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Dunamis: Jurnal Teologi dan Pendidikan Kristiani

Volume 10, Nomor 2 (April 2026)

ISSN 2541-3937 (print), 2541-3945 (online)

<https://www.sttintheos.ac.id/e-journal/index.php/dunamis>

DOI: 10.30648/dun.v10i2.1716

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Submitted: 22 Maret 2025	Accepted: 10 Juni 2025	Published: 11 Desember 2025
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## **Ruteng Diocesan Church as An Ecological Community: Practicing Ecopastoral Amid an Ecological Crisis**

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### **Abstract**

The ecological crisis threatens human life. In the face of the ecological crisis, the Church is called to be sensitive and involved in efforts to save the environment. Practicing ecopastoral is a form of the Church's involvement in saving the environment. Conducted by literature research, this article seeks to explain the ecopastoral praxis that can be applied by the Ruteng Diocesan Church as an ecological community. In order to raise the awareness of the people about ecopastoral as a joint movement, the Ruteng Diocese Church needs to integrate the local wisdom of the Manggaraians into the ecopastoral praxis. In practice, the Ruteng Diocese Church can live the ecological liturgy, ecological kerygma, and ecological diakonia as an important content of ecopastoral praxis.

**Keywords:** diakonia; eco-theology; kerygma; liturgy; local wisdom

## INTRODUCTION

Pope Francis by the Encyclical *Laudato Si'* makes the world community aware that environmental damage and the deterioration of human life are interrelated. Environmental damage affects human life. At this point, *Laudato Si'* does not only touch on environmental issues, but also touching on the issue of human dignity. It criticized the modern human mentality and the design of human power obtained from technology. It called for finding alternative ways in organizing the economy and development; the value that each creature possesses is sought; must develop a good human understanding of ecology; honest and careful deliberation must be carried out; there must be serious obligations of international and local policy; culture of abandonment and proposed healthy lifestyles. In this case, according to Pope Francis, efforts to save the environment must go hand in hand with efforts to improve the fate of the poor. As for the mission of the Church, the effort to take sides and option for the poor cannot be made without taking sides and option for creation and criticize

the rich as actors and the unfair economic system they use as a means of op-pression.<sup>1</sup>

In the local context of the Ruteng Diocese Church, for example, based on synod III in 2013-2015, three main problems in the field of ecology were found, including mining exploitation activities that destroy human life and damage the balance of the ecosystem, forest destruction due to unsustainable management, and waste problems that result in environmental pollution and interfere with human health.<sup>2</sup> In the face of an ecological crisis, the Ruteng Diocese Church must affirm its existence as an ecological community. As an ecological community, the Ruteng Diocese Church carries out a divine mandate that requires the harmony of all creation. In this context, ecopastoral is a strategic pastoral step that can be taken in striving for environmental conservation and at the same time defending others who are victims of natural exploitation.

Through ecopastoral, the Church seeks to present the Kingdom of God in human life through the preservation of created nature so that it can help the people in living

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<sup>1</sup> Alexander Jebadu, "Option for the Poor and Option for the Creation: Dua Sisi Urgen Misi Gereja Kontemporer," in *10 Tahun Karya Kepausan Paus Fransiskus Merentang Asa Di Tengah Krisis Kemanusiaan Dan Lingkungan*, ed. Maksimus Regus and Marianus Mantovanny Tapung (Ruteng: Unika St. Paulus, 2023).

<sup>2</sup> Panitia Sinode III Keuskupan Ruteng, *Dokumen Sinode III 2013-2015 Keuskupan Ruteng Pastoral Kontekstual Integral* (Yogyakarta: asdaMEDIA, 2017), 242-45.

faith with an ecological dimension.<sup>3</sup> The appreciation of faith with an ecological dimension is manifested in the action of preserving the environment and defending the fate of the poor as the subjects who suffer the most from the exploitation of nature.<sup>4</sup> In practice, ecopastoral is a joint movement of all the faithful that must start from the family as the smallest cell of the Church. What can be done in the family is to integrate ecological practices into family routines, such as saving the use of clean water, reducing the use of plastic materials, and disposing of garbage in its place. In the context of the Church's pastoral work, it is very important to pursue pastoral work based on ecology, such as liturgy, communion, teaching, and evangelism. In addition, the Church can also form a community of environmentalists, form a waste bank, and use renewable energy.

The themes of ecology and ecopastoral have become the subject of study for several academics with different focuses.

From a feminist perspective, ecology is closely related to the struggle for gender justice and ecological justice.<sup>5</sup> In the realm of pastoral practice, every parish needs to pursue ecopastoral efforts. Ecopastoral is not only motivated by the fact of environmental destruction, but further serves as a concretization of faith in God, the Creator and Sustainer of life.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, according to Petrus Tan, *Laudato Si'* offers a new perspective on deep ecology with an emphasis on the sacramental value of creation, interdependence among creations, global common good, solidarity, and ecological egalitarianism.<sup>7</sup>

Unlike the previous study, this study focuses attention on the ecopastoral Church of the Ruteng Diocese as an ecological community. The Ruteng Diocese Church lives in the context of Manggarai culture which has a lot of rich local wisdom with an ecological dimension. This article underlines the importance of integrating the wealth of local wisdom of the Manggarai community

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<sup>3</sup> Andeka K. Kalalo, Yohanes S. Lon, and Inosensius Sutam, "Pesan Ekologis Laudato Si' Dan Implikasinya Terhadap Pastoral Lingkungan Hidup Komunitas Suster DSY Di Paroki St. Pius X Mukun," in *Turut Belajar Dan Mendidik Butir-Butir Pemikiran Dan Praktik Pendidikan*, ed. Fransiska Widyawati (Ruteng: Unika St. Paulus, 2019), 199-222.

<sup>4</sup> Hugo Bayu Hadibowo, "Berpihak Pada Yang Miskin Melalui Gerakan Menanam Dan Merawat Sumber Air: Sebuah Bentuk Pastoral Ekologi Di Paroki Baturetno – Wonogiri – Jawa Tengah," *Lumen Veritatis: Jurnal Filsafat Dan Teologi* 12, no. 1 (2021): 83–112, <https://doi.org/10.30822/lumenveritatis.v12i1.1307>.

<sup>5</sup> Jean Loustar Jewadut and Benediktus Denar, "Tinjauan Kritis Terhadap Ekologi Holistik Kaum Feminis: Perspektif Teologi Gereja Katolik," *Jurnal Alternatif: Wacana Ilmiah Interkultural* 13, no. 1 (2024): 46–63.

<sup>6</sup> Benediktus Denar et al., "Ekopastoral Sebagai Respons Terhadap Masalah Lingkungan Hidup Di Paroki Santo Maximilianus Kolbe, Wukir," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Katolik (JPak)* 25, no. 1 (2025): 89–106, <https://doi.org/10.34150/jpak.v25i1.739>.

<sup>7</sup> Petrus Tan, "Mempertimbangkan Deep Ecology: Sebuah Tanggapan Terhadap Isu Perubahan Iklim Dari Perspektif Ensiklik Laudato Si Paus Fransiskus," *Gema Teologika* 10, no. 1 (2025): 107–28, <https://doi.org/10.21460/gema.2025.101.1335>.

into the ecopastoral praxis of the Ruteng Diocese Church. In addition, this article also puts forward koinonia as a model for the ecopastoral development of the Ruteng Diocese Church. As a koinonia or ecological community, the Ruteng Diocese Church can live ecological liturgy, ecological kerygma, and ecological diakonia as an important content of ecopastoral praxis.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This article is conducted by literature research. This literature research utilizes information from various books, journals, and online publications trusted entities related to the research theme to produce systematic writing on the theme. This research is written by going through the following stages: determining the focus of the discussion, looking for relevant information, studying relevant theories, studying theoretical analysis with real situations, and reaching conclusions.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### The Meaning of Ecopastoral

Ecopastoral, which boils down to harmonizing the relationship between hu-

mans and the environment, is intended to awaken a conscientiousness about the responsibility for the common good of all humans and all other creations. Harmonizing relations with the natural environment must be pursued by humans in order to realize the common good of all humans and fellow creatures. The harmonization of human relations with nature is based on the fact that humans are in a social system that includes values, ways of thinking, paradigms, knowledge, and ideologies and at the same time is in an ecosystem that includes water, soil, air, flora, and fauna. These two systems are interconnected and influence each other.<sup>8</sup> In addition, the harmonization of these relationships also starts with the awareness that the environment has value in itself and has a very important contribution to human survival so that it must be protected from various acts of destruction. That is why, ecopastoral is not only concerned with technical issues, but also includes efforts to instill values through education. In this context, ecopastoral is the Church's effort to carry out the cultural mandate that has begun since God gave the mandate to Adam and Eve to keep and preserve His creation.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Yusup Rogo Yuono, "Melawan Etika Lingkungan Antroposentris Melalui Interpretasi Teologi Penciptaan Sebagai Landasan Bagi Pengelolaan-Pelestarian Lingkungan," *Fidei: Jurnal Teologi Sistematis Dan Praktika* 2, no. 1 (June 18, 2019): 186–206, <https://doi.org/10.34081/FIDEI.V2I1.40>.

<sup>9</sup> Kalis Stevanus, "Pelestarian Alam Sebagai Perwujudan Mandat Pembangunan: Suatu Kajian Etis-Teologis," *Kurios: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pendidikan Agama Kristen* 5, no. 2 (2019): 94–108.

Ecopastoral with the involvement of Christians to maintain the integrity of creation is not solely motivated by the fact of environmental damage, but more so as a concretization of faith in God as the Creator and Keeper of life. In this case, faith in God has an ecological dimension. On that basis, various forms of ecopastoral activities should be derived from the love of God who created and wants the harmony of all creation.<sup>10</sup> From the beginning, God created everything in order to form a fellowship. In creation, the world as a cosmos precedes man who was created on the sixth day, after all others were created. This means that humans become newcomers in a fellowship that must live an attitude of appreciation for the cosmos. On the seventh day God does not bless any particular creature but presents Himself in communion with the whole of creation. This is the purpose of all creation. On the seventh day, each creation reaches the fullness of its meaning, that is, enter harmonious communion with all other creations.<sup>11</sup>

According to Keraf, in practice, ecopastoral carries a change in concept related to three important aspects of the Christian faith life. First, ecopastoral offers a change

in the concept of salvation. This means that salvation does not wait to happen in heaven (eschatology) but begins on this earth. The salvation is also not what liberation theology offers, like liberation and salvation from the shackles of poverty, backwardness, human exploitation, and injustice. The important thing that must also be pursued is the safety of mother earth and human life here and now.

Second, ecopastoral proposes a change in the concept of sin. Sin is not always understood conventionally, meaning it is only related to the destruction of man's relationship with God and man with man. More broadly, human life behaviour that is exploitative and considers nature as just a tool to satisfy economic interests must also be seen as a sin. In this case, the consequences of ecological sin are no less horrifying than conventional sins because they threaten the integrity of the earth and life in it.

Third, ecopastoral wants a change in the concept of repentance. It is not only repentance in the conventional sense, namely the restoration of human relations with God and human beings with others. No less important is the restoration of human rela-

<sup>10</sup> David Eko Setiawan and Silas Dismas Mandowen, "Pendekatan Pastoral Terhadap Pelestarian Hutan," *HUPERETES: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pendidikan Kristen* 2, no. 2 (2021): 96–108, <https://doi.org/10.46817/huperetes.v2i2.51>.

<sup>11</sup> Adrianus Sunarko, "Perhatian Pada Lingkungan. Upaya Pendasaran Teologis," in *Menyapa Bumi Menyembah Hyang Ilahi. Tinjauan Teologis Atas Lingkungan Hidup*, ed. Adrianus Sunarko and Eddy A. Kristiyanto (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2008).

tions with nature through ecological conversion. Ecological conversion must be manifested in a concrete change in behaviour towards nature.<sup>12</sup>

### **Integration of Local Wisdom into the Ecopastoral Praxis of the Ruteng Diocese Church**

The Ruteng Diocese Church must always be open to explore the rich value of local wisdom owned by the Manggaraians. The local wisdom of the Manggaraians contains a wealth of meanings that are useful for life. Local wisdom contains spiritual values that can accommodate the spiritual needs of the community. In addition, local wisdom can also play a stimulating function for social solidarity as well as artistic, historical, magical mythical, and ecological functions. The application of local wisdom values can be one of the strategic steps to strive for an aesthetic experience of nature while realizing ethical responsibility for the environment.

The integration of local wisdom in ecopastoral discourse and praxis is one of the efforts that can be pursued by the Ruteng Diocese Church. The local wisdom of the Manggaraians is a fundamental and essential value in the implementation of ecopastoral. There are three main considerations.

First, the model of integration of local wisdom in ecopastoral promoted by the Ruteng Diocesan Church can strengthen the sense of rooting in God's people. In this case, the integration of local wisdom in ecopastoral discourse and praxis will help the Manggaraians to understand the richness of culture and maintain their connection with the values and wisdom of life that have been passed down from generation to generation. By integrating elements and values of local wisdom in ecopastoral, the Ruteng Diocese Church has become an increasingly cultured Church.

Second, the integration of local wisdom in ecopastoral discourse and praxis can help increase the participation of God's People in preserving the environment. Because such ecopastoral discourse and praxis will definitely be more contextual and relevant to the conditions and needs of the local community. Contextual and relevant because in essence local wisdom is tied to one specific locality, namely the community of people who live it. Local wisdom is tied to a certain locus so that it truly articulates the wisdom that is typical of a particular place and culture. In this context, the integration of local wisdom in ecopastoral discourse and praxis, in addition to bringing God's People closer

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<sup>12</sup> Alexander Sonny Keraf, "Krisis Ekologi Dan Ancaman Kehidupan" (Ruteng, 2024), 10-20.

to the context of their lives, can also strengthen the relationship between the Church and the surrounding communities, especially indigenous communities that live the values of local wisdom. This effort will create a space for indigenous peoples to participate in the ecopastoral discourse and praxis promoted by the Church. This space can give birth to a pastoral ecosystem of a more contextual, dynamic, and relevant environment.

Third, the integration of local wisdom in ecopastoral discourse and praxis is closely related to the process of inculturation. In addition to the fact that ecopastoral must be inspired by theological-biblical teachings, ecopastoral must also base itself on the local cultural context of the community. In this case, contextual ecopastoral grounding is becoming increasingly urgent. Contextual ecopastoral is an ecopastoral that gives appreciation to the local wisdom of the community. In ecopastoral, inculturation is also a necessity. Inculturation is understood as a dynamic and continuous process of encounter between the Gospel and culture marked by the revelation of the Gospel into socio-political and religious-cultural situations. The incarnation of the Gospel into the con-

text of the lives of the people has transformative power to the context and lives of the local people. One of the important points in the sense of inculturation is that the transformation of life occurs because of the inculturation of the lives of the faithful according to the context of their culture, and that it must also increase the Church's understanding the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world.<sup>13</sup>

The involvement of the Ruteng Diocese Church to integrate the wealth of local wisdom into ecopastoral discourse and praxis has made the Church further enriched through various cultural values in which the local Church grows. Thus, true ecopastoral must take the good and authentic elements of a culture, permeate and refine them with the spirit of the Gospel and integrate them in pastoral discourse and praxis.<sup>14</sup> In this way, the Church will know and reveal the mystery of Christ even better, while continuing to be moved for continuous understanding. Only then can God's People truly live the gospel as something familiar. In this case, the Church is expected to be able to attract everyone to enter into a process of continuous change.

<sup>13</sup> Emanuel Pranawa Dhatu Martasudjita, "Inkulturasikan Dan Tata Perayaan Ekaristi 2020: Gambaran Berinkulturasikan Dalam Konteks Indonesia," *Studia Philosophica et Theologica* 22, no. 2 (2022): 159–80, <https://doi.org/10.35312/spet.v22i2.441>.

<sup>14</sup> Resa Dandirwalu, J. B. Banawiratma, and Daniel K. Listijabudi, "Berteologi Kontekstual Dari Sasi Humah Koin Di Fena Waekose – Pulau Buru," *DUNAMIS: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pendidikan Kristiani* 5, no. 2 (April 25, 2021): 408–25, <https://doi.org/10.30648/DUN.V5I2.502>.

The transformation of the Church should be formulated as an effort to build a good life of God's People through the Church's real involvement in the world. The Ruteng Diocese Church through ecopastoral should strive for a spirit of service that is directed to the value of transforming life together and preserving the environment. The integrity of this transformation should be built through the right living according to the God's Word and expressed with appreciation for the richness of local wisdom of a certain culture. With it, the Church's mission in the field of ecology answers the demand that it is the responsibility of all members of the Church. The concretization of the Church's ecological mission is the fulfillment of the Church's missionary character as God's co-worker in *missio Dei*.<sup>15</sup>

### **Koinonia as a Model for Ecopastoral Development of the Ruteng Diocese Church**

Ecopastoral is a program of all the God's People of the Ruteng Diocese Church, not just the cloaked people. On this basis, ecopastoral development must prioritize the koinonia of friendship between the clergy

and the laity. Koinonia friendship promotes egalitarian and non-dominating values between the clergy and the laity. In this case, the concept of friendship koinonia is a concept that is counterpart to the concept of koinonia which tends to have a clerical feudal character. Koinonia, with its clerical feudal character, prioritizes a communion mechanism that gives the clergy the privilege to define the pastoral realm. The result is the creation of an imbalance in pastoral roles between the clergy and the laity.<sup>16</sup>

The Ruteng Diocese Church lives in a multireligious environment characterized by the fact that Catholic Christianity is the majority religion. In this context, the Ruteng Diocese Church must recognize the fact of religious diversity and build cross-border relations without making differences based on the consideration of majority and minority religions.<sup>17</sup> The public involvement of the Ruteng Diocese Church became more meaningful as far as it became a means of communion with followers of other religions. The life dialogue between the Ruteng Diocese Church and followers of other religions plays an important role in promoting

<sup>15</sup> Grets Janialdi Apner, "Gereja Eko-Misional: Sebuah Tawaran Teologi Misi Ekologi Berdasarkan Eko-Hermeneutik Terhadap Kejadian 1:27 Dan 2:15," *Dunamis: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pendidikan Kristen* 7, no. 1 (2022): 171–83, <https://doi.org/10.30648/dun.v7i1.659>.

<sup>16</sup> Jean Loustar Jewadut and Fransiska Rosari Nirmala, "Peran Komunitas Basis Gerejawi Bagi

Efektivitas Pelaksanaan Karya Pastoral Partisipatif Dan Kontekstual," *JPAK: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Katolik* 23, no. 2 (2023): 10–26, <https://doi.org/10.34150/jpak.v23i2.504>.

<sup>17</sup> Felix Wilfred, "Religious Freedom in Asia," *Concilium* 1 (2018): 15–26.



environmental conservation efforts. Life dialogue is a valuable opportunity to share knowledge, experiences, values, and then work together to realize concrete steps to preserve the environment.<sup>18</sup>

Interreligious koinonia is not only limited to the participation of other religious communities in the implementation of tourism (environmental) festivals that are momentary. No less important is that the koinonia must be able to instill religious, moral, and cultural values to strengthen the fortress of self-defense of the people in responding to the pace of development that often ignores local wisdom and the fate of indigenous people. In addition, the interreligious koinonia also seeks to provide public enlightenment about the advantages and disadvantages of development, including tourism development and fighting for the fate of marginalized communities in an increasingly super premium pace of development. In this context, according to Stackhouse, the Church is responsible for the formulation of a new social gospel in the form of public theology. Public theology leads the Church to have public significance.<sup>19</sup>

The koinonia model that supports ecopastoral development efforts in the Diocese of Ruteng is a koinonia that contains the values of sacramentality, solidarity, subsidiarity, and liberation. First, koinonia of sacramental value. That is, koinonia which believes that all forms of pastoral work pursued by the Ruteng Diocese Church are a form of participation in the work of God who wants salvation for all creation. In addition, the sacramental value of koinonia also believes that everything in the universe is good with the characteristics of needing and respecting each other.<sup>20</sup>

Second, koinonia which is worth solidarity. The value of solidarity comes from the love of God that is manifested in the event of the incarnation. The emptying of Jesus is a form of radical solidarity with human life. In all of His ministry works, Jesus lived the spirit of solidarity with humanity, especially with those who are suffering and in need of help. Guided by the principle of solidarity of Jesus, the koinonia of the Ruteng Diocese Church as an effort to develop ecopastoral must also show solidarity with the community (people) whose natural wealth

<sup>18</sup> Anthony Le Duc, *Religious Self-Cultivation and Environmental Flourishing A Humanistic Relational Approach* (Germany: Franz Schmitt Verlag, 2024), 186-87.

<sup>19</sup> Frederike Van Oorschot, "Making Public Theology Operational: Public Theology and the Church," *International Journal of Public Theology* 13, no. 2

(2019): 203–26, <https://doi.org/10.1163/15697320-12341572>.

<sup>20</sup> Bayu Kaesarea Ginting, "Koinonia: Respon Gereja Atas Krisis Ekologi," *DUNAMIS: Jurnal Penelitian Teologi Dan Pendidikan Kristiani* 7, no. 1 (2022): 184–204, <https://doi.org/10.30648/dun.v7i1.661>.

is taken away by the government in order to pass development projects. By showing partiality and solidarity, the people will feel greeted, strengthened, and more critical in selecting development programs from the government that are pros and cons to community welfare and environmental integrity.

Third, *koinonia* which has a subsidiarity value. The value of subsidiarity requires the provision of responsibility to institutions that are in a lower position to running programs without having to be dictated and dominated by institutions with higher positions. In the life of the church, for example, the principle of subsidiarity is realized when the diocese does not take care of what can be done by the diocese, the diocese does not annex the tasks that can be done by the parish, the parish does not take over the work of the territory, and the territory does not take over the work that can be done by the Ecclesiastical Base Community (KBG).<sup>21</sup> *Koinonia* as a model of ecopastoral development in the Diocese of Ruteng with subsidiarity value can be seen through the PAF (publication, animation, and facilitation) assistance model for groups of environmentalists in the parish who already have a group structure, governance, and responsible persons. Through publication, parishes can use

social media to publicize the group's activities. Through animation, the parish gives spiritual strength to the group through recollection activities and eucharistic celebrations. Through facilitation, parishes can facilitate cooperative relationships between the group and other groups, such as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the field of the environment with a wider network.

Fourth, *koinonia* that is worth liberation. This means that *koinonia* as a model of ecopastoral development in the Ruteng Diocese is directed at the project of liberating the community from the shackles of development that harasses the noble dignity of human beings, which tarnishes the nobility of Manggarai's cultural wisdom, and that damages the environment. The liberating *koinonia* reinforces the common awareness that social and ecological injustice is not a fate that must be taken for granted, but is caused by the actions of people or structures and therefore its resistance requires progressive joint action. On that basis, the Ruteng Diocese Church must be open to building cooperation with all people with good intentions to save the fate of the environment. In this context, the Ruteng Diocese Church has become an eco-social community characterized by a dialogical and cooperative

<sup>21</sup> John Mansford Prior, "Antara Monarki Dan Demokrasi: Melacak Jejak Laku Hierarki Gereja 40 Tahun Terakhir," in *Allah Menggugat Allah*

*Menyembuhkan*, ed. Paulus Budi Kleden, Otto Gusti Madung, and Anselmus Meo (Maumere: Ledalero, 2012).

attitude in fighting for the fate of others and the environment.

### **Concrete Steps of Ecopastoral**

This study offers concrete ecopastoral steps that can be carried out with a basic pattern that refers to the Church's duties, namely ecological liturgy, ecological kerygma, and ecological diakonia.

### ***Ecological Liturgy***

The liturgy of the Church must be embodied in worship that not only establishes the relationship between man and God but also adds an explicit ecological aspect.<sup>22</sup> Through the liturgy, God is present to greet and sanctify all creation. Liturgy as a celebration of the meeting between God and all creation is seen in the aspect of the use of natural symbols in liturgical activities. The water used in baptism, the oil used in the celebration of Christmas and ordination, and the bread and wine in the Eucharist are symbols of nature that are the means of God's presence in the midst of His people.

Ecological liturgy is not only understood as the use of more natural elements in the liturgy and also not just the use of ecological themes in the liturgy. More deeply,

ecological liturgy means the celebration of the universal brotherhood of creation that prostrates itself before the Creator and thus participates in the communion of the love of the Triune God. In the brotherhood of the universe, humans open themselves to learning and drawing inspiration from other creations.

Man meets God and realizes the sanctity of life no longer by distancing himself from the world (*Fuga Mundi*), but by entering the world and relating harmoniously with humans and the created nature. Saint Francis of Assisi lived a form of cosmic holiness by contemplating God and His majesty in nature with all the components in it that are the sacraments of God and Christ. The appreciation of the holiness and cosmic spirituality of Saint Francis of Assisi is an attempt to revitalize the values in the Christian tradition, namely the encounter with God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit in creation.<sup>23</sup>

To increase the people's love for nature and their willingness to gain inspiration from nature, in the recollection activities of the people in each parish, nature meditation can be made. Nature and all its contents can not only be enjoyed by humans to meet their physical needs but can be meditated so that

<sup>22</sup> Yusak Budi Setyawan, "The Church as an Ecological Community: Practising Eco-Ecclesiology in the Ecological Crisis of Indonesia," *Ecclesiology* 17, no. 1 (2021): 91–107, <https://doi.org/10.1163/17455316-bja10009>.

<sup>23</sup> Peter C. Aman, "Teologi Ekologi Dan Mistik-Kosmik St. Fransiskus Asisi," *Diskursus - Jurnal Filsafat Dan Teologi* 15, no. 2 (2016): 188–208, <https://doi.org/10.26551/diskursus.v15i2.11>.

it becomes a way to enter into silence and silence for the sake of encounter with God. Nature meditation is one of the meditation techniques that is done in relation to the objects of the universe. Nature meditation makes humans realize that natural wealth is not only an object to satisfy the needs of human life, but a means to learn and gain inspiration for life. Nature meditation provides a blessed opportunity for humans to fully realize the greatness of God seen through the nature of His creation and to experience God's unconditional and limitless love.

### ***Ecological Kerygma***

The Ruteng Diocese Church can carry out ecological kerygma through catechesis activities with the theme of ecology at the parish level up to Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC). Ecological catechesis aims to foster a reawakening of the human duty to guard, care for, and preserve the natural environment.<sup>24</sup> Ecological catechesis can be applied in two ways. First, ecological catechesis in direct contact with the people. In its implementation, pastoral ministers can visit the people in each Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC) to hold catechesis. In cate-

chesis, in addition to pastoral ministers delivering the catechesis materials that have been prepared, believers need to be given space and time to testify about their experience of faith in God that is met with the reality of their daily lives, especially the reality of the environment around them.

Contextual catechesis can be manifested according to the background and customs of a particular local Church. For the context of the local Church of the Diocese of Ruteng, contextual catechesis can be carried out, one of them, with a pattern of *lonto leok*. For the Manggaraians, *lonto leok*, it has two important meanings, namely, to unite words and unite steps. For this reason, *lonto leok* who are able to unite the aspirations of different participants, and they are encouraged to step together to realize the aspirations that have been agreed. In the process, catechesis *lonto leok* goes through three stages, namely the stage of exposing the problem, assessing the problem in the light of the Holy Scriptures and the teachings of the Church, and solving the problem.<sup>25</sup>

Second, ecological catechesis with the use of digital media (online). In the era of information and communication technology

<sup>24</sup> Tetty Novitasari Simbolon et al., "Mendorong Pertobatan Ekologis Berdasarkan Ensiklik Laudato Si Lewat Katekese Ekologis Di Paroki Salib Suci Ngabang Keuskupan Agung Pontianak," *Amare* 2, no. 2 (2023): 62–67, <https://doi.org/10.52075/ja.v2i2.185>.

<sup>25</sup> Agustinus Manfred Habur, "'Model Lonto Leok Dalam Katekese Kontekstual Gereja Lokal Manggarai,'" *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan Missio* 8, no. 2 (2016): 217–26.

development, digital media has become a new forum for evangelization works. The Church realizes that the presence of digital media not only brings challenges but also provides new opportunities for the Church to make her proclamation work up to date with the times. The ecological context in the digital era can be concretely created through the use of websites, social media, and personal and community blogs. Through these media, the Church can carry out the work of preaching without having to preoccupy herself with the problems of distance, time, and cost.

### ***Ecological Diakonia***

So far, diakonia has been understood only as the Church's service of love to the weak and poor. The concept and concrete action of diakonia must be deepened in the form of environmental care and conservation. The human diakonia must be expanded with ecological diakonia. Ecological diakonia seeks to uphold justice, peace, and the integrity of creation. The ecological diakonia's efforts are based on a view that sees and treats nature as friends and brothers, as dynamic and harmonious dialogue partners in relations with interdependent subjects as one universal family. Ecological diakonia also requires the use of nature by everyone, including by the next generation. The consequence is that efforts to manage

natural resources must pay attention to environmental sustainability.

In the agricultural sector, for example, ecological diakonia can be realized through sustainable agricultural management efforts by prioritizing the use of organic fertilizers. In addition, it is necessary to explore and rediscover agricultural practices that are based on local wisdom that highly values the integrity of the environment. Such governance, although it seems less economically profitable, can ensure the sustainability of agriculture across generations. In this case, the principle applies that an economy that respects the environment will not place profit maximization as its only goal because the protection of the environment cannot be guaranteed solely based on financial calculations regarding costs and profits. This means that the environment, including sustainable agriculture, cannot be protected by capital and the market, but by human goodwill to love and preserve the natural environment.

It is also undeniable that ecological problems are also political issues that include how environmental sustainability is pursued through community participation, as well as social and economic institutions. Public policy is one of the keys to ecological change. In the context of ecological diakonia, the Ruteng Diocese Church needs to

involve itself in the public sphere to encourage environmentally friendly political policies. To guide the development of public policy establishment on ecological issues, the Church needs to develop public theology.<sup>26</sup> The spearhead of Christian public theology is the Church because the voice of the Church has a significant influence on the determination of public policy. All the Church's efforts through prophetic criticism and advocacy will only be effective if she is able to break free from the grip of the ideology of capitalism that oppresses society and damages the environment.

## CONCLUSION

The church is a means to continue God's missionary work. God's missionary work is not only aimed at saving man but also saving all other creations. God's offer of salvation is integral and holistic because it encompasses all of His creation. For this reason, the Church has the task of striving for the harmony of all creation through ecopastoral praxis. In order to raise the awareness of the people about ecopastoral as a joint movement, this study assert that the Ruteng Diocese Church needs to integrate the local wisdom of the Manggaraians into the ecopastoral praxis of the church. In practice, the Ruteng Diocese Church can

live the ecological liturgy, ecological ke-rygma, and ecological diaconia as an important content of ecopastoral praxis.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This article is the result of collaboration with the second, and third author. I would like to thank the second and third authors who have contributed their thoughts on ecopastoral discourse and praxis in the Church.

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