thinking. As Pope Francis calls for a radical "change in lifestyle" which "could bring healthy pressure to bear on those who wield political, economic and social power. . . . 'The issue of environmental degradation challenges us to examine our life-style.'" (LS 206) According to Pope Francis, "There needs to be a distinctive way of looking at things, a way of thinking, policies, an educational program, a lifestyle and a spirituality which together generate resistance to the assault of the technocratic paradigm." (LS 111)

Proposing A Model of the Holistic Ecological Education

1. Inspired by Pope Francis' proposal

Pope proposes a model of holistic ecological education, which is supposed to result in integral ecological. This approach, as he describes it, has the capacity to re-establish harmony between man and nature, God and his fellow human beings: "It [holistic ecological education] seeks also to restore the various levels of ecological equilibrium, establishing harmony within ourselves, with others, with nature and other living creatures, and with God." (LS 210) This educational model requires three elements: responsibility, synodality, and religious sensitivity.

responsible members of society. Therefore, holistic ecological education as model or approach not neglect fundamental and realistic steps toward caring for the natural environment: "Education in environmental responsibility can encourage ways of acting which directly and significantly affect the world around us, such as avoiding the use of plastic and paper, reducing water consumption, separating refuse, cooking only what can reasonably be consumed, showing care for other living beings, using public transport or car-pooling, planting trees, turning off unnecessary lights, or any number of other practices" (Laudato Sí, no. 211).

Second, holistic ecological education lead to a greater sense of solidarity within human family: "It [holistic ecological education] needs educators capable of developing an ethics of ecology, and helping people, through effective pedagogy, to grow in solidarity, responsibility and compassionate care" (Laudato Sí, no. 210). holistic model help cultivate for the pupils the sense of solidarity not only among human fellows but also with all creatures.

Third, it is very important element that Education toward sustainability needs to be anchored in a profound religious sense of God's goodness and his loving presence in evolutionary process of the natural world and in human history. Since the earthly Jesus, risen and glorious, is "present throughout creation by his universal Lordship" (Col 1:19-20). Thus, students need to be educated in a balanced way in terms of social sciences and religious feelings. From there, learners will have a multidimensional and comprehensive view of the world and life.

2. Implementation for Holistic Ecological Education

In order to implement the settings for holistic ecological education, it is not lack the role of family. Schools, media, catechism, and religious formation institutions can all serve as settings that strengthen or expand ecological knowledge and sensitivity because of the family's essential role in education.

Highlighting the role of family in such ecological education, Pope Francis teaches: "in the family we first learn how to show love and respect for life; we are taught the proper use of things, order and cleanliness, respect for the local ecosystem and care for all creatures. In the family we receive an integral education, which enables us to grow harmoniously in personal maturity" (Laudato Sí, no. 213).

The context of ecological education, Pope Francis sets a goal for this: "It is my hope that our seminaries and houses of formation will provide an education in responsible simplicity of life, in grateful contemplation of God's world, and in concern for the needs of the poor and the protection of the environment" (Laudato Sí, no. 214). Implementation for holistic ecological education is not only aimed at the present stage but above all looks to the future, so this approach focuses on training groups of children and youth activists.

3. Create and Promote for Ecological Spaces of Encounters

Pope Francis propose a model of encounter that so-called the culture of encounter: "To speak of a "culture of encounter" means that we, as a people, should be passionate about meeting others, seeking points of contact, building

bridges, planning a project that includes everyone. This becomes an aspiration and a style of life.” (Fratelli Tutti, 216)

External encounter at the level of encounter begins from the social and cultural aspect, gradually moving towards interculturality in post-modern context especially in context of cities. External encounter creates mutual trust that it will move towards internal encounter, together encountering the Creator, moving towards a reconciling encounter with God as Creator, of whom Christ is the mediator and reconciler. As Amartya Sen explains that, it needs to form a culture of listening and of attentiveness to what happens to the lives of others and to the lives of ecosystems (Amartya Sen, 2025).

Thus, the ministry of the church is an instrument to create and promote for ecological spaces of encounter. The ecological space of encounter is not only for individuals, groups, and families, but also for individuals to immerse themselves in living nature, and to reconnect spiritually with the Creator. In the Asian context, especially the Church in Vietnam, the influence of the clergy and religious is respective in society. That is an advantage for them to influence the community for the younger generations. Furthermore, the clergies and religious people not only care about the Catholics but also create environmental programs that can collaborate with inter-religious friends, to build fraternity through working together to protect the environment and build a green community for everyone.

Apply A Model of Renewable Agricultural Farm

This kind of model not only for parishes or religious orders in suburban or rural areas but for benefits of urban parishes and schools.

1. Explaining on the model of Renewable agricultural farm

Children and youth who are attracted by gadgets are less likely to play outside. This causes not just a loss of connection with nature, but also direct health problems.

Parishes and religious schools do not have available ecological land space but have a budget of resources (financial, and social relationship). Meanwhile, parishes in the rural areas have ecological land space to create but lack finance and the ability to consume vast agricultural products. Therefore, based on these two needs, this model can be a space and a bridge for parishes and schools to collaborate to solve the problems: (1) consumption sources for agricultural products, (2) providing educational space for children and young people, and (3) spending the financial resources for investment in ecological technology and agriculture.

2. Setting up goals for this model- Renewable Energy+ Biodiversity Energy+ Education (RBE)

First goal: Renewable Energy

It comes from natural energy such as solar panel, wind energy, water (hydroelectric machine). The electricity is sold or using electricity for suppling farm itself.

Second goal: Biodiversity Energy (decomposition from waste)

Utilize organic waste from leaves, green waste, food, and organic fertilizer to produce bio-fertilizer. This is a reusable organic fertilizer source and does not waste bio-waste, saving costs for crops and farm animals.

Third goal: Education for youth and children through community Engagement

RBE aims to use its unique offer to engage kids in a dynamic program of education (both formal and informal) and to demonstrate how a renewable agricultural farm contributes to their life. For example, how their smart phones are charged, how a power plant works, how solar, wind, or water energy is transformed into the grid, how photosynthesis captures sunlight, and how biodiversity energy is transformed through the food chain to the well-deserved lunch.



Figure 1. Energy Biodiversity Energy Education

3. Example for RBE community and training programs

Tabel 1. Example for RBE community and training programs

Activity	Description
Ecology Team Building	Community participants such as local farmers and cooperated customers in business work with ecologists, chaplain to study and improve the RBE. Parish priests and pastoral council members work with farmers, schools, environmental experts and local businesses to specify suitable locations, models, scales, and fund-raising.
Creative Programs	Children or the youth in the school will participate in designing some recycled items, decorating, volunteering to promote the use of solar or wind powered devices as part of the RBE challenge event.

Educational Visits	Schoolchildren or kids will tour a clean power facility and understand how renewable energy is created, which will supplement their scientific education and encourage them to be responsible consumers. They will study the site's biodiversity and conduct classroom sessions as a result. They also get the opportunity to engage in experiences as farmers. These activities are designed to fit within the curriculum
Touring day	Teachers and students are asked to tour the farm, understand how energy is created, and then return to a nearby school to present their discoveries and explore ways to incorporate the facility into the classroom. Discounts for groups of instructors, students, and families...etc.
Spiritual Need	Supply the spaces for relax and spiritual reflections, towards to opening for small houses for individuals, groups, and families would to have retreats.

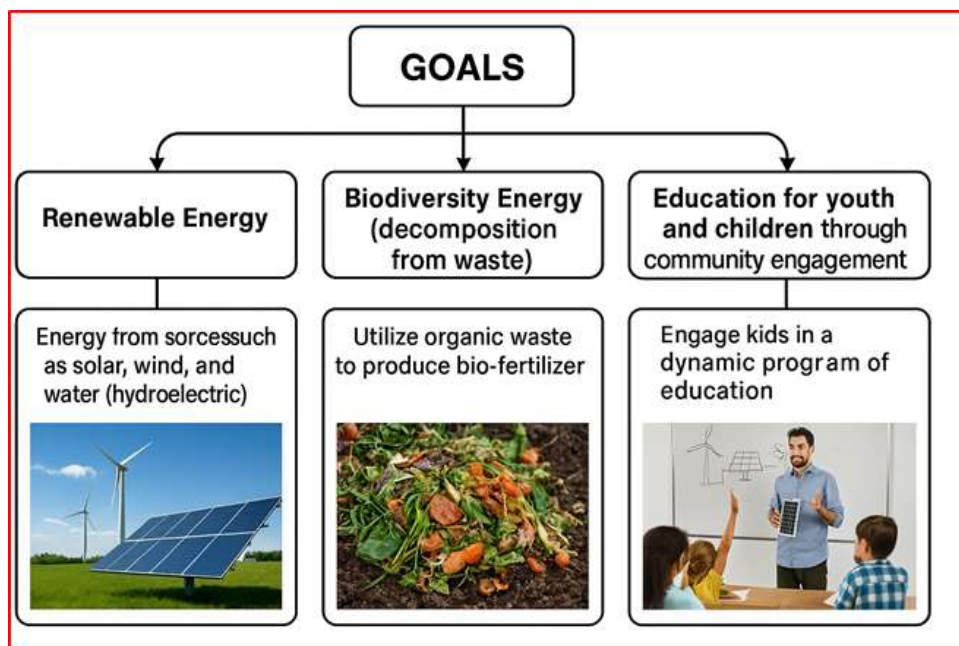


Figure 2. RBE engaging with children

RBE has the ability to provide several advantages from the land, including the generation of renewable solar energy, increased biodiversity, and the provision of a variety of ecosystem services such as soil/water/air/sunlight quality. These advantages not only help to mitigate climate change, but also aid in the adaptation of local biodiversity and agricultural productivity.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Missionary Orientation for Holistic Ecological Education as a response to the ecological conversion. Ecological education must be deeply rooted in a spirituality of accompaniment that fosters solidarity and interconnectedness among all living beings. This missionary orientation emphasizes not only knowledge but also an ecological conversion towards a transformative relationship with creation that inspired by the belief that all creatures share a common destiny in the cosmic Christ. Through spiritual accompaniment, educators and religious communities walk alongside learners, fostering trust, social dialogue, and a commitment to justice. By standing with marginalized communities and embracing ecological responsibility, this approach nurtures a sense of belonging within the web of life and empowers individuals to become agents of environmental and social transformation.

The holistic model of ecological education inspired by the ideas of Pope Francis in his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, the holistic educational model helps people have a multidimensional view of the environment, fostering the awareness that humans are part of a network of ecological diversity, Christians have the mission to awaken awareness of God's presence in creation.

RBE is the result of a combination of utilizing renewable energy sources, balancing ecological diversity and educating people. A renewable agricultural farm model provides hands-on ecological education while addressing sustainability challenges. This initiative integrates renewable energy, biodiversity conservation, and educational programs to teach children and communities about ecological responsibility. Through collaboration between urban and rural parishes, this model enhances environmental awareness and fosters sustainable living practices.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

To further this research, it is recommended to go deeper on the theme of Christocentric Ecological Conversion that explores the study of ecological conversion grounded in Christ's cosmic lordship, integrating pastoral care, liturgical renewal, and community engagement rooted in Christology.

On the Eco-Theological Christian Education theme it suggests exploring pedagogical models that integrate Christocentricity with ecological consciousness in catechesis and faith formation, inspired by *Laudato Si'* and the cosmic Christ.

Finally, expanding the Holistic Ecological Education Model requires the Research of renewable-based educational initiatives (e.g., farm schools) as hands-on platforms for ecological literacy. Emphasize collaboration between parishes and communities to promote sustainable living.

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