CREATION AS GIFT
Journey Toward the Trinity

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During my Christmas vacation in 1999, I spent some hours with concerned non-government organizations and people’s organizations in Maramag, Bukidnon, who literally took to and barricaded the streets to stop the continuous massive destruction of remaining forests by the Timber Industries of the Philippines, Inc., in the watershed reservation of Lake Lanao. The barricaders were able to hold about forty truckloads of logs from November 28 to December 10 but, unfortunately, the Philippine National Police came to disperse them and released the truckloads of logs, hurting around twenty barricaders.

Why do these things happen? Do these loggers not realize that our natural resources are fragile and limited? Our government environment agency does not have a reasonable “effective alternative except to tolerate the rapacious exploitation of our remaining forests.”¹ This lack of ecological consciousness and the ambiguous policy on the use of our natural resources are signs of irresponsibility that

¹Gaudencio B. Rosales, D.D., “Why the Church is Involved in Environmental Care,” lecture at Institute of Church and Social Issues, in Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, 1 Dec 1999.
promote ecological suicide: land degradation, land slides, reduced water quality, climate change, depletion of the ozone layer, extinction of species,\(^2\) increase of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, global warming, and eventually destruction of human beings.

Ecological awareness is still relatively new to Filipino Catholics. In 1987, in the face of poor institutional support mechanisms to protect the environment, the local Church of Malaybalay initiated a diocese-wide catechesis on forest protection. One year later, the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) decisively released a pastoral letter\(^3\) reflecting on the critical condition of our natural resources. Pope John Paul II elevated this concern in 1990 by stressing that “the ecological crisis reveals the urgent moral need for a new solidarity”\(^4\) and that the responsibility of Christians “within creation and their duty toward nature and the Creator are an essential part of their faith.”\(^5\) Convinced that this ecological movement is a positive sign of the times, I decided to write this paper which centers on creation. I believe that “theology is necessarily ecological”\(^6\) because if we really love and respect God, we must also love and respect his creation. Our belief in God the Creator fortifies our commitment to a healthy environment.


\(^3\)Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines, “What is Happening to our Beautiful Land?” (Manila, Jan 1988).


\(^6\)John Paul II, “Peace with all Creation” no. 15.
The Being of Creatures: Pilgrim Status

We are grateful for our existence and the exuberant existence of the things around us and we wonder "why is there being rather than nothing?" We are convinced that these things did not make themselves (CCC 338) and their existence is not necessary. We believe that everything that exists is created and purely a gift from the Creator (CCC 290). All created beings receive their existence from the Creator so that the absolutely primary status of every being is receptivity. As creatures, therefore, our being is "receiving" from God our Creator: without God's creative action, there would not even be a pre-existent subject of reception. Creation is a gift flowing outward from the Infinite Source, who actively produces, out of his wisdom and love, the great variety and diversity of creatures. This act is one of purely gratuitous freedom, because there is already an infinitely perfect self-communication within the very nature of God in the dynamic procession of the divine persons prior to creation.

God did not simply give creatures existence at some fixed point in time in the past. He "upholds and sustains them in being, enables them to act and brings them to their final end" (CCC 301) at every moment. Creation is a continuous act of giving existence that enables the creature to go beyond itself and become more than it was, toward a goal which is not yet fully achieved. According to Karl Rahner, evolutionary change occurs because God empowers the creatures to be what they are, and enables them to become more than they are themselves. God did not create the universe as something completed, something utterly perfect and finished forever but "cre-

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ated it in a ‘state of journeying’ (in statu viae) toward an ultimate perfection yet to be attained, to which God has destined it” (CCC 302).

In a special way, God’s plan for all human beings is “to become sharers in the divine nature” of the Father, through the Son in the Spirit (DV 2; see Eph 1:9, 2:18; 2 Pet 1:4). The final goal of evolutionary history is intimacy with God and with free human beings, “a future shared in some way by the whole created cosmos.”¹⁰ For St. Thomas Aquinas this movement to the ultimate goal is simultaneously a return home of creation back to its Source.¹¹

Creation as Temporal Analogue
of the Immanent Trinity

We observe that every creature “exists in itself” uniquely and distinctly apart from other beings. We discover, based also on repeated observation, that every created being in act is, by nature, self-communicative—either to communicate its goodness with those around it or to enrich itself to the extent that its nature allows.¹² This can be expressed metaphysically as “to be is to be substance-in-relation.”¹³ However, if we wish to discover the ultimate explanation why all being should be so, the Christian revelation that “there is one God, who is three equal and distinct Persons” (CFC 1326) sheds


¹¹St. Thomas Aquinas developed this notion of coming home of all creatures back to their Source. See note 65 of W. Norris Clarke’s Person, Being, and Ecology, edited with commentary by Rainier R.A. Ibaña (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Office of Research and Publication, 1996).

¹²See Clarke, Person, Being, and Ecology, 9-14.

light on why all creatures, as God's image, are such. All created beings are really striving to imitate and be united to the triune God as closely as their natures will allow. For Boff, the Trinity emerges as "one of the most suitable representations of the mystery of the universe"—a web of relationships and arena of interdependencies—precisely because the Trinity is the efficient, exemplary and final cause of all creatures' inner structure.

The very inner nature of the Trinity itself is an ecstatic process of self-communicating love: the Father, unoriginated possessor of the infinite fullness of the divine nature, communicates ecstatically his entire divine nature to the Son (except his Fatherhood). The Son completely receives all that the Father has given him. Then, the Father and the Son together, in a single act of mutual love, pour forth the same divine essence again in its fullness to the Holy Spirit. But the Son and the Spirit are of absolute equal ontological perfection as the Father. This circularity that inherently enwraps each person in the other—the interplay of "perichoretic relations" of love (Jn 14:11)—grounds the unity of God.15 In the words of St. Augustine, "each of the divine Persons is in each of the others, and all are in each one, and each one is in all, and all are in all, and all are only one."16 This timeless, perfect, loving self-communication within the three divine Persons is also called circumininessio, which is neatly described by Norris Clarke as a circular movement "from the Father to the Son to the Holy Spirit, then back again through the Son to the Father, in an intense, timeless, always completed yet always on-going ecstasy of inter-communion."17

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15 Ibid., 184.
16 Augustine, *De Trinitate* VI, 10, 12.
Human Being as Creation’s Companion

The human being is created in the image of God (Gen 1:27). The human person is “capable of self-knowledge, of self-possession and of freely giving himself and entering into communion with other persons” (CCC 357). Human beings are destined to fulfill this image latent within themselves and draw it out into “manifest likeness.” That is why to be an image of God is to be called to ongoing imitation of the trinitarian communion.

Moreover, human beings must recognize that they share, with all other creatures, a common origin in God’s creative action, a common journey in the ongoing story of creation and a common destiny in the New Creation. According to Denis Edwards, our contemporary scientific anthropology suggests that “human beings are part of the cosmos, part of one single history of evolution,” so that a human person can be described as the “cosmos come to consciousness of itself.” As a child of the universe, every human being is “profoundly and intrinsically interconnected with every other creature.” As an intelligent creature, the human being’s presence is indispensable to a journeying universe so that it would not remain totally unconscious of its goal.

**Excursus 1: Overcoming the Anthropocentric Attitude**

The role of human beings is to exercise God’s rule over non-human creation (see Gen 1:28). But this dominion is to be exercised

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18 Edwards, Jesus the Wisdom of God, 143.

19 Edwards, Jesus the Wisdom of God, 40. See also his other book, Jesus and the Cosmos, 40.
wisely, benevolently and responsibly as protector and shepherd of the "integrity of creation" (CCC 2415) as God is. The unique stewardship given to human beings is to be understood in terms of a relationship where they care for and preserve the gift of creation\textsuperscript{20} rather than subjugate and exploit it (see CCC 373). The Creator willed "that man should treat nature... as an intelligent and responsible administrator."\textsuperscript{21} But stewardship may still have an anthropocentric tendency in relating with nature. That is why we need to complement stewardship with a sense of "solidarity" (CCC 344) and "companionship"\textsuperscript{22} with nature, i.e., a sense of the theocentric kinship of all creation. We have to recognize that every creature, because of their relationship with God, has "intrinsic value" apart from its usefulness to humans (see CCC 339). It is true that "God created everything for man, but man in turn was created to serve and love God and offer all creation back to him" (CCC 358; see GS 12, 24, 39).

\textbf{Alienation and Disruption in Creation}

The human person is created good, endowed with genuine but finite freedom, and therefore, capable not only of rising to the heights of holiness but also of falling to the depths of sin. The price of freedom is that human beings will have the ability to inflict evil upon

\textsuperscript{20}See Bernard Anderson, \textit{From Creation to New Creation} (Minneapolis: Augsberg Fortress, 1994) 130.

\textsuperscript{21}John Paul II, \textit{Ecclesia in Asia: Post-synodal Exhortation of the Holy Father John Paul II on Jesus Christ the Savior and His Mission of Love and Service in Asia}, no. 41.

one another and the rest of creation. In the story of the Fall, we see that “sin is an abuse of the freedom that God gives to created persons” (CCC 387, see CCC 397; Gen 3:1-11). Human beings, not God, are the cause of moral evil.\textsuperscript{23}

Man declared his autonomy from the sovereign Source of his own being (see GS 13). He “transgressed his creaturely limits; he mistrusted God and willed to grasp at life himself.”\textsuperscript{24} This first sin committed by our first parents, which deprived them of their original “holiness and justice” and affected the whole of human history (see CCC 390, 401), disrupted connectedness and harmony with all things and with God’s designs and, consequently, alienation permeated the different domains of human existence. The human being became alienated from God, from himself, from his fellow human beings, and from his environment\textsuperscript{25} (see GS 13; CCC 401).

Thus, St. Paul rightly says “all creation is groaning in labor pains even until now” (Rom 8:22). In order to properly understand the reality of sin, we need to see it in relation to Jesus Christ. That is, the universality of sin asserts our absolute need for salvation, which is offered through Jesus Christ the Savior (CCC 389; ND 370-95).

**Excursus 2: The Mystery of Evil**

Traditionally, we use original sin to explain the intrusion of evil into the created order (see CCC 403, 1607), such as the suffering of both human beings and animals arising from famine, disease and death. However, we should accept that the reality of evil and suffering ultimately still remain a mystery to us in our present pilgrim state.


\textsuperscript{25}See Edwards, *Jesus the Wisdom of God*, 159. Edwards stresses that “human destruction of biodiversity is an extreme form of human sin.”
A good approach to this mystery is to view it “in terms of our interrelated ‘world-in-process’” (CFC 292) and “not from any defect in God or his creative power” (CFC 291; CCC 311). “God freely willed to create a world ‘in state of journeying’ toward its ultimate perfection” (CCC 310).

Jesus as the Summit and Center of the Plan of Creation

God, from the beginning of creation, willed the Incarnation (see Eph 1:3-6; Col 1:15-23; Jn 1:1-18). It was always God’s plan to give himself to creatures in boundless love. This love is manifested in our history in the person of Jesus Christ. God willed the Incarnation first of all as the “source, centerpoint and fulfillment” of all creation (see GS 45, LG 13, 17, 48) because creation was projected in, for, and through the Son (Col 1:16-17). The Son is the exemplary cause of all created beings. All creatures have been created in him and are marked by him. He is already present at the beginning of the universe, accompanying the evolutionary process which “blossoms when the conditions for such an event are cosmogenically in place.”26 This position is well expressed in the Scotist thesis: “Even if humans had not sinned, the Son would have become incarnate in Jesus Christ, to crown creation as decreed by the divine plan”27 from the beginning. So the Incarnation, in the divine plan, is not simply reducible to restoration of a world order destroyed by sin. Gustave Martelet points out that the immediate purpose of the Incarnation is not sin, but adoption; not redemption as such, but deification.28 It is not enough to say that Jesus Christ becomes Saviour only “in function of human

26Boff, Cry of the Earth, 178.


28Quoted by Dupuis in Who Do You Say I Am?, 147.
sin” in a “second stage” of the divine plan. God’s mind sees all things in one vision, in one plan.29

The truth that Jesus is consubstantial (homoousious) with us in his humanity, except sin (ND 614, 607; Heb 4:15), implies that Jesus is also made up of stardust and truly part of biological evolution (see D Viv 50). He belongs to the human family and “takes part in the vicissitudes of evolution.”30 However, Jesus is unlike anyone else because he is consubstantial with God in his divinity, that is, “begotten not made, one in being with the Father” (ND 7). Jesus is the Word made flesh (Jn 1:14; 2 Jn 7; 1 Jn 4:3). In becoming human, he shares and allows our nature to share in his divine nature. This “wonderful exchange” is realized, in Rahner’s terms, in the person of Jesus as both the definitive and absolute self-communication of God to the whole cosmos, and the self-transcendence of the world of matter—in its highest and final stage—reaching out to God.31

Jesus reveals the God of creation—as a caring and compassionate Abba (see Mt 6:9-15)—who makes the sun rise and sends rain upon the just and the unjust (see Mt 5:45). Even the parables of Jesus reflect a love for nature, such as the beauty of wild flowers, the growth of trees, the harvest of grain, the rising of bread, the sprouting of seed, etc. (see Lk 12:6-20, 22-27, 54-55). According to Dodd, “the sense of divinity of the natural order is the major premise of all parables.”32 Moreover, Jesus’ words and deeds reveal that God is

29See Karl Rahner, S.J., “Some Implications of the Scholastic Concept of Uncreated Grace” in Theological Investigations 1 (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1961) 319-46. He says, “We can understand creation and incarnation as two moments and two phases of the one process of God’s self-giving and self-expression, although it is an intrinsically differentiated process.”

30Boff, Cry of the Earth, 180.


on the side of human beings, wanting our well-being and happiness. By using the image of the Kingdom of God (Mt 8:11, Mk 10:5-7, 28:19), Jesus teaches us that God saves and that God is already at work in our world, liberating human beings and renewing the whole creation. Hence, we see in Jesus the ideal relationship of human beings with creation.

The radicalism of both Jesus’ message and lifestyle led him to death. His suffering and death on the cross was the consequence of his love for creation. His overflowing compassion for creation made him accept in freedom the limitation and vulnerability of such relationship (see Phil 2:6-11). His solidarity with those who suffer culminated in his very own suffering and death on the cross. His passion revealed the compassionate God who suffers with us, including those who suffered and died from the beginning of the world. According to Rahner, when Jesus’ blood was poured out over the cosmos, he actually became “what he had always been in his dignity, the very center of creation.”33 John F. Haught adds that the act of dying is a unique occasion for entering into an even deeper relationship with the Earth rather than a separation from it.34 So the death of Jesus made a radical difference. Moreover, Jesus’ descent into hell effectively extended the reach of divine love for creation to the lowest depths of negativity (see 1 Pet 4:6; CCC 634). When he resurrected from the dead, Jesus manifested the divine victory in saving all created reality and opened “the way to a new life” (CCC 654). The glorified humanity of the risen Christ, which entered into divine glory (CCC 659, 663; GS 30), is the principle and hope of creation’s future transformation and the “indispensable and permanent gateway” of creation’s union with God.35


The Spirit as Creator and Giver of Life

The Church believes that the Father creates through the Son in the Holy Spirit. "The Word of God and his Breath are the origin of the being and life of every creature" (CCC 703). St. Irenaeus affirms that the Father made all things "by the Son and the Spirit" who are his "hands." Scripture describes the Spirit as the wind sweeping over the waters at creation (see Gen 1:2; Ps 33:6) and the breath of life which sustains all things and renews the face of the earth (see Ps 104:29-30; Eccl 12:7). We attribute to the Spirit the multiplicity of beings and biodiversity. The Spirit is present in all things (see Wis 1:7). In the words of Leonardo Boff, "the Spirit dwells in the cosmos and animates the entire cosmogenic process." Moreover, as Creator-Spirit, creation reveals the unique features of the Person of the Holy Spirit as wind (Gen 1:2), water (1 Cor 12:13), fire (Acts 2:3-4), cloud and light (Ex 40:36-38), dove (Mt 3:16), hand (Acts 8:17-19), and finger (Lk 11:20).

The Gospels attribute to the Spirit the Incarnation of the Son (see Mt 1:20). The Incarnate Son received and sent the Holy Spirit. We speak of their joint mission in fulfilling God's plan of salvation (see AG 2-4). On the day of Pentecost, the Spirit is revealed as the principle of unity, overcoming our division. Our communion in the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 13:13) continually recreates us in the image of the Son.

The Holy Spirit is uncreated grace (Rom 5:5) that "introduces us into the intimacy of the Trinitarian life" (CCC 2021). The Spirit invites us to come to the Father through the Son (Gal 3:26; 4:4-7), and is the grace that "bonds" us to one another. Moreover, the community of creation "exists with one another, for one another and in one another" in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. This experience of

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36St. Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* 2, 30, 9; see CCC 292.

37Boff, *Cry of the Earth*, 170.

38Jurgen Moltmann quoted by Edwards in *Jesus the Wisdom of God*, 119.
grace in our earthly life gives us hope of a future glory—the fulfillment of human life, shared by all created realities.

**Church as Sign and Instrument of New Creation**

The being of every creature is to be in communion—horizontally and vertically—with other fellow existents. This dynamism becomes more intense in the ecclesial life of believers—a communion which is rooted in their union with Christ. This union of Christ with the Church is so intimate that without Christ, the Church “would make up a torso without the most expressive part, the head.”\(^{39}\) So the “whole Christ” (*totus Christus*) is the Church which is one with its head (see CCC 795; see Col 1:18). The Church is continually formed by the Spirit to be one “body of Christ” (see Jn 14:26). As principle of communion, the Holy Spirit continually gives birth to the Church. This joint mission of Christ and Spirit in establishing the Church stems from God’s plan to “bring everything together under Christ, as head, everything in heaven and everything on earth” (Eph 1:10). But Christ’s headship in creation (*anakephalaisis*) is not domination but self-giving love (see Eph 5:25; Col 1:20).

As the “body of Christ” united to its head, the Church has to embrace and appropriate Christ’s attitude towards creation. Concretely, Christ’s work of caring for and healing creation needs to be the Church’s work. The Church as means and sign of the eschatological kingdom, is the realizer of salvation-in-process, through the action of the Spirit, in reconciling everything in Christ. Hence, the mission of the Church is to continue the mission of God (see AG 2-4).

The Church, being an interim eschatological community, “carries the mark of this world which will pass” (LG 48) and lives in history which needs continual reformation (see UR 6). Even if some

\(^{39}\)Boff, *Cry of the Earth*, 183.
of her members have already arrived at that homeland, she as a whole is still journeying and living the tension between the already and not yet. Complete happiness is achieved only when the entire creation is in communion with God.

Sacraments and Liturgy: 
Celebration of God’s Presence in Creation

Every creature is a revelatory sign of God’s goodness and love (see Wis 13:1; Rom 1:19-20) and can and should be a “sacrament of God.” Moreover, the Incarnation penetrated all created realities and, therefore, everything is essentially holy and can be a vehicle for communion with God, and a means of grace. As embodied spirits, human beings respond and receive God’s saving actions through the use of symbols from creation (e.g., water, oil, bread, wine, candles, fire, flowers, etc.). In doing this, human beings do not only express their praise to and adoration of the Creator but unite and bring the voices of non-human creatures to God. Human beings fulfill their function as intelligent creatures by helping and joining with all non-human creatures to glorify and adore the Creator (see Gen 2:3; CCC 347).

The eucharist is the most meaningful opportunity for expressing human praise and gratitude to God for all his works and gifts of creation. In the Liturgy of the Eucharist, we acknowledge God as the source, sustainer, and goal of all creation. The whole of creation is grateful for the gift of salvation offered by Christ on the cross. As

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spiritual food, the eucharist “sustains our strength along the pilgrimage of this life” (CCC 1419; see Mk 2-3) and makes us long for eternal life (see Mt 26:29). In the face of our experience of brokenness and alienation in life, the eucharist serves as “an eschatological moment of wholeness” and the “most compact symbol of a reconciled world.”

The “bread and wine which become the Body and Blood of Christ” (CCC 1413) can be viewed as a prolongation of the Incarnation and Christ’s connection to the elements of the cosmos. Finally, the celebration of the eucharist can be seen as a foretaste of the heavenly liturgy and an anticipation of eternal life (see CCC 1326; CFC 1730-31). This experience gives us the clearest sign of our “hope in the new heavens and new earth” (CCC 1405).

The Hope of Cosmic Redemption: The Coming Home of the Whole of Creation

Our experience of the incompleteness, imperfection and temporality of the world generates hope for the future. Although “no eye has seen nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived what God has prepared for those who love him” (1 Cor 2:9), our faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ gives us a glimpse of what will happen to us in the end. Our faith gives us the assurance that death and annihilation do not have the last word. In creating us, God already freely shared with us his own divine life of love. The Father raised us from being mere creatures to being his adopted children through his Son in the Spirit.

As representative of the cosmos, Christ’s resurrection is a promise, not only of the resurrection of human beings but also of the full cosmic redemption to come (see Col 1:18-20; Acts 4:2; Jn 14:2; Rom 5:10, 8:10-11; 1 Cor 15:12-16; 2 Cor 4:14; 1 Thess 4:14; 1 Pet 1:3-5;

Rev 1:5). With Christ’s resurrection, the destiny of the world is already “decided and has already begun.” Indeed, eternal life does not begin only at the end of this life; it is already initiated in this life (see Gal 4:6-7; Col 3:3-4; 2 Cor 1:22) and will be completed in the glory of heaven (LG 48; Acts 3:21).

Revelation promises the new heaven and the new earth (Gal 6:15; 1 Cor 7:31, 15:45-49; Rom 5:15; Col 3:9; Eph 2:15, 4:22). The material world and human beings are groaning as they wait with eager longing (see Rom 8:19-23) to share the “glorification in the risen Jesus Christ” (CCC 1047). The Church teaches that our efforts to build a better world and our struggles for justice have a place in the overall plan of God. Although we are living in a passing world, our commitment to protect and build a healthy environment manifests “a vital concern for the Kingdom of God” (GS 39). Our efforts foreshadow “in some way the age which is to come” (GS 39; see CCC 1049). Dermot Lane contends that our belief in the eschaton should “commit us with a new energy and deeper zest for the cultivation of this life in virtue of the Christian promises held out for the future.”

Mary as the Paradigm of the Destiny of Creation

The immaculate conception and assumption of Mary anticipates the blessed end of the whole of creation and opens our eyes to what will eventually happen to each human person. Mary represents all creation as the first to share the resurrection of Christ and to share in the glory of God. Even when she was still on earth, Mary was “gra-

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43 Edwards, Jesus the Wisdom of God, 127.


45 Boff, Cry of the Earth, 172.

46 See Walter Brennan, “The Role of Mary in the New Creation: A New
ciously favored” (Lk 1:28) by the Father “with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places” (Eph 1:3–4; see CCC 492). The third person of the Trinity descended personally and directly over her (Lk 1:35) and made her God’s temple, sanctuary, and tabernacle in a real and genuine way (see CCC 721). She was “fashioned by the Holy Spirit and formed as a new creature” (LG 56); the Spirit sanctified her womb (see CCC 722) in order that she might “conceive the eternal Son of the Father in a humanity drawn from her own” (CCC 485). At one moment, i.e., with her fiat, the Spirit and the Word were in her (see CCC 721). Through her fiat, God’s plan of salvation for the world was accomplished. Thus the whole of creation rightly venerates her as Mother of our Savior. Finally, in her, we imitate what a creature should be and “in her we contemplate what the Church already is in her mystery on her own ‘pilgrimage of faith,’ and what she will be in the homeland at the end of her journey” (CCC 972).

Epilogue

In this paper, I stressed three key ecological insights. First, creatures share with human beings the gift of life from the Creator God. Thus, I intended to awaken awe, wonder, gratitude and empathy for all creatures. Second, creatures exist within the interrelations of love in the trinitarian communion. Consequently, I tried to enkindle a sense of interconnectedness of all creatures, human and non-human. Finally, the “assault on creation is sinful and contrary to the teachings of faith.”47 Therefore, I highlighted the relationship between the Creator God and creation, and argued for a stewardship which recognizes kinship and companionship with creation.

My reflection on these ecological insights, arose from my experience with the different environmentalist-priests in Bukidnon. I was


47CBCP, “What Is Happening to Our Beautiful Land?”
especially moved by the example of my close friend, our very own Fr. Neri Satur, who offered his precious life for the love of God's creation. His martyrdom in 1991 opened the eyes of many people and until now inspires the anti-logging barricaders in Maramag. What a challenging experience! It was then that I truly appreciated the passion of the people of Bukidnon in protecting the environment. I began to realize that one cannot be an effective pastor of the local Church of Bukidnon today without being an environmentalist, as well.

May our enthusiasm for ecological consciousness in Bukidnon radiate to and stir other local Churches. We take our cue from the Creator God who “so loved the world that He gave His only Son” (Jn 3: 16). Indeed, our Mother Earth is worth dying for.

The earth that we see... is but a beginning;
It is but a promise of something beyond it...
A world of saints and angels,
A glorious world,
The place of God,
The mountain of the Lord of Hosts,
The heavenly Jerusalem,
The throne of God and Christ....

John Henry Newman

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