CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO ECOLOGICAL CHALLENGES

A REAPPRAISAL OF THE CHRISTIAN NOTION OF STEWARDSHIP AS A SUSTAINABLE HERMENEUTICAL KEY TO ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

LUKE POOTHRUKAYIL

Oriental Institute of Religious Studies, India
St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Kottayam - 686 010
Kerala, India.
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Human being is an ecological being. He lives in an ecological world where all beings, organic and inorganic, are interrelated and interconnected. The misinterpretation of dominion concept, dichotomical view of nature and technology etc. made, consciously or unconsciously a disequilibrium in the integrity of the universe. Heideggar wrote: Modern man has lost the habit of inhabiting the earth. This phenomenon has called the attention of scientists, politicians, religious leaders, naturalists to restore the original integrity of the creation. Hence ecology is developed as a scientific discipline. It is our task to study how to rejuvenate our home earth *habitable.*

It was really fortunate of me to have received the whole hearted support and encouragement of my Bishop Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry in this endeavour of mine and I am filled with gratitude to him. I am also grateful to the congregation of the oblates of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of which I am a member. My heart fills with gratitude to my professor and promoter Dr. Je De Tavernier without whose help this book would never materialize. I am thankful to the Professors, Administrative Staff and Library Staff of the faculty of Theology, Catholic University, Leuven, Belgium.

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Luke Poothrukayil

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FOREWORD

"Christian Response to Ecological Challenges" by Luke Puthrukayil is indeed a novel attempt to develop the necessary theoretical and theological rationale as well as foundations for the treatment of our ecosystem essentially as part of the totality of nature of which man is a part. It needs to be said that historically man became capable of developing some theoretical basis (often with the backing of some fundamental theology) for the treatment of nature as if the whole nature is subservient to the needs of man however unecological these needs might be. It is true that "we stand today before a wounded creation that suffers under the distorted conditions that are the aftermaths of the distortion of the life of humanity." In man's selfishness and greed he has pathetically exploited and brought under subjugation the best of God's creation in nature so much so that this has now begun destroying the very basis of his biological existence on this earth.

Against the very goal of God's creation of nature to reflect His glory and to enable man to share in that glory, we have instead turned against it in a fiendish attitude and gave effect to what we shall call an ecological crisis of alarming dimensions. We have begun a systematic exploitation of natural resources of all kinds and the root-level destruction of nature itself under the pleasant name of 'development'. several Theologians have found reasons to accuse Jewish and Christian belief as the basis for the totally negative attitude to nature: "The roots of our ecological crisis lies in Judeo-Christian belief in man, being made in God's image, is set apart from nature and that the entire nature was brought into being for human benefit and rule." The belief that nature and its components exist only for the cause of serving the interests of man is based on that. He has the dominion over nature in such a way that nature is deprived of any sense and nobility of its own. Modern science and technology made use of this platform as the spring-board for the econocentric exploitation of the earth to the point of annihilation of the ecological balance.

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Today we recognise that we have made a mistake of alarming proportions: Civilised man has marched across the face of the earth and has left a desert in his footprints." We have come to see that nature should not be thought of an enemy to be subdued, but in terms of a responsible partner to be respected and cared for. If both the world and mankind are created and have their origin in the same source, it would mean that man endowed with reason must go as far as to respect the dignity of creation and the integrity and value of the created beings.

The misuse and misappropriation of nature have forced a fresh understanding of nature and its role in human development towards the second half of twentieth century. This has been the basis for the present-day understanding of the concept of stewardship. The concept of stewardship necessarily implies the protection of nature by man who is endowed with an intellect to oversee the organisation and functioning of the world around him. This would mean preservation of whatever has been hither to, part of the world around him without destroying anything at the grassroot level. We know that some species of animals and birds have disappeared from this earth due to the atrocities man has often done on nature.

The concept of stewardship would again mean promotion of the kind of environment adequate enough for the enrichment of all forms of nature. Man is a microcosm in which all other forms of creation are found existentially realised. He is a being that can exist only in a community of other men as well as in an environment enriched by other parts of nature. This coexistence cannot realise in any of its modalities unless man finds himself and gets accommodated amidst the various forms of infra-human creation.

In other words the concept human stewardship becomes quite fundamental while dealing with nature. Man becomes the image of God in the process of creation and preservation. Thereby man has assumed the role of representing God on earth. Imaging God is actually stewarding God. By sharing in this responsibility man has become the co-creation. The notion and responsibility of ecological stewardship is based on this foundation. The present work assumes stewardship as a covenant

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which safeguards the totality of being with all its intrinsic and instrumental relation to him and the environment. Stewardship means authority over animals and plants, not for their destruction but to perpetuate the intense relationship that exists between man and animals. Here the role of man comes as a custodian of animals. We are given the stewardship of the Land, the earth. Man is created from the soil and thereby man is essentially made part of the earth. Man has the responsibility to preserve the species on earth. The Church is called to join hands with the ecologists and the environmentalists to emphasise this role of stewardship of man. This is brought about as a great responsibility against the problems that we are facing today.

Fr, Luke Puthrukayil has clearly and systematically brought out the Christian understanding of the ecological problems and the magisterial stand on them. The Catholic Church always has tried to think according to the times and to review her positions/outlooks and update them. This work of Fr. Luke is an outstanding example in this regard. This is a new branch of Theology and this needs to be developed in all dimensions and in all details.

In Indian thinking, the mother Earth is *Bhoomi Devi* (Goddess) and we are her children. The world is macrocosm and we are microcosms, formed out of the five basic elements (Air, water, ether, fire and earth) in different combinations and permutations. Hence we are only a part of the nature. The Lord is the real Master and Owner of the whole creation (Lev. 25, 23; Hos. 2, 10). The Lord wants to preserve it. The Earth is God-betrothed. God has covenated her to Himself. This is God's pledge: 'as long as the earth lasts, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease to be'. This covenant covers Noah and his posterity and every living creature of the earth. (Gen. 8,21-22). The pact is that never again will there be a flood to destroy the Earth. God's rainbow is set in the clouds as a sign and sacrament of this covenant between God and His creation. Heuce Man, the crown of 'God's creation is still only a part of creation. Perhaps man can be called a steward. Gandhiji calls man a Trustee.

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Let us do our part and play our role as faithful Steward and a responsible Trustee to beautify, to improve and to perfect God's creation.

We congratulate Fr. Luke for the initiatives he has taken to direct his studies and Research in this new and important area which should be developed much more. Let this be a good beginning in that series. We are sure, this book will attract the attention of millions. Best wishes.

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AN APPRECIATION

The concept of environmentalism has merged as a major concern during the past three decades. Understanding of nature and ecological problems constitute a core area of discussion not only of environmentalists but politicians, economists, theologians and technologists as well. It is ultimately man and his attitude in the use of nature and technology that are the roots of ecological problems. Therefore, there is an increasing recognition that many problems of human biology and many sociological problems are basically ecological. The problems have been created or developed due to the different perceptions of the environment down through the centuries ranging from the nomadic to the current technocratic world. The 'new ecology' emerged with environment, men, culture, society and human activities constituting the ecosystem.

To understand the soul of nature an integrated scientific and theological approach is needed. The book "Christian Response to Ecological Challenges" of Fr. Luke Poothrukayil is a bold attempt to reveal the biblical interpretation of nature, the spirituality embodying it and the role of man as a responsible steward. The Christian theology of nature from the Apostolic times to the twentieth century has been vividly discribed and gives greater insight into the philosophical and theological foundation for the treatment of environment within a biblical, anthropological and sociological perspective.

Lynn White's proposition that "the roots of our ecological crisis lies in Judeo-Christian belief that man, being made in God's image, is set apart from nature and that the entire physical creation was brought in to being for human benefit and rule" is not the real interpretation. In fact, the resemblance of God's image and likeness in human beings involves a divine relationship

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and not a possession of divine authority. This relationship is not only limited to human beings and God but also to plants, animals and Earth. Man's image of God means he is the representative guardian, responsible steward and intimate companion of a world which is not his own creation, his duty is to look after and conserve the animate and the inanimate beings bringing about ecological balance. This stewardship model brought forth in this book has due relevance and significance to understand man's role in nature. The indepth study made by Fr. Luke Poothrukayil on the subject and his deep insight on the spirituality of environment has given an academic dimension to the book. I am sure that the book will invoke a meaningful discussion in this emerging area of ecological discourse.

Prof. K. P. Joy,
Principal, Baselius College
Kottayam.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Ecology and ecological concerns are a much discussed issue in the contemporary theological arena. The concern for the nature has been aroused by the fear that if the present trend of exploiting the nature continues unhindered, within a short span the world will be deprived of essential elements of sustenance. Due to the threats that humankind has to face, there arose an attempt to treat the environment as a partner of human life so much so that an ethical consideration of the ecology became necessary. Since, the whole issue circumscribes a new way of life and human relation to the created world the issue is more ethical and theological than biological. Considering the ecological concern as an ethical question we try in this study to provide a model of stewardship as the best one to the present day problems. It is true that many environmentalists tried to search out the causes for the present situation. Since the publication of Lynn White's article in 1967 "On the Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis", the charge is made that Christianity is excessively human centered. Extreme anthropology constituted a major obstacle to cherishing our planet as an oikos, a common home, for the teeming variety of interdependent species. They came to the conclusion that it was not individual isolated events that depleted the earth of its resources but a philosophy of life that motivated the generations to adopt a utilitarian attitude to the environment. Till 1970's we have claimed that nature is ours. Today we realize that we also belong to nature. "Civilized man has marched across the face of the earth and has left a desert in his footprints".

The more we depend on technology, the more we are thrown into the environmental crisis: The scientific achievements that related humankind from the claws of poverty, hunger and disease have now become the most lethal weapon threatening the very human survival. In order to cure the world the whole

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philosophy of life rooted in the wrong understanding of dominion given to humankind at creation which is the corner stone of Judeo Christian tradition that is to be changed. Whether this accusation of some of the environmentalists are true to facts is an important question to be addressed. We see that a close analysis of the biblical narratives would clarify that dominion is to be interpreted not in terms of subduing an enemy, but in terms of responsible partner. If both the world and mankind are created and have their origin in the same source, it deems that human beings endowed with reason and intellect must respect the integrity and value of the co-created beings. This is the implication of the mandate given at creation from a contextual study of the biblical narrative of creation. Having this as our prime motive we try to present our enquiry in three chapters.

In the first chapter we try to present the gravity of the present vulnerable situation. The word ecology comes from the biological science of the natural environmental communities and we examine how these natural communities function to sustain a healthy web of life and how they become disrupted causing death to plant and animal life. Pollution of air, water and land, nuclear wastes, depletion of minerals, devastation of forests, increased demands for food, shrinking supplies of arable land, exploitation of nonrenewable resources, the disappearance of all species of animals and plant life economic development and inappropriate life style on a finite globe and the threat of a nuclear holocaust are some of the issues engaged by environmental ethicists over the last two decades. The population growth is also often blamed for environmental problems. But we do not deal it here in our discussion. The mechanistic concept, having at its basics a dualistic notion of nature, except for a short romantic period and person like Francis of Assisi, prevailed till the dawn of twentieth century. There has been an unprecedented interest in the second half of the twentieth century, among theologians, philosophers, and social thinkers, in renewing the understanding of nature and making it as an integral part of the human milieu. We try to analyze the notion of nature in a theological and ecological perspective developed in the course of history and especially according to certain

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theologians and ecologists. All agree that all things even sub-atomic particles, exist for, with, and through one another. Nothing exist outside interrelationship.

From this follows the contemporary understanding of stewardship. How this can be proved would then be the fundamental question in the second chapter. The term stewardship is rich in meaning as it implies protection, preservation, promotion and enhancing of everything that can come under the title of creature. Our motive is to find whether there is a biblical foundation for stewardship implying all the above said aspects. For this purpose a deeper understanding of the creation narrative is imperative. It appears that the traditional *imago dei* concept which gave human person dominion and authority over everything that is created cannot be treated apart from *imago mundi*. Human person perceived as *imago dei* and *imago mundi* reminds that the human relation to the created world is nothing other than a covenantal relationship. Then what would be its implications and what all things come in the parameter of covenantal relationship? It seems that this relation involves stewardship of animals, earth and preservation of species and wild life. We try to see how animals are treated in Bible, how the concept of them developed in the course of history? Do they have moral claims and if so how they should be stewarded?

In our attempt to analyze earth and the creation we try to develop a land ethic which provides an awareness that it is imperative to keep the earth in all its purity in order to keep our own existence on earth. A number of environmentally conscious modern ecologists chose to focus their attention on earth and earthkeeping. We see that the earth is the Lord's and we are His stewards. Our next attempt is to study how the nature is seen as the abode of God's presence. God's presence in creation marks the sacramentality of nature. Long ago a mystic observed the presence of spirit in the world. "The spirit sleeps in the rock, dreams in the flower, feels in animals, knows what it feels in men, and feels what it knows in women". Hence we try to analyze how nature is to be stewarded scrupulously. It is possible only through a better understanding of different models of stewardship developed in different worlds emphasizing one or other aspect of human relation to the created world.

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Hence we take different models and see how it is applicable to our present day.

In the third chapter our intention is to see whether the question of stewardship of nature is one limited to the discussion table of environmentalists and ethicists or whether the Church has any concern for this burning issue of ecology. This cannot be answered without an analysis of the papal teachings and other pronouncements of bishops conferences and pastoral letters. It appears that the Church was closely following the concerns of the modern world and had tried to respond to these issues through the official means. The present Pope John Paul II in almost all his speeches on social concerns refer to the environmental issues. However, it should be acknowledged that they have not adequately attracted the attention of the media as the call of politicians and environmentalists. Hence the task for the Church is to make the world hear its voice and present its call for a better way of life in conformity and union with the nature as a challenge and message for a better future.

Indeed the topic of our study is very vast but within the limited scope of our paper I am constrained to do justice to the theme of stewardship. I hope that this study will evoke an awareness in us to see the created world through the eyes of God, who creates, sustains and unifies.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF ECOLOGICAL CONCERNS

Introduction

Within the last three decades, ecology and ecological protection have turned out to be one of the major themes of discussion in all fields of human life. This has been triggered by the fear aroused by the scientific study on nature which prophesied an immanent danger of death of the whole environment. Consequently it led to a cry for the protection of ecological equilibrium by all means, from the part of politicians, economists, environmentalists and so on. The problem was that each perceived nature from his or her own particular perspective, lacking a holistic vision of nature itself. In such a context an integral and sound theological understanding of nature is an imperative in order that it may provide a framework within which a strategy for ecological sustenance can be outlined. Perceiving this need we attempt to understand nature in its integrity. In order to facilitate the understanding, we analyze in this chapter, the term ecology, environmental problems, ecological concerns, biblical understanding of the nature and the theological foundations of ecological concerns in a general manner.

1. Ecology and Environmental Problems

1.1. The Term Ecology

The term *Okologie* was coined by Ernst Haeckel, a German Zoologist and first appeared in English language in 1866.[1]

1. M. BATES, "Ecology", in W. D. HALSEY (ed.), *Collier's Encyclopedia*, Vol. 8, 1967, 516-520, p. 516.

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Etymologically it was understood as deriving from the term "oikos" which indicates household, home, habitat and "logos", meaning doctrine. Ecology, then, refers to the systematic relationship of abiotic environmental factors with biotic components such as plants, animals and microbes.[2] For Arne Naess, "Ecology means the interdisciplinary scientific study of the living conditions of organisms in interaction with each other and with the surroundings, organic as well as inorganic."[3] Hence the term ecology has an appreciably broader meaning than the immediate family, household and community.[4] Briefly it deals with the organisms and its environment.[5]

1.2. Ecology and Eco-System

In the 1960s the term emerged as one of the most popular and important aspects of biology. Ecology then was in the primary sense of the term or in its wider perspective a study of the organisms related to their environments. But in the ethical discussions the term is used particularly in relationship to questions of human responsibility to care for the material universe.[6] These discussions necessitated a pondering into the different dimensions of ecology. In reference to religious studies ecology entered as a central concept in two major ways, namely, a movement for the preservation of nature,[7] named as religious ecological conservationism; and the study of it as

2. J. C. LOGAN, "Ecology", in D. EGGENBERGER (ed.), *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 16, New Jersey, 1974, 138–139, p. 138.
3. A. NAESS, *Ecology Community and Life Style*, Cambridge, 1989, p. 36.
4. A. NAESS, *Ecology, Community and Life Style*, pp. 37–38.
5. R. L. SMITH, "Ecology", in *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*, Vol. 6, Chicago, 1974, 197–200, p. 197.
6. T. EARLY, "Ecology", in *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Religion*, Vol. A–E, Washington D. C., 1978, p. 1153.
7. According to IAN BARBOUR ecology is a young science and needs 'natural laboratories' in which to investigate the complex interactions among the members of biotic communities. No part on earth is totally beyond the reach of human influence but relatively untouched areas can provide a data base from which to study the effects of our intervention. According to statistics we are extinguishing one hundred species every day, destroying libraries of genetic information that were built up during millions of years. I. BARBOUR, *Ethics in an Age of Technology*, San Francisco, 1993, p. 65.

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ecology of religion.[8] Various studies on ecological systems all over the world made a real reorientation of modern 'isms' and 'logy', especially in the field of theology. The aim here is to interpret religion in the light of its ecological relations with its environment.

This new awareness brings forth a 'new ecology" which is developed in the late 1960s. It is a more thoroughly biological view wherein environment, men, culture and society supposedly constitute one ecosystem. Human beings become part and parcel of this system, because he is inextricably tied to his environment. For the air he breaths, the water he drinks, the food he consumes and the products he uses and throws away, bind him to the functions of local and global ecosystems.[9] Ever since man became a numerous species he has affected his environment notably.[10] Hence the field of ecology covers many areas of thought that have been fenced off as more or less separate sciences. Here we are studying the reactions and behaviours of organisms and the interrelations of communities of single or numerous kinds of organisms. Our attention on ecology is dealt on human ecology because he is intricately related to his physical environment. The basic notion of human ecology is that every species must adapt itself to its total environment, which consists of the other living organisms as well as the inanimate resources of the physical surroundings.[11] It is in the context of these adaptations that ecological problems arise.

1.3. An Overview of Environmental problems

Atmosphere and air are very important conditions for human survival and healthy life. This is getting polluted excessively by industries that emit smoke filled with sulphur dioxide, flurosol, carbon dioxide and other chemical ingredients. Overcharging the atmosphere with these chemical ingredients

8. A. HULTKRANTZ, "Ecology", in M. ELIADE (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, Vol. 4, New York, 1987, 581–585, p. 581.
9. R.L. SMITH, "Ecology". p. 197.
10. L. WHITE Jr., "The Historical Roots of our Ecologic Crisis", in I. G. Barbour (ed.), *Western Men and Environmental Ethics: Attitudes Toward Nature and Theology*, Reading, Massachusetts, 1973, 18–30, p. 18.
11. D. J. BOGUE, "Ecology, Human" in S. SCHINDLER (ed.), *Encyclopedia International*, Vol. 6, New York, 1963, 204–208, p. 208.

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cause partial or substantial destruction for the ozone layer, thereby posing a big threat to global climatic equilibrium. When the sky showers rain it becomes an acid rain harmful to vegetation. The air is also heavily polluted by the transport system.[12]

The process of industrialisation and urbanization is on the increase, along with the industrial work that naturally produces sewage that has to be disposed off. The rivers and seas serve as the convenient places for dumping these waste materials. The overall result would be the pollution of water due to their chemical and poisonous contents.

By the end of this century the greatest threat to the survival of life on earth may well arise from the destruction of the God-given environment. Human society is now using more resources and producing wastes at rates that are not sustainable.[13] W. G. Michaelson points to some endangering aspects that distort our biosphere. 1) Greenhouse effect: a dramatic rise in the temperature of the earth over the next few decades, which scientist now say could occur, would result in global catastrophe second only to nuclear war. By reducing the burning of fossil fuels and encouraging renewable energy resources we can save our biosphere to a certain extent. 2) Deforestation: devastation of forest causes the erosion of irreplaceable soil, creating water shortages and contributing to drought and desertification which will also cause species extinction. 3) Acid rain: The contamination by acid rain which will affect human lungs. 4) Population expansion: unlimited growth of population and limited resources will create a

12. Y. AMBROSE, "The Ecological Problems in India and Its Consequences", in *Jeevadhara* 18 (1988) 5-22. See also A. GOUDIE; *The Haman Impact: On the Natural Environment*, Oxford, 1990.

13. D.H. MEADOWS & J. RANDERS, *Beyond the Limits; Confronting Global Collapse Envisioning a Sustainable Future*, Vermont, 1992, p. 47. This book makes a scientific analysis of the finiteness of the natural resources and highlights the limited capacity of the earth. The authors also challenge the general assumption that any technical solution or political choices would ensure a sustainable future. They propose an ethical mores for the global development.

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disequilibrium in nature.[14] Besides, the unlimited economic growth in the industrialized society can also cause imbalance in the society by creating social injustice.

We should also know that the environmental crisis is not only a present crisis. Plato was already complaining in the *Critias* about deforestation and overgrazing had degraded the environment and reduced Attica "to the bones of a wasted body". There is also growing support for the view that Mohanjo-daro and Harappa in the Indian subcontinent eventually declined due to environmental degradation.[15] Actually the environmental problem can neither be reduced to the political sphere nor to the biological arena. The problems have been created or developed due to the different perceptions of the environment down through the centuries ranging back from the nomadic to the current technocratic world. Each stage was permeated by its own world view and philosophy of life.[16] The human imperative of subduing the nature has been welcomed by the technology which in turn made environmental pollution and dehumanizing effects on the ecosystem.

According to M. Amaladoss there are four reasons for the ecological problems: 1) The consumerism that seeks only the immediate satisfaction of needs and pleasures without considering the consequences of it on oneself and nature. 2) The unbridled commercialism based on profit motive, reducing the other person and nature as mere objects. 3) Individual and collective selfishness without the least concern of global community other than one's own race, ethnic group and caste. 4) Lack of respect for nature meaning that it is seen as a tool and not as an integral part of oneself.[17] Briefly the rape of

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14. W. G. MICHAELSON, "Covenant and Creation" in C. BIRCH (ed.), *Liberating Life: Contemporary Approaches to Ecological Theology*, New York, 1990, 27–36, pp. 34–35.
15. Cf. R. C. HEREDIA, "Towards an Ecological Consciousness: Religious Ethical and Spiritual Perspective", in *Vidyajyoti: Journal of Theologica Reflection* (Hereafter, *VJTR)* 55 (1991) 489–505, p. 491.
16. A. GORE, *Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit*, New York, 1993, pp. 216–265.
17. M. AMALADOSS, "Ecology and Culture Some Indian Perspectives", in *Jeevadhara* 18 (1988) 40–54, p. 48 See also C. F. CRANOR, "Collective and Individual Duties To Protect the Environment", in *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 2 (1985) 243–259.

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nature, the massive pollution of our environment together with the irresponsible and greedy exploitation of the limited resources of the earth and the sea are some of the problems.

The Rio summit brought together a large galaxy of world leaders and more than 30000 delegates from 178 countries was a great sign of concern for protecting our planet now and for the future generation.[18] In the wake of growing concern over damage to the environment and the danger of future damage on a still greater scale, religious leaders have given increased attention to the theological basis for ecological responsibility.[19] This invites us to a consciousness that our existence depends upon the proper functioning of the earth's present ecosystem.[20]

2. Ecological Concern and Ecological Responsibility

2.1. The Relevance of Ecological Concern

Man has a central role in the ecosystem. We stand today before a wounded creation that suffers under the distorted conditions which are the aftermaths of the distortion in the philosophy of life of humanity. In our selfishness and greed we have used our otherwise good technological abilities to exploit God's creation to an extent of destroying the balance of nature and deformed what God originally made to be in wholesome communion with us and with him.[21]

Far from being friendly to nature, humankind has turned out to nature strangely even to the extent of becoming nature-fiendish. The exploitation of the created realities in gigantic

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18. A meeting, conducted by U. N., in Rio de Jeneiro held on June 3, 1992 is called Rio Summit. That a five week preparatory meeting in New York city produced 24 million pages of documents shows the herculean task it did. Participants of ten thousands of diplomats, hundreds of world leaders, Scientists, ecologists, feminists, journalists, tourists shows the global awareness of the problem. P.E. DEWITT. "Rich-Poor in Rio coming together to save the earth", in *Time* (1 June 1992) p. 40–51.
19. T. EARLY, "Ecology", p. 1153.
20. W. H. MURDY, "Anthropocentrism: A. Modern Version", in D. SCHERER & T. ATTIG (eds.). *Ethics and Environment,* Englewood, 1983, p. 16.
21. R. J. RAJA, "As it was in the Beginning...", in *VJTR* 55 (1991) 681–687, p. 683.

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proportions are all in the name of development. At least some of the theologians accuse the Judeo-christian attitude as the sole cause of the present day problems. Lynn White says, "The roots of our ecological crisis lies in Judeo-Christian belief that man, being made in God's image is set apart from nature and that the entire physical creation was brought in to being for human benefit and rule".[22] According to John Passmore it is not Hebraic-Chrisian but Greco-Christian 'arrogance' influenced the idea that all things are made for man. Greco-Christian having at its basis the sublimity of rationality which can be acclaimed only for humans, denied the value of those who lack this quality. He says further that human being has the dominion over nature in the sense that he has the right to make use of it but as stoics think nature exists only in order to serve human beings interests.[23] This is the essential and basic element of the dominion thesis. This 'despotic view' holds that the earth and its contents were created for, or exist entirely for, the benefit of man, who can control its systems with very little effort or need for skill or understanding.[24] Bernard Häring agrees with these views when he says that, "Our dilemma is an unfortunate outgrowth of Judeo-christian heritage which has produced a blind science and technology and a berserk econocentric culture instead of ecocentric culture".[25] The usurpation of indiscriminate power over nature by both developed and developing nations is not merely thrusting the globe into an alarming ecological crisis but into an utter annihilation of nature on the altar of greed. The facts and data[26] show the pace of extinction of precious and rare animal

22. R. ATTFIELD, "Christian Attitude To Nature", in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 44 (1983) 369-386, p. 369. see also J. VERSTRAETEN, *Social Morality*, Unpublished Lecture Notes, K. U. Leuven, 1991-1992, pp. 35-37.
23. J. PASSMORE, *Man's Responsibility for Nature: Ecological Problems and Western Traditions*, London, 1974, p. 17.
24. V. ROUTLEY, "Critical Notice on Man's Responsibility for Nature", in *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 53 (1977) 171-185, p. 172.
25. B. HARING, *Free and Faithfull in Christ*, Vol. 3, New York, 1981, p. 174.
26. Van Klinken in his book "The integrity of Creation" narrates a sorrowful picture of extinction of species. Between 1500-1850 one species disappeared every ten years; Between 1850-1950 one species disappeared per year; Around 1990 ten species are disappearing per day; Around 2000 one species will disappear per hour; Between 1975-2000 about 20% of all species will have disappeared; About 2100 we do not dare to think. (quoted in *Concilium*

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species, birds and vegetation, disappearance of rivers and streams, and the cancerous growth of sandy deserts: all due to a pollution of air, poisoning of water, deforestation etc.

"It is not technology and science but man's strive for power and domination"[27] that leads this deadly campaign, so says Jürgen Moltmann. In other words, "it is ultimately man and his attitude in the use of nature and technology that are the roots of the ecological problems".[28] Therefore there is an increasing recognition that many problems of human biology and many sociological problems are basically ecological.[29] Modern civilization have set their sight on development, expansion and conquest. The acquisition of power, the increasing of power and the securing of power, these altogether with the pursuit of happiness constitute the root of contemporary ecological crisis.[30]

2.2. The Relevance of Ecological Responsibility

The concern for the nature is a question of values and morals. The goods of the earth are destined for the whole of humanity. The whole earth is equally destined to whole human beings but in reality the strong exploits the weak. There is an imbalance existing in the world due to the unjust distribution of the goods of the earth. God's lordship over the creation is interpreted to mean not only that man has a responsibility of stewardship but also that the creation should be so maintained

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(1991) No. 4, J. B. Metz and E. Schillebeeckx, No heaven without earth, SCM press, London, p. 66). Today 40% of word's qualified scientists work in industries that cause major environmental damage and senseless arms race. Right now 400000 engineers and scientists are engaged in ecologically insane and senseless military research. W. D. CORSON-FINNERTY, *World Citizen: Action for Global Justice,* New York, 1982, p. 46.

27. J. MOLTMANN, *God in Creation: An Ecological Doctrine of Creation,* London, 1985, p. 20 See also A. AUER, *Umweltethik: Ein Theologischer Beitrag Zur Okologische Diskussion,* Dusseldorf, 1985.

28. M. AMALADOSS, "Ecology and Culture: Some Indian Perspectives", p. 41. See also W. BUHLMANN, *Wer Augen hat zu Sehen.. Was Gott Heute mit Uns Christan Vorhat,* Graz, 1989, pp. 188–201.

29. M. BATES, "Ecology", p. 516.

30. J. MOLTMANN, *God in Creation,* p. 26,

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as to serve the need of all.[31] The present system of science and technology based on the old mechanistic view, which is in spirit anti-ecological, shapes our moral perception in a perverted way. As T. S. Derr says, "there is no true fullness of human liberation without a liberation of the earth's resources for the benefit of all men and for the full humanization of the cosmos."[32] The ecological problem is a matter of pressing concern of our century. Environment and ecology will be dominant concerns of the coming generation also. Now, many of the ecological problems can be foreseen while still many remain undiscoverd.[33]

2.3. Theological Basis of Ecological responsibility

There is a movement among political and religious leaders to take responsibility for preserving the ecological balance. It is our responsibility to use our talents and resources with creative freedom for ourselves and the well sustaining of the ecosystem. The teaching that the earth is a product of divine creation carries the implication that man does not own it but stands in the relationship of a steward. Biblical theology of interrelationship would affirm that our relation to creation is one of responsibility. We would cooperate with creation by studying the intricate interrelationships, biosphere culture, and community in the created world and by setting up a symbiotic relationship with the ecosystem.[34] In other words, the Genesis account of creation speaks of a cooperative existence between created things and human beings. In this account plants are intended as food for beasts, fowls and reptiles as much as for mankind. After the flood all are alike instructed to breed and to be fruitful. Psalms catalogues God's concern for nature and all creatures, among which man figures no more prominently than the birds and the wild beasts (Ps 104).

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31. T. EARLY, "Ecology", p. 1153. See also D. T. WILLIAMS, "The Christian and the Environment: Prophet, Priest and King", in *The Evangelical Quarterly* 66 (1994) 143–158.

32. T. S. DERR, *Ecology and Human Liberation*, Geneva, 1973, p. 73.

33. A. RIMBACH, "All Creation groans-Theology/ Ecology in St. Paul", in *Asian Journal of Theology* 2 (1987) 379–391, p. 380.

34. G. THERUKATTIL, "Towards a Biblical Eco-Theology", in *Jeevadhara* 21 (1991) 465–483, p. 478.

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Ecological responsibility is part of our praise of Creator and Redeemer, while misuse of nature or environment is a blasphemy. According to Helen K. Kenik, Bible entrusts human beings with the responsibility of caring, because their 'royal humanness' has three essential aspects: God dependence, nature caring, and human community.[35] Depending on the command of the Lord to subdue the earth, man must care for the earth in such a way that it will contribute to the good of the present as well as for the future generation. From a philosophical reading of the creation account Roger Burggraeve concludes, "the biblical fact of creation does not just have a proctological significance; it also has an eschatological significance. As a pointer towards the beginning, at the same time it opens up perspectives on what is the desirable relationship between human beings and the world".[36] The intrinsic relation between man and nature could be theologically and anthropologically traced from the biblical tradition.[37] Hence K. Hilpert says that man is ethical only when he helps and supports all forms of life.[38]

Ecology in its broader spectrum is related with its cosmosphere which needs an extensive study. But due to our limited scope we confine ourselves to a discussion of the Christian notion of stewardship and its various interpretations and implications. As already mentioned, Christianity is very often accused of being the cause of present ecological problems due to the mechanistic and technocratic interpretation of the Bible. But whether this accusation can be fully endorsed is debatable. Very often, exegetes and Bible scholars assert that, the original

35. H. K. KENIK, "Towards a Biblical Basis for Creation Theology", in M. Fox (ed.), *Western Spirituality: Historical Roots, Ecumenical Routs*, Santa Fe, 1981, p. 54, See also R. C. HEREDIA, "Towards an Ecological Consciousness: Religious, Ethical and Spiritual Perspectives", in *VJTR* 55 (1991) 489–505.

36. R. BURGGRAEVE, "Responsibility for a New Heaven and a New Earth", in J. B. METZ and E. SCHILLEBEECKX (eds.), No Heaven Without Earth, in *Concilium* (1991), No. 4, 107–118, p. 109.

37. B. STOECKLE, *"Christliche Verantwortung und Umweltfragen"* in *Stimmen der Zeit* 12 (1974) 832–844, p. 834.

38. K. HILPERT, "Umweltethik", in *Stimmen der Zeit* 205 (1987) 35–46, p. 38. See also G. ALTNER, *Okologische Theologie: Perspektiven Zur Orienterung*, Stuttgart, 1989.

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message of the Bible is not domination but stewardship. A birds eye view of the biblical understanding of the concern for nature is relevant.

3. Towards a Christian Theology of Nature

3.1. The Term "Nature" in Bible

The word Nature or *natura* is etymologically derived from *nasci* which means 'to be born'. It has its corresponding Greek *phousis*, having its root in *phouen* which means 'to bring forth', referring to the production of things. Hence the term generally includes in connotation the idea of energy and activity. Nature properly signifies that which is primitive and original or etymologically, that which a thing is at birth as opposed to that which is acquired or added from external sources.[39] In our Christian context the word "nature" refers to the created universe with determined laws of interdependence, and God as its source and end.[40] In the O. T. Yahweh, the God of all created[41] all things out of original chaos[42] and established God's providential rule over the whole of creation. In the O. T., there appears a sense of order and beauty in the world, as the product of God's wisdom, power and goodness. All the processes

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39. C. A. DUBRAY, "Nature", in C. H. HERBERMANN (eds.), *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 10, New York, 1911, 715–717, p. 715.

40. M, J. DORENKEMPER, "Nature", in D. I. EGGENBERGER ,*The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 10, New York, 1967, 276–280, p. 276.

41. The Old Testament gives 3 different creation narratives: (1) Cosmogony in Gen 1–2:4a (priestly tradition). Here human being is the centre and nature is distinct from them. It is a kind of dualism. (2) Gen. 2:4a–25 belongs to Yahwist tradition. The whole interest centres on the making of the human beings first and then of a pleasant and tranquil place for their abode. (3) Deutero–Isaiah. Here, there is a lofty conception of God. He is the only God (Is.40:12,26). Here we find no creation legends or primeval chaos. "I am Yahweh ... who does all things" (Is 45:6–7).

42. The central point in Creation is not the idea of bringing something into existence out of nothing *(ex nihilo sui et subiecti)*. The Hebrew expression *tohu–wa–bohu* in Gen. 1:2 means void and nothing. But this expression really means formless waste. (E. A. SPEISER, *Genesis*, Anchor Bible, New York, 1964, p. 366). The Biblical creation lays emphasis on the transformation of formless waste into meaningful forms rather than creation coming out of void or nothing. F. WILFRED, "Nature and Human Survival", in *Jeevadhara* 28 (1988) 55–75, p. 71.

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of nature are His direct acts: the thunder is His voice (Ps 29), the light His garment, the winds and the lightning His messengers (Ps 104:2-4). But still He is no Nature-God.

In the N. T. Jesus also adopted the concept of nature of His time. But, whatever dualism or pluralism was involved in them. He eliminated these aspects and brought nature into the most direct and intimate relation with the idea of the fatherhood of God. This governed His fundamental attitude towards nature. His view of world is teleological and optimistic.[43] He loved nature. His parables, love of birds and flowers, reveal his intimate communion with nature which enabled Him to see in her face the symbols and the effulgence of divine truth. He appreciated things in their right place and use (Mt 11:19; 15:11; Lk 7:34). The order of nature is the process of divine love and mercy. According to Paul Santmire, an ecological reading of the New Testament theology of nature brings in an impression of the ultimate realization of the divine purpose for all things in the integration and unification of the whole creation under the cosmic role of Christ.[44] The assertion that Christ exists before all ages has a temporal and qualitative sense in the realm of nature. The terms "redemption" "reconciling" and "making peace" acquires a cosmic dimension by which the nature shares also in this salvific realm.[45]

3.2. Apostolic Time

Nature is pictured as under constant watch over and protection of God's realm. Creation, providence and nature are manifestations and proofs of the unity, spirituality, power and goodness of God. St. Paul's conception of God becomes his interpretation of nature (Acts 14:15-17; 17:24-26; Rom 1:20). His view on Nature is optimistic despite the corruption of nature by sin (Rom 7:18); and everything moves on to God (Rom 8:28). In the earlier writings of Paul, God's creation of nature is direct (2 Cor 4:6; 1 Cor 12:18; 15:38). In his later

43. T. RESS, "Nature", in J. HASTINGS (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. 9, Edinburgh, 1917, 207-253, p. 211.
44. P. SANTMIRE, *The Travail of Nature: The Ambiguous Ecological Promise of Christian Theology*, Philadelphia, 1985, p. 210.
45. J. DELOBAL, "Christ, the Lord of Creation", in *Louvain Studies* 16 (1991) 155-169, p. 164.

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writings everything is through Christ (Phil 2:6; Col 1:16–17) and subjected to Christ (I Cor 15:24–27; Eph 1:21ff). God's plan of salvation through Christ in this world is being realized and the Christian community plays an irreplaceable role in this realization of God's plan. According to J. Delobel christians therefore have a particular motive to care for the world in which they live. It is the world of God through Christ, destined for God in Christ. To consider the cosmos as creation by God brings a deeper dimension of faith–vision which discovers a conviction of caring for the creation. This concern for creation embraces more than just ecology though ecology is a real aspect of it. We can see in the early time nature was considered more sacred co–existential with human world.[46] Hence nature cannot be a system of mechanical conformity and necessity, but has a moral order in which God's unchanging purpose of grace is realized. In such a system the antithesis of nature and super–nature cannot arise, for, with God all things are possible and natural and without Him nothing is possible.

3.3. Hellenistic–Christian Theories

Early Church which came face to face with Aristotle's scientific theism, platonic dualism and stoic monism was in a way compelled to assume a scientific and philosophic view of nature. Actually traditional Greek religion did nothing to encourage the view that man is the master of the world. Christianity in this period did not encourage man to undertake the transformation of nature. Man was free to use nature as they chose–provided they did not worship it as sacred.[47] Aristotle (384–322) and Plato (427–347) portrayed a gulf between humans and all other beings based on the unique human capacity for reason.[48] For Aristotle plants and animals exist solely for the sake of human life. To the Christians and Manichaeans nature is the realm of evil from which human soul must seek to escape. For them nature in itself is a prison, it is ruled by capricious powers that ever enslaves humans, especially through the human body. Nature belongs altogether to the sphere of darkness and

46. J. DELOBEL, "Christ, the Lord of Creation", p. 168.
47. J. PASSMORE, *Man's Responsibility for Nature* p. 17.
48. I. BARBOUR, *Ethics in an Age of Technology*, p. 75.

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evil.[49] Gnostics saw nature as a process of emanation rather than as an act of creation. Cicero in his writings taught that in the world we have no obligation to respect animals because they are not rational beings.

Greeks (both Pagans and Christians) were impressed with unity, harmony, order and beauty of Nature, but were less interested in the scientific approach to nature. T. Ress summarises the understanding of the Greek world in the early centuries: "Creation was an eternal process issuing from the unchangeable essence of God and therefore of the nature of a physical and necessary emanation, and distinguishes from the christian idea of a free creative act, which was the general view of the Greek fathers in the 4th and 5th centuries"[50]. Against this Greek philosophical conception of the nature, there developed a new theory of the world not quitting dualism, but stressing the complete rule of God over the nature. For instance, early Fathers like Clement (c. 150–215c) and Origen (185–254) defended the mosaic cosmogony.

Clement of Alexandria maintained that God created the matter out of nothing with which He made the world. For Origen, among the created beings man as a rational being was essentially superior to all the creatures and the whole of nature is arranged to supply his needs and to afford opportunity for the development of his rational capacity.[51] The apologists like Justin consider the world as created out of pre-existing matter. Here the biblical tradition and the ancient world's picture of the universe are fused into religious cosmology. Pantheistic elements which glorified cosmos and gnostic elements which disparaged it were both excluded.[52]

3.4. Western (Latin) Fathers.

The western fathers accepted the same theory of Greek theology but with little differences. The Genesis theory is accepted literally in which God perfected all His works in due order. Tertullian (160–220) holds that the world is created from nothing and therefore returns to nothing. Unlike Pantheism,

49. P. SANTMIRE, *The Travail of Nature*, p. 274.
50. T. RESS, "Nature", p. 213.
51. T. RESS, "Nature" p. 213.
52. J. MOLTMANN, *God in Creation*, p. 83.

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God's creative activity is free and even arbitrary, for it is not conditioned by His essence. Nature has an independent existeuce. Nature is a most holy and reverend work of God, an object of reverence. There are two Divine operations but one truth. Nature is originally and essentially good, but evil is not altogether absent, (only as a means to the fulfilment of God's purpose).

Ambrose (339-397) and Augustine (354–430) developed the concept of radical evil in nature. God, being supremely good-wills only that which is good and therefore all nature is essentially good. All the harmony that Augustine sees in nature is not a necessary uniformity in nature but the harmony of God's will. In short, his view on Nature stands in a double antithesis namely (1) original Nature as God created it; (2) the realm of grace into which the elect one is delivered from the corruption and misery of the present world.[53] Passmore's comment on Augustine that the irrational exists solely for the sake of the rational is not correct.[54] Of course Augustine holds an order of nature in which the intelligent are superior. Every, thing has value in itself in the scale creation.

3.5. Early Medieval period

John Scotus Erigena, the pioneer of the discussion on nature in the medieval age, in his book *De Divisione Naturae*, defines nature in four successive stages: (1) God in Himself (nature uncreated and creating); (2) God as prolated cause of all things (nature created and creating); (3) World as continuous evolution process of divine substance (nature created but not creating); (4) God in all as the culminating point (nature neither creating nor created).[55] The identification of all reality with God was not generally accepted by the Church. Augustine's thought prevailed in the thought of the Scholastics. God created all things by an act of will after the example that He had in his mind (Aquinas, Summa Theologiae I.XIX.4). The dualistic

53. T. RESS, "Nature", p. 233.
54. R. ATTFIELD, "Christian Attitudes to Nature" in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 44 (1983) 369–386, p. 377.
55. J. S. ERIGENA, *Divisione Naturae*, cited in T. RESS, "Nature", pp. 214-215.

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trend brought forth asceticism and diabolism. Early Christian monasteries in the East propagated the idea of freeing oneself from the power of evil in the nature. It prevailed in the West through the Benedictines in 6th century, Clunians in 11th century and the Mendicants in the 13th century.[56] This concept of Nature as something to be checked and avoided, dominated the life and thought of the Middle Ages with exception of St. Francis of Assisi whose love of Nature was equal to his asceticism. The end of the patristic age from Ambrose (339–397), Augustine to Gregory characterised a descend to the lower level of ignorance and indifference about Nature.

3.6. Middle Ages

A new interest in nature could be identified during the Middle Ages. Mathematics and natural sciences entered into realistic vision of nature through Avicenna and Gerbert of Aurillae (950–1003). Bernard (1090–1153) saw nature as a living organism. William of Conches (1080–1154) in his *Magna de Naturis Philosophia* and *Philosophia Mundi* propounded and atomic theory of the universe. In this era there arose an emphasis on the natural and super natural aspects which consequently made the divergence still wider.

Vincent of Beauvais (1190–1264) through his book *Speculum Majus* re- created a genuine interest in nature. The great writings of Aristotle were rediscovered by the middle of the 12th century. His spirit of observation and research into Nature affected Albertus Magnus (1200–1280). Roger Bacon (1210–1294) revolted against *a priori* methods of sholasticism and laid down the experimental method of modern science as the only adequate way of investigating nature. Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas recognised the distinction between natural and supernatural and tried to reconcile them. Thomas Aquinas' (1225–1274) world view was permeated with a radical optimism.[57] He in his monumental *Summa Theologiae* brings to light the idea of nature as something emanating from God; and each according to its nature

56. F. KEMPF, H. G. BECK (eds.), *History of the Church*, Vol. 3, London, 1980, pp. 320–328.
57. E. GILSON, *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*, trans. L. K. Shook, New York, 1956, p. 189.

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returns to God. The idea of the all pervading presence of God in all things is very strong. But the world is never considered as God. Nature, in particular, tends to become, by accent, a self enclosed, independent whole ruled by an inviolable inner law".[58] In fact Thomas' theocentrism is infused in Anthropocentrism. For him hiearchy of being is not a cone shaped with the human nature at the apex. While dealing with the relation between human beings and temporal goods he says that people own temporal goods to use such goods to satisfy personal needs, to provide for those in their charge and to practise stewardship.[59] Duns Scotus on the other hand put philosophy and theology in separate realms, and so is rather silent or unconcerned about the theological notion of stewarding the nature or of man's responsibility towards the nature.

Twelfth century was a watershed in the middle ages. Whatever, Alexander Hales, Albertus Magnus and Vincent of Beauvais (1190–1264) observed and admired of nature, were from the perspective of the prison-house of scholastic metaphysics. But Roger Bacon (1210–1294) revolted against the 'a priori' methods of scholasticism and laid down the experimental method of modern science as the only adequate way of investigating nature.[60] The confidence in human mastery over the earth, seen in the spirit of Benedictine and Celtic monasticism, was bolstered by a number of social, economic and cultural developments that were to reshape the whole society.[61]

3.7. Sixteenth-Eighteenth Century

The study of classical period led to a new appreciation of nature and a free investigation of it, which in the 16th century paved the way for the beginning of modern science. The idea of Bacon (1561–1626), "knowledge is Power", is made to discover right over nature. New knowledge became means of power over the forces of life and nature, not understanding about them let alone empathy with them.[62] Renaissance cherished not a theory

58. H. P. SANTMIRE, *The Travail of Nature*, p. 89.
59. T. AQUINAS, *Summa Theologiae* IIa, IIae, 9.32, art. 5.
60. T. RESS, "Nature" p. 216.
61. H. P. SANTMIRE, *The Travail of Nature*, p. 80.
62. J. BLEWETT, "Social Justice and Creation Spirituality", in *The Way* 29 (1989) 13–25, p. 21.

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but an attitude to nature. The scientific discoveries of Copernicus (1473–1543), Galileo (1564–1642), Kepler (1571–1630), and Newton (1642–1727) transformed the conception of nature and came into conflict with much that has been embodied in the Dogma of Church. Dogmas were mostly founded on the scholastic dualistic view of nature, such as purely absolute and spiritual. Nature was not seen as something sacred or sacramental. In the renaissance period since the Church would not reconstruct its dogma, a deep cleavage was made between theology and science. The concept of nature became gradually unchristian and even antichristian.

Protestantism caused the so–called conflicts between religion and science and into a real conflict between the old and the new system of philosophy and science. Hence the view on Nature is varied. To Luther the human solidarity with nature suggests a theocentric–ecological relation rather than a mere anthropocentric soteriological relation.[63] The whole creation is a "mask of God". God is hidden in nature but he is at the same time powerfully present there.

Calvin gives a theo–aesthetical view of Nature. He combined his view on anthropocentrism with a belief in stewardship over the whole earth and says that everyone should regard himself as the steward of God in all things which he possess.[64] His theo–aesthetical sense of nature is depicted in the following words "While we contemplate in all creatures, as in mirror, those immense riches of His wisdom, justice, goodness and power, we should not merely run them over curiously and so to speak with a fleeting glance but we should ponder them at length, turn them over in our mind seriously and faithfully, and recollect them repeatedly".[65] Well before Calvin, Sir Mathew Hale wrote about stewardship already in 1677.[66]

Sir Mathew Hale in his book *The Primitive Origination of Mankind* (1677) maintains that man was created as God's viceroy,

63. P. SANTMIRE. *The Travail of Nature*, p. 128.
64. Cf. R. ATTFIELD, *Christian Attitudes to Nature*, p. 380.
65. J. CALVIN, *Institutes* 1. 14. 21. cited in, P. SANTMIRE, *The Travail of Nature*, pp. 128-129.
66. R. ATTFIELD, *Christian Attitudes to Nature*, p. 380.

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steward and bailiff and was given dominion to crush the fiercer animals, protect the tame and useful ones, to preserve and improve plant species... to preserve the face of the earth in beauty, usefulness and fruitfulness.[67] All creatures according to Hale, whether high or low in the material order, are adapted to one another's needs and convenience and not only to those of mankind.[68]

Pantheism,[69] on the other extreme by identifying God as, *natura naturans* with the world as *natura naturata*,[70] also made the reality an impersonal, non moral system of necessity.[71] At the same time deists[72] accepted the current scientific view of nature but only in virtue of God's creative act. Dualism of God and world prevailed and it placed God normally outside the universe. Nature is therefore regarded independent of God and it is in itself sufficient and self-explanatory.

67. Cf. R. ATTFIELD, *Christian Attitudes to Nature*, p. 380.

68. C. J. GLACKEN, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and Culture in Western Thought from Ancient Times to the End of Eighteenth Century*, Los Angeles, 1967, p. 400.

69. This is a form of monistic philosophy, which interprets all reality as a direct expression of the activity of the Absolute, or God. It gives a unified interpretation of nature but includes also an attitude of worship. Spinosa, a typical pantheist philosopher, says that when we take a dualistic approach to nature and God there is no logical bridge between them. He proposes to pass by a continuous process from the world which we know to the immanent divine source law of the world. G. B. SMITH, "Pantheism", in S. MATHEWS & G. B. SMITH (eds.), *A Dictionary of Religion and Ethics*, London, 1923, p. 323.

70. The realm of nature which includes everything that happens in space-time or all that is accessible to scientific enquiry, or all that exists in dependence of divine creator is **natura naturata**. Nature may also signify the force or principle that sustains the aggregate of natural things is **natura naturans**. S. R. L. CLARK, "Nature, and Theology", in A. RICHARDSON & BOWDEN (eds.), *A New Dictionary of Christian Theology*, London, 393-395, p. 394.

71. T. RESS, "Nature", p. 216.

72. Deism is a Philosophy and Theology that represents God's relation to humanity as expressed through universal natural law rather than through revelation. It was an attempt to put faith in God upon a scientific basis by discovering in humanity a so-called natural religion, independent of any particular cult and revelation. S. MATHEWS, "Deism" in S. MATHEWS & G. B. SMITH (eds.), *A Dictionary of Religion and Ethics*, 1921, London, 127-128, p. 128.

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In the 17th and 18th centuries exploitative attitude to nature began with the mechanistic view held by Newton (1642–1727) and others. Newton thought of nature as a complex machine designed by God. If it is a machine there are no inherent rights and therefore no hesitation manipulating and using it.[73] Newton perpetuated also a sharp separation of humanity from the non-human world. Accepting the Cartesian dualism Newton made man, "the Lord and master of nature". Through the notion of *res cogitans* of Descartes everything other than himself becomes *res extensae*. "Nature then became mindless, spirit-less and human beings through their rational knowledge could become its *maîtres et possesseurs*".[74] Although he says that to "render ourselves the masters and possessors of nature",[75] which has a despotic tone, he was not an advocate of irresponsible ruthlessness.

3.8. Modern Period

According to naturalism[76] physical science need not be religious or irreligious. It involved a denial of any moral or spiritual significance in the world. Huxley and Spencer sponsored the idea of all knowledge in the proper sense of knowing and set apart religion into the region of unknown and unknowable. Science emancipated themselves from theology and cosmology. The ancient and medieval view of *natura* is rejected as scientific doctrine of creation is limited to personal faith which says human beings have to put their trust in God and not in Creation.[77]

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73. I. BARBOUR, *Ethics in an Age of Technology*, p. 58.
74. C. HALKES, "The Rape of Mother Earth: Ecology and Patriarchy", in *Concilium* (1991) No. 4, p. 94.
75. R. ATTFIELD, *Christian Attitudes to Nature*, p. 381.
76. In naturalism there was a trend of thought which saw nothing in nature as sacred. This doctrine has been held responsible for a uniquely exploitative attitude to nature. Another trend was to see nature as the expression of God's glory and to care for her as steward. A still more radical view has been that humankind has no unique place in God's creation and need not expect to manage everything, even with good intention. S. R. L. CLARK, "Nature, Theology and", p. 394. According to our view point we cannot fully agree with S. R. L. Clark.
77. J. MOLTMANN, *God in Creation*, p. 33.

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Modern thinkers did not leave nature in an antithesis realm. Descartes (1596–1650), Leibniz (1646–1716), Kant (1724–1804), Berkeley (1685–1753), Butler (1612–1680), and Hegel (1770–1831), among others, have striven to interpret nature in correlation with the conception of God as living and personal, free and immanent in the world, by His power, wisdom and goodness continually forming and guiding it to fulfil His perfect purpose of holiness and love.[78] Leibniz believed that all created substances whether high or low in the chain of being, had a perfection of their own to attain.[79] Kant in his third *Critique* rejects the belief that man is the end of creation, denying at the same time that nature is a teleological system. Kant writes that as the single being upon earth that posses understanding human being is certainly titular lord of nature, he is born to be nature's ultimate end. From this view we can deduce, according to Kant that human beings relationships with nature are not subject to moral censure. W. D. Davies summarises the period in an amicable manner: "Descartes established a dualism between the human mind and the natural world, Spinoza and Leibniz tried to overcome this dualism, Berkeley rejected the notion of material substances, Kant made the mind the source of the laws of nature and Hegel subordinated material nature to the ends of the absolute spirit."[80]

In the emerging industrial technology of 18th century domination of nature, was increasingly achieved in practice as well as in theory. Private ownership and capitalism treated the nature as something for commercial benefit. "Mechanistic science, dualistic philosophy, industrial technology and capitalistic economics – all encouraged human domination over nature."[81]

Darwin's (1809–1882) work *Origin of Species* was of course essential in preparing the way for ecology. Here human species is treated as a part of nature in communion with other forms of life. There is no sharp discontinuity either in evolutionary

78. T. RESS, "Nature", p. 218.
79. R. ATTFIELD, *Christian Attitudes to Nature*, p. 383.
80. W. D. DAVIES, *The Gospel and the Lord*, Berkeley, 1974, p. 179.
81. B. GRIFFITHS, "Nature Technology and New Society", in *Jeevadhara* 18 (1988) 23–31, pp. 24–25.

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process or in morphology and behaviour. "Darwin's studies brought out the interconnectedness of the whole of life and the complex balance of interaction in the biological world."[82]

The patristic and scholastic method of imposing a Christian interpretation upon nature by authority is changed and a new confident view of nature is found in the literature of poets such as Blake, Wordsworth, Goethe, and Browning. For them nature is not an impersonal machine but an organic process with which humanity is united. For them, not rational analysis but feeling and imagination come into role. While the Romantic period inclined toward geo-piety, industrialism, with its efficient materialistic use of nature, overrode it and stimulated continued alienation. Till in 1864 George P. Marsh published the book, *Man and Nature*, and a growing feeling for nature and its beauty began to spread.[83] From the speculative view of nature there was a move towards Christ's idea of world as the Father's home and workshop in the romantic world.

The 19th century witnesses a different attitude to nature. Humanity is conceived as a part of nature in both evolutionary history and contemporary life. Through Einstein's (1879–1955) theory of relativity and quantum physics a new model is emerging. The universe is conceived not as a mechanical system of separate parts but as a field of energies in which all parts are interrelated and interdependent.[84]

4. Twentieth Century: Approaches to Nature

4.1. Theological Approach to Nature

The pioneers of the 20th century are not dealing with nature as such in the form of pure abstraction but nature with its concrete relatedness with other beings. The study of nature is not purely a theological but also biological and ecological pursuit; it does not start from science either. Nature is to be understood as a dynamic evolutionary process along with the

82. I. BARBOUR, *Ethics in an Age of Technology*. p. 58.
83. A HULTKRANTZ, "Ecology", p. 581.
84. B. GRIFFITHS, "Nature, Technology and New Society", p. 25.

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history of emergent novelty characterized throughout by chance and law. The Natural order is ecological, interdependent, and multi-levelled.[85] Many 20th century theologians work essentially within the framework of theological anthropocentrism, for example according to Karl Rahner nature is created and thereby not divine. The word of God and human beings are the real representatives of the God in the world and nature is nothing else than the continuation of his bodiliness and hence reaches its fulfilment in him and his history.[86] He says: "God reveals himself in the creation. Well, but this is only the hem of his garment, the curtain that veils him".[87]

4.1.1. Karl Barth

In the 20th century Karl Barth (1886–1968), a confessional Protestant theologian, brought forward a new vision of nature. Barth does not deal with theology of nature substantively at any place but has integrated it into his theory of Christian dogmatics. Everything is created solely for the sake of realizing God's covenant with humanity in Christ. Because of *servatio*, therefore *creatio* and therefore also *conservatio*.[88]

Nature has no divinely bestowed meaning of its own. Nature is a kind of divine afterthought that allows God's primary purpose – redemption of the eternally chosen ones – to be fulfilled. Nature is totally shaped by grace. The very being of nature shows to us the covenantal history of God with humanity which needs a "corresponding space". The history of creation, from its origins and its whole structure, is planned to reflect these saving deeds of God and to give them an echo.

For Barth creation is the construction of the space for the history of the covenant of grace. It is the external ground for the establishment of the covenant. To that degree creation

85. I. BARBOUR, *Religion In an Age of Science*, Vol. 1, San Francisco, 1990, p. 21.

86. K. RAHNER, "The Church and the Parousia of Christ" in *Theological Investigations*, Vol. 6, London, 1969, 295–312, p. 311.

87. K. RAHNER, "The Church as the Subject of the Sending of the Spirit", in *Theological Investigations*, Vol. 7, London, 1971, 186–192, p. 187.

88. P. SANTMIRE, *The Travail of Nature*, p. 152. Because of election the world is created; because of election the world is also sustained.

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is essential to the greater scheme of things. But its being is purely instrumental, pure service. As a showplace for the saving works of God, it cannot be the subject of a work directed to it. Everything is created – including "man-as-such" solely for the sake of realization of God's covenant with humanity in Jesus Christ.

4.1.2. Teilhard de Chardin

Teilhard de Chardin (1881–1955), a Roman Catholic philosopher and theologian, is a creative theologian of nature. He elaborates three different levels of thought: scientific, theological and religious. He seeks to connect the biophysical order to the cosmic Christ, in an evolving realm. Matter and spirit are not opposed as two separate things as two natures but as two directions of evolution within the world.[89] Nature is beautiful not in itself; it is beautiful because it is a kind of mirror that shows those who have eyes to see how great their own spiritual destiny is going to be. "Nothing is profane to those who know how to see."[90] Chardin loves nature fundamentally, but not for its own sake as St. Francis did. He blesses matter in its totality and in its true nature. He writes: "Blessed be you harsh matter, barren soil, stubborn rock, you who yield only to violence, you who force us to work if we would eat. Blessed be you, perilous matter, violent sea, untamable passion; you who unless we fetter you will devour us."[91] He develops the idea of cosmic christology from Col 1:15ff; Rom 8; Eph 1:1ff. Glorified Christ is the ultimate goal and ultimate reality of the universe. Christ is a kind of spiritual magnet which draws the universe to itself and which organizes and orders the universe – a process that will allow it one day to attain fulfilment in Him.[92] His vision of

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89. T. De CHARDIN, *Science and Christ*, p. 51.
90. T. De CHARDIN, *The Divine Milieu*, New York, 1960, p. 38. He writes: "I want to teach people how to see God everywhere, to see him in all that is most hidden most solid and most ultimate in the world... That is why the history of the living world can be summarised as the elaboration of ever more perfect eyes within a cosmos in which there is always something more to be seen." See also T. De CHARDIN, *Christology and Evolution*, New York, 1971, p. 101.
91. T. De. CHARDIN, "The Spiritual power of Matter", in *Hymn of the Universe*, trans. S. BARTHOLOMEW, London, 1965, p. 68.
92. T. De CHARDIN, *Science and Christ*, New York, 1969, p. 79.

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the final convergence to an omega point is both an extrapolation of evolutionary directionality and a distinctive interpolation of Christian eschatology.[93] Nature lives. Nature is an ocean of energy and universal motion. Nature is also a field for conquest – to be used even exploited – but in building up of the final culmination.

4.1.3. Paul Tillich (1886–1965)

Paul Tillich has got a rich appreciation of nature and that appreciation is theologically well–founded. He was against surrendering nature to natural sciences. According to him the tremendous mystery of nature and its fecundity are the revelation of the divine. He developed a kind of sacramental theology of nature as his profound essay 'Nature and Sacrament' indicates.

Traditional Christianity overemphasized the divine transcendence and widened the gap between God and nature. On the contrary extreme divine immanence expressed through nature, mysticism, pantheism, romanticism, cosmic unity, made an imbalance in viewing the nature. The antithetical relationship between nature and history observed in the philosophies of Kant, Fichte and Maréchal as well as in the theologies of Karl Rahner (1904–1984) and John Baptist Metz (1928) in their classical forms is diminishing in the writings and conception of modern writers. The new synthesis of history and nature cannot be successful without a new cosmic and ecological awareness. A different type of scientific research is gradually coming to the fore in which scientists, philosophers, theologians, and even politicians endeavour to listen to the language of nature instead of making nature speak the language of the human mind. They all profess to worship a God who summons mankind to an ecological, cosmic covenant.

4.2. Ecological Approach to Nature

4.2.1. Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965)

Albert Schweitzer was one of the pioneers who held that all living things deserved moral consideration or respect. The

93. I. BARBOUR, *Religion in an Age of Science*, San Francisco, 1991, p. 27.

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concept of reverence for life is the main theme which he developed. He was a great thinker who took seriously the value of all living things. For him ethics is infinitely extended responsibility toward all life. A man is truly ethical only when he obeys the compulsion to help all life which he is able to assist and when he shrinks from injuring anything that lives.[94] His love of nature is evident in these words 'we are to tear no leaf pluck no flower, crush no insect'. Thoughtless injury to life should be avoided. But if injury is necessary then it is permitted. He accepts experimentation on animals which establishes according to him a new and special relation of solidarity (and to rank lives is practically impossible). The animal life then becomes a source of enrichment and we human beings should in turn do good deeds for animals.[95] The basis of life-ethics lies in mysticism.

4.2.2. Aldo Leopold (1883–1948)[96]

Aldo Leopold is the pioneer of a 'Land Ethic'. The proponents of a Land Ethic call themselves holists (emphasizing both the whole and holy). They see earth as an organism; its community includes soil, waters, plants, animals or collectively the Land, Leopold's book, *A Sand county Almanac* (1949) is well known. For him land is not mere soil. The plants and animals keep the energy circuit open and the evolutionary changes in the cosmos have more comprehensive effects. He writes: "we abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."[97] His theory is centred on three key points 1) Land: Land is more than just environment dirt. It is not mere soil. It is a fountain of energy flowing through a circuit of soils, plants and animals.[98] He continues: "Food chains are the living channels which conduct energy upward, death and decay return it to the soil. The circuit is not closed; some energy is dissipated in decay, some is added by absorption

94. A. SCHWEITZER, *The Philosophy of Civilization*, New York, 1959, p. 310.
95. A. SCHWEITZER, *The Philosophy of Civilization*, p. 318.
96. Leopold died while fighting a grass fire on a neighbour's farm. He is universally accepted as the father of Environmental Ethics.
97. A. LEOPOLD, *A Sand County Almanac*, New York, 1949, p. viii.
98. A. LEOPOLD, *A Sand County Almanac*, p. 216.

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from the air, some is stored in soils. It is deposited in the ocean and in the course of geological time raised to form new lands and new pyramids".[99] The soil is full of animals. The water is full of 'little animals'. Our bodies are habitats for creatures. So land is not according to him dirt but, 2) Community: community of interdependent parts, that is the ecological vision of things. One life form depends on another form. Humans are part of this community of interdependent parts.[100] Therefore he calls land as the 'biotic community'. He gives a definition of right and wrong: "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.[101] 3) Health: Health is the capacity of the land for self renewal. Conservation is our effort to understand and preserve this capacity.[102] We will make an extension of ethics only if we appreciate ecological facts in the light of our attachment to a biotic community. Following and supporting the idea of Leopold, Baird Callicott writes that the biotic community is a proper object of our study as we contemplate its complexity, diversity, integrity and stability.[103]

4.2.3. Lynn White

Lynn White is famous for his article "The Religious Roots of our Ecological Crisis". It was not a definitive study but rather a suggestive character. His theme was man's unnatural treatment of nature and its results. Changes in human ways often affect non-human nature. The fusion of science and technology, he says, tended to arrest a functional unity of brain and hand which in turn caused the roots of our ecological crisis.[104] Formerly man had been part of nature and now he is the exploiter of nature.[105] In his historical evolution of study

99. A. LEOPOLD, *A Sand County Almanac*, p. 216.
100. A. LEOPOLD, *A Sand County Almanac*, p. 203.
101. A. LEOPOLD, *A Sand County Almanac*, pp. 224–225.
102. A. LEOPOLD, *A Sand County Almanac*, p. 221.
103. J. B. CALLICOTT, "Hume's Is/Ought Dichotomy and the Relation of Ecology to Leopold's Land Ethic", *Environmental Ethics* 4 (1982) 163–174, p. 173. See also E. JOHNSON, "Treating the Dirt: Environmental Ethics and Moral Theology" in T. REGAN (ed.), *Earth Bound: New Introductory Essays in Environmental Ethics*, New York, 1984, 336–365.
104. L. WHITE, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis", p. 21.
105. L. WHITE, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis", p. 23.

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of nature, he says, Christianity is the most anthropocentric religion and it made possible to exploit nature in a mood of indifference to the feelings of natural objects.[106] He adds that the Christian dogma of creation, has another meaning in our perception of today's ecological crisis. Besides, Christian elements other elements are also added, "we are superior to nature, contemptuous of it, willing to use it for our slightest whim.[107] According to him until we reject the Christian axiom that nature has no reason for existence save to serve man, the ecological crisis will continue.[108] His idea can be summarized as follows "The traditional Judeo-Christian view of the creation is precisely that it was planned in every detail for man's use and edification, and for no other purpose. This indifference to the possibility of autonomy in other creatures has much faciliated our style of technology and thus has been a major force in polluting our globe".[109] He writes further: "From christian compassion we must defend the continued existence of our fellow animal, plant, insect, and marine species, as well as the integrity of landscapes, seascapes, and airscapes that are perilled by human activity whether or not these in any way affect human existence. We must do this because of our belief that they are all creatures of God".[110] Thus he recommends that "we must join in the club of creation. They may help to save us from ourselves".[111]

4.2.4. Peter Singer and Tom Regan

Peter Singer and Tom Regan are two animal liberationists. While the former is the pioneer of animal liberation movement the latter is of animal right movement. They promote all kinds of preservation of nature and its creatures. They considered animals as morally equitable (in proportional degrees) with human beings. In the course of history animals were treated cruelly since they have no reason. Earlier, Jeremy Bentham one

106. L. WHITE, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis", p. 25.
107. L. WHITE, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis", p. 28.
108. L. WHITE, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis", p. 29.
109. L. WHITE, "Continuing the Conversation", in G. BARBOUR (ed.), *Western Man and Environmental Ethics: Attitudes Toward Nature and Technology*, London, 1973, p. 63.
110. L. WHITE, "The Future of Compassion", in *The Ecumenical Review* 30. (1978) 99-109, pp. 108-109.
111. L. WHITES, "The Future of Compassion", p. 107.

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of the early utilitarians, asked: "The question is not can they reason? can they talk? but can they suffer?"[112] Bentham's eminent disciple John Stuart Mill agreed also with Bentham. Peter Singer, therefore, asserts in so far as animals can suffer equally with humans, they have equal claim to relief, since pain is pain. Regan agrees with Singer about moral consideration of animals, but object to the utilitarianism which Singer proposed. Regan holds that they have inherent value because they not only are alive but are subject of a life that itself has value. This subject-of-a-life criteria is offered by Regan as a sufficient condition for having inherent value, but not a necessary condition. He asserts that if humans have rights then nonhumans too have them. If human rights recognize the inherent value of humans, then nonhuman rights can recognize the inherent value of nonhumans.

4.2.5. Paul Taylor

Paul Taylor adopts a biocentric outlook on nature and realizes that humans, animals, and plants are all members of "the earth community life". From the perspective of a life-centred theory, we have *prima facie* moral obligations that are owed to wild plants and animals as members of earth' biotic community.[113] When we see inherent worth in all things we will recommend intrinsic value on the promotion of their good. His attitude of respect for nature and the duties of a life-centred system of environmental ethics are his main subject of discussion. The characteristic for having the status of a moral patient is not the capacity for pleasure or suffering but the factor that the being has a good of its own which can be furthered or damaged by moral agents.[114] According to him animate (Plants and Trees) and nonhuman (animals) beings have value of their own. But he does not speak of inanimates (rock, water etc.,), deserving any moral value in themselves. Moral agents (human beings) should be

112. T. REGAN & P. SINGER (eds.), *Animal Rights and Human Obligations*, New Jersey, 1975, pp. 129-130.

113. P. W. TAYLOR, "The Ethics of Respect for Nature", in D. VANDEVEER (ed.), *People, Penguins, and Plastic Trees· Basic Issues in Environmental Ethics*, Belmont, 1986, p. 169.

114. P. W. TAYLOR, "Frankena on Environmental Ethics", in *Monist* 64 (1981) 313-325, p. 314.

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concerned about not only of the good of sentient creatures (plants and animals), but also of non-sentient living creatures (trees and grass), and other lower organisms. The goal-seeking or teleological character of animals and plants seek out certain elements of their environments (for e. g. a dog pulls its paw from fire, plants turn toward sun). He says that we human beings should respect them. He recommends us to adopt 'a doctrine of species'; a doctrine which regards all living things having inherent worth irrespective of high or low species.[115]

Taylors' theory is less obscure than Schweitzer's mysticism. If we accept the biocentric outlook how can we resolve the conflict arising from it? Therefore, he gives certain rules of conduct and priority principles.[116]

4.2.6. Kenneth Goodpaster

Kenneth Goodpaster defends also the version of respect for all kinds of life. He admits that the nonsentient creatures such as trees and plants have a good, independent of human beings. But he asks whether the tree cares as to its purposes being fulfilled or frustrated. Why should I care for the tree's good when the tree does not and cannot? He admits the goodness of sentient beings but he says that it is also true of a machine. When the machine works in the way your brain work, doesn't it belong the moral order?[117] His conclusion is that neither rationality nor the capacity to experience pleasure and pain are the conditions of moral consideration.

4.2.7. Michael Fox

Michael Fox, while discussing about animal rights, says that animals may have interests in the sense that they are capable of distinguishing between states of conciousness which are painful and those that are pleasureful or that accompany physical well-being; and that they seek the latter and avoid

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115. P. W. TAYLOR, "The Ethics of Respect for Nature", in *Environmental Ethics* 3 (1981) 197-218, pp. 210-211.

116. P. W. TAYLOR, *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics*, Princeton, 1989, pp. 169-198.

117. P. W. TAYLOR, "The Ethics of Respect for Nature", p. 200.

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the former as much as possible.[118] Both Singer and Regan assert that animals' painful and pleasurable experiences are qualitatively and quantitatively the same as those of humans and hence animals have a capacity to enjoy life equal to that of humans. But Fox says that it is difficult to define these capacities. He asserts the superiority of *Homo sapiens;* they have the capacities to be critically self-aware, manipulate concepts, use a sophisticated language, to reflect, to plan, to deliberate, to choose and to accept responsibility for acting.[119] Animals do not have them and therefore have no moral claim. Yet, he asks that they should not be maltreated or made to suffer needlessly or excessively. When we admit that humans have more value than animals then it means that 'more valuable beings' have a greater claim to life, pleasure and freedom from suffering than those lacking the capacities. According to Fox it is difficult to deal with animals and humans in the same way.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen ecology as a developing and burning issue that calls for comprehensive treatment. The original term itself connotes a network of interrelations between human beings and the environment in which human being lives. In other words human beings and ecology are two sides of the same existential reality which have neither an existence opposing to each other nor a life apart from each other. However, as the thirst for intellectual mastery evolved and the basic attitude of concern and love for the nature give way to avarice and greed, supported by a reasoning framed or developed within the Judeo-Christian and scholastic world view, the environment, which was once a safe haven where all could live in peace is turned into a sphere of immanent death, fear and catastrophe. Stimulated by the posited threat, happily enough, a new concern for the world and an awareness of the need to protect the nature in its integrity and original

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118. M. FOX, "Animal Liberation: A Critique", in K. S. SHRADER-FRECHETTE (ed.), *Environmental Ethics*, Pacific Grove, 1983, 113-124, p. 113.
119. M. FOX, "Animal Liberation", p. 117.

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virginal purity are on the rise. Unless and untill the regenerating capability of the earth is rejuvenated, the present and future generations would be victims of disaster. This conciousness constitutes a major theme of discussion in almost all spheres of contemporary life. This new awareness invites to search out a theological foundation for the treatment of environment within a biblical, anthropological and sociological perspective.

In this regard we saw the historical development of the concept of nature through various stages. It is true that each of the views held in respective periods of time had an impact on moulding the attitude towards nature. A dualistic world view which considered material as evil and world as something to be subdued and escaped from, is now substituted by the present day vision that world is intrinsically good, having a value in itself and is to be protected and safeguarded. The nature is now friendly, valuable and good *per se*. On this basic understanding it seems that the earth is to be treated as co-existent and correlative to human being so much so that anything wrong to the environment is a wrong to the human being. Moreover, any desacralised concept of nature is to be discarded or corrected in order that a respectful attitude to nature basing on the biblical understanding as created and willed by God for his glory and for the sustenance of human beings is to be sustained. In this perspective the right attitude to nature seems to be that of stewarding. This is the fundamental and underlying meaning of the divine mandate to subdue and have dominion. This theme would constitute the matter for our discussion in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS OF STEWARDSHIP TO ECOLOGY

Introduction

Our main concern in this chapter is focused on developing a stewardship model of ecological concerns which would provide us with a perspective, for sustaining a well integrated biosphere. In this attempt first we focus on the development of the notion of stewardship in the book of Genesis. Very often the mandate given to human beings in the account of creation is interpreted as giving them the power to dominate and subjugate the whole creation. But a genuine understanding of the concept of *imago Dei* and *imago mundi* will show that it is not a mandate for dominion and subjugation. Rather they are developed on the basis of the covenantal relationship between human being with God and nature.

In the second, third, and fourth sections we deal with the material creation of beings in which the biblical God vests on human beings the responsibility to steward the subhuman species and the entire planetary system. We will analyze specifically the human relationship and responsibility to animals, earth, plants, species and finally the universe as a whole. A study on these themes will infuse in us a consciousness of caretaking the biosphere.

Finally we discuss the sacramentality of nature and the different models of stewardship. The nature, to which man is integrally related, has a sacramental character. For the entire creation bear witness to the presence of God. The different models that are emerged in the course of history have paved the way to preserve our ecosystem. God is the ultimate end of

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everything. Hence human beings have an added responsibility to steward the entire creation so that it may achieve its destination in and through human stewarding.

1. Biblical and Theological Basis of Stewardship

The general understanding in contemporary theological circles is that stewardship has its basis in the Bible. Notwithstanding the various interpretations given to this concept by biblical scholars, consensus exists among them concerning the presence of the theme in Bible.

1.1. A General Understanding on "Stewardship"

The emergence of a widespread ecological consciousness enhances the human beings to perceive the biblical and historical roots of the problems. Many have indicted the christian tradition for its complicity on creating the environmental crisis. But a thorough study on the concept of stewardship overcomes the misinterpretation of many. Bible portrays God as the creative source of life and sustanance. God hands over human beings responsibility for maintaining the created order,preserving life, fashioning justice and offering mercy. God nourishes, supports and empowers humans in these creative efforts. Hence to explore the potentiality of stewardship as a symbol of human vocation is emerged in the contemporary theology and thinking. Edward Schillebeeckx writes, "to be a creature is at the same time to be an ecological being".[1] This understanding compels us to see the biblical foundations of the term stewardship.

1.1.1. The Notion of stewardship in the Old Testament

The term steward denotes *oikonomous*. Its very etymology speaks of a household manager or "the office of one who is entrusted with the properties of another".[2] The steward is one who is "entrusted with the oversight of part or all of his

1. E. SCHILLEBEECKX, *Church: The Human Story of God*, London, 1990 p. 245.
2. D. J. HALL, "Stewardship", in D. K. McKIM (eds), *Encyclopedia of the Reformed Faith*, Edinburgh, 1992, 358–359, p. 358.

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master's estate, including persons and property".[3] The role of a steward in O. T. varies according to the vocabularly and the context.[4] Hence according to the O. T. description, a steward is "an official who controls the affairs of a large household, overseeing the service at the master's table, directing the household expenses on behalf of the master".[5] It means the term stewardship denotes accountability and responsibility. On the one hand, the steward is a servant and strictly accountable to his master, and on the other hand, he is given an exceptional range of freedom of one bearing high responsibility.[6] But the idea conveyed by the word steward is more than the literal meaning of the word.[7] In Isa. 22:15, steward is like a treasurer. In Deut. 1:11,16, steward is like a guard or overseer. The kings of O. T. had always such a steward.[8]

1.1.2. The Notion of Stewardship in the New Testament

The most common New Testament expression for "steward" is *oikonomos* and this term occurs first in the parables of Jesus.[9] In the N. T. the term *oikonoma* occurs 9 times, *oikonomos* 10 times and *oikonomeo* once (Lk 16:23).[10] Jesus sometimes describes a disciple's life in terms of stewardship (Mt 25:14–30; Lk 12:42–48). In some of the main biblical references[11] steward has a right over the whole household and sometimes over the whole property of his master. The picture of a real steward is

3. J. H. FARMER, "Steward", in J. HASTINGS (ed.), *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, Vol. 2, New York, 1908, 676–677, p. 676.
4. T. M. DORMAN, "Steward", in G. W. BROMILEY (ed.), *The International Steward Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. 4, Michigan, 1988, 617–618, p, 617.
5. C.U. WOLF, "Steward, Stewardship", in G. A. BUTTRICK (ed.), *The Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. R–Z, New York, 1962' 443–445, p. 443.
6. D. J. HALL. "Stewardship", p. 358.
7. T. M. DORMAN, "Steward", p. 617. For example Eliezer of Damascus was Abraham's slave and a trusted steward. He has got the duty of even-finding a wife for Abraham's son.
8. Gen 43:19, 44:4; 1 King 15:18; 1 Chr 27:31.
9. G. FRIEDRICH (ed.), "Oikonomos", in *Theological Dictionary of New Testament*, Vol. 5, Grand rapids, 1968, 149–153, p. 150.
10. J. GOETZMANN, "Oikonomia", in C. BROWN (ed.), *Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, Vol. 2, Grand Rapids, 1971, 253–256, p. 254.
11. Lk 16:1-8; Mt 24:45; Mt 25:21-23; Lk 12:42.

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depicted in Mt. 24:25.[12] An *oikonomos* or steward is one to whom the owner of a household turns over responsibility for caring for the property managing affairs, making resources yield as much as possible and sharing the resources with others.[13] The word "stewardship" in Lk. 16:2–4 means simply "the office and duties of a steward".[14]

The word Oikonomia occurs in the Pauline Corpus 6 times (Icor 9:17 Eph 1:10; 3:2,9; Col 1:25; 1 Tim 1:4), and *oikonomos* 5 times (Rom 16:23; Icor 4:1,2; Gal 4:2; Tit 1:7). The only other N. T. occurrence of these words is in I Pet 4:10.[15] Elsewhere the N. T. uses, *oikonomos*, in a metaphorical sense, depicting believers as "stewards of the mysteries of God "(Icor 4:1), "God's steward', (Tit 1:7) and "steward's of God's varied grace" (1 Pet 4:10).[16] The Christian concept of stewardship before God involves time, talents, possessions and self (Lk 12:42 Eph 3:2).[17] The qualities of a steward are faithfulness, (Icor 4:2), blamelessness (Tit 4:7) and watchfulness (Lk 12:42). The word "oikonomos" is not only restricted to the earthly things but also it moves in a second direction in the sense of God's plan of salvation.[18] The steward is also one who is entrusted with the treasures of the Gospels: he has knowledge of God's plan of salvation.[19] In Icor 9:17, Paul calls the preaching of the Gospel a "commission" (*oikonomia*)

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12. Like a King who has invited his servants to a feast without fixing a time. The clever among them dressed and settled themselves at the entrance to the palace. They said: can anything be lacking in the house of kings (In his house everything is always ready, so the meal can begin at any time). The foolish went on with their work. They said: can there be any feast without laborious preparation. Cf. G. FRIEDRICH (ed.), *The Theological Dictionary of N. T*, p. 149.
13. U. S. BISHOPS, "Stewardship: A Disciple's Response", in *Origins* 22 (1992) 458–471, p. 464.
14. T. M. DORMAN, "Steward", p. 618.
15. H. KUHLI, "Oikonomos", in H. BALZ & G. SCHNEIDER (eds.), *Exegetical Dictionary of N. T.* Vol. 2, Grand Rapids, 1991, 498–500, p. 499.
16. T. M. DORMAN, "Steward", p. 618.
17. C. U. WOLF, "Steward, Stewardship", p. 443.
18. J. GOETZMANN, "Oikonomia", p. 255.
19. As we read in Mt 13:52 steward has control of the hidden treasures of his master which would lie dead and unprofitable if he did not dispense them. In other religions also, for example Islam, Koran speaks: "I am placing on the earth one that shall rule on my deputy" (Sure 2:30).

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from which he cannot withdraw. The soteriological sense of the term steward is also found in patristic literature.[20] Therefore the term "steward" has a wider theological and salvific meaning.

To understand the concepts of *oikonomia* and *oikonomos*, one must refer to their roots in the concept of the house as it is mentioned in the N. T. (*oikos*). God's people, God's community is his house, which he builds up through the work of those he has called to the task, to whom he entrusts the stewardship of the house.[21] In the biblical background steward's duty is "to manage everything with most watchful fidelity and utmost efficiency, and to do it in the interest of his master."[22]

1.1.3. The Notion of "Steward": Historical Evolution and Meaning

There are 26 direct references to stewards and stewardship in the scripture, but the concept was insufficiently developed in historical theology.[23] In the secular background the word steward is not found in any manuscript earlier than the 11th century, and the form *stigweard* though certainly the original is recorded only in a later manuscript. Since the 16th century the definitions of the word have often been influenced by the supposed etymologies *stead* and *ward* and *stow* and *ward*.[24] It is in 1677, Mathew Hale used this word in the real meaning.[25] In 1970 John Black used the term stewardship in the concept of human beings responsibility. Gradually the notion of stewardship has got rich meaning in the writings of eco-realists. The contemporary theology has also begun to explore the potentiality of stewardship as a symbol of human vocation.[26] Actually the biblical understanding of stewardship invokes a responsibility not to the creation but to ths creator in the sense that our accountability towards God.[27] In our study we confine to the theological sense of the term steward.

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20. Cf. J. GOETZMANN, "Oikonomia" p. 255.
21. J. GOETZMANN, "Oikonomia" p. 255.
22. J. H. FARMER, "Steward", p. 676.
23. D. J. HALL, "Stewardship", p. 358,
24. J. A. SIMSPON & E. S. C. WEINER (eds.), *The Oxford English Dictionary*, Vol. 16. Oxford, 1989, 664-666, p. 664.
25. G. M. TEUTSCH, *Lexicon der Umwelthik*, Dusseldorf, 1985, p. 98.
26. D. J. HALL, "Stewardship" p. 358.
27. G. M. TEUTSCH, *Lexikon der Umwelethik*, p. 98.

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1.2. Co-creative Stewardship in Genesis 1 & 2

The Bible has a tremendous influencing character on our ecological concepts. What we need, today, is a fundamental approach to respond to the challenge prescribed by the ecological threat. An adequate biblical theology of ecology is needed to meet the problems in a substantial way. Since Bible is a collection of books, we will not get a uniform notion of the theme. Nevertheless, this difficulty should not be exaggerated. It is our task to find out the real meaning of Bible.[28] The Eco-catastrophe invites us to a re-reading of the Bible. It invites us to what eco-theologians call an ecological reading of the Bible. As long as we read the Bible in a strong anthropocentric perspective, we are neglecting God's love and concern for the entire cosmos and human's co-creative stewardship for promoting the unity and integrity of the whole cosmos.[29]

As we have seen in the last section, there was a series of interlocking and destructive dualism that crept in theology through Greek philosophy[30], Cartesian philosophy etc. As a result, God and world are placed on opposite ontological poles. "This vitiated the view of theology on Nature-human relationship from the organic to mechanistic interpretation of the entire universe".[31] This tended to focusing our conquering and mastering the Nature.[32]

1.2.1 Theology of Dominion and Stewardship

Many verses of Bible indicate that God has given some privileged position to human beings in relation to the rest of

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28. H. P. SANTMIRE, *The Travail of Nature: The Ambiguous Ecological Promise of Christian Theology*, Philadelphia, 1985, pp. 189-218.
29. G. THERUKATTIL, "Towards a Biblical Eco-theology", in *Jeevadhara* 21 (1991) 465-483, p. 467.
30. According to J. Passmore, the tradition of stewardship, though never strong but persistent, dates back to the post-platonic philosophers of the Roman empire and especially to the teachings of Imblichus, in the third century A. D. Cf. J. PASSMORE, *Man's Responsibility for Nature*, London, 1974, p. 28.
31. G. THERUKATTIL, "Towards a Biblical Eco-Theology", p. 467.
32. C. HALKES, "The Rape of Mother Earth: Ecology and Patriarch"; in *Concilium*, (1989), No. 206, 91-100, p. 91.

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creation. According to Gen 1:28[33] God intends the human beings 'to subdue[34] and to dominate the earth and fill it' with his offspring. It was actually one of the many streams of tradition. In Western Christianity this aspect has got overemphasis with the false dichotomic view of Greek philosophy that led to the ruthless and arrogant exploitative attitude towards nature.[35] Basing on Gen 1:28, Lynn White considered that the biblical understanding of the concept of dominion is the root cause of present day ecological problems.[36] Several arguments against this opinion can be proposed. The words "subdue" *(kabash)* and "rule" *(radah)* were not originally meant as a justification for humankind to exploit nature, but rather to grant to humankind the freedom from the frightening forces of the nature. This creation story was written in the time of the exile of the jewish people in Babylon, where the influence of Babylonian pagan beliefs on natural gods was very strong. At that time it was considered necessary

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33. Appeal to the supposed etymology of the verb used here or to how they are used in some other contexts, is not to be the point in a context governed by the 'image' relationship. Even if they are sometimes used of tyrannous kings, they cannot legitimately be interpreted as arbitrary or exploitative treatment of creatures. Cf. R. MURRAY; "The relationship of creatures within the Cosmic Covenant", in *The Month* 251 (1990) 425-431, p. 426.

34. These words 'subdue' and 'dominate' in the Bible is severely attacked in the recent writings of 'theologians of eccology'. This notion of subduing and dominion has demythologised the world and made it secular and set apart from God which encouraged the exploitation of environment and secularization of science. Such an accusation is not right. The exegesis of biblical creation narratives and its frequent presuppositions are more serious and substantial. Of course Gen. 1 has 'demythologised creation' but not secularised the world. The hebrew word, "to have dominion" clearly translated, does not connote violence.

35. G. THERUKATTIL, "Towards a Biblical Eco-Theology", p. 468.

36. This immediate conclusion of Lynn White is criticised by J. Baird Callicott. He says that White begins with unmistakable allusions to Priestly tradition (creation of light and darkness, the earth and all its functions and so on) then jumps over to allusions in Jahwist (creation of Adam and Eve and naming of animals) then again to P (dominion) then to J (Jahweh forming Adam from dust) and finally comes to rest with a final allusion to P (*imago Dei*). We would like to point out that he is not consistent in his method of exegesis. Cf. J. B. CALLICOTT, "Genesis and John Muir", in C. S. ROBB, C. J. CASEBOLT (eds.), *Covenant for a New Creation: Ethic Religion and Public Policy*, New York, 1991, pp. 107-140.

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to remind the jews that God should be worshipped instead of nature by human beings. Nature was described as God's creation, so that human being should not subordinate to it. Every attempt to worship nature by the jews was considered as idolatry and being sanctioned by punishment.

The word *"radah"* itself is used 22 times in the Old Testament. It refers not only to man–nature relationship, but also includes man to man relationship, mostly concerning the practise of royal authority. Psalm 72 and Ezra 34 explain the manner a king ought to exercise his authority, that is to strive for the establishment of justice and peace and to care for the weak people. The word "kabash" actually means to remove all kind of obstacles as the necessary step to enable human being to live in peace, and to maintain the order in the world that had been created by God out of its formerly chaotic situation.

Thus we see that both these words are more appropriate to be interpreted as a sort of mandate from God to humankind to take care of the nature and be responsible for the well being of the whole creation. Therefore actually the Biblical interpretation was, "we are allotted dominion but free from a free hand do, do whatever we like".[37] The verses in isolation and superficial can mean arrogant and exploitative attitude.

According to Gen. 2:15, God placed the human beings in garden. It is not a vast area so that he may not be a threat to the habitats of other living beings. To exterminate and to extinguish, God has given no power to him. Actually the account of creation that is found in Gen. 2 is the literary and theological product of a much earlier tradition. It reflects a more royal ideology.[38] The words used are to "till" *(abad)* and "keep" *(shamar)* have a profound meaning. The word "abad" means to till, to keep, to serve or be as a slave to, while "shamar" has the meaning of to keep, to preserve etc. Hence

37. A. NAESS *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle,* Cambridge, 1989, p. 183 see also J. B. TUBBS, "Humble Dominion", in *Theology Today* 50 (1994) 543–556.

38. D. BERGANT & STUHLMULLER, "Creation According to the Old Testament", in E. MCMULLIN (ed.), *Evolution and Creation,* Notredame, 1985, 153–175; p. 156.

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human being's given autonomy and distinction from nature should not be interpreted as superiority over nature, but rather as stewardship of the nature. According to John Black "to till it and keep it", implies that human beings should act "in a responsible way in relation to the lower order of creation, in the same way as God acts upon men".[39] The two notions of dominion and preservation are found in Gen 1 & 2 respectively. Hence a comparative study is opportune.

1.2.2. Genesis 1 & 2: A Comparison

In the first creation story (Gen 1:1–2:4a), which belongs to P tradition, creation reaches its climax in human beings. Man names the animals which defines their natures and establishes authority over them,[40] and each creative act has its own independent place and significance. In the second creation story (Gen 2:4a–25), which belongs to J tradition everything is focused on the creation of human beings and their place in creation. Each thing is created with a view to humans and is set in particular relationship to them. In P the human beings are in the apex of pyramid and in J they are the centre of a circle.[41] In J there are two descriptions of the earth. Twice the Lord God placed the humans in the garden (2:8,15). Twice the man names the woman (2:23;3: 29), twice he is driven from the garden (3:12; 3:24). This affirmation suggests a terrestrial and not celestial focus.[42] Hence the garden is planted for him (2:8, 15). The animals and birds are created so that he can give them names (2:19). Woman is made to be a helper (2:21). Although it seems too anthropocentric,[43] it is not so because Gen. 2:15 does not mean it. In J there beats the heart of the farmer, a man who loves the countryside. In the remainder of Gen. 2, all of the emphasis is on earth while Gen. 1 is divided

39. J. BLACK, *The Dominion of Man: The Search for Ecological Responsibility*, Edinburgh, 1970, pp. 48–49.
40. The naming scene is rich in symbolic potency. In naming, Adam displays the kingly gift of *Wisdom:* R. MURRAY, "The Relationship of Creatures within the Cosmic Covenant", p. 426.
41. A. KONIG, *New and Greater Things: Re-evaluating the Biblical Message on Creation*, Pretoria, 1988, p. 22.
42. D. BERGANT & C. STUHLMULLER, "Creation According to the Old Testament", p. 156.
43. A. KONIG, *New and Greater Things* p. 22.

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between heaven and earth. But in Gen. 2 the whole concern is with the earth–man, the garden, trees, rivers, animals and birds. Although it begins with the earth in Gen. 2:4–7, but then surprisingly restricts its attention, to the garden.[44]

In P, we see God as God and in J, the expression 'Lord' is added. The Lord is the name Israel used for their God. Thus combination brings the notion the Lord of Israel is the God of creation. In J, God breathes the breath of life in to him. In P, he rules over the animal kingdom but in J, he names.[45]

In J, human beings and animals are formed by the Lord God out of ground (2:7,14). Both are clay figures that live. The difference lies in God's second act (v. 7), when he breathef into man's nostrils 'the breath of life'. There is no mention os this in the case of animals. And so this act establishes a creative relationship, a propinquity, between God and man. It shows a particular relationship between God and man.[46] From the relationship emerges one's special responsibilities as a steward.

1.2.3. A Call to Stewardship

The role of a man as a steward with duties and responsibilities is not systematically framed in the first books of Bible. But each indirectely imply it and hence accountable for an ecological behaviourness. God has "made him free and intelligent sharer in the goveruance and completion of His creation".[47] The dominion of humans over animals is that of guidance like. a shepherd to his sheep".[48] Commenting on Genesis Edward Schillebeeckx says that human beings do not get a separate day of creation but on the same day animals are created. So God is concerned for man and beast. Being creatures among many other non–human creatures and being human beings must

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44. A. KONIG, *New and Greater Things*, p. 23.
45. A. KONIG, *New and Greater Things*, p. 24.
46. A. KONIG, *New and Greater Things*, p. 30.
47. B. M. ASHLEY, *Theologies of the Body, Humanist and Christian*, London, 1985, p. 418.
48. G. THERUKATTIL, "Towards a Biblical Eco–Theology", p. 469.

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go hand in hand. Thus 'ruling the earth' as a creative task in no way implies the demolition and pollution of this earth; it must be a constructive–almost divine–, caring creativity.[49]

Throughout the Torah there are also numerous references concerning the care of nature and animals. According to Bernhard Anderson, a bible scholar, "to focus exclusively on the first two chapters of Genesis and leave chapter 9 out of the reconing presence a very unbalanced picture of biblical action of creation".[50] Hence in Gen. 9, we see the Noahic covenant (Gn 9:36) which also affirms the same. God entrusts everything to Noah. The whole passage explains that God bequeaths the earth as some kind of personal property; but reasonably interpreted, God places everything at Noah's disposal with the strict stipulation that it be used in accordance with the commandments of God. Noah receives "rights of disposition not property of rights".[51] The new covenant affirms also God's Lordship over creation. We find here a restriction of human exercise of freedom. He is given the responsibility of a steward. He is to respond to God in the name of creatures since they cannot respond themselves.[52] It recalls a great responsibility and not a despotic rule. Arne Naess comments: "The wisdom of God is ridiculed if He is said to have engaged so ignorant and so ignoble a creature as *Homo-sapiens* to administer or guard the vastness of nature of which we understand so little.[53] So the source of his authority is not in himself but in God. The crowning of human beings to be steward over the world is anything but a matter of and certainly it does not have its ground in human themselves.[54]

The one-sided incomplete interpretation of Genesis neglected the deeper understanding of human and all other creation coming from the hands of God and the total dependence of

49. E. SCHILLEBEECKX, *Church*, pp. 236–237.
50. S. McDONAGH, *To Care for the Earth: A Call to a New Theology*, London, 1986, p. 122.
51. A. NAESS, *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle*, p, 184.
52. Cf. G. VON RAD, *Genesis, A Commentary*, Philadelphia, 1961, pp. 131–133.
53. A. NAESS, *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle*, p. 187.
54. H. W. WOLF, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, London, 1974, p. 227.

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all on this absolute source and the consequent interdependence of all. Marc Vervenne writes "The story of creation was not only a giant theological cosmology, but also an anthropology and eschatology. It reflected an experience of nature as creation of God, of life as being carried by God, of death as going towards God".[55] We need to include a relational view that human is a partner and servant, intelligent and creative in a community of relationships in which interdependence, cooperation and conservation become important values.[56] A human being can therefore neither be relegated to the level of a mute puppet, nor be elevated to the level of an arrogant despot.[57] He is dependent on God and as part of creation and being unique in self consciousness is called to maintain the integrity of creation and exercise trusteeship in a responsible way.

1.2.4. A Call to Co-Creation

The main narration and description of Genesis is on land and nature, and a God who takes delight in the created realm and values it for its own sake. Humanity, in turn, has the role of caretaker, extending God's care, preserving the life of other creatures, and defending their rights beyond their usefulness to us.[58] If we annihilate a species, we lose forever an expression of God.[59] This long range perspective is derived from a sense of history and an orientation toward the future, as well as accountability to a God who spans the generations.[60] It is true that Genesis develops a special role to human beings but it does not mean the humanity is given the freedom to build up their empire at the expense of nature.[61] Richard Baar in his article "Land Misuse" writes the fact of human dominion over nature

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55. M. VERVENNE, "Mens, Kosmos en Aarde: een Exegetische Reflectie over Genesis 1–3", in J. De TAVERNIER en M. VERVENE (red.), *De Mens: Hoeder of Verrader van de Schepping?*, Leuven, 1990, 27–62, p. 31.
56. S. AROKIASAMY, "Ecological Ethics in a Divided World", in *Jeevadhara*, 21 (1991) 484–498, p. 491.
57. R. J. RAJA, "Eco-Spirituality in Psalms", in *Vidyajyothi Journal of Theological Refleetion*, (Hereafter, *VJTR*) 53 (1989) 637–650, p. 644.
58. I. BARBOUR, *Ethics in an Age of Technology*, San Francisco, 1993, p. 78.
59. J. BLEWETT, "Social Justice and Creation Spirituality", in *The Way* 29 (1989) 15–25, p. 16.
60. I. BARBOUR, *Ethics in an Age of Technology*, p. 76.
61. G. De SCHRIJVER, *Ancient and New Creation Narratives* Unpublished, lecture notes, K. U. LEUVEN, 1992–93, p. 98.

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is inescapable. It is the command of God which is critical however is the quality of human value: failure to do so amounts disobedience and violation of a special trust.[62]

Briefly, the message in the book of Genesis calls us to a co-creative stewardship in relation to nature which "has been created by God to be the place where he can live in community with man, granting man his own living space and responsibility".[63] We need a new approach to living 'with' rather than 'on' the land, to husbandry rather than exploitation.[64] And therefore "man does not have to keep a respectful distance and worship, if he can and must go into it".[65] This is his vocation as a steward in the ecological interpretation of the Genesis.

1.3. *Imago Dei*: Fundamental call to human beings

God said: "Let us make man in our image (*selem*) after our likeness (*demuth*): and let them have dominion over... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them" (Gen 1:26–27). The origins of the *imago Dei* symbol renders in depth, a meaning on which all the concepts of human beings with his divine call, dignity and uniqueness is depicted. It was a theme for scholars to ponder its various implications and denominations with a view to affirm and differentiate man with other beings.

1.3.1. *Imago Dei:* Meaning and Implications

The word *Imago Dei* found three times (Gen. 1:27–28; 5:1–3; 9:5–6) in Genesis, originated in the priestly tradition.[66] The creation of human beings is the final work of creation. The solemn creation "Let us make...", according to Jürgen Moltmann

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62. R. A. BAER, Jr., "Land Misuse: A Theological Concern in Christian Century" 83 (12 Oct 1996), cited in *M.* E. STORTZ, "Ethics, Conservation and Theology in Ecological Perspective", in C. S. ROBB, C. J. CASEBOLT (eds,), *Covenant for a New Creation: Ethic, Religion and Public Policy* New York, 1991, p. 205.
63. A. KONIG, *New and Greater Things*, p. 159.
64. K. P. ALPERS, "Starting Point for an Ecological Theology. A Bibliographical Survey", in M. E. MARTY & D. G. PEERMAN (eds.), *New Theology*, No. 8, New York, 1971, p. 312.
65. KONIG, *New and Greater Things*, p. 160.
66. D. J. HALL, *Imaging God in Stewardship*, New York, 1986, p. 69.

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involves five factors: introduction, resolve, creation of human beings, blessings and commission, provision.[67] The triple use in the phrase 1:27 of the verb "created" (*bara*) is striking. It seems to give a particular importance and intensity to the creative act.[68] The word *selem* in its earliest and elemental form means an actual plastercast, a copy, a duplicate.[69] In modern time this term signifies "bodily likeness, intellectual similarity and spiritual affinity".[70]

The image signifies God's representative on earth as a king puts his statue in a conquered land to signify his real though not his physical presence there.[71] Human beings therefore bear a "stamp" of his maker.[72] This involves four qualities of human beings narrated by Harold De Wolf, such as "spiritual being", "the sense of moral obligations", "longing for union with God", and "aspiration to goodness".[73] The two words image and likeness are used to connote representation and similarity respectively. Image expresses mere outward representation, and likeness, reflexive and inward relationship.[74] Image of God implies according to many of the theologians up to Aquinas human being's power of reason.[75] According to Thomas Aquinas "all creatures contain some evidence (trace) of their maker but only "intellectual creatures" are properly speaking... made to God's image."[76] Therefore J. F. A. Sawyer writes Gen. 1:27 in a different form "So God created the man with a

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67. J. MOLTMANN, *God in Creation: An Ecological Doctrine of Creation*, London, 1985, p. 217.
68. JOHN PAUL II, "Man is Created in the Image of God", in *L'osservatore Romano*, 14 April 1986, p. 11.
69. G. H, PIAZZA, "A Theology of Ecology: God's Image and Natural World", in *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 13 (1984) 107–110, p. 108.
70. G. H. PIAZZA, "A Theology of Ecology", p. 108. See also B. J. P. LONERGAN, "The Concept of *Verbum* in the Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas", in *Journal of Theological Studies* 10 (1949) 359–393.
71. J, F. A. SAWYER, "The Meaning of *Imago Dei* in Genesis 1–11, in *Journal of Theological Studies* 25 (1974) 418–428, p. 421.
72. Cf. D. J. HALL, *Imaging God in Stewardship*, p. 91.
73. L. H. DE WOLF, *A Theology of the Living Church*, New York, 1953, pp. 205–206.
74. J, MOLTMANN, *God in Creation*, pp. 218–219.
75. Cf. D. J. HALL, *Imaging God in Stewardship*, p. 92.
76. D. J. HALL, *Imaging God in Stewardship*, p. 93.

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resemblance to Himself with a resemblance to divine beings He created them".[77]

1.3.2. *Imago Dei*: Foundation of Dignity and Vocation

Imago Dei includes human beings creative capacity.[78] In the realm of creation, therefore, he becomes the representation of God.[79] Hence he comes in a fundamental relationship with God as a representative, counterpart to respond to God, appears as God's splendour on earth.[80] In creating human beings as His image, God turns over His lordship to humans to rule as He rules. Therefore this dominion can only be understood as a vocation or a specific commission and not as autonomous and autocratic voice.[81] In Gen. 1:28, we see that, the man is commissioned by God to rule over the animals and to subdue the earth. The creation of God's image on earth is followed in v. 28 by the commission to rule over the animals and vv. 28 and 29 by the charge to "subdue the earth". This is an added commission. According to Moltmann likeness to God is not to be found identical with the commission to rule.[82] To be *imago Dei* does not mean to have something but to be and do something.[83]

1.3.3. *Imago Dei*: Relation and call of Human Beings

The resemblance of Gods image and likeness in human beings involves a divine relationship and not a possession of divine authority.[84] Karl Barth argued that the image of God in Gen. 1 refers to I – Thou relationship between men and men as well as between men and God.[85] Joseph Sittler writes, "human

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77. J. F. A. SAWYER, "The Meaning of *Imago Dei* in Genesis 1–11", p. 424.
78. J. GORSKY, "Judaism and the Environment", in *The Month* 252 (1991) 78–88, p. 79.
79. D. BERCANT, C. STUHLMULLER, "Creation According to the Old Testament", in E. McMULLIN (ed.) *Evolution and Creation*, Notredame, 1985, p. 162.
80. J. MOLTMANN, *God in Creation*, pp. 220–221.
81. G. A. PIAZZA, "A Theology of Ecology", p. 109.
82. J. MOLTMANN, *God in Creation*, P. 224.
83. D. J. HALL, *Imaging God in Stewardship* p. 98.
84. D. BERGANT & C. STUHLMULLER, "Creation According to the Old Testament", p. 161.
85. K. BARTH, *Kirchliche Dogmatik* III, 1 (1947) p. 205, cited in J. F. A. SAWYER, "The Meaning of *Imago Dei* in Genesis 1–11", p. 422.

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being is an ecological entity in relation".[86] This relationship is not noly limited to human beings and God but also to animals and land. But any arbitrary disposal of the plant or animal for self serving purposes is detached from the model of God's lordship.[87] It means stewardship over the earth, for God.[88] Man as image of God is man as representative, guardian, steward and companion of a world which is not his own creation, not an object for which he can hope to find a "fix" for the results of his own exploitation.[89] By sharing in God's image and likeness human beings are necessarily entering into a relation. The term *imago Dei* in itself denotes not to a substance, an attitude or a specific quality but to a relation.[90] We are creatures, whose very being implies relatedness. Therefore human beings are to be seen not in his or her solitude, with his or her rational volitional and other capacities intact, but by considering human beings in the context of their many dimensioned relationships.[91] It is only as God's image human beings are exercising legitimate "rule" and in the context of creation, human beings as whole, an equal, and in the community of human beings.[92]

Imago Dei concept is that which authorizes the human person to the stewarding of God's creation. Through the stewarding, love and work, man shares in the creative and salvific act of God. Pope John Paul II in his speech on St. Peter's square

86. J. SITTLER, "Ecological Commitment as Theological Responsibility", in *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science* 5 (1970) 172–181, p. 176.
87. G. H. PIAZZA, "A Theology of Ecology", p. 109.
88. J. MOLTMANN, *God in Creation*, p. 224.
89. E. P. ECHLIN, "Christian Agriculture. Husbandry or Industry", in *The month* 150 (1989) 190–195, p. 193.
90. J. SITTLER, "Ecological Commitment as Theological Responsibility" p. 174.
91. D. J. HALL, *Imaging God in Stewardship*, p. 115.
92. J. MOLTMANN, *God in Creation*, p. 225. According to Moltmann "*imago Dei*" has a profound meaning. As God's image human beings are God's proxy in his creation and they represent Him. Human beings are counterpart for God himself; human beings are created for sabbath "to reflect the praise and glory of God" (p. 188). John Paul II in his address on 9th April 1986 at St. Peter's square said that because of image of God, human beings are mouthpiece of the glory of God" JOHN PAUL II, "Man is Created in the Image of Cod", in *L'Osservatore Romano* (14 April 1986) 1–14, p. 11.

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on 9th April 1986 says: *imago Dei* does not merely determine man's place in the whole order of creation but also speaks even of his link with the order of salvation in Christ.[93]

Human beings cannot claim to be the absolute superior because of *imago Dei*. There are also biblical references which reminds his fragility, weakness and finitude.[94]

1.3.4. *Imago Dei*: Stewardship and Care

In this ecosystem human beings have a special role, as everyone will accept, thanks to his sharing in the image of God. The ontology of "imago Dei" contains within itself a love ethic and therefore as Kierkegaard says we image God only in loving. This loving aspect insists stewarding. That means imaging God is stewarding God. Because of the relational aspect of *imago Dei* a threefold relation is clear: to God, to human beings, to nature. Through the sharing in God's substance he became co-creator which is also derived from the term *imago Dei*. According to Dennis Carrol the notion of merciful stewardship is at the centre of our responsibility as *imago Dei*.[95] Only when he patterns himself on Jesus Christ, the perfect image of the invisible God, he can discover the true meaning of his social and cosmic dimensions.[96]

Hence the term imago Dei has a profound depth in the ecological stewardship notion. God's dominion over creation and human beings share in co-creation, through the sharing in His image and likeness, are all for the preservation of the nature. If human beings are caring and cultivating harmony in their dealing with each other and the earth, they can grow "in the

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93. Quoted in *L'Osservatore Romano*, (14 April 1986) 1-14, p. 11. We will not elaborate the theme here because it does not come in our line of thought, According to Joseph Sittler salvation is an ecological word in the sense that it is the restoration of a right relation which has been corrupted J. SITTLER, "Ecological Commitment", p. 177.

94. Sir 33:10,13, Job 33:4,6; 34.14-15; Is 64:7; Ps 102:14 Although Ps. 8 elevates human beings, the idea of *imago Dei* does not appear here.

95. D. CARROL, "A Green Theology? Theology and Ecology" in *The Way* 31 (1991) 276-285, p. 280.

96. H. E MERTENS, "The Doctrine of Creation in Ecological Perspective", in *Louvain Studies* 12 (1987) 83-88, p. 87.

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image and likeness of God".[97] Creation is not a once-for-all-act; the creation process must purposely and continuously be fostered.[98] Through his vocation as *imago Dei*, which necessarily implies stewardship, he bears also the character of *imago mundi*.

1.4. *Imago Mundi:* Human Being as a Part of Creation

As human beings resemble God's image, he resembles the world also. Human beings are also one of the creatures in the fellowship of creation. Human beings have a God/world relationship. In this relationship to world, he can be called an *imago mundi*. As Jürgen Moltmann writes, human being is a microcosm in which all previous creatures are to be found again, a being that can only exist in community with an other created being and which can only exist in community with all other created beings and which can only understand itself in that community.[99]

1.4.1. *Imago Mundi:* Human Being Shares with Nature

Human being according to Gen. 2:7 is a living soul. He is an animated body. This characteristic links him with animals which are too described as "living souls" (Gen. 1:30). Human beings share in the life of the universe. He is a microcosm after the model of the macrocosm. It has a principle of unity, a living principle, a soul.[100] In this macrocosm human beings live, share and involve. As they have created at the last stage, they are at the apex of the created things and not the crown of creation.[101] "The very fact that human beings share in the beingness of earth he cannot claim a blind dominion over nature". He is taken from the earth (Gen. 2:7). He is formed from "*adama*". Therefore human being is bound up with the earth.[102]

1.4.2. *Imago Mundi:* Human Being Shares the Life of God and to be with Nature

Human beings in relation with animals share their living soul living space, food and blessing of fertility. He is distinguished from

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97. S. McDONAGH, *To Care for the Earth: A Call to a New Theology*, London, 1986, p. 123.
98. J. SITTLER, "Ecological Commitment as Theological Responsibility",p. 199
99. J. MOLTMANN, *God in Creation*, p. 186.
100. R. PANIKAR, *The Cosmotheandric Experience*, New York, 1993, p. 137.
101. J. MOLTMANN, *God in Creation*, p. 187.
102. J. MOLTMANN, *God in Creation*, p. 187.

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animals because of *imago Dei* and therefore he is authorized to give names (Gen 2:19). It brings animals into a community of language with human beings.[103] What he has common with other creatures and what he differs from other creatures are expressed through *imago mundi* (image of world) and *imago Dei* (image of God). All other creatures reflect in human being. This "complex system" contains within itself all simple systems in the evolution of life. It is from this macrocosm he has been built up and proceeded.[104] Hence we can say as Gregory of Nazianus said "human being is a second cosmos, a great universe within a little one".[105] Both are also ultimates, and thus reducible neither one to the other nor to higher entity. Both are distinct but not separable.[106] Therefore Bede Griffiths writes: "If I could know myself I would know matter and life, since all are contained in me".[107] In his vocation as a steward for the creation human beings represent God. He is viewed as belonging within the enduring cohesion of the whole creation.[108] According to the concept of *imago Dei* and *imago mundi* human beings are not mere submerged parts of the body of God but related to God or to another Thou.[109] As image of the world he stands before God or the rerpesentative of an other ceature. He lives, speaks and acts on their behalf.[110] Through the concept of *imago Dei* and *imago mundi* we can presume that man is a part of the world yet having a dominion over the created world for he being created in the image and likeness of God.

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103. J. MOLTMANN, *God in Creation*, p. 188.
104. J. MOLTMANN, *Cod in Creation*, p. 190.
105. Cf. J. HABGOOD, " A Sacramental Approach to Environmental Issues", in C. BIRCH, W. EAKIN, J.B. McDANIEL (eds.), *Liberating Life. Contemporary Approaches to Ecological Theology*; New York, 1990, p. 46:
106. R. PANIKAR, *The Cosmotheandric Experience*, p. 150.
107. Cf. J. A. BAKER, "Biblical Views of Nature", in C. BIRCH, W. EAKIN, J. B. McDANIEL (eds.), *Liberating Life: Contemporary Approaches to Ecological Theology*, p. 10.
108. J. MOLTMANN, *God in Creation*, p. 189.
109. S. McFAGUE, "Imaging a Theology of Nature: The World as God's body", in C. BIRCH, W. EAKIN, J. B. McDANIEL (eds.), *Liberating Life: Contemporary Approaches to Ecological Theology*, p. 216.
110. J. MOLTMANN, *God in Creation*, p. 190.

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1.5. Stewardship as a Covenant

1.5.1. Concept of Covenant in O. T. and its Implications

The God of the Bible is a God of covenant; a covenant which safeguards the totality of being with all its intrinsic and instrumental relation to him and its surroundings. The word covenant comes from *berith*, means a convention, agreement, compact etc. It is used 300 times in the Old Testament.[111] Beginning with the human dimension, a shift from the ideal of stewardship to the reality of fellowship or covenant is essential. In the two stories of creation (Gen. 1:1–2:4a; 2:4b–25) besides the theme of dominion on which the ideal of stewardship is based there is also the idea of relationship on the basis of covenant. It is not a later development. The reason is God is immanent in every created being and his love is extended to all beings.

The covenantal relationship is so pervasive in the Bible that it is often thought to be the essential way God relates to humans. The very name of O. T. and N. T. bears witness to the overriding significance of successive conventional understandings.[112] Eichrodt, therefore, writes that covenant is the basic principle of the relationship to God.[113]

God is the creator of heaven and earth (Gen. 1:1) which implies the whole species with all its minute parts. He indwells in everything. The inner secret of creation is the indwelling of God. Hence there is an intrinsic relation. This relation is outwardly projected in creation and in human beings at the culmination. The total context of Gen. 1:26–30 shows that there is an implicit covenant which is explicitly made by God with creation wherein the human being made in God's own image was to entrust the creation to him to achieve the purpose of creation.[114] Eckhart

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111. A. B. DAVIDSON, "Covenant", in J. HASTINGS (ed.), *Dictionary of Bible*, Vol. I, 1989, 509–517, p. 509.

112. W. B. GULICK, "The Bible and the Ecological Spiritualists", in *Theology Today* 48 (1991) 182–194, p. 187.

113. D. W. EICHRODT, *Theologie des Alt Testaments*, Vol. 1, Leipzig, 1993, p. 6.

114. M. D. AMBROSE, "The Cosmic Experience of God According to Genesis", in *Indian Theological Studies* 26 (1989) 122–133, p. 128.

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writes: "creation is the voice of God the way in which the covenant is communicated to humanity".[115]

In Gen. 9 God speaks to Noah "Behold I establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you, also with every living creature to be found with you, birds, cattle and every wild beast with you... everything that lives on earth." (Gen. 9:11). Thus the covenant is not only with human beings, but with the whole of what we call nature. It is not mere human beings that demands a reckoning with regard to creation entrusted to them through this covenant. God says: "Between me and the earth" (Gen 9:13).

In the ninth chapter, the word covenant is used 5 times. This notion of covenant cannot be reduced either to the mosaic model or to the personal treaty between God and the house of David. It is a distinct concept which can truly be called cosmic covenant".[116] The covenant is of God's initiative. It is universal in scope, unconditional and everlasting.

1.5.2 Stewardship Implies Covenant Relationship

According to W. Dyrness, human beings in their creation and in their mandate to have dominion over the earth are obviously central to the creation, but this is rigorously qualified by their covenantal responsibilities.[117] The call to stewardship is a privilege bestowed on human kind by God. In the heart of this stewardship covenant is inclusive.[118] The covenant emphasises the bond among all parts of creation making them interdependent. The covenant provides the basic and bounds of creativity: While creativity underserves that God's covenant is not static but rather

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115. Cf. J. SAHI, "Ecological Voice of the Earth", in *VJTR* 52 (1988) 341–345 p. 341.

116. R. MURRAY, "The Relationship of Creatures within the Cosmic Covenant", in *The Month* 251 (1990) 425–432, p. 427. God makes other covenants with the whole of natural order (Jer 33:20–25), Abraham (Gen 15:17), Isaac (Gen 17:19), Jacob (Gen 28:18), Abraham and Abimalake (Gen 21:27) with day and night (Jer 33:20).

117. W. DYRNESS, "Stewardship of the Earth in the Old Testament", in W. G. MICHAELSON (ed.), *Tending the Garden: Essays on the Gospel and the Earth*, Michigan, 1987, p. 52.

118. S. McDONAGH, *To Care for the Earth: A Call to a New Theology*, p. 123,

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shapes a process with purpose and possibility.[119] This covenant relationship is of mutual trust and hope in which the integrity of creation is affirmed. In the 'creation covenant' of God with Adam (humanity), He says: "to subdue and have dominion over the creation" but in the second covenant of God with Noah He purposely avoids the term "subdue" for God knows till the time of Noah human beings have misused this special command by sinfully creating violence and polluting relationships. In bible Creation, stewardship and covenant are terms whose meaning are interdependent. God's creation is stewarded and bound up in covenantal relationship. Therefore the God of covenant expects from human beings not merely a remembrance but a reckoning with regard to the creation entrusted to them through this covenant.[120]

1.5.3. Covenant: Its Depth Meaning

Covenant encompasses the parts, restores the relatedness of the whole environment, and adds dimensions of commitment and loyalty to the created order and to God. Respect for biotic right is therefore theocentric, respect for the bio-centric values of God. It is the affirmation that all life is included to this moral circle, – God's universal covenant of justice.[121]

Till recently the term "master" was used to show man's authority over nature and inanimate beings. But the term can be misinterpreted and the notion of slavery and oppression are in its implication. He acts as a master and decides what is good and what is wrong. It implies a notion of grades and hierarchy. Now the apt term used is stewardship where he has concern to his environment. It is more life centred ethics and not man centred. It forbids violence and enhances affection, refined and defended. Moreover it is directed to the whole inhabited world. It has got a wider meaning of trustworthy custodian of resources

119. C. S. McCOY, "Creation and Covenant: A Comprehensive Vision for Environmental Ethics", in C, S. ROBB, C. J. CASEBOLT (eds.), *Covenant for a New Creation: Ethic, Religion and Public Policy,* Maryland, 1991, p. 224.

120. R. J. RAJA, "As it was in the Beginning", in *VJTR* 55 (1991) 681-697, p. 684.

121. J. A. NASH, "Biotic Rights and Human Ecological Responsibilities", in H. BOCKLEY (ed.), *The Annual Society of Christian Ethics,* Boston, 1993, p. 149.

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that were indispensable to the life and well being of the whole community. Critics maintain, however that stewardship still assumes human superiority over nature and it can too easily revert to the attitude of dominion.[122] Therefore according to Van Klinken, the expression covenant is much better to stewardship, which conveys more than the latter.[123] Hence in this covenantal perspective human beings are neither separated nor autonomous. However, when we use the term stewardship in this thesis, we use it in the biblical and theological meaning.

2. Stewardship of Animals

2.1. Notion of Animals in the Old Testament

From the very beginning of the biblical narration on creation, we can see the narration of animals in it. "Let the earth bring forth living creature... cattle and creeping things and beasts of all kinds" (Gen 1:24). After the creation God saw that it was good (Gen 1:25). Before and apart from the creation of human beings God saw that animals are good. The command to human beings to be fruitful and multiply does not nullify the identical command to animals.[124] There are hundreds of references on animals, wild as well as domestic, there are hundreds of references in the Bible. Animals have played an important role in the lives of "biblical people". They are mentioned in the Bible in connection with cults, richness, stewarding etc. The Book of Job is the most important book in the Bible which narrates about animals, whose descriptions are welcomed by zoologists.[125]

In the book of Genesis man was given the authority over animals and plants. Already in Gen. 2 human beings are entitled to have a responsibility on animals, by naming them they have entered a personal relationship.[126] The giving of a name implies the wielding of authority over the objects named as well as

122. I. BARBOUR, *Ethics in an Age of Technology*, p. 78.
123. J. V. KLINKEN, "The Integrity of Creation: Ecology between Theology and Science," in *Concilium* (1991) No. 4, 65–77, p. 68.
124. C. BIRCH, W. EAKIN, J. B. McDANIEL (eds.), *Liberating Life: Contemporary Approaches to Ecological Theology*, New York, 1991, p. 276.
125. W. P. ANDERSON, "Animals", in M. S. MILLER & J. L. MILLER (eds.), *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, London, 1952, 19–20, p. 19.
126. B. IRRGANG, *Christliche Umweltethik: Eine Einfuhrung*, Munchen 1992, p. 311.

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fitting it meaningfully into ones demesne.[127] There are several biblical laws and other declarations pertain to human treatment of animals (Deut 22:1–5; Exo 23:4; Prov 12:10; Deut 25:4; Deut 22:6ff). In the book of Leviticus we have a list of forbidden and nonforbidden animals (Ch. 17)[128] In Proverbs it is stated that caring for ones own animals, of course, is good husbandry as well as human practise (Prov 27:23–27).

In the course of biblical history, we cannot see a unified vision on animals. Human beings right of sabbath rest are also allotted to animals. This means that sabbath was a day of rest not only for humans but for animals too (Exo 20:10; Deut 5:14). Even the wild beasts were to be remembered and nurtured (Exo 23:10ff; Lev 25:6ff) on Sabbath day.[129] By the time of priestly code (Deuteronomy) it seems that God desired innumerable and continuous offerings of sacrificial animals. But prophets and psalmists are against animal sacrifice. The classical declaration of Am. 5:21–24, Hos. 6:6 and Isa 1:11–17 are familiar. In third Isaiah, too may have proclaimed that God's way is opposed to all kinds of sacrifices (Isa 66:1–3).[130] Amos 5:25, Jer 7:21–23 maintained that Yahweh never did ordain sacrifices. Isaiah gives even a lovely vision of different animals dwelling together (11:6–8). Elsewhere in the O. T., sympathy for animals seems to come out in the story of Belam's donkey (Num 22:27–30) and in the description of animals suffering in drought (Jer 14:5–6) and it is clearly stated that God's care for all creatures extends to all animals (Ps 104:10–30; Jon 4:11).[131] Hence there are scattered passages which promote gentleness to animals but it is not possible to argue a wanton cruelty that which is prohibited.[132] Referring to Ps. 104, R. J. Raja writes that Ps, 104 stresses the equality of human beings with all the created realities especially

127. A KONIG, *New and Greater Things*, p. 30.

128. M. DOUGLAS, "The Forbidden Animals in Leviticus", in *Journal of Studies of Old Testament* 59 (1993) 3–23; See also R. MURRAY, *The Cosmic Covenant*, London, 1992.

129. R.H. HIERS, "Biblical Theology and Methodology; Biblical Perspectives on the Environment", in *Zygon* 19 (1984) 43–59, pp. 52–53.

130. R. H. HIERS, "Biblical Theology and Methodology", p. 53.

131. R. MURRAY, "The Relationship of Creatures within the Cosmic Covenant", in *The Month* 251 (1990) 425–423, p. 430.

132. P. SINGER, *Animal Liberation*, London, 1976, p. 205.

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the animals, all of whom together depend on their creator.[133] Rolston III moves a step ahead when he writes: "In God animals are born free".[134] He draws the idea from Ps. 104:18–27 and Job. 39:5–8. The animal would constitute that part of nature closest to man.[135] This affinity of human beings and animals involves a common denomination of living beings and are united by a fraternal bond. The resemblance of man to animal especially their common origin from dust and their common way of ending in grave expressed in the bible show the intense relation between both.[136]

2.2. Animals in the New Testament

Likewise, the New Testament speaks of God's care for animals, birds like sparrows (Mt 10:29; Lk 12:6) and plants such as lilies (Mt 7:28–30). If a man is worth many sparrows, then a sparrow's worth is not nil.[137] But Jesus did not give any significant teaching regarding the animal world. Besides Jesus shows an attitude of indifference to the fate of two thousand swines to hurl in to the see. Augustine comments it that we need not to govern our behaviour toward animals by the moral rules. In the Gospels, we find, yet a wide range of references and allusions to animals; there are more than 40 occurrences of animals.[138] The metaphor of good shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep signifies that the flocks have a value of its own, where even at the cost of his life that the shepherd seeks the sheep. Unlike O. T., in the N. T., there is an annulment of distinction between clean and unclean animals (Act 10:11) and abolition of animal sacrifice (Hb 10:1–18). We can conclude that New Testament neither cherishes any cruel attitude towards animals. nor does it take into

133. R. J. RAJA, "Eco Spirituality in Psalms", in *VJTR* 53 (1989) 637–650, p. 643.
134. H. ROLSTON III, "Environmental Ethics: Some Challenges for Christians", in H. BOCKLEY (ed.), *The Annual Society of Christian Ethics*, Boston, 1993, p. 168.
135. J. J. KILGALLEN, "Animals", in X. L. DUFOUR (ed.), *Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, London, 1969, 13–14, p. 13.
136. J. J. KILGALLEN "Animals" p. 13.
137. C. H. BIRCH & J. B. COBB Jr., *The Liberation of Life*, New York, 1984, p. 147.
138. A. STROBEL, "Animal, Beast", in H. BALZ & G. SCHNEIDER (eds.), *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. 2, Grand Rapids, 1991, p. 148.

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account animal's rights.[139] We can also say that Jesus' attitude to animals appears to be positive, for He refers caring for animals even on the day of sabbath (Mt 12:11; Lk 14:5).[140] Paul also refers the legitimate freedom that animals enjoy (1Cor 9:9–10) and the culmination of the entire universe in God.

2.3. Historical Development[141]

In the Greek background Pythagoras encouraged his followers to treat animals with much respect. Pythagoras was a vegetarian, Plato and Aristotle held the view that animals exist to serve the purposes of human beings. Aristotle hold that animals exist to serve the purpose of humans, and although we share a common animal nature which does not justify that the animals have equal consideration with the humans. Since nature makes nothing purposeless or in vain, it is undesirably true that God has made animals for the sake of human beings".[142]

The Eastern Church has a compassionate view on non–human species. The prayer for animals composed by Basil the Great is well-known. Chrysostom wrote "surely we ought to show them great kindness and gentleness for many reasons, but, above all, because they are of the same origin as ourselves"[143] Isaac the Syrian promoted compassion to animals. Patristic period also hold that man's role is that of God's steward of creation.

In the West Francis of Assisi and Bonaventura supported all kinds of gentleness to animals. Augustine respected the belief that the nonhuman creatures have instrumental value. But he argued that since beasts lack reason we need not concern their suffering. Aquinas says that there is an order of things where imperfect are for perfect, plants for animals and animals for human beings. Therefore according to Aquinas charity does not extend

139. P. SINGER, *Animal Liberation*, p. 209.
140. R. H. HIERS, "Biblical Theology and Methodology", pp. 52–53.
141. The reader may find the historical devolopment of the concept of animals as a sudden leap from one to another. In this study we do not intend to dwell on the devolopment of this concept in detail. It exceeds the time and space limits of our present work.
142. Cf. P. SINGER, *Animal Liberation*, p. 206.
143. Cf. R. ATTFIELD, *The Ethics of Environmental Concern*, Oxford, 1983, p 20.

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to irrational creatures. The only reason not to do cruelty to animals is that it may lead to cruelty to human beings[144] Aquinas and Kant along with most major Western philosophers asserted that we have no direct duties towards animals because they are not rational. Rationality is the criterion of a strong separation between human beings and animals.[145] But J. Bentham and J, S. Mill supported the idea of duties to animals for the fact that they can experience suffering. Not rationality, but sentience is the factor which determines whether a being object of a moral subject or not. Peter Singer attacks the human chauvinism of restricting ethical concern to his own species. The concept of *jus naturae*[146], which developed already in third century, acknowledges that they have some value in themselves and asserts animals are to be treated well.

But in different nations and in different philosophical systems animals were not treated with utmost decent. Modern form of bullfight and colosseum events were existed in the Roman Empire. The Medieval period did not give a positive attitude to animals. During the Renaissance anthropocentric view was so strong that human being has got a central role in universe and he became "the measure of all things". Marsilio-Ficino in *Theologica Platonica* described man as the centre of universe, the middle of universe, and the chain of the world.[147] But against this a few Leonardo da Vinci who became a vegetarian out of love for animals and Giordano Bruno argued for sympathy to animals. In modern period Descartes hold a dualistic philosophy and accepted the Christian doctrine that animals have no immortal soul. He called animals as mere machines, "automata". David Hume hold the view that by the law of humanity we are bound to give gentle usage to the creatures. And Jeremy Bentham was perhaps the first to denounce "man's dominion" as tyranny than

144. Cf. P. SINGER, *Animal Liberation*, pp. 211-213.

145. R. ATTFIELD, *The Ethics of Environmental Concern*, Oxford, 1983, pp. 35-50.

146. *Jus naturae* suggests that animals have some degree of moral acknowledgement. This is explicit in their self-defence mechanism and caring of offspring.

147. M. FICINO, *Theologica Platonica* III, 2. cited in, P. SINGER, *Animal Liberation*, p. 216.

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legitimate government. [148] The first attempt for the legal rights for animals took place in Britain in the House of Commons (1800) but not with great achievement. Then a welfare society for the preservation of cruelty to animals started by some humanists.

Charles Darwin's Original Species (1859) was a turning point. He wrote "man in his arrogance thinks himself a great work, worthy of the interposition of a deity. More humble, and, I believe, true, to consider him created from animals".[149] This has made an impact on the concept of human attitude to animals. The history of animal liberation started here. Within two decades the first animal protection laws were constituted in England in 1882 by Richard Martin and Erskine.[150] Due to the concern and love for animals some have vehemently protested against the Western culture and adopted Eastern ideas from Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism. Arthur Schopenhauer advocated human beings can live without killing animals. Even if we kill the animals it should be made easier by means of chloroform. Man's modern view of animals differs enormously and asks whether animals are outside the moral sphere.

2.4. Do Animals have Moral Claim

Do the animals have the same right as human beings? As created by God and less inferior to human beings, animals have their own inherent worth and instrumental goodness. They have been placed on earth by God and have their own nature's, their own ends and their own capacities to develop and to flourish according to their environments.[151] The human love towards animals is not simply of mercy but of objective justice.[152] But B. E. Rollin is of having another concern about animals. According to him, since animals are incapable of entering social agreements, lacking both reason and language and not being moral

148. P. SINGER, *Animal Liberation*, p. 222.

149. P. SINGER, *Animal Liberation*, p. 224.

150. G. M. TEUTSCH, *Lexikon der Umweltethik*, p. 101.

151. D. S. ODERBERG, "A Civilizing Influence– Basil Wrighton and Animal Rights", in *The Month* 252 (1991) 84–88, p. 86.

152. D. S. ODERBERG, "A Civilizing Influence", p. 86.

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agents,[153] they are not objects of moral concern.[154] Like many others, J. Bentham holds the view that because animals can suffer they have got certain rights and it is inconsistent to excluds animals from ethical considerations. Almost all modern writers agree that we ought to be kind to animals. But the question is whether animals can claim kind treatment from us as their due. Animals are not genuine "moral agents" and thus incapable of being moral subjects, of acting rightly or wrongly in the moral senses, do not come under moral principle.[155] According to Michael Fox "only autonomous being can and do belong to a moral community.[156] Animals lack this moral power and cannot claim moral consideration as their due. But as moral agents we have an obligation to avoid mistreating animals.[157]

Concerning our relationship with animals, C. H. Birch and J. B. Cobb write that to view animals as means to our ends is wrong. What is wrong is to view them only as means. Ethics, law and economics should take account not only of the use of animals but also of their rights.[158] They have rights but cannot

153. We hold that humans are morally superior beings while animals lack the capacities of a moral agent, such as free will, accountability, deliberation, judgement, practical reason etc. This view rests on a conceptual conception. As far as moral standards are concerned, only human beings that have the capacities of a moral agent can properly be judged to be either mora or immoral, Moral standards are simply not applicable to beings that lack such capacities. Animals and plants cannot, therefore, be said to be morally inferior in merit to humans. Since the only beings that can have moral merits or be deficient in such merits are moral agents, it is conceptually incoherent to judge human as superior to nonhuman on the ground that humans have moral capacities while non humans don't have such capacities. P. W. TAYLOR, "The Ethics of Respect for Nature", in D. VANDEVEER (ed.), *People, Penguins, And Plastic Trees: Basic Issues in Environmental Ethics*, California, 1986, p. 179.

154. B. E. ROLLIN, *Animal Rights and Human Morality*, Buffalo, 1981, p. 11.

155. J. FEINBERG, "Can Animals have Rights", in T. REGAN & P. SINGER (eds.), *Animal Rights and Human Obligations*, New Jersey, 1983, p. 192.

156. M. FOX, "Animal Liberation: A Critique", in K. S. SHRADER-FRECHETTE (ed.), *Environmental Ethics*, Pacific Grove, 1983, p. 117.

157. M. FOX, "Animal Liberation: A Critique", p. 118.

158. C. H. BIRCH & J. B. COBB jr., *The Liberation of Life*. Cambridge, 1984, p. 154. See also R. M. RODD, "Pacifism and Absolute Rights for Animals: A Comparison of Difficulties", in *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 2 (1985) 53-61.

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claim an absolute right to life.[159] Holmes Rolston III, writes: "It might seem easy enough to extend the christian ethic to animal neighbours. But on further reflection, just to treat animals like people is not very discriminating. In some way they are our cousins, in other ways not".[160]

2.5. Human-Animal Stewardship Relation

The biblical and theological messages about the value of animals speak with one voice: Animals do not exist for the sake of the unbridled pursuit of human avarice and greed.[161] The image of God with its associated dominion for human being is not for exploitation of animals but for responsible care.

Human role as a custodian of animals is to be concrete and realized by preserving and stewarding animals otherwise it is dangerous to human survival too. In this context Paul W. Taylor writes the wellbeing of human is dependent upon the ecological soundenss and health of many plant and animal communities while their soundness and health does not in the least depend upon human wellbeing.[162] For the animal world is a necessary world integrated into the ecosystem. For a healthy biosphere, animals are to be preserved with extra care and shall not expect its extinction through non care and killing. R. F. Nash thinks that according to A. Schweitzer the killing of a creature without a real need is at least a small murder.[163] Edward Schillebeeckx says that human beings must look after animals: animals to all of which they have given a name, as to recognizable fellow

159. C. H. BIRCH & J. B. COBB jr., *The Liberation of Life*, p. 157. See also R. ELLIOT, "Rawlsian Justice and Non-Human Animals", in *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 1 (1984) 95-106. See also G. MORAN, "Dominion Over the Earth", in *Commonweal* 114 (1987) 697-701.

160. H. ROLSTON III, "Environmental Ethics', p. 164. In our view point we cannot fully agree with Holmes Rolston III. It is true that the animals are part of creation. Hence we must treat them nicely, but that doesn't mean that they are equal to man.

161. C. BIRCH, W. EAKIN, J. B. McDANIEL (eds.), *Liberating Life*, p. 284.

162. P. W. TAYLOR, "The Ethics of Respect of Nature", in D. VANDEVEER (ed.), *People, Penguins and Plastic Trees: Basic Issues in Environmental Ethics*, California, 1986, p. 176.

163. R. F. NASH, *The Rights of Nature: A History of Environmental Ethics*, London, 1989, p. 76.

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creatures with their own unassailable rights.[164] But the deplorable fact is that today the econocentric culture endangers the "animal world" through its international trade[165] and other maltreatment.[166]

Hence Konrad Hilpert advocates that the animals are to be treated 'humanly' not for its own sake and not merely out

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164. E. SCHILLEBEECKX, *Church*, p. 237.

165. A main reason for the endangering of wild life is the international illegal trade. Juan Villalba of the Latin American bureau of Traffic, an international organisation that maintains the wildlife trade says: "It is the third biggest contraband business, after drugs and arms". Each year, millions of creatures are wrenched from their natural habitat by peasants and others in order to make quick money. The tale of international animal trade is not only a story of laws being flouted; it is also a story of environmental devastation and enormous cruelty. Some animals are disappearing even before they are recognized, laments Mexico's Homero Aridjis - a poet and conservationist. "We are killing the masterpieces of life on the planet. The illegal animal trade is the biggest ecological disastel in the Americas" says Circe Amado, a Brazilian animal activist. "Our countries end up without any fauna, our people get nothing and others make a killing" laments Zaida Lopez of Nicaragua's Natural Resources Institute. Now the experts and wildlife leaders say that the best strategy is to attack demand as opposed to supply in the wildlife trade. Menake Gandhi, former environmental minister of India says "controls have to be imposed on the buyers and not the sellers". See for further details I. McCLUSKEY, A. PRATAP & A. PURVIS, "All God's Creatures prices to sell", in *Time* 142 (1993) 36-41. In his book "Der Todliche Fortschritt", Eugen Drewermann reports a great number of endangering animals due to different reasons. For instance, in Bolivia alone the animal dealers amass 50 million dollars per year by illegal trafficking. In Germany among the 300 species of birds, 130 are in the brim of extinction. For further details see E, DREWERMANN, *Der Todiche Fortschritt: Von der Zerstorung der Erde und des Menschen im Erbe des Christentums*, Freiburg, 1991, pp. 305-331.

166. Cosmetics and households (perfumes, powder, detergents, etc.) in the present day has developed into an industry for which animals are victimized and being utilized as the primary raw materials. Even in the name of fashions (coats, gloves, caps, etc.) which is taken for granted as a natural tendency, the technocratic world of present day behave to animals as if they are deemed to be born for human ends. Under the title of producing nutritious food for human beings, "intensive rearing method" is adopted so much so that animals are taken away from their natural habitat and are all deprived of all their natural growth. Circus, bullfights, aquatic shows which are supposed to be for entertainment in reality instrumentalize the animals. All this converge to the contemporary living philosophy and pleasure.

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of normal customs and manners",[167] but because they have an innate right to be respected. This kind of stewardship is not beyond our reach. The more we study on animals and its world, we are aware of our duty to be steward and not to be mere observers. Eugen Drewermann in his book *Der tödliche Fortschritt* writes "Was ist der Mensch ohne die Tiere? Wären alle Tiere fort, so strübe der Mensch an grosser Einsamkeit des Geistes".[168] Dr. Reinhold Bergler, director of the psychological institute of the university of Bonn therefore writes "Mensch und Tier fördern und fordern sich gegenseitig".[169] It is a matter of collective responsibility. It is an issue of justice. In all our dealings with animals whether direct or indirect the ethic for liberation of of life requires that we render unto animals what they are due, as creature with an independent integrity and value.[170] The reason for all this is "man has the capacity to love, not just his own species but life in all its shapes and forms. This empathy with all the interknit life is the highest spiritual expression I know".[171]

3: Stewardship of Land (Earth)[172]

3.1. Earth: The primary reality

Earth is the primary reality from which all complexity, diversity, integrity, richness, natural and cultural hisrory derive. It is not merely a loose collection of myriads of ecosystems. In the eco-sensitive viewpoint of the ecologists non-human creation is a natural resource merely to be preserved and responsibly used exclusively for human satisfaction. The basic task for us

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167. K. HILPERT, "*Verantwortung fur die Natur: Ansatze zu einer Umwelt-ethik in der Gegenwartigen Theologie*", in *Theologie und Philosophie* 60 (1985) 336-399, p. 386.
168. E. DREWERMANN, *Der Todliche Fortschritt*, p. 163.
169. R. BERGLER, "*Sieben Goldene Regelen fur das Katzengluck*" in *Deggendorfer Wochenblatt*, 5 Januar 1994, p. 7.
170. C. H. BIRCH & J. B. COBB jr., *The Liberation of Life*, p. 287.
171. L. EISELEY, "The Judgement of the Birds", in *Zygon* 19 (1984) 25-41, p. 34.
172. In this section we use the term earth, land, creation, world, nature, biotic community (a term coined by Albo Leopold) synonymously. Human beings, plants, animals, soils and waters are "all interlocked in one humming, community of cooperators and competitors, one biotic". See also A. LEOPOLD, *Round Rivers*, New York, 1953, p. 148.

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is to develop a sustainable set of principles on the basis of which we can save the earth from its present ruined condition. Unless we develop a morally grounded earth–human relationship we will be accountable for genocide, biocide and ecocide. Humans cannot think of their existence without the earth. According to D. Martin writes "without the earth, humans are simply an abstraction".[173]

3.1.1. Land in the Bible

Ecology is the study of the organisms 'at home'. Earth is our home. We cannot survive without the earth. Our concern towards the earth with its complex web of linkages, relationships and interdependence is to be studied. Earth in the Bible denotes either a particular part of the earth in a geographical sense, or the earth as the place of human habitation (Is 45:18).[174] In the cosmic sense, earth is a disk which rests either upon the waters of the abyss (Ps 24: 2) or upon pillars (Ps 104:5; Job 38:4). The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof (Ps 24:1). "The Land is mine" (Lev 25:23). Likewise are the gold and the silver of the land, wine and its grain, its wood and its flax (Hos 2:10–11). This is a fundamental doctrine of Israelite faith.[175]

In the first six books of the Bible, Gerhard von Rad observed that "there is probably no more important idea than that expressed in terms of the land promised and later granted by Yahweh, an idea found in all resources and indeed every part of each of them".[176] The first action of God, as depicted in the Bible is the creation of heaven and earth (Gen 1:1). Before the creation of human being God fertilizes the land with water and gives the commandment "Be fruitful and multiply" (Gen 1:22),

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173. D. MARTIN, "The Earth Charter: A Religious Voice", *Creation Spirituality* 8 (1992) 36–38, p. 37.

174 J. L. McKENZIE, "Earth", in *Dictionary of the Bible*, London, 1965, p. 208.

175. When, therefore, Jesus said, give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's. His listeners grasped its meaning. They knew that no more could belong to Caesar than the "image and the inscription". S. RAYAN, "The Earth is the Lord's", in *VJTR* 54 (1990) 113–132, p. 113.

176. G. VONRAD, "The promised Land and Yahweh's Land in the Hexateuch" in *The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays*, New York, 1966, pp. 79–93.

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which is a key text in shaping the human-earth relationship in the Bible [177] God's care of the earth is vehemently described in each and every book of the Bible, as if God is commuted only to this land (rather than other parts of the universe) and His promises for His people were almost always the land.

In the opening chapter of Genesis we see the word "earth" more than 15 times. And God saw that it was good. Creation here, is pictured as a vast public household.[178] God's creative act has enriched this houshold in abundance and He made an immediate relation with land. The unity and intrinsic relation of God with the land is expressed in different terms by Samuel Rayan. 1) God crowns the earth with splendour and beauty. And God says "Let the earth bring forth". And she brought forth in joy every kind of being-living and nonliving. 2) The earth is Godbetrothed. 3) God has covenanted her to Himself. 4) He makes them harmonious.[179] Therefore Walter Brueggemann writes the "central vision of world (-history) in the Bible is that all creation is one, every creature in community with every other, living in harmony and security towards the joy and well being of every other creature.[180] Karl Barth also writes "Everything created prior to humanity is only relatively necessary, compared to the human creature. The whole creation, therefore can be fittingly called a house built for humauity"[181] God has given the earth to mankind. "The heavens belong to Yahweh but the earth he has giveu to the sons of Adam" (Ps 105:16). Yahweh is portrayed as the Landlord who declares "The land shall not be sold in perpetuity for the land is mine (Lev 25:23). This implies that land is Lord's and we are his stewards.

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177. In two different creation narratives in the Bible (Gen 1:1-2:4a and 2:4b-25) the former presents a fertile land, while the latter is sterile, where God plants a garden. God-man-earth relationship, however, is clearly implied here.

178. L. L. RASMUSSEN, "Creation, Church and Christian Responsibility", in W. G. MICHEALSON (ed)., *Tending the Garden*, Michigan, 1987, p. 116.

179. S. RAYAN, "The Earth is the Lord's" in *VJTR* 54 (1990) 113-132, p. 115.

180. W. BRUEGGEMANN, *Living Towards a Vision: Biblical Essays on Shalom*, New York, 1976, p. 15.

181. Cf. H. P. SANTMIRE, *The Travail of Nature*, p. 152.

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Although the 'earth' is created good (Gen 1:31), it shares the curse upon human sin (Gen 3:17). But God has again blessed the land. In Deuteronomy land was seen as a place of great blessing and fertility... often with lavish images of overflowing fecundity.[182] In his book, *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise and Challenge in Biblical faith* writes Walter Brueggemann, "Deuteronomist can readily believe that Yahweh grants His people enduring, wholesome continuities, enjoying the span of planting and harvest, participating in the full cycle of life with the earth– and all under Yahweh's attentive protective eyes".[183] "God's blessing and justice is extending to the soil community and not alone to human beings".[184] "Original blessing underlies all beings, all creation, all time, all space, all unfolding and evolving of what is".[185] According to Mary Douglas, in O.T., we find God's blessings as the source of all good things and the withdrawal of blessing as the source of all dangers. Both land and livestock are blessings through which they enter in to the divine order.[186] To preserve these blessings human beings have to observe the laws. "Disobedience to law brings ecological disaster"[187] and those who are faithful to God will inherit the blessings of life in the land (Deu 8:1–20; Mat 5:3–12).

3.1.2. Biocentric Development of Land Ethics

Aldo Leopold's *A Sand Country Almanac* first published in 1949 has become a classic of the environmental movement. J. Baid Callicott has called Leopold "the father or founding genius of recent environmental ethics", a writer who created the paradigm of an ethical system that included the whole of nature and nature as a whole.[188]

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182. H. P. SANTMIRE, *The Travail of Nature*, p. 119.
183. W. BRUEGGEMANN, *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith*, Overtures to Biblical Theology, Philadelphia, 1977, p. 51.
184. E. P. ECHLIN, "Christian Agriculture: Husdandry or Industry" in *The Month* 150 (1989) 190–195, p. 192.
185. M. FOX, *Original Blessing*. New Mexico 1983, p. 46. Mathew Fox prefers to use in creation theology original blessing, instead of original sin.
186. MARY DOUGLAS, *Purity and Danger*, New York, 1969, pp. 45–54.
187. W. DYRNESS, "Stewardship of the Earth in the Old Testament" in W. G. MICHAELSON (ed.), *Tending the Garden: Essays on the Gospel and the Earth*, Michigan, 1986, 50–65, p. 60.
188. J. B. CALLICOTT, "Animal Liberation: A Triangular Affair", in *Environmental Ethics* 2 (1980) 310–321, p. 311.

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Aldo Leopold wrote "We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong we may begin to use it with love and respect".[189] He saw the indivisibility of the earth– its soil, mountains, rivers, forests, climate, plants and animals constitute sufficient reason for respecting the earth "not only as a useful servant but as a living being". He states that the land is not mere mud or dirt. It is a fountain of energy flowing through a circuit of soils, plants and animals.[190]

Building on Leopold's ideas, a number of authors have defended a *holistic ethics* in which the welfare of the biosphere is the supreme value. P. Baird Callicott supports Leopold's dedication to the whole biotic community including non–sentient members such as trees and plants. He says that "we all tend to have a positive attitude towards the community to which we belong, and ecology simply shows us that we belong to a wider community than we had thought".[191] Joseph Wood Krutch, a spokesman of Leopold, accepted the idea that every part of creation has purpose, importance and value (in non–theological terms also). Since the land is the household of all beings every creature along with earth should be protected. Human beings should extend his relationship to the land where they find their abode. Agreeing land preservation as a moral obligation, modern ecotheologians, such a Rene Dubos, tried to point out that the stewardship form was always respected in Christian tradition. Reflecting the value and concern towards land he even coined the term "theology of the earth", with a reasonable acceptance of enlightened anthropocentrism. He said that "mankind was in charge of the world and could and should manipulate nature to his best interests but always with a feeling of reverence for what was ultimately not his possession but Gods".[192]

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189. A. LEOPOLD ,*A Sand County Almanac*, New York, 1949, p. viii–ix.

190. A. LEOPOLD, *A Sand County Almanac*, p. 216.

191. J. B. CALLICOTT, "Hume's Is/Ought Dichotomy and the Relation of Ecology to Leopold's Land Ethic", in *Environmental Ethics* 4 (1982) 172–181, p. 174.

192. R. DUBOS, *A God Within*, New York, 1972, p. 45.

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Walter C. Lowdermilk's (1884–1974) speech on Jerusalem Radio on June 1939 entitled "The Eleventh Commandment" is famous. He reasoned that if God could have foreseen the ravages that centuries of thoughtless forestry and agriculture would bring to his creation, he would have been moved to add to the Ten Commandments. The eleventh commandment follows:

> Thou shalt inherit the holy earth as a faithful steward, conserving its resources and productivity from generation, to generation. Thou shalt safeguard thy fields from soil erosion, thy living waters from drying up, thy forests from devastation, and protect the hills from overgrazing by thy herds, that thy descendant may have abundance forever...[193]

For him the responsible land use was not just the key to physical progress but to higher spiritual development as well. Following the same idea Joseph Sittler began his effort in preserving biosphere by publishing a key article in 1954 entitled "*A theology for earth*". According to him "God–man–nature" has to be understood as a unity. In 1960 addressing to the World Council of Churches he said the purpose of God is cosmic redemption. Abuse of the environment is an insult to God and hence the care of the earth is a religious imperative.[194]

Bill Deval and George Sessions advocated biosphere equality in their book *Deep Ecology*. They promoted that all things in the biosphere have an equal right to live and blossom and reach their own individual forms of unfolding.[195] Arne Naess emphasises also biospheric equality.[196] Richard A. Baer Jr., his book *Land misuse : a theological concern*, is well known. Interpreting on Gen 1:31 he says earth in its totality had intrinsic value for God. Its implication was the basic fact of their being created by God endowed every part of nature with rights that human ought to respect. Therefore he draws a conclusion, "Because

193. W. LOWDERMILK, "An 11th Commandment", in *Santa News Press* (22 June 1969), cited in, R. F. NASH, *The Rights of Nature*, p. 97–98.

194. J. SITTLER, *The Care of the Earth and Other University Sermons*, Philadelphia, 1964, p. 89.

195. B. DEVALL & G. SESSIONS, *Deep Ecology*, Salt Lake City, 1985. p. 67.

196. A. NAESS, "The Shallow and the Deep, Long Range Ecology Movement", in *Inquiry* 16 (1973) 95–100.

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God is the highest authority of earth no member of his world can dictate the destiny of any other member".[197] His first assumption is that the world belongs to God and second foundation of his ecotheology is God likes the world created. Hence God delights in nature and cares for it quite apart from its importance for man. Deriving from his third principle–interrelationship of beings is part of God's plan – he writes in amalgamating ecology and theology, want only to destroy the relational and holistic qualities of our environment is to sin against the very structure of the world which God has created. He writes further: "Failure to fulfil our obligations as faithful masters of gifts of God's creation, will inevitably bring God's judgement upon. The earth itself will rebel against our greedy and thoughtless exploitation of nature and our irresponsible fecundity".[198] He believes that the environmental degradation, human suffering and divine retribution were closely related.

H. Paul Santmire in his essay *Reflections on the alleged ecological bankruptcy of western theology* wrote that "in the eyes of God nature has its own value, its own rights for life and fulfilment".[199] According to Santmire it is not enough to respect natures' rights but people have a God-directed personal and social responsibility to act to preserve and to defend these rights.[200] John B. Cobb jr. made the greatest contribution to environmental theology. All things exist only in relation to their environment. Cobb argued that all matters from subatomic particles to human beings had a potential richness of experience, that humans should respect. If there is intrinsic value anywhere, he declared, then is intrinsic value everywhere.[201] John Carmody in his *Ecology*

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197. R. A. BAER, jr., *Land misuse: A Theological Concern*, cited in, R. F. NASH, *The Rights of Nature*, p. 100.

198. R. A. BAER, jr., "The Church and Man's Relationship to His Natural Environment", in *Qnaker Life* (12 January 1970) 420–444, p. 421.

199. H. P. SANTMIRE, "Reflections on the Alleged Ecological Bankruptcy of Western Theology", in *Anglican Theological Review* 57 (1975) 131–152, p. 140.

200. H. P. SANTMIRE, *Brother Earth*, cited in, R. F. NASH, *The Rights of Nature*, p. 106.

201. J. B. COBB, jr., & C. BIRCH, *The Liberation of Life: From the Cell to the Community*, Cambridge, 1981, p. 152.

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and Religion (1983) argued that every creature is a presence of God and therefore nature has an independent right to exist, live and flourish. He advocates "Love nature like a neighbour or relative"[202] All of the modern ecotheologians emphasise the interrelatedness of biotic community "like the blood which unites one family".[203] Those who wish to reside in a promised land must promise to preserve its integrity, stability and beauty.[204]

And since the "land as a community is the basic concept of ecology, land is to be loved and respected as an extension of ethics".[205] Aldo Leopolds'linkage of ecological and theological relation gives new meaning to nonhuman right and human moral obligations. This viewpoint led some ecotheologians to speak of stewardship as a moral responsibility–not of people to other people but of people to God. It is a matter of social justice (not in the sense of interpersonal relations) to apply biotic right to the entire spectrum of life on earth. Hence the necessity of extending Christian ethics into ecology.

3.1.3. Human Beings Relation to Land and its Value Ethic

Human beings share with other species a common relationship to the earth. In relation to other species we are but one among them. The Law of genetics, of natural selection and of adaptation apply equally to all of us as biological creatures. Each animal and plant is like us in having a good of its own.

In an evolutionary point of view we see that not only are we very recent arrivals on earth, but that our emergence as a new species on the planet was originally an event of no particular importance to the entire scheme of things.[206] We are

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202. J. CARMODY, *Ecology and Religion: Toward a New Christian Theology of Nature*, New York, 1983, p. 119.

203. C. SEATTLE, "The Land is Sacred", in *Counselling and Values* 18 (1974) 275–277, p, 276.

204. H. ROLSTON III, "Environmental Ethics: Some Challenges for Christians", p. 180.

205. A. LEOPOLD, *A Sand County Almanac*, p. viii–ix.

206. If we condense the age of the earth (46.000.000.000 years) into the life span of a person 46 years old the following is the role of man on the planet. He is appeared 4 hours ago: agriculture was discovered during the last hour; industrial revolution began a minute ago. K. M. MATHEW, "In Search of a Theology of the Environment". in *VJTR* 57 (1993)

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relatively newcomers entering a home that has been the residence of others for hundreds of millions of years, a time that must be shared by all of us together.[207] How we treat other beings will depend upon our metaphysical, theological, and philosophical views about life. A materialistic view of life is unlikely to sustain a deeply ethical concern of all life. An anthropomorphic view of life often fails to sustain any deep concern for nonhuman life.[208] A biocentric view can also mislead us. Because the consciousness and intellectual capacity of human beings as image of God are not respected in due. We become only one of the created beings. Paul Taylor recommends a new "belief system".[209] What we needed today is not a new environmental ethic but a careful application of traditional forms of ethics in the light of new ecological knowledge.[210] Charles Birch recommends a biocentric ethic for our environmental concern, because "I [C. Birch] believe that God is concerned about all life and not only human life".[211] It is a submission to divine governance and we locate all things in a manner appropriate to their relation to God.

An attitude of respect for nature is important. Such a disposition commits a person to the principles of moral consideration and intrinsic value, to be disposed to further, as an end in itself, the good of any entity in nature just because it is that kind of entity is to be disposed to give consideration to every such entity and to place intrinsic value on the realization of its good.[212] "Behold the lilies of the fields" (Mt 6:28). The word 'behold' implies a respect, a kind of tenderness which suggests that living things have a life akin to ours and an

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215–222, p. 216. See also S. SIVADAS, "A new Gospel on nature" in *Jeevadhara* 21 (1991) 421–433, p. 422.

207. P. W. TAYLOR, "The Ethics of Respect for Nature", p. 176.

208. C. BIRCH, "Christian Obligation for the Liberation of Nature", in C. BIRCH, W. EAKIN, J. B. McDANIEL (eds.), *Liberating Life: Contemporary Approaches to Ecological Theology*, New York, 1991, 57–72, p. 61.

209. P. W. TAYLOR, "The Ethics of Respect for Nature", p. 174. The belief system constitutes a coherent, unified and rationally acceptable picture or map of a total world. By examining each of its main components and seeing how they fit together, we obtain a scientifically informed and well ordered conception of nature and the place of humans in it.

210. I. BARBOUR, *Ethics in an Age of Technology*, p. 64.

211. C. BIRCH, "Christian Obligation for the Liberation of Nature", p. 60.

212. P. W. TAYLOR, "The Ethics of Respect for Nature" p. 173.

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intrinsic value to themselves and to God.[213] We should also not forget that the wellbeing of human being is dependant upon the ecological soundness and health of many plant and animal communities, while their soundness and health does not in the least depend upon human wellbeing.[214] Indeed, from their standpoint the very existence of human beings is quite unnecessary. Since human beings are morally superior, a higher kind of entity and have a greater inherent worth which all bring a moral relation to nonhuman forms of life. We begin to look at other species as we look at ourselves seeing them as beings which have a good they are striving to realize just as we have a good we are striving to realize. We, therefore, develop a disposition to view the world from the standpoint of their good as well as from the standpoint of our own good. We cannot remain intellectually neutral. As moral agents we share the earth's bounty with other species in a responsible way.

Different authors give different models and suggestions for a positive view on biosphere. Gotthard M. Teutsch recommends 3 views for a sound environment: 1) renunciation of despotic bicycle morality (God looking and nature treading), that means although human beings are superior to other beings but not entitled to superiority. 2) Welfare of nonhuman beings, which relate all beings as integral part of one unified whole functionally interrelated. 3) Solidarity with beings[215] by which each being is seen to share the teleological strive to realize its own good in its own unique way. Thus says Ian Barbour, "Environmental ethics entails communal responsibility as well as individual conscience".[216] He advocates a shift in ethical view from individualism and competition to communality and cooperation.[217] As human beings are basically selfish and seek their own ends Klaus L. Klostermayer invokes a "guilty feeling in their conscience" so that the wellbeing of ecosystem[218], remain in a sustainable

213. C. BIRCH, "Christian Obligation for the Liberation of Nature", p. 61.
214. P. W. TAYLOR, "The Ethics of Respect for Nature", p. 176.
215. G. M. TEUTSCH, *Lexicon der Umweltethik*, p. 100.
216. I. BARBOUR, *Western Man and Environmental Ethic: Attitudes Towards Nature and Technology*, Addison-Wesley, 1973, p. 4.
217. I. BARBOUR, *Western Man and Environmental Ethic*, p. 16.
218. K. K. KLOSTERMAYER, "Bhakthi, Ahimsa, and Ecology", in *Journal of Dharma* 16 (1991) 246–254, p. 254.

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equilibrium. To bring it into practise, Harold Shilling extends biblical ethic such as love of God, love of neighbour to a three-fold realm: love of nature. This implies certain limitations on human beings unbridled egoism.[219] In a theological and ethical language a self imposed moderation which we call asceticism, denotes "rejection of consumerism" and "rejection of power" are important.[220] George Therukattil says: "the purpose and values of science and technology must be theologically and eco-ethically reoriented which means not as to rule over nature but as to perform that duty, which is to guide human interactions with rest of nature, their preserving and protecting its integrity"[221] For an integral biosphere Felix Wilfred suggests that "every technological planning and intervention must be evaluated in terms of its human and social costs".[222]

These comments all suggest different aspects of how a well integrated system of biosphere can sustain. "To be at home in the world of nature does not just mean finding out how to utilize nature or earth economically and efficiently. Home is not a hotel", says Stephen Toulmin.[223] This means that human beings should keep the biotic community beyond their usefulness to humanity and not mere a fulfilment of human needs.

3.1.4. Stewardship of the Earth

Biblical narration of creation of earth and human beings is linked very closely. In order to show human beings relation and affinity to earth, God uses His word and soil. Adam[224] is

219. Cf. W. B. GULICK, "The Bible and the Ecological Spirituality", in *Theology Today* 48 (1991) 182–194, p. 184.
220. J. REITER, "Environment and Ethic", in *Theology Digest* 36 (1988) 223–231, p. 228.
221. G. THERUKATTIL, "Ecological Crisis, a Moral Dilemma", in B. PUTHUR (ed.), *Moral Theology Today*, Alwaye, 1991, p. 137.
222. F. WILFRED, "Nature and Human Survival", in *Jeevadhara* 18 (1988) 55–75, p. 69.
223. Cf. S. McFAUKE, "Imaging a Theology of Nature: The World as God's Body", in C. BIRCH, W. EAKIN, J. B. McDAVID (eds.), *Liberating Life Contemporary Approaches to Ecological Theology*, New York 1991, 201–227 p. 220.
224. 'Adama', 'eves' is often in the Bible used to indicate the earth as a planet rather than as soil or ground. R. K. HARRISON, "Earth", in G. W. BROMILEY (ed.), *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. 2 (1982) 3–4, p. 3.

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taken from *adamah* (earth) but this is in order that he may emerge from it as the master to whom God has confided it. He is to 'rule' over it (Gen 1:28) and it is like a garden of which he is appointed as steward (Gen 2:8, 15). This is the source of that intimate connection between man and the earth, which leaves so many echoes in scripture.[225] In psalms we read that mankind inhabits earth as God inhabits heaven (Ps 115:16). Human beings are intrinsically related to the land as the natural habitat. As Israel could not think of itself apart from the land, neither could finally think of human beings in general apart from the earth.[226] Relying on the biblical notion of blessedness and fertility, it would be reasonable to say that human responsibility towards the earth must begin with the recognition that God, not human effort, gives fertility to the earth.[227] It is God who enables the land to bring forth leaves, flowers and fruits etc. The life of human beings depends completely on the fertility of its soil. All through Genesis (and Old Testament) this theme is sounded very much (Gen 24:35; 26:12; 39:5; Ps 104:14).

Like Adam many of his descendants were tillers of soil (Gen 4:2) which shows their affinity to the earth. We see no exploitative mentality or even seeking any methods for it. Hence James Baert says, there is little interest in the development of tools and weapons in this time.[228] Sirach commended farm work which was created by most High (Sir 7:15). Since the land– the whole earth– is Yahweh's (Ps 24:1) it is not for humans to do with as they please (Jer 27:5). God made a covenant with land and this covenant code stipulated that the land should "rest and lie fallow" every seventh year (Ex 23:10). This is a year of rest (Lev 25:4,5). The Israelites has in mind that the land is God's and they are only caretakers and therefore God assures his blessing (Deut 11:14–15). The prophets recited this idea very often for instance, Isaiah a major prophet speaks

225. J. P. LANGAN, "Earth", in X. L. DUFOUR (ed.), *Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, London, 1969, 105–109, p. 105.
226. H. P. SANTMIRE, *The Travail of Nature*, p. 192.
227. W. DYRNESS, "Stewardship of the Earth in the Old Testament", in W. G. MICHEALSON (ed.), *Tending the Garden. Essays on the Gospel and the Earth*, Michigan, 1987, 50–65, p. 52.
228. J. BARR, "Man and Nature. The Ecological Controversy and the Old Testament", in *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 55 (1972–1973) 9–32, p. 25.

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about the land and its use. "His God instructs him and teaches him the right way" (Isa 28:26). The prophets believed that YAHWEH transforms the land and brings about the real green revolution in the coming age which the whole creation would share in peace (Amo 9:13–14; Joe 3:18; Ezk 47:1–12).[229] The faith of Israel was deeply rooted and extolled by the "wonderful earthiness".[230] Although no special guidelines are given for caring the earth in the Bible, Israelites have practised good stewardship in N. T., we read "God loved the world to such extent that he sent His son" (Joh 3:16). Even though exegetes may not be fully agree to the translation of world in to earth, one could say that earth also includes in the notion of the word, world. It is supported by the Pauline idea that the whole creation partakes in salvation or redemption by Jesus. In addition to that one could say that Jesus obtained the reconciliation between man and God on earth.[231] Briefly, the basic biblical viewpoint of land is stewardal much more positive than as it was generally conceived to be.

Joseph Sittler, a pioneer of stewardship of earth comments that the world is not God but it is God's. "Use and throw away" mentality is to be avoided in our relation to earth. The importance of this attitude is well expressed by Friederic Kirschemann when he says that "once we have concluded that we own the land, we determine to use it anyway we see fit and discard it when we have finished with it"[232] J. A. Baker take a step further and said: "Earth is not to be evaluated simply in terms of human needs and interacts. God created the greater part of the world for its own sake".[233] Jane Blewet quoting from Sean McDonagh's "To care for the earth" argues that we treat the earth as we treat one another. "It strikes me that perhaps we mistreat one another precisely because we mistreat the earth. We rip, rape

229. R. H. HIERS, "Ecology, Biblical Theology and Methodology", p. 55.
230. G. VON RAD, *Genesis*, Philadelphia, 1972, p. 278.
231. A. C. MYERs, "Earth", in *The Eerdmans Biblical Dictionary*, Michigan, 1987, p. 298.
232. F. KIRSCHEMANN, "The Ecology, Economy, Ethic Connection in Land Use", in C. S. ROBB, C. T. CASSEBOLT (eds.), *Covenant for a New Creation: Ethics, Religion and Public Policy*, New York, 1991, 78-90: p. 79
233. J. A. BAKER, "Biblical Views of Nature", in C. BIRCH (ed.), *Liberating life*, 9–26, p. 19.

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and rob it, oppress, despise and discard it".[234] Here the nature is deprived of its own subjectivity though we have no right to treat earth as a thing or object. In this context Konrad Hilpert asks: "As the human beings are always 'the subject' why not animals, plants, stones or even the nature be 'subjects?'[235] Democratic justice also questions human position with regard to the nature. He is only a minority in the vast universe and he cannot overrule the majority. Hence Jane Blewett comments, "The earth is not our home nor are we neighbours to vast numbers of other creatures".[236] And if human beings exploit the nature without rethinking he wounds himself finally.[237] What is needed is the inculcation of the idea that we have to love the earth as we love a neighbour and create an earth ethic. However care must be taken not to fall into pantheism and naturalism.[238]

From this analysis it is clear that it is in our hands that the future of the biosphere lays. The earth's ledger, which in the final analysis is the only real one, tells us that earth is finite and vulnerable and that natural systems will be seriously depleted and possibly collapse unless human beings begin to shape their lives in the light of ecological accounting.[239]

3.2. Species Preservation

3.2.1. God's Care of Species

In the "Endangered Species Act of 1973", U. S. congress had lamented the lack of adequate concern (for) and conservation (of) species.[240] They declared that species "have aesthetic, ecological, educational, historical and scientific value to the nation

234. J. BLEWETT, "Social Justice and Creation Spirituality", in *The way* 29 (1989) 13-23, p. 20.

235. K. HILPERT, "*Verantwortung fur die Natur*", in *Theologie und Philosophie* 60 (1985) 376-399, p. 389.

236. J. BLEWETT, "Social Justice and Creation Spirituality", p. 21.

237. K. HILPERT, "*Verantwortung fur die Natur*", p. 391.

238. H. ROLSTON III, "Environmental Ethics", p. 181.

239. S. McDONAGH, *To Care for the Earth*, p. 45.

240. H. ROLSTON III, *Philosophy Gone Wild: Essays in Environmental Ethics*, Buffalo, 1988, p. 206.

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and its people".[241] This is a contemporary attempt to protect species. However there is a reference to the species protection in the biblical tradition. The Bible records the first endangered species project – Noah and his ark. God wills that each species on earth should continue despite the disruptions introduced by flood and asked Noah to collect each species in pair. Although individual animals perish catastrophically, God has an adequate concern and conservation for species. After the flood God made the covenant "the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations" (Gen 9:12–13). Although, "The biblical authors had no concept of genetic species but used instead the vocabulary of bloodlines".[242] The ark of Noah gives its message that we should not cause any species to go extinct. We can say that every creature is a work of God and God wish to preserve it.

3.2.2. "Earth Speciates"

From a biblical background we can see God inspires and allows species. The spirit of God is brooding, animating the earth and earth gives life, "Earth speciates".[243] Jesus looking at the fields of Galilee said that "the earth produces of itself" (Mk 4:28). God reviews this display of life and continues the life emerging process. Noah is told not just to save species that has "aesthetic, ecological, educational, historical, recreational and scientific value", but the whole. Whether we have benefit from it or not we have to preserve at least to the extent of artificial extinction. There is always a possibility of natural extinction. Extinction in nature is not evil. We are not obliged to preserve species from natural extinction (through museums, etc.). Holmston writes: "Humans cannot and need not save the product without process".[244] Also Leopold, an adamant defender of eco-rights, never wrote about the natural rights of particular organisms. He even advocated killing thousands of animals if their population exceeded the carrying capacity of their environment. Edward O. Wilson has a different opinion. We

241. Endangered Species Act of 1973, sec. 2a, 87 stat. 884 quoted by H. ROLSTON III, "Environmental Ethics: Some Challenges for Christians", in H. BOCKLEY (ed.), *The Annual Society of Christian Ethics*, 1993, p. 171.
242. H. ROLSTON, III, "Environmental Ethics", p. 172.
243. H. ROLSTON, III, "Environmental Ethics", p. 175.
244. H. ROLSTON, *Philosophy Gone Wild*, p. 216.

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should not eliminate species because humankind might find them useful for the future for foods, medicines and like.[245]

3.2.3. Stewardship of Species

It is difficult to think of species and duties to species in ordinary terms. Species is a coherent, ongoing form of life expressed in organisms, encoded in gene flow, and shaped by the environment.[246] Here we see species in a biological context as a living historical "form". Species lacks moral agency, reflective self awareness, sentience, and an organic individuality. This does not mean that it does not have a right to exist. Each ongoing species defends a form of life. The wrong that humans are doing or allowing to happen through carelessness is to disrupt this historical flow of life. In this sense every extinction is a kind of super killing. That is to say it kills "essences" beyond "existences", the "soul" as well as the "body".[247] In other words, to kill a species is to shut down a unique story. Moreover each species reproduces its own kind. This proves that there is an inherent tendency to preserve its own species. This is expressed in the dictum like produces like. The species defends its kind against the world but at the same time interacts with its environments, functions in the ecosystem, and is supported and shaped by it.[248] Therefore H. Rolston writes "species regularly enter and exit nature's theatre. Perhaps natural selection currently tests species for their capacity to coexist with humans".[249]

Species have a right of existence. John Rodman argues from a legalized point of view and writes: "non human species exist in their own right (have their own origin, structure, tendencies etc.) and not simply for us',[250] Feinberg sees another perspective about

245. E. O. WILSON, *Biophilia*, Cambridge, 1984, p. 119.
246. H. ROLSTON, III, *Philosophy Gone Wild*, p. 210. Darwin gives a definition of species, "I look at the term species, as one arbitarly given for the sake of convenience to a set of individuals closely resembling each other". C. DARWIN, *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*, Baltimore, 1868, p. 108.
247. H. ROLSTON, *Philosophy Gone Wild*, p. 212.
248. H. ROLSTGN, *Philosophy Gone Wild*, p. 215.
249. H. ROLSTON, *Philosophy Gone Wild*, p. 25.
250. J. RODMAN, "The Liberation of Nature", in *Inquiry* 20 (1977) 83–131, p. 126.

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the preservation of species and says that "we do have duties to protect threatened species, not because of duties to the species themselves as such, but rather duties to future human beings".[251] Stewarding the species is a human duty towards God who begets life. Theologically speaking, preservation of all kinds and forms of life is promoted in the Bible. Stewardship is extended to the whole realm of creation which includes "seen and unseen" as we pray in Credo "created by God". In our evolutionary ecosystem preservation of species is also significant because it is a dynamic life form maintained over time in a genetic flow.[252] Despite, ignoring all these concerns, the disruptions introduced by humans God will for each species on earth to continue.[253] The life of every species on earth is important. On Noah's arch, God did not seem much concerned with individuals but rather greatly concerned for species.[254] Rolston continues, "The Noahaic story teaches sensitivity to all forms of life... What is required is not human prudence but principled responsibility to the biospheric earth, to God".[255] We see from Noahaic covenant all animals have value in themselves as well as for one another and for God. Each therefore claims respect from human beings Holmes Rolston compares destroying species to tearing out of pages from an unread book written in a language hardly known how to read, about the place where they live.[256]

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251. J. FEINBERG, "The Right of Animals and Unborn Generations", in W. T. BLACKSTONE (ed.), *Philosophy and Environmental Crisis*, Athens, 1974, 43–68, p. 56.

252. H. ROLSTON, *Philosophy Gone Wild*, p. 212.

253. H. ROLSTON III, "Environmental Ethics", p. 172.

254. H. ROLSTON III, "Environmental Ethics", p. 173. God's concern and care for the nature and the creatures is well depicted in the story of deluge. Their the Lord asks Noah to collect from all the species on earth a pair, so that none of His creation would be totally extinguished from the face of the earth and we see in the ark (which could be considered as a microsm) both human beings and creatures coexist and find a peaceful habitat. Besides it is through a bird Noah makes sure of end of deluge. Human beings need at times the help of animals.

255. H. ROLSTON III, "Environmental Ethics", p. 175. See also J. A. NASH, *Loving Nature: Ecological Integrity and Christian Responsibility*, Nashville, 1992, pp. 162–191.

256. H. ROLSTON, *Philosophy Gone Wild*, p. 207.

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3.3. Plants and Wilderness: Human Beings Shelter

Truly a broader version of ecological ethics would extend our duties beyond the animal world to include plants. Some Ethicians have claimed that it is arbitrary and hedonistic to confine our duties to creatures that can feel pain. Instead they urge, we should acknowledge that all living things including plants have an interest in remaining alive.[257] In cases of plants, opinion differs on our duties towards them. Some argue that trees and plants "do not suffer pains, and pleasures. we cannot be compassionate toward them"[258] and therefore doesn't come under the golden rule "love one another". Some others are for the preservation of trees and plants on the basis of a return effect. Bishnois community, a religious community in Rajasthan, India, believe that cutting a tree or killing an animal is a blasphemy. They continue to protect trees and animals with the same fervour as it was in the origin.[259] The Chipko Movement (1973) of India is also following the same way of conduct.[260] According to Ian Barbour the most obvious benefit is recreation–camping, hunting, fishing, canoeing, backpacking, and so on.[261] He goes on further and says that it will develop a *human Character* in us. "Wilderness can teach us moral lessons: we can learn humility and gratitude but can also gain self–reliance in facing the challenge of the wild".[262] Destroying them we destroy our cultural tradition.

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257. M. C. VELASQUEZ, *Business Ethics: Concepts and Cases*, New Jersey, 1988, p. 237.

258. H. ROLSTON III, "Environmental Ethics", p. 169.

259. O. P. DWIVEDI, "Human Responsibility and the Environment: A Hindu Perspective", in *Hindu–Christian Studies Bulletin* 6 (1993) 19–26, pp. 24–25. See also P. R. ATHICAL, "Tarumitra–Die Freunde Der Baume", in *Weltweit* 4 (1994) 4–10.

260. This is a movement started by Sunderlal Bahuguna. After trying many ways of stopping the cutting of the trees by the government he launched the "Embrace (chipko) the Trees" movement. He trained the village people to go and embrace the trees when the government workers came to cut it down. It resulted a positive attitude towards trees and reduced the cutting. Paulose Mar GREGORIOS, "New Testament Foundations for understanding the Creation", C. BIRCH (ed.), *Liberating Life*, New York, 1990, p. 83.

261. I. BARBOUR, *Ethics in an Age of Technology*, p. 64.

262. I. BARBOUR, *Ethics in an Age of Technology*, p. 65.

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3.3.1. Wilderness and Human Sublimation

Wilderness has a spiritual significance that goes beyond aesthetic and moral values. In wilderness we discover that we are spiritual beings and not just consumers.[263] John Muir writes "The forests...a great delight to God for they were the best he even planted! Forests invite transcending the human world and experiencing a comprehensive, embracing realm.[264]" Jesus himself seems, at times, to have retreated into wilderness when he wanted to get things done. Wilderness as well as plants are to be preserved as "sanctuaries for religious experience.[265]"

Preserving wilderness can be useful for scientific research as well as to preserve the endangered species. According to scientists, "Ecology is a young science and needs" natural laboratories "in order to investigate the complex interactions among the members of biotic communities.[266]" From a utilitarian perspective wilderness can defend to a certain extent air pollution which integrates our ecosystem. When we preserve forests we are preserving a whole variety of animals and birds they will enrich human beings comparatively in a better proportion.

4. Sacramentality of Nature

4.1. Nature: God's Revelatory Sphere.

God reveals himself in different ways and means. Creation is the first event of revelation of God in the history.[267] This

263. I. BABROUR, *Ethics in an Age of Technology*, p. 65.

264. J. MUIR, *Our National Parks*, Boston, 1901, p. 331.

265. H. ROLSTON III, "Environmental Ethics", p. 171.

266. I BARBOUR, *Ethics, in an Age of Technology*, p. 65. See also H. HOEFNAGELS, *"Christliche Verantwortnug fur die Schopfung: Die Haltung des Menschen Gegenuber der Natur"* in *Stimmen der Zeit* 204 (1986) 547-558.

267. Dermot Ryan explains the creation as revealing or preaching the Yahweh's glory. He notices that there is an awareness of interdependence of all things on God and it is not merely grasped by metaphysical principle but something which can be perceived in the life and movement of every being around them Cf. D. RYAN, "Sacraments foreshadowed", in D. O'CALLAGHAN (ed), *Sacraments* (the gestures of Christ), New York, 1964, 1-21, p. 1-4,8; "God who created and conserved all things by his word provides man with constant evidence of himself in created realities" *Dei Verbum*, No. 3, A. FIANNERY (ed.), *Vatican Council II*, Bombay, 1975,

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invisible God has made himself visible through creation.[268] Paul writes: "Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely his eternal power and duty has been dearly perceived in the things that have been made" (Rom 1:19–20). The nature [world] is the "grammar or symbol of God's self communication, the condition of possibility of self communication.[269]" This self communicating God "leaves an imprint on every creature as an artist leaves something of himself or herself in every work".[270] Each individual, essentially related to God by its indelible imprint, exists in the divine presence and mediates the divine presence. Creation therefore is a sacrament. This is done by God itself. He sacramentalized the creation. The word *hallowed* means 'sanctify', is first found in Gen. 2:3. This word is not used to allude creation but to Sabbath. But Jürgen Moltmann is of opinion that the sanctification of any creation of space would be particular whereas the sanctification of the sabbath benefits all created things on the seventh day, that is to say it is universal. Nature is sanctified and we say the sacramentality of nature.[271]

Instead of considering nature as something sacred, through the unhuman way of subduing the "dwelling of God" (nature) we try to rape it. Everything has become "profane" exiled from the spheres of the "holy" and therefore everything has lost its meaning.[272] If we look nature in an indifferent mood it is mere matter and devoid of any interest. Hence Feya Mathew writes: "Nature in itself is devoid of interest and is therefore indifferent, so to speak to its own fate"[273] G. S. Hendry also writes the same idea that nature is a better revelation, or vehicle: of God, in as much as it has no will of its own to oppose God.[274] Nature reveals more of God human persons.

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268. H. FRIES, *Revelation*, London, 1970, p. 42.
269. G. VANDERVELDE, "The Grammar of Grace. Karl Rahner as a Watershed in Contemporary Theology", in *Theological studies* 49 (1988) 445–459, p. 449.
270. C. CUMMINGS, *Eco-Spiriuality: Towards a Reverent Life*, New York, 1991, p. 34.
271. J. MOLTMANN,*God in Creation*, p. 283.
272. B. GRIFFITHS, *Return to the Centre*, London, 1981, p. 22.
273. F. MATHEWS, *The Ecological Self*, Padtstow, 1991, p. 37.
274. G. S. HENDRY, *Theology of Nature*, Philadelphia, p. 70.

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4. 2. Nature: A Sacrament

A sacramental view of nature has universal consensus. Eastern orthodoxy celebrates the goodness and beauty of creation and admists God's presence in it.[275] Celtic Community also expresses a deep love of nature and a conviction that God is immanent in the natural world. The underlying thought in this attitude is the whole earth is full of this glory (Is 6:3); God's presence is everywhere[276]; We never "enter" his presence, rather we are always in this presence. The Psalmist admist: "Wither shall I flee from thy presence" (Ps 139:8). Universe reveals itself as a mystery by which it "leads to a reflection that concedes a greater understanding of the mysteriousness and incomprehensibility of God and his way".[277] God is present to this universe to our ecosphere from within (Ps 104). If God is present, then all things of the ecosysetem acquire divinity, sacredness, sanctity and God is adored in them.[278] St. Basil (330–379) while teaching on Genesis once said "I want creation to penetrate you with so much admiration that everywhere, wherever you may be, the least plant may bring to you the clear remembrance of the creator".[279]

4. 3. Sacramentality and Theology of Interrelationship

As every being is related to God and bears his mark, which it can claim worth, dignity and mystery. Sacramental approach to creation urges us to stewardship, to preserve each

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275. I. BARBOUR, *Ethics in an Age of Technology*, 1993, p. 78,

276. This does not involve a pantheistic view. In traditional Christianity. divine *transcedence* is emphasized and at the opposite extreme respect for nature is overemphasized and hence *immanence*. Both concepts are not completely right. In process theology God transcends nature but it also immanent in the temporal process. This implies that nature is not to be exploited, but is to be respected and appreciated for it is the scene of God's continuing activity. I. BARBOUR, *Ethics in an Age of Technology* p. 79.

277. R. FARICH, *Wind and Sea Obey Him*, London, 1982, p. 72.

278. J. KULANDAI, "Basics in Eco-Spirituality", in *VJTR* 56 (1992) 488–501, p. 493. See also L. OSBORN, "A Fox Hunter's Guide to Creation Spirituality", in A. WOLKER (ed,), *Different Gospels*: *The New Edition*, London, 1993, pp. 154–172.

279. St. Basil, *Hexaemeron*, trans. B. Jackson, A *Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, second series, Vol *8*, Grand Rapids, 1952, p. 76.

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of its intrinsic value, goodness and worth. Such an approach advices us to use earth's resources wisely.

This approach to created things in the Bible can be called a theology of interrelationship. The Book of Wisdom invites humanity to discover the inter-relationship, harmony, wisdom and grace given by God within the creation and then to live accordingly (Wis 1:7;7:15–22;8–6). The book of Ecclesiastics admonishes man to live in harmony, and to live in symbiosis with nature (Eccle 3:1–9). Everything in creation is not for human's usefulness, but for God's glory. Everything that exists in the natural world is not meant to be domesticted and subjugated by human beings.[280] In his obligation to preserve the nature in its sacramental character he should know that everything deserves to be revered for what it is in itself and for what it potentially reveals.[281] Stewardspship is also a kind of appreciation. One who sees the beauty of the world sees the form of God's appearance everywhere. In this concept, everything is sacred water, fine mounatins, rivers, holy trees, holy rivers...etc. God reveals himself in nature. The truth of the sunshine, the truth of the rain, the truth of the fresh air, the truth of the wind in the trees, these are truths. And they are always accessible.[282] Understanding this aspect, John Carmody writes "Beautiful places are signs of God".[283]

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280. G. THERUKATTIL, "Towards a Biblical Eco Theology", pp. 475–476.
281. C. CUMMINGS, *Eco Spirituality*, p. 36.
282. T. MERTON, *Is the Contemplative Life Finished? Contemplation in a World of Action*, Garden City, 1973, pp. 363–364.
283. J. CARMODY, *Ecology and Religion*, p. 78.
284. G. THERUKATILL, "Towards a Biblical Eco-Theology", p. 475. The form "Cosmotheandric" or "theanthropocomis" (is coined by Raymond Paniker) refers to a triadic pattern of reality. The cosmotheandric principle could be formulated by saying that the divine (theos), the human (anthropos), and the earthly (cosmos) are three irreducible dimensions which constitute reality. Everything that exists, any real being, presents the divine constitution expressed in three dimensions. Cf. S. EASTHAM, "Introduction" in R. PANIKAR, *The Cosmotheandric Experience: Emerging Religion Consciousness*, New YOrk, 1993, pp. IX–X.
285. P. W. TAYLOR, *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics*, New Jersey, 1986, p. 91.
286. Y. AMBROISE, "The Ecological Problems in India and its Consequences", in *Jeevadhara* 18 (1988) 5–21, p. 10.
287. G. THERUKATILL, "Towards a Biblical Eco Theology", p. 478.
288. S. McFAUGE, *Models of God*, London, 1987, p. 14.

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Sacramentality of nature or the theology of interrelationship takes a "cosmotheandric" view rather than an anthropocentric view.[284] Creation has an inherent value outside of human utility. It is because of its concelebration with God. The exploitative attitude is there when nature is thought of in utility or as nothing more than a vast area of repository of resources.[285] It tends human being to see nature as an object, masterable and manipulatable.[286] The interrelationship achieved through considering nature as a sacrament obliges us to trust and cooperate with creation to remake it and reshape it. Contemporary theology needs an organic and mutualistic way of understanding the world, a model, by which we can see that all that exist is interrelated and has an intrinsic worth and value.[287] We need such an appropriate language in theology, "understanding God-world and humanworld relationship as open, caring inclusive interdependent, changing, mutual and creative".[288] When we enter into such a realm, our attitude will cease to be instrumental and will become reverential. We become part and parcel of the cosmic whole. We are bound by earth's natural law, we are sustained by biochemical laws, we have our lives from earlier species. This kind of reverential and sacramental view of nature makes to believe that we are related to one another also in the level of subhuman reality.[289]

Contemplating the principle of sacramentality on nature. we see that every creature bears within it some trace of its creator and every being is a limited but irreplaceable revelation of the divine being. Everywhere the glory of God is present, sometimes overpoweringly present. Therefore in the seventh century bishop of Nineveh, Isaac the Syrian speaks of "the secrets of the glory of God in creatures."[290] Simone Weil asks that "if the beautiful is the real presence of God in matters and if contact with the beautiful is a sacrament in the full sense of the word, how is it that there are so many perverted aesthetes".[291] Or how can we exploit or misuse the nature? Hence a new theology of nature using the concept of stewardship and

289. B. HARING, *Free and Faithful in Christ*, Vol. 3, New York, 1981, p. 181.
290. Cf. D. CLEMENT, *Sources: les mystiques chretiens des origines*, Paris; 1983, p. 193.
291. S. WEIL, *Gravity and Grace*, London, 1952, p. 138. See also G. DIETRICH, "The World as the Body of God", in *Journal of Dharma* 18 (1993) 258-284.

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sacramental view we can preserve the integrity of ecosystem in a sustainable milieu.

5. Different Models of Stewardship

Sacramental character of nature and creation centred spirituality invoke us to think of certain models of stewardship. What triggered the growth of different models in history is the acquisition of the new sense in the sacredness of nature. It is to be noted that a "model or paradigm is derived from a situation with which we are familiar and is employed to elucidate those which we are less familiar".[292] Models are not mere admirable ideal but one that has been tested for a long period of time by individual and communities. Thomas Berry, a pioneer of green theology, analyzing the history divides these models into five[293] We try to make a perusal of each of these models. In this attempt our intention is not to propose any model as something to be slavishly imitated but as source of inspiration and encouragement.

5.1. Early Celtic Nature Model

Historical reference to the celts began in the fifth century BCE. The celts have formed one of the great branches of the Indo-European peoples. Like that of other barbarous peoples the religion of the celts was a pagan polytheism. They venerated animals or animal gods, vegetation and veneration of trees. Celtic temples were sacred groves and among the deities honoured were corn-mothers and corn-maidens.[294] The cult of nature-spirits

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292. R. MICHIELS, "The Self Understanding of the Church After Vatican II", in *Louvain Studies* 14 (1989) 83–107, pp. 87–88.

293. Thomas Berry advocates five models: (1) the early celtic nature model, (2) benedictine custodian model; (3) Hildegard of Bingens' fertility model; (4 Franciscan fraternity model; (5) Teilhardian evolutionary model. Cf. J. BLEWETT, "Social Justice and Creation Spirituality", in *The way* 29 (1989) 13–25, p. 15. But we recommend one more model which is called Oriental Sacramental Model. We deal this model afterwards. See *infra.* p. 40.

294. H. B. ALEXANDER, "Celtic Religion", in S. MATHEWS (ed.), *A Dictionary of Religion and Ethic*, Edinburgh, 1921, 75–76, p. 75. See also M. WICKHAM, "Paradigms of Celtic Spirituality", in *Creation Spirituality* 7 (1991) 24–25.

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preceded and outlived the rite of anthropomorphic Nature-god. Out of a primitive nature worship, out of early animal and agricultural cults, there had been evolved departmental deities of nature (of mountains, forests, rivers etc.), deities of growth and fertility and anthropomorphic animal divinities.[295] It was a kind of pantheism. In the strict sense we cannot accept it as a model because of its pantheistic characteristic, but the attitude towards nature was positive and not destructive. Therefore John Macquarrie says: "Although celtic spirituality belongs to a culture that has almost vanished it fulfils in many aspects the condition to which a contemporary spirituality would have to conform."[296]

Celts made no distinction between the secular and the sacred. They were unable to discern boundaries of where religion began and ended and thus found it natural to assume that God was lovingly concerned in everything they did. In a community in which household, family and kin were central realities; they felt themselves at home with a Godhead whose very essence was a harmonious relationship of persons. Since they had no towns, no currency, no large scale industries, they had little temptation to material and worldly ideals.

5.2. Benedictine Custodian Model

From the 7th century onwards, a network of Benedictine monasteries existed in Europe.[297] Perhaps this is the oldest form of church's response aimed at integrating some concern relating to ecology as well as the crisis created by the misuse of the natural environment. The busy monks drained swamps, cleaned forests, improved fields and tended their gardens with diligence and devotion.[298] They developed a close harmonious contact with

295. J. A. McCULLOCH, "Celts", in J. HASTINGS (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. 3, Edinburgh, 1910, pp. 277–304.

296. J. MACQUARRIE, "Paths in Spirituality", in M. MAHER (ed.), *Irish Spirituality*, Dublin, 1983, p. 7.

297. In the 6th century Northern Britain came under the influence of Celtic Christianity with the arrival of Columbana (521–97). Columbana with 12 companions settled on the island Iona of Northwest Scotland. There he built a monastery and with his monks he lived a life of extreme asceticism. Convinced of missionary zeal spread celtic Christianity throughout Scotland and Northern England. J. HOLMES & B. W. BICKERS, *A Short History of Catholic Church*, Kent, 1992, pp. 48–49.

298. R. F. NASH, *The Rights of Nature*, p. 96.

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their environments, with its seasons and rhythms, its native plants, birds and animals. Rene Dubos appreciates this kind of *taming* the earth and says: "The interaction between humanity and the earth often generates more interacting and creative ecosystems than those occurring in the wilderness.[299]" This ideal of good husbandry and responsible stewardship of land made a stewardship model in history. Living in harmony with nature and keeping their needs to a minimum, the monastic communities proclaimed the message that earth is the Lord's and that it should not be discriminately used to satisfy human avarice and greed.[300] Historians also point out that this tradition of caring for land is an affective model of stewardship.

5.3. Hildegard of Bingen: Fertility Model

Hildegard (1098–1178) was the first German nature doctor.[301] Her writings on earth and nature are full of ardour and passion. She has no revulsion to earthly, bodily or animate nature. She says, holypersons draw to themselves all that is earthly.[302] According to her, natural world is not an area of chaos or wilderness which humans must either avoid or battle with in order to conquer or domesticate.[303] Because of her love to earth she says, "The earth should not be injured: the earth must not be destroyed".[304] That does not mean we have to worship nature. "All nature is

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299. R. DUBOS, *Wooing the Earth*, New York, 1980, cited in, S. McDONAGH, *To Care for the Earth*, p. 130.

300. We see a similar response in the characteristic of Hindu model of relating to the concerns of ecology. "The "Ashrams" were centres where life in harmony with nature was constantly promoted.

301. Hildegard of Bingen was poet, musician, painter, visionary, botanist, herbalist, counsellor to Popes, princes and councils of the church. Unfortunately her writings were not widely known. Her approach, to the earth delights in its 'greening'. Saint Hildegard offers a mystical contemplation about the intrinsic worth of nature. See H. VON BINGEN, *Scivias-Wisse die Wege*, Freiburg, 1991. See also G. UHLEIN, *Meditations with Hildegard of Bingen*, Santa Fe, 1982. E. LEUSCHEN, "Hidegard, Saint and Scientist", in *Benedictine Review* 2 (1958) 48–53.

302. Cf. M. FOX, *Original Blessing*, p. 57. The same idea can be seen in Indian Spirituality. See also J. CHAWLA, "Gendered Represntations of Seed, Earth, and Grain: A Woman Centered Perspective on the Conflation of Woman and Earth", in *Journal of Dharma* 18 (1993) 237–257.

303. S. McDONAGH, *To Care for the Earth*, p. 135.

304. Cf. M. FOX, *Original Blessing*, p. 117.

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at the disposal of humankind. We are to work with it: for without we cannot survive.[305]" Her love of earth is so great that she said to the extent, that earth is most creative in moulding the very flesh of the son of God. Attributing religiosity to earth, she says: "I welcome all the creatures of the world with grace.[306]" The taming, organizing skills of Benedict and the fraternal solicitude for all creatures of Francis all contained a masculine approach of reality. But Hildegard celebrates the feminine, fertility dimension.[307] Her writings pulsate a senecious and raptures love for the earth. In order to express life and life soft in nature, she uses the word *viriditas* which means green, sprout, bloom. This *viriditas* is found everywhere in nature.[308] This kind of love of nature, we cannot find in history. She is a pioneer of nature care method and proposed a harmonious relation between God, man and nature. This fertility model implies nature is fertile and fruitful and thereby cooperating with nature we are cooperating with God, who owns the earth.

5. 4. Franciscan Fraternity Model

Francis of Assisi (1182–1226), the greatest spiritual revolutionary in Western history, challenged the Christian anthropocentrism. Everything is equal in its derivation from God and its capacity to glorify God. Francis' thoughts held no hierarchies, no chains of being, no dualism.[309] For him, every creature in the world is a mirror of God's presence. So he developed a fellowship approach to creatures[310] and he tried to depose man from his monarch over creation and set up a democracy of all God's creatures.[311]

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305. M. FOX, *Original Blessing*, p. 68.
306. Cf. M. FOX, *Original Blessing*, p. 108. See also M. FOX, "Creation-Centered Spirituality from Hildegard of Bingen ot Julian of Norwich: 300 Years of an Ecological Spirituality in the West", in P. JORANSON K. BUTIGAN (eds.), *Cry of Environment*, Santa Fe, 1984, 85–106.
307. M. FOX, *Original Blessing*, p. 134.
308. K. J. LESCH, *Und alle Welt Empfing den Kuβ ihres Schopfers*, Wurzburg, 1991, p. 27.
309. R. F. NASH, *The Rights of Nature*, p. 93.
310. S. McDONAGH, *To Care for the Earth*, p. 131,
311. L. WHITE, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis" in I. G. BARBOUR (ed.), *Western Man and Environmental Ethics*, London, 1973, p. 28.

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Expressing the ecological-like unity he perceived, Francis' Canticles and prayers addressed nonhuman beings as "brother" and "sister". He preached sermons to birds, urging them as part of God's spiritual family to give thanks to their creator.[312] Francis became an advocate for the creatures even to the minute. Worms and ants became just a part of his loving community. He cared the worms so that they may not be crushed. He ordered honey for the bees in wintertime. His talk with nightingale, his dealing with wolf, preaching to the fishes and insects, using of the adjective 'mother' to characterize the earth which were unprecedented in the history, has now got a new vision.[313]

Francis, sense of kinship with nature found lyrical expressions in his "Canticle of Brother sun" or "Canticle of the Creatures". In spite of all of this Francis held neither transmigration of souls nor pantheism. His view of nature rested on a unique sort of *pan-psychism* of all things animate and inanimate designed for the glorification of God.[314] He did not speak of "rights" of birds, worms, etc., but he did remove them from the category of "things".[315] According to him all created beings share a common dignity and equality under God[316] and have a direct relationship with God.[317] This relationship gives inherent value to the created things. According to him every being has value, and it consists in 3 levels. First there is a symbolic value (The sun bears the likeness of the most high one), secondly the aesthetic value (The sun is beautiful and radiant), thirdly utilitarian value (the sun gives light) and each of the creation has specific values.[318] He preached even to them so that he restored the gospel idea to preach the gospel to all the nation.[319] Francis "the hero of a thousand points of view",[320]

312. R. F. NASH, *The Rights of Nature*, p. 93.
313. H. P. SANTMIRE, *The Travail of Nature*, p. 109.
314. L. WHITE, "The Historical Roots Our Ecological Crisis", p. 29.
315. R. F. NASH. *The Rights of Nature*. p. 93.
316. I. BARBOUR, *Ethics in an Age of Technology*, p. 77.
317. R. F. NASH, *The Rights of Nature*, p. 93. See also C. PALLIKUNNEL, *Novelty in the Spirit of St. Francis of Assisi*, Rome, 1993.
318. R. D. SORREL, *St. Francis of Assisi and Nature: Tradition and Innovation in Western Christian Attitudes Towards the Environment*, New York, 1988, p. 101.
319. R. D. SORREL, *St. Francis of Assisi and Nature*, p. 62.
320. H. P. SANTMIRE. *The Travail of Nature*, p. 106. Authors uphold a variety

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"the saint for all seasons",[321] "patron saint of ecology",[322] and his attitude towards nature is a best model to preserve ecosystem and shows the right attitude of christian stewardship.

5.5. Teilhard de Chardin: Evolutionary Model

In the background of evolution theory, Teilhard de Chardin saw a world around him, a universe with no hope, nothing to look forward, but a vast, cosmic "heat death". To overcome the pessimism, despair which caused an age of anxiety, he adopted the theme "evolution", constructively and critically. He proposed a "creation from inside" and this is moved by a spirit which he calls "love". Every creature has a distinct form of being which are moved by a law of "complexity consciousness". Basing on this law everything in the universe, and universe itself is evolving to a "cosmic Christ" and therefore he derived the idea of "cosmic christology" evolution (Col 1:15ff; Rom 8; Eph 1:1ff). Christ is a kind of spiritual magnet which draws the universe to itself and which organizes and orders the universe to a process that will allow it one day to attain fulfilment in Him.[323] All entities in the universe have a "without", a certain state of organization and a "within", a certain state of consciousness. According to him nature is totally at the disposal of God's history with the human community. Nature is an ocean of energy and universal motion. He admits that nature is also a field for conquest to be used, even exploited, but in order to build that kingdom of spirit which is the final goal of the whole evolutionary

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of opinion on Francis' concern for and love of nature. To R. D. SORREL, Francis was a source of "tremendous controversy, misinterpretation and distortion (R. D. SORREL, *St. Francis of Assisi and Nature*, p. 5) While some called him a devout Catholic (G. K. CHESTERTON, *St. Francis of Assisi*, New York, 1924), and "A Catholic Model for Human Liberation" (Cf. L. BOFF, *St. Francis: AModel for Human Liberation,* New York, 1985), some others stamped as a pantheist and a heretic who miraculously escaped the stake. L. WHITE, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis", p. 28. Anyway, Francis gave a new vision about creation and it is valid for all time.

321. S. McDONAGH, *To Care for the Earth*. p. 134.

322. R. F. NASH, *The Rights of Nature,* p. 93.

323. T. De CHARDIN, *Science and Christ,* (trans. HAGUE), New York, 1969. p. 79.

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process.[324] But Paul Santmire disagrees and says, universe is not evolving to an omega point but to an omega world, a commonwealth of all beings.[325] The model which Teilhard's theory brings is that the liberating triumph of grace and unifying ultimacy of charity affects all the creatures of nature which will inspire us to cooperate with nature and care for the creation. This "deep sense of the sacred in the whole of creation that is prompting outcries from all corners of the globe at modern industrialized abuses of the planet and the destruction of its manysplendoured community" insists us to caretaking model to acknowledge.[326] His deep evaluation and love for nature inspired him to say in a context of eucharist, "I will make the whole earth my altar and on it will offer you all the labours and sufferings of the world".[327] In other words, he identifies himself with the universe and brings a new vision of created realities. He writes: "I want to teach people how to see God everywhere, to see him in all that is most hidden, most solid and most ultimate in the world.[328] Reflecting on God's presence and continuous evolution of beings, we develop a model of stewarship, which is called evolutionary model.

5.6. Oriental Sacramental Model

According to this model the Church in solidarity with the weakest, with that part of creation that is victimized, seeks the renewal of the whole creation.[329] It is rather a contemporary model but rooted in the Bible. God sent his Son to the world to "set free" (Hb 2:14) us from all our bandages. It is our too much dependence on the world that causes an exploitative attitude. The Church as a perfect model tries to liberate human beings from the fetters of consumerism to asceticism "accumalationalism" to "liberalism". This liberation is not the same as what "liberation theology" calls for. Their liberation is mainly

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324. H. P. SANTMIRE, *The Travail of Nalure*, pp. 170–171.
325. H. P. SANTMIRE, *The Travail of Nature*, p. 172.
326. J. BLEWETT, "Social Justice and Creation Spirituality" p. 15.
327. T. De CHARDIN, *Hymn of the Universe*, London, 1965, p. 20.
328. T. De CHARDIN, *Christology and Evolution*, New York, 1971, p. 101. *The Phenomenon of Man*, New York, 1959 p. 31. *The Making of a Mind*, New York, 1965, p. 269. *The Divine Milieu*, New York, 1960, p. 15.
329. K. C. ABRAHAM, *Eco-Justice: A New Agenda for Church's Mission*, Bombay, 1992, p. 26.

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political and economic in motive. But this is a liberation for creation. Christ's work of redemption takes in its meaning (Rom 8:12–23) is a kind of inward liberation, including demonic powers. The renewal of the universe is a response to the cry of the poor and the dumb creatures and of silent nature.[330]

The Church is a communion of believers and not merely construction and system. The spirit of the Church is cosmically oriented. If the church is indeed oriented towards the cosmos then the ecological crisis of the earthly creation is also the crisis of the church. Through the celebration of eucharist we are committing ourselves for the renewal of creation. The body broke is an imperative for sharing. Through sharing giving and receiving we motivate people to be open to God's creation and re–creation. This kind of a vast cosmology composed of science, mysticism, and art replaces a mechanistic, Newtonian cosmology. Humans have a responsibility to live as creatures, in balance with the rest of God's creation.[331] This heals the most poignant and urgent pain of our time – the crucifixion of "brother" earth.[332] As the earth belongs to the Lord, a wasteful lifestyle moulded after avarice and greed should be avoided. Church's duty is to prepare human beings as per this sacramental model. Today, we face a situation where individual greed is organized as structures, capitalism, market economy, technology and media control. We need a collective protest as well as individual, responsible, liberative, humble models of life.

Conclusion

Our main concern in this chapter was how to keep and make the ecology in a sustainable equilibrium. In this background we have seen the stewardly intention of the original Biblical mandate in Genesis 1 and 2; the image of God concept as it relates to humanity's role in tending creation; the significance of the Nohaic covenant with all of creation; stewardship of the land and the result of our disobedience; the purpose and value of non–human creation; humanity's responsibility for the

330. K. C. ABRAHAM, *Eco–Justice: A New Agenda for Church's Mission*, p. 27.
331. C. CUMMINGS, *Eco–Spirituality*, p. 108.
332. M. FOX, *The Coming of the Cosmic Christ*, San Francisco, 1989, p. 83.

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nurture and redemption of the non-human creation; the sacramentality of nature; and the significance of different models for the preservation of biosphere. We perceive that genuine protection and preservation of the biosphere can only be achieved through a stewardship attitude. Stewardship is a sound model for it has its roots in the bible and agress with the basic attitudes nourished in the tradition. It is biblical because it embarks itself on the biblical account of creation where human person is created in the image and likeness of God and given the mandate to subdue the earth. It is traditional because the patriarchs and the fathers of history considered prosperity always in terms of healthy relation with the nature where persons protect the equilibrium and enhance the regenerating capacity while the earth produces means of subsistence not only for the human beings but also for the live stock. Human beings created with intelligence and will arrange their life in such a way that they were responsible viceroys of God on earth. Here, the dominion commanded at creation receives an informed meaning – informed with responsibility, love and mutual respect.

Two main theological concepts that set basis for this understanding generates from the fact that human person is *Imago Dei* and *Imago Mundi*. As image of God, person has the obligation to subdue the earth and use it in such a way that the person may become the converging point where whole creation can glorify God. As *imago mundi*, person has the same substance as that of all other creatures. We are the world by which the world expresses itself. This calls for solidarity and mutual cooperation. This relationship is essentially covenantal in its character. Hence, the stewardship model makes a happy blending of human nobility as well as human equality with the created world.

The fact that human beings are of same substance with the created world asks the person to take the biosphere seriously. In this relation there is a hierarchical order within which animal world stands closer to the human. The animals notwithstanding their instrumental existence for the human world have inherent worth. Since they have worth, human beings endowed with the capability to arrange life in a judicious way are invoked not to consider the animals are something to be preserved and protected according to the will of God. Moreover, they have to be safeguarded not for the present generation alone but the responsibility for

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the future asks for it. It is true that in this relation of human person to the animal world it is the human beings who profit more than the animal world.

Yet another element in this relation is the vegetative world. They exist for the sustenance of the human and animal world. The human beings through the rational allocation of the goods of the earth provides what is due to humans, animals and vegetative kingdom. In other words, in the life cycle of existence everything exist in mutual support, co-existence and help. All these relations unite in a single point, namely land. It is the abode of all beings and hence, the primary source of existence. It is to be understood that earth or land not matter or soil alone. It is the mother which generates and sustains life. The spirit of life and propagation is lying hidden in its depth. Hence any harm done to the mother earth will end up not only in death of the present but in the death of very birth itself.

This fundamental understanding reminds the human beings not to manipulate the resources of nature which may finally end up everything in a catastrophical abyss. Moreover, it exhorts to retrieve from any behaviour that endangers the original virginity and purity of the abode of life. In this aspect, modern scientific and technological overenthusiasm to know every secret of the creation without respect for equilibrium into a moderate notion of minimum harm and enrichment of the regenerating capability of the ecosystem. Naturally, this attitude will end up in a dedication for the preservation of endangering species, extension of wilderness and wild life not at the expense of human life etc. This attitude would eventually be called stewarding of the nature. God alone enjoys absolute power over them and human beings as gifted with reason and will are only trustees of God in the world. Creation care is a religious calling. All of nature cries out for us to be agents of God who will participate with him in rescuing nature from impending destruction.

In addition to this from a religious perspective, every created thing in the world shares something of the divine in it. In this way, it symbolically represents divine presence in the world. In this perspective creation is a sacrament of God since sacrament is that which symbolically represents and make present the immanence of God. Basing on this it is beyond doubt that a stewardship model is viable as it makes a congenial mingling of theocentrism, anthropocentrism, ecocentrism and biocentrism.

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CHAPTER THREE

MAGISTERIAL TEACHINGS ON ENVIRONMENT

Introduction

Gaudium et Spes,[1] the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, says that the aspirations, joys and hopes, sorrows and anxieties of the world are the joys, hopes anxieties of the Church. The dangers that confronts the biosphere thus at the same time is a concern for the Church as well. Injury to any part has repercussions on the whole. History affirms that the Church has always been monitoring the crucial issues that affect the world and has always been responding to them in its own way. Ecological questions have moved to a more prominent position in contemporary awareness, and thus the Church has taken up the issue of environment and of our proper relation to it. However, the critiques accused the Church of being silent. The truth is that due to an onrush of other issues these considerations went unnoticed. But, since two decades the role of the Church in the promotion of the environmental concern achieved attention so much so that within this period a considerable amount of official and unofficial pronouncements arrived in the media. Pope John Paul II places the situation facing humanity in its true perspective when he says: "The right to a safe environment is ever more insistently presented today as a right that must be included in an updated charter of human rights".[2] Among others the 1990 peace day message stands separate, for it make an exclusive treatment of ecological issues.

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1. *Gaudium et Spes*, in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 58 (1966) 1025–1115, 7 December 1965, (hereafter *AAS*). For the references of *Gaudium et Spes* we use hereafter *GS*. For English translation M. WALSH, B. DAVIES (eds.), *Proclaiming Justice and Peace: Documents From John XXIII to John Paul II*, Bangalore, 1985, 77–140. The references of documents and encyclicals will be indicated with the abbreviated title of them.
2. JOHN PAUL II, "Peace with God the Creator, Peace with all of Creation", in *AAS* 82 (1990) 147–156, 8 December 1989, for English, trans. in *Origins* 19 (1989) 465–468, No. 9, (References given are to the numbered paragraphs), hereafter *PWC*.

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In this first section we try to present the official documents and the papal teachings on ecology and related themes in their chronological order. Here our concern would be to see whether the Church is serious about the issue and whether it provides any answer to the contemporary problems, either through a theoretical structure or through a call to a way of life that would contribute to a sustainable ecosystem. This study would also include some of the pastoral letters and pronouncements of Bishops' conferences.

The second section would analyse these documents according to a thematic order, so that the study may provide a comprehensive vision of the position of the Church concerning ecology.

1. A Survey of the Magisterial Teaching on Environment

1. 1. Papal Pronouncements

It is generally accepted that *Gaudium et Spes* is a milestone in the history of Church's stance towards the world. There seems to be only two statements which suggest a human responsibility for nonhuman creation. The first relates to the 'autonomy of earthly realities' which is bound up with the recognition in faith that through the 'will of the Creator', the 'individual realities' have their 'own goodness' and their autonomy and their own orders. The second introduces a soteriological note: Redeemed by Christ and made a new creature... love the things of creation. However it is centred on dominion theology but with a margin. For man created in the image of God received a mandate to subject to himself the earth and all that it contains, and to govern the world with justice and holiness (GS 34). We read in GS. 12, all things on earth should be related to man as their centre and crown.[3] The council's broad vision of earth and its resources for the wellbeing of humanity is explicit in the words, "God intended the earth and all that it contains for the use of every human being and people. Thus as all men follow justice and

3. This idea can also be seen in *Lumen Gentium* (The Dogmatic Constitution on Church) No. 36 and No. 3 of *Dei Verbum* (The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation). See also J. K. SHELDON, *Rediscovery of Creation, A Bibliographical Study of the Church's Response to the Environmental Crisis:* London, 1992.

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unite in charity, created goods should abound for them on a reasonable basis" (GS 69).

The encyclical of Pope Paul VI's *Populorum Progressio*[4] (The development of Peoples), one of the finest documents, on development, shows but no sensitivity to any ecological concerns. However, while quoting' to fill the earth and subdue it' (PP 22) the Pope calls for developing and perfecting the earth. His apostolic letter *Octagesimo Adveniens*[5] (The letter to cardinal Roy) published in 1971 does speak about the environment. Paul VI writes:

> man is suddenly becoming aware that by an ill-considered exploitation of nature he risks destroying it and becoming in his turn the victim of this degradation. Not only is the material environment becoming a permanent menace-pollution and refuse, new illness and absolute destructive capacity-but the human framework is no longer under man's control, thus creating an environment for tomorrow which may well be intolerable. This is a wide ranging social problem for tomorrow which concerns the entire human famliy (OA 21).

We see pope's concern of environment and biosphere is very positive. In 1971 the synod of bishops says:

> Their [earth's] resources, as well as the precious treasures of air and water-without which there cannot be life-and the small delicate bisophere of the whole complex of all life on earth, are not infinite, but on the contrary must be saved and preserved as a unique patrimony belonging to all mankind.[6]

The synod was worried about dumping the material in the atmosphere and the sea and the irreplaceable damage to the biosphere.

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4. PAUL VI, *Populorum Progressio*, in *AAS* 59 (1962) 257–299, 26 March 1967, for Eng. tran. M. WALSH, B. DAVIES (eds), in *Justice and Peace*, 141–164.
5. PAUL VI, *Octagesimo Adveniens*, in *AAS* 63 (1971) 401–441, 14 May 1971, for Eng. tran. M. WALSH, B. DAVIES, (eds.), in *Justice and Peace*, 165–187.
6. BISHOPS' SYNOD, "Justice in the World", in *AAS* (1971) 923–942, 6 November 1971, No 8. for Eng. tran. M. WALSH, B. DAVIES (eds.), *Justice and Peace*, 188–203.

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Pope John Paul II in his first encyclical (1979) *Redemptor Hominis*[7] (The Redeemer of Humanity) makes many references to the environment.[8] In No. 8 he speaks of certain phenomena such as the threat of pollution of the natural environment in areas of rapid industrialization and such other problems. Industry and technology cannot serve all human needs, rather it has its bad effects such as pollution which endangers human life itself. In No. 15 he recalls that "we seem to be increasingly aware of the fact that the exploitation of the earth...demands national and honest planning". He continues that the accelerated depletion of natural resources, disproportionate amount of talent and money applied toward military technology and the exploitation and destruction of creation itself has not further humanity's dominion over creation. He therefore says: "It was the creator's will that man should communicate with nature as an intelligent and noble 'master' and 'guardian', and not as a heedless 'exploiter' and 'destroyer' "(RH 15). For John Paul the fact that the environment is exploited comes not from the biblical command to subdue the earth, but rather from a secular idea of maximising the profits.[9] Maximising the profits leads to exploitation and domination not only of other human beings but also of natural resources. In order to become stewards human beings should not abdicate their moral and spiritual position in the order of creation.

Laborem Exercens[10] (Human Labour), a Social Encyclical on human endeavour, Pope John Paul II makes references to the environment. In No. 21 he asserts the dignity of human work and person's freedom to transform the earth through work and the use of technology and industry. The dignity of agricultural work, signifies a model of stewardship of the earth. Even though

7. JOHN PAUL II, *Redemptor Hominis*, in *AAS* 71 (1979) 257-324, 4 March 1979, for Eng tran. M. WALSH, B. DAVIES (eds.), *Justice and Peace*, 243-261.

8. In this encyclical he emphazises the dominion of labour over capital, ethics over technology, person over things and spirit over matter (RH 16).

9. M. NAUGHTON, *The Good Stewards: Practical Application of the Papal Social Vision of Work*, Lanham, 1992, p. 85.

10. JOHN PAUL II, *Laborem Exercens*, in *AAS* 73 (1981) 577-647, 14 September 1981, for Eng, tran. M. WALSH, B. DAVIES (eds.), *Justice and Peace*, 271-311.

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no mention of ecology as such is seen the idea of human endeavour for a well integrated universe is integral in this document. Critics maintain that the progressive destruction of land through the use of agrochemical and soil erosion are not referred to.[11]

Pope John Paul II's interest on biosphere is not excluded from the animal world. Already in 1982 to the participants at a studywork of the papal academy of science he said:

> It has to be pointed out that the new technique such as the breeding of cells and fibres, have undergone a tremendous development which allows a very important development in the biological science, and these techniques complement the animal experimentation. Of course animals are in the service of human and can therefore be objects of experimentation. In spite of this they have to be treated as God's creatures, which are assigned to serve the wellbeing of human person, but none to be mistreated by human beings. Therefore the lessening of the animal experimentation, which weren't needed any longer was according to the plan and well-being of all creation.[12]

Pope's concern and attitude towards animals is very positive but varies in accordence with their moral order.

On 6th July 1985 while addressing to the participants in Vatican conference on 'the frontier cosmology' Pope John Paul II affirmed: "This planet is our home, which in some way or other support us, nourish us, fascinate us, inspire us. In this vast universe we ever more realize our smallness on one side and at the same time our grandeur on the other side.[13]" He asks that we must be responsible to our planet.

At the United Nations Centre for the environment in Nairobi, on August 1985 John Paul II spoke of environment in relation with future generation. He said:

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11. S. McDONAGH, *The Greening of the Church*, Quezon City, 1990, p. 181.
12. DEUTSCHE BISCHOFSKONFERENZ, "*Die Verantwortung des Menschen fur das Tier*", Arbeitshilfen 113, Bonn, 1993, p. 24.
13. JOHN PAUL II, "That We be more Responsible for Ourselves, Our Neighbours, Institutions and Our Planet", in *L'Osservatore Romano* (22 July 1985) 1-12, p. 8. (hereafter LOR).

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> The exercise of dominion should serve the needs of human family. Exploitation of the riches of the nature must not take place according to the needs of immediate people but also the needs of the future generations. The stewardship over nature entrusted by God to man will not be guided by shortsightedness and selfish pursuit. It should take in to account the fact that all created goods are directed to the good of all humanity.[14]

The encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*,[15] (On Social Concern) issued on Dec 30, 1987 contains the first sketchy analysis of the ecological crisis.[16] Here he provides a theological and moral analysis of the ecological crisis.[17] The document emphasizes the importance of facing the tremendous challenge of the last decades of second millennium (SRS 47). Although environmental issue is not central to the encyclical SRS, it provides a global vision of human solidarity, and an environmentally sensitive notion of development in which being is more important than having.[18] He advocates the need to respect the integrity and cycles of nature (SRS 26). The tone of the encyclical is anthropocentric; but his ecological concern is placed firmly within its framework. He places the environmental concerns at the conclusion of his treatment of authentic human development (SRS 34). About development he writes "One: must take into account the nature of each being and of its mutual connection in an ordered system, which is precisely the cosmos." (SRS 34).[19] Unlike some of the modern ecologists,

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14. Cf. S. McDONAGH, *The Greening of the Church*, p. 181.
15. JOHN PAUL II, *Sollicitudo Rei Sacralis*, in *AAS* 80 (1988) 513–586, 30 December 1987, for Eng. tran. in *Origins* 17 (1988) 642–660.
16. This is the first official Vatican document bearing the popes own name that discusses the ecological issues in the context of a just and sustainable development. This document is a landmark in Catholic participation in the environmental movement. Three and half paragraphs out of a total 46 are devoted specifically to ecological issues.
17. D M. COWDIN, "John Paul II and Environmental Concern: Problems and Possibilities" in *The Living Light* 28 (1991) 45–52, p. 46.
18. D. CHRISTIANSEN, "Moral Theology, Ecology, Justice and Development", in C. S. ROBB & J. CASEBOLT (eds.), *Covenant for a New Creation*, New York, 1991, 251–271, p. 256.
19. This formulation is remarkable because it is an affirmation in the Pope's own words, of two strong ecological principles, namely the independent moral status of other creatures, and the need to think and act in terms of

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the Pope says that it is not anthropocentrism or dominion that is the cause of all ecological crisis but a misconceived utilitarianism.[20]

While SRS remains caught in the pro-transformationist and pro-development bias exhibited in so much of recent Catholic personalist thought, other magisterial documents have begun to push more deeply and consistently for industrial, technological and economic restraint in order to protect biosphere.[21] This encyclical sets a fundamental basis for a well integrated eco-system. By accepting the intrinsic value of nonhuman creatures, and by recognizing the demand for ecological thinking SRS takes a very long and rapid step to bring Catholics into the march of environmental ethics.[22]

Commenting on SRS Paul Lakeland says that this is a welcome development in a world in which too much thoughtless dominion over resources and creatures has brought the human race to the point of poisoning the planet.[23]

To the representatives of science, art, and journalism at the *Festspielhaus* theatre in Salzburg under the title 'Toward a True Ecology' Pope John Paul II on 26th Jan 1988 made an exhortation holding the ecological values. His concern for nature is deeply stated in the words: 'Humanity and its world are at stake, and they are endangered as never before.' He advocated them to protect the world-the beautiful endangered earth.[24] In this speech he affirmed that the mankind not only live in and with nature but also has a reponsibility to it and an inseparable bond with it. The main theme of his speech was "be guardians

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whole environment and ecological systems. D. CHRISTIANSEN, "Moral Theology, Ecology, Justice and Development" p. 256.

20. Cf. D. CHRISTIANSEN, "Moral Theology, Ecology, Justice and Develoment", p. 256.
21. W. FRENCH, "Catholicism and the Common Good of the Biosphere", in M. BARNES (ed.), *An Ecology of the Spirit: Religious Reflection and Environmental Consciousness*, Vol. 36, Lanham, 1994, 177-194, p. 186.
22. D. CHRISTIANSEN, "Moral Theology, Ecology, Justice and Development", p 256.
23. P. LAKELAND, "Development and Social Teaching,", in *The Month* 21 (1988) 706-710, p. 708.
24. JOHN PAUL II, "Toward a True Ecology", in *The Pope Speaks* 33 (1988) 323-327 p. 324.

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of the earth". According to John Paul II the earth (in the horizon of faith), is not a limitless, exploitable reservoir, but a part of the mystery of creation which one may not treat greedily but rather awes it wonder and reverence.[25] He asks to consider the earth as a garden and not to make it become a desert. Therefore earth must be protected and developed. Pope's concern for the world is not for its own sake, but to admonish that protection and development must go hand in hand. Mere protection of environment brings nothing and mere development alone also achieves nothing. In his address to diplomats in Antananaviro (Madagascar), on 30th April 1989 he warned:

> we are all well aware of the dangers threatening all areas due to irresponsible exploitation for unheated pollution. Forests must be protected, soil erosion must be safeguarded. All these things can be achieved through vigorous and judicious co-operation and to this end national borders must be crossed: without hindrance and power struggle.[26]

Almost the same idea can be seen in his speech on 4th October 1979, to the farmers in Des Moines, Iowa and a sustainable land ethics finds its roots here.

> The land is God's gift. It is also man's responsibility ... you (farmers) are stewards of some of the most important resources God has given to the world. Therefore conserve the land well so that your children's children and generations after them will inherit an ever richer land than was entrusted to you ... In farming you cooperated with the creator in the very substance of life on earth.[27]

On the occasion of the world Day of Peace, (1 Jan. 1990) titled "Peace With God the Creator; Peace with all Creation", Pope John Paul II made his historical document on ecology. It is the first papal document devoted exclusively to enviroumental

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25. JOHN PAUL II, Toward a True Ecology", p. 327.
26. JOHN PAUL II, cited in J. MALONE, "Environmental Degradation and Social Injustice" in *Origins* 22 (1993) 685-692, p. 687.
27. JOHN PAUL II, "Homily at Living History Farms, *Pilgrim of Peace: The Collected Speeches of John Paul II in Ireland and the United States*, Washington. 1989, pp. 117-118.

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concerns.[28] The message stresses the worldwide ecological crisis as a moral issue and he stresses the importance of respect for nature and environment.[29] If humanity is not at peace with God then earth itself cannot be at peace (PWC 5). He also calls for respect for order and integrity of the creation.

Ecological problems are named in a much more detailed manner than in previous documents such as depletion of ozone layer, the greenhouse effect, acid rain, soil erosion, the destruction of marine resources tropical deforestation and the prodigious waste of resources on environments (PWC 6). In this letter he stresses the integrity of nature and adds that the earth is a common heritage (PWC 7–9). He instructs that the Christians must realize the responsibility within creation and their serious obligation to care for all creation (PWC 15–16). The emphasis upon human rights and the goods of nature suggests that while we are to keep ever alive a sense of fraternity with non–human beings and natural entities their value is still derived from their resource value to present and future generations. He calls the attention of modern society to be serious about its life style. Simplicity, moderation, and discipline as well as a spirit of sacrifice must become part of everyday life (PWC 13). The Pope argues that we should care for all creation because God cares for all creation. Moral concern is extended to the non–human world so far as its well–being can serve human well–being. Ecologically enlightened human self–interest becomes the primary moral argument for environment protection.[30] Towards the end with regard to Christians in particular he asserts that "their responsibility within creation and their duty towards nature and the creator constitute an essential part of their faith"

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28. This document is written in a lively style. Its coverage is comprehensive, the analysis is inclusive and the text reverberates with a not of urgency S. McDONAGH, *The Greening of the Church*, p. 190.

29. We can divide this document into five sections. 1) Man's relation to nature as presented in revelation. 2) The moral problems that underlie the ecological problems. 3) The need for national as well as international efforts to protect the environment. 4) Promote peace and introduce new lifestyle and education for the people. 5) Call to christians to accept the responsibility to protect the environment.

30. W. FRENCH, "Catholicism and the Common Good of the Biosphere", p. 187.

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(PWC 15). In the conclusion he evokes the memory of Francis of Assisi, patron saint of those who promote ecology, and the classic model of being at peace with God and with all creation.[31]

Respect for human dignity and for the environment were the central messages of the speech which the holy father gave on 5th Feb. 1990, to the members of the regional council of Lazio in Italy. Recalling his recommendation during Assisi talk he said: "In finding a solution we must direct the effort to mobilize the will of citizens to face the problems of ecology. An issue like this cannot be neglected for it is vital for human survival".[32] Pope's concern for a well integrated ecosystem is deep in his thoughts. He informs us that humanity is called to establish a new relationship of attentiveness and respect towards environment. Hence he exhorts for and our effort to take responsibility and create a life-style of solidarity and brotherhood.

To the *Omina Homini* association on Aug. 25, 1990 Pope John Paul gave an address. The theme of the address was life and environment. Here he gives some basic notions to solve the problems of ecology. He says that the problem of ecology requires not only our attentive consideration but also our complete involvement on both the level of science as well as of political decisions. Pope advocates a true understanding of mankind's domination over nature. The problem of ecology is extended both is extended both to nature and humanity. Therefore a balance between ecology and anthropology is requisite.[33] To achieve this he advocates an 'ecology of spirit'. In this broader perspective technological progress must always aim to a civilization which promotes human integrity. Otherwise the re-establishing of environmental balance would not reach the levels hoped for.

In the encylcical *Centesimus Annus*[34] (Hundredth Year,) 1991, Pope John II discusses directly the ecological problems.

31 C. CUMMINGS, *Eco-Spirituality: Toward a Reverent Life,* Mahwah, 1991 P. 120.

32. JOHN PAUL II, "Environmental Ills demand Political and Moral Answers", in *LOR* (Feb 19 1990) 1-12, p. 2.

33. JOHN PAUL II, "Life and Environment", in *The Pope Speaks* 36 (1991 44-46, p. 45.

34. JOHN PAUL II, *Centesimus Annus*, in *AAS* 83 (1991) 793-867, for Eng. tran in *The People Speaks* 36 (1991) 273-310.

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In this document he sees consumerism as a problem of ecology. He says that in his desire to have and enjoy rather than to be and to grow, man consumes the resources of the earth and his own life in an excessive and distorted way (CA 37). He appeals even to safegurd natural habitat so that species can survive and thereby balance the nature in general. He admits also that an anthropological error prevails in our day. Instead of realizing his roles as co-creator with God man sets himself in place of God and thus ends up provoking a rebellion on the part of nature (CA 37). In this context he advocates to develop a 'human ecology' (CA 38), which means that not only nature but also man too it also a gift of God. And from this concept he draws our attention to a 'social ecology' based on family, where value system and morals are developing. This will in turn enable a sound environmental ecology. He instructs, "God gave the earth to the whole human race for the sustenance of all its members without excluding or favouring anyone" (CA 31). The sacramental and aesthetic value of nature is emphasised in this document. What we need is not manipulation but contemplation. In short the Pope is well aware of present day problems and he speaks of sustainable solutions.

On 16th Oct, 1991 Pope made a homily during mass in Cuiaba, Brazil where he mentioned again the theme of ecology. He said: "We all know the causes of the problem". He presumes it because he himself has repeated it on many occasions. Therefore, quoting *Centesimus Annus* No. 37. he adds that the ecological problem has a universal effect on other regions of the planet. So he asks to safeguard the moral conditions for an authentic human ecology.[35]

To the scientists attending a workshop on chemical hazards on 22th Oct, 1993 the Pope says that the human family is at the crossroads in its relationship to its natural environment. Mere utilitarian consideration or an aesthetic approach to nature cannot be sufficient basis for a genuine education in ecology. In this speech the idea of stewardship prevailed and he relates stewardship to moral responsibity: He is of opinion that respect for natural environment and the correct and the

35. JOHN PAUL II, "Christ will Judge the Selfish" in *LOR* (28 Oct 1991) 1-14, p. 5.

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moderate use of the resources of creation are a part of each individual's moral obligation towards others. He, therefore, recommends 'subordinating the possessions'. The exact solution for an ecological problem consists that "we must learn to approach the environmental question with solid ethical convictions involving responsibility, self control, justice and fraternal love".[36] Through his various documents and speeches he expresses the interest and concern of church towards ecology. It is to be noted that the papal pronouncements gave an impetus to adapt these teachings in particular to all Christians. Thus various bishops' conferences expressed fheir concerns for the ecological issues.

1.2. Pastoral Letters and Other Official Documents

In 1980 under the title *"Zukunft der Schopfung – Zukunft der Menschheit"* the German Bishops Conference published a pastoral letter calling our attention to make conscientize the future of humanity is based on the preservation of creation.[37] The coming future is not a duty of science and technology but it is our moral responsibility. When we look at the world with a view as God's creation then we find something new in it. The world is a gift to humanity and the gift at the same time is a task – a task of higher responsibility.[38] The bishops say that the biblical understanding of dominion includes the responsibility towards the dominated.[39] Created things are *for* human beings while human beings are *with* them. It was the German bishops who first published a pastoral letter on ecology.

In the synod of reconciliation, in 1984, a Japanese bishop Stephen Famio Hamao made a speech in the assembly that

> work of peace will be effective if all men become aware of their deep connection with nature. Man must not only dominate nature but also seek harmony with it and

36. JOHN PAUL II, "Nations Need an Environmental Ethics", in *LOR* (3 Nov 1993) 1–14, p. 4.
37. DEUTSCHE BISCHOFSKONFERENZ, *Zukunft der Schopfung–Zukunft der Menschheit,* Bonn, 1980, p. 4.
38. DEUTSCHE BISCHOFSKONFERENZ, *Zukunft der Schopfung,* p. 8.
39. DEUTSCHE BISCHOFSKONFERENZ, *Zukunft der Schopfung*, p. 10.

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admire in it the beauty, wisdom and love of the creator. Thus men will be freed of their frenzy for possessions and domination and will become artisans for peace.[40]

German Catholic and Protestant bishops together published in 1985, a document on environment titled *Verantwortung wahrnehmen fur die Schopfung*, in which they affirmed that the responsibility to the creation of God must be taken in all seriousness. The declaration deals with the fundamental questions of understanding nature uniqueness of human beings and above all the creation theology.[41]

In 1986 the worldwide fund for nature sponsored a Conference on 'religion and nature' at Assisi in which representatives of the world's five largest religions took place. According to their view the environment and its problems are a pressing issue for the present world. Each religion has declared its commitment for an integrated ecosystem.[42]

There are signs that many Christians who have exercised a prophetic mission in the area of social justice are now turning towards environmental issues. The Guatemala bishops in 1987 produced a document entitled "The Cry for Land" on the recognition of justice in favour of environmental ethics. The main theme of the pastoral was that "the earth belongs to the Lord". If it is Lord's we are only care-takers and are not allowed to misuse then at the expense of others.[43]

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40. Cf. S. McDONAGH, *The Greening of the Church*, p. 180.
41. DEUTSCHE BISCHOFSKONFERENZ, *Die Verantwortnng des Menschen fur das Tier*, (Arbeitshilfen 113), 4 Oktober 1993, Bonn, p. 25.
42. In this conference christians declared: Human dominion over nature is not a license to abuse but a stewardship in symbiosis with all creatures. The jewish declaration affirmed the autonomy of all living creatures with its value. For Islam submission to the will of God is the means of peace and peace is to be done with man and nature. Buddhists emphasised the respect for life and for environment. Since human beings as well as other non-human sentient beings depend upon the environment as the ultimate source of life and well being. The Hindu declaration on nature locates both humanity and divinity within creation, not apart from it. The divine is not exterior to creation but expresses itself through natural phenomena. C. CUMMINGS, *Eco-Spirituality*, p. 120.
43. Cf. S. McDONAGH, *The Greening of the Church*, p. 193.

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In 1987, the bishops of the Dominican Republic published a pastoral letter entitled **The Protection of Nature is a Condition of Survival.** It focuses : our links with nature include our relations with others and God. For this reason the exploitation of the natural resources should be carried out according to the needs of the whole human family both present and future. The extreme poverty of the peasants, is the result of wasting of goods by those who possess more,[44]

In 1988 Catholic bishop's conference of the Philippines under the title **What is Happening to our Beautiful Land** published an eloquently ordered and long pastoral letter. They maintained that the environmental issue is ultimately a pro-life issue; through thoughtlessness and greed we have sinned against God and creation. In the first section of the letter they draw the attention to reflect on what is happening in the light of the gospel. This reflection would convince us that the assault on creation is sinful and contrary to the teachings of our faith.[45] The bishops deal with different problems confronting the world, especially Philippines, and condemned the devastation of the tropical forests in their country. The pastoral letter appeals to individuals, communities and states to be concerned about the problems of ecology. Robert J. Moore says that the theology of the pastoral letter gives a "totally healthy meaning to the doctrine of dominion".[46]

The declaration of the Stuttgart forum called *Gerechtigkeil, Frieden und Bewahrung der Schopfung* published a document under the title *Gottes Gaben – Unsere Aufgabe*, on 22 Oct 1988. The statement says that one of the important duties of ours is the species preservation. The variety of the creation is a reflection of God's glory. It is an unconditional requisite for the universal ecological stability. Many of the animal and plant species are in danger or at the brim of extinction. Therefore

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44. Cf. S. McDONAGH, *The Greening of the Church*, p. 193.

45. A. C. JOSOL (ed.), *Response to the Signs of the Time*: *Selected Documents*, Quezon City, 1990, 306–320, p. 306.

46. R. J. MOORE, "A New Christian Reformation", in *Ethics of the Environment and Development*, p. 112. cited in, D. CHRISTIANSEN, "Moral Theology, Ecology, Justice, and Development", p. 268.

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the forum suggests a bioethics which supports all basic forms of life.[47]

In 1989 the Catholic Bishop's of Northern Italy issued a a pastoral letter on ecology. It begins with the statement: Every human being has the fundamental right for an environment suitable to his health an well being. The bishops give three main ideas: 1) Respect for environment is an expression of gratitude to God and is not far from being a form of praise and worship, 2) Moderation means a control in consumption in favour of future generation. 3) Quality of life which is given through the concern of natural environment.[48]

The Lent pastoral letter of the Dutch bishops conference on 16th September 1989 deal the ecological problems in relation to creation. The letter follows.

> Creation and its creator do not relate to each other like strangers. The loving gesture with which God grants existence to others is imprinted and shaped in us and everything that arrives at existence. Water, the sun, the sky and the earth, animals and plants each have their own identity and value in that they are reflections of the richness, the multiformity, the goodness of God. God is not captured in the highness of his own being, in an impenetrable light; He is preseut in each of his creatures, as the loved one, giving life, is present in the loving human being, without the two of them becoming one. God is present in His creation without identifying Himself with it and without nature thus becoming divine.[49]

A European Ecumenical Assembly was conducted under JPIC (Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation) on 15–21 May, 1989 in Basel. The members of the assembly called on Christians to 'turn back to the creator who in love cares for all and each

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47. DEUTSCHE BISCHOFSKONFERENZ, *Die Verantwortung des Menschen fur das Tier*, pp. 28–29.

48. Cf. C. CUMMINGS, *Eco–Spirituality*, p. 122.

49. DUTCH BISHOPS, *Bondgenoten in Gods Schepping?* Utrecht, 1989, cited in, M.E. BRINKMAN, "The Challenge of an Ecumenical Creation Theology", in *Exchange* 20 (1991) 87–97, p. 94.

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of his creatures'. The declaration calls for developing a friendly approach to nature.[50]

The fourth Biennial Congress *On the Fate of the Earth* met at Managua, Nicarugua in 1989, The congress intended to go to the root of our environmental crisis, but did not trace a root to its ultimate spiritual ground. Still they offer a searching analysis of the intertwined economic, social and ecological factors with helpful suggestions for deficient international action. They declared that it is the right of every person to live in a healthy environment.[51]

The World Council of Church's convocation on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation held in Seoul, S. Korea (March 6–12, 1990) was a landmark in the history of environmental protection. The Church as the community of risen Lord is called to take a reconciling role in the world. The convocation made many substantial output in view of an integrated community of justice and peace. Quoting Isa 32:17, Mich 4:3–4, Amo 5:5, Mt 5:9, the convocation expressed certain resolutions with the phrases "we affirm", "we will resist", "we commit", for a well-integrated environment. The convocation affirmed that all exercise of power is accountable to God, the creation is beloved of God etc. The main theme was that the earth belongs to the lords.[52]

On Oct 1990 bishop Michael Pfeifer of San Angelo, Texas wrote a pastoral letter titled *Earth is our Home Our Source of Life.* In it he wrote that "our home is in danger, earth as the gift of God must be protected".[53]

Bishop Anthony Pilla of Cleveland, America, published a pastoral letter titled *Christian Faith and the Environment.* He centred his reflections around a basic question: what is the

50. This convocation was a part of a preparation for a world convocaion in Seoul in 1990. In the convocation 700 delegates participated from every European country (except Albania). Cf. S. McDONAGH, *The Greening of the Church*, p. 194.
51. C. CUMMINGS, *Eco-Spirituality*, p. 121.
52. Y. TESFAI, "The World Council of Church's Convocation on Justice, peace and the Integrity of Creation-Seoul", in *Africa Theological Journal* 20 (1991) 17–27.
53. Cf. J. MALONE, "Environmental Degradation and Social Injustice", p. 687.

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relationship between our basic christian faith and our responsibility for the environment? Modern man is using an allusion that "it doesn't matter" and thereby he misuses the environment. The bishop says when the beauty and balance in creation are not treated with respect, the universe in a sense talks back to us, demanding our attention and response. The concern for human person is central to the teaching of the Vatican but he adds that it should not keep us away from attending to our relation with and concern for all God's creation, the environment itself. We fail when we live as if we were independent of those environmental systems and network, both living and non–living which support us.[54]

Florida bishop's pastoral letter (Jan 1991) on environment under the title *Companions in Creation*, highlights the point that we should prevent further damage to our environment and further loss of our sources. Quoting Gen 1:28 the bishops comment that dominion is not a power to exploit or use want only. Accepting the central position of human beings they say that human beings are fellow creatures and companions with all creation. The creatures are sacramental for they contain the 'memory of creator' and 'revelation of God'. The letter says that the preservation of the environment is a fundamental and critical issue of our time. Again it says recycle, reuse and reduce must become our environmental watch words. The pastoral letter ends with an appeal to all who are responsible to act their role.[55]

On 4th June 1992 Bishop Martino at the U. N. Conference on environment and development, on the behalf of pope, made an address. He is of opinion that philosophy, theology and science all speak of a harmonious universe, of a cosmos endowed with its own integrity its own internal, dynamic balance. This order must be respected. The whole of creation is everyone's heritage. Environment and development should go hand in hand. The care and protection of environment should not obstruct the right to development nor can development be invoked in

54. Cf. A. PILLA, "Christian Faith and the Environment", in *Origins* 20 (1990) 333–338.

55. FLORIDA BISHOPS, "Companions in Creation", in *Origins* 20 (1991) 609–610.

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thwarting the environment. He recognizes that the task of achieving a just balance is today's challenge. His speech covered numerous issues concerning ecology today.[56]

On 14th October 1992 Pontifical Council, *Cor Unum*, has issued a statement titled *Teach Ecological Responsibility*. According to it the problems cannot be dealt with merely on the local level it must be studied in its global dimension. The statement admonishes that development must respect the basic norms of environment. Therefore the council suggests "preserving the cosmological order whole and intact is an act of justice since earth is a common heritage and all citizens have a right to a safe environment".[57]

Bishop Malone of Youngstown, Ohio on 17th February 1993 addressed a forum on ecology at Ohio university in Columbia about the problems confronting the world and the solution for it. He says that the right aspiration to a decent life won't work by the same kind of exploitation of natural resources and with the same kind of polluting technologies. In this rather long pastoral letter he deals with almost all themes that normally come under ecology. The bishop concludes: Like Noah and his family before us, we are also responsible to preserve life on earth. As on the ark, human survival alone is not enough. For human life to survive, all creation must also survive.[58]

From 31st Jan. to 5th Feb. 1993, in Tagaytay City, Philippines Asian bishops conducted an Asian Colloquium on science and faith. According to them ecological crisis has two realms: on the one side there is the greenhouse effect and on the other side there is abject poverty, human greed and ignorance of ecological issues and lack of appreciation of the life support systems of the earth. Therefore the colloquium points out these crisis as today's most pressing moral issues. The colloquium called for replacing the concept of humanity as 'master of the universe' with concept of stewardship. They appealed for a

56. R. R. MARTINO, "All Human Needs must be Respected", in *LOR* (17 Jun 1992) 1–16, p. 13.

57. *Cor Unum*, "Teach Ecological Responsibility", in *LOR* (28 Oct 1992) 1–14, p. 4.

58. J. MALONE, "Environmental Degradation and Social Justice", p. 692.

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sustainable development' and put forward recommendations to all spheres of life–government, bishops, educationists, pastors, laity etc.[59]

On 4th October 1993 the German bishops published a pastoral letter on *The Responsibility of Human Beings for the Animals*. The main theme is that animals and plants and other beings have a right to exist, and that we human beings, as moral agents, have the responsibility to protect them. Freedom necessarily includes responsibility. Animal tests, cosmetic products from animals, gene technique all are to be used with minimum pain and only for necessity. Animals are not things but co–creation with human beings *(Mitgeschopfe des Menschen)*.[60]

Catholic Bishops Conference of India held in Delhi from 26 Feb. to 2 Mar. 1994, pronounced the need of preserving ecosystem thereby avoiding harm to the biosphere. They underlined the key idea that development should observe the basic rules of ecosystem.[61]

2 Theological dimensions of the Magisterial Teachings on Environment

2. 1. Human Person and Dominion Theory

The Catholic Church approaches both the care and protection of environment and all questions regarding development from the view point of the human person.[62] The ultimate determining factor in ecology is the human person.[63] Human being is the only person in this world capable of being conscious, gifted with intelligence and sagacity to utilize. He is ultimately responsible for his choices and its consequence.[64] Therefore

59. ASIAN BISHOPS, "Root Causes of the Environmental Crisis", in *Origins* 22 (1993) 692-694.
60. DEUTSCHE BISCHOFSKONFERFNZ, *Die Verantwortnng des Menschen*, (Arbeitshilfen 113), 4 Oktober 1993, Bonn, p. 19.
61. CATHOLIC BISCHOPS CONFERENCE OF INDIA, "Resolution of the Annual Meating", in *Deepika Daily*, Kottayam, 3 March 1994.
62. R. R. MARTINO, "All Human Needs must be Respected," in *LOR* (17 Jun 1992) 1--16, p. 13.
63. R. R. MARTINO, "All Human Needs must be Respected", p. 13.
64. R. R. MARTINO, "Responsible Stewardship: Ecology as a Moral Task", in *Origins* 22 (1992) 88-90, p. 88.

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Gaudium et Spes qualifies him as the only creature on earth which God willed for itself (GS 24). This is a truth constantly presented by the Church's *magisterium*, during the course of the centuries.[65] The term *imago dei* focused on the first chapter of Genesis contains the key to Pope's theological reflection on human person. Creation of man is preceded by the creators addressing himself, *ad intra*.[66] It is precisely from this qualitative distinction in creation that human beings are distinguishable from the rest of creation.[67] Man resembles God more than nature. Because humanity is created in the image of God, humans cannot be reduced or merely understood on the level of the world.

Through creation, in the image of God, man is called to become, among the creatures of the world, a mouthpiece of the glory of God.[68] According to the Yahwist tradition man has got the breath of life. The breath of life has made man capable of knowing beings, of naming them and of recognizing them; he was different from them.[69] The idea of image, likeness, breath of life are considered the basis of dominion theory. Dominion over earth will be actualised only when it reflects God's image (LE 43). The capacity for, innovation, invention, creativity etc. are reflections of this image. Dominion here, is primarily a moral dominion, which makes it an act of stewardship.[70] The environmental exploitation comes not from a biblical concept of dominion but from a secular idea that the purpose of work is primarily maximizing profits.[71] John Paul II says that the realization of environmental balance can come about only through a return to the true understanding of mankind's dominion over nature.[72] Although Pope affirms the notion of

65. JOHN PAUL II "Man the Image of God, is a Spiritual and Corporeal Being", in *LOR* (21 Apr 1986) 1–14, p. 1.
66. JOHN PAUL II, "Man is Created in the Image of God", in *LOR* (14 Apr 1986) 1–14, p. 1.
67. M. NAUGHTON, *The Good Stewards*, p. 70.
68. JOHN PAUL II, "Man is Created in the Image of God", in *LOR* (14 Apr 1986) 1–14, p. 1.
69. JOHN PAUL II, "Man, the Image of God", in *LOR* (16 April 1986) 1–12, p. 1.
70. M. NAUGHTON, *The Good Stewards*, p. 84.
71. M. NAUGHTON, *The Good Stewards*, p. 85.
72. JOHN PAUL II, "Life Death and Environment Intertwined", in *LOR* 3 Sept 1990) 1–14, p. 10.

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dominion, it is circumscribed by moral limits.[73] The intrinsic quality of image and likeness brings with it an understanding about the universe and all that it contains. Then, we can see that as the image of God, as co-creator and steward, the person's duty and right to subdue the earth is never a license for exploitation.[74]

2.2. Dominion and Use

The universe and life in all its forms bear witness to God's creative power, his love and his enduring presence. Creation reminds us of the mystery and love of God. The Pope says that man has a dominion over nature but at the same time is subject to the will of God who imposes limits upon his use and dominion over things (SRS 29). When man disobeys God and refuses to submit to his rule nature rebels against him for he has tarnished the image of God in himself (SRS 30). In *Redemptor Hominis* he writes: "It was the creator's will that man should communicate with nature as an intelligent and noble 'master' and 'guardian' and not as a heedless 'exploiter' and 'destroyer' (RH 15). If an appreciation of the value of the human person and human life is lacking, we will also lose interest in others and in the earth itself (PWC 13).

The earth's resources and all the means to their access and use must be wisely monitored and justly shared. In *CA 37* the Pope says: "Man thinks that he can make arbitrary use of the earth, subjecting it without restraint to his will, as though it did not have its own requisites and a prior God-given purpose which man can indeed develop but must not betray". Man should not take up the role of God in relation to the world, for he is not the author of creation and if he plays a role it will cause for a rebellion from the part of nature.[75] For John Paul II unlike modern ecologists, a new theology is not necessary. He is of opinion that a new wisdom in our dominance and an obedience to God's will is enough for a good stewarding. In this connection he opines that the respect for

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73. D. CHRISTIANSEN, "Moral Theology, Ecology, Justice, and Development" p. 256.
74. M. NAUGHTON, *The Good Stewards*, p. 84.
75. CA 37 & SRS 34.

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the natural environment and the correct and moderate use of the resources of creation are integral to each individuals moral obligation towards others.

In SRS he strongly recommends that one cannot use with impunity the different categories of beings whether living or inanimate, according to ones economic needs. Some are not even renewable. Using absolute dominion is just opposite to stewardship. The Pope suggests that the dominion granted to man by the creator is not an absolute power nor can one speak of a freedom to choose and misuse or to dispose of things as one pleases. The limitation imposed by the creator is symbolically expressed in "not to eat of the fruit of the tree".

The whole creation is everyone's heritage.[76] It is the obligation of a steward to be the one who cares for the goods entrusted to him. He is not the one who plunders, but the one who conserves and enhances and not the one who destroys and dissipates.[77] The human person has a responsibility of stewardship in regard to all creation with which he or she lives in interdependence.[78] The Pope suggests that human relation should be "with justice and holiness".[79]

2.3. Dominion and Stewardship

Pope John Paul II is an ardent promoter of stewardship. He notices that various animal species are threatened with extinction (CA 38). In an ecological perspective he says that each of the species makes its own particular contribution to the balance of nature in general. Recalling this idea cardinal Renato Martino calls for a 'cosmic fraternity',[80] through which humanity enter into or establish a new relationship of attentiveness and respect towards environment.[81]

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76. R. R. MARTINO, "All Human Needs must be Respected", p. 13.
77. R. R. MARTINO, "All Human Needs must be Respected", p. 13.
78. "Holy See and Earth Summit: Memorandum on the Holy See's Position on Environment and Development", in *LOR* (10 June 1992) 1–16, p. 6.
79. LE 25 & GS 34.
80. R. R. MARTINO, "Responsible Stewardship: Ecology as a Moral Task", p. 89.
81. JOHN PAUL II, "Environmental Ills Demand Political and Moral Answers", p. 2.

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John Paul II turns his attention to the integrity of nature recalling the notion of earth as a garden. The first man was a guardian or gardener. According to the pope the earth by reason of its fruitfulness and its capacity can satisfy the human needs. Earth is the first gift of God for the sustenance of human life. The call of 'Be guardians of the earth' is not only in an aesthetic sense but as the source of moral agent. This command cautions the limits of his activities or in the words of pope a limitation imposed from the beginning by the creator himself (SRS 34). We are care–takers of this garden in which all creatures, not merely those in the human community, live in dependence–first upon God and then upon each other. Like Noah and his family before us we are responsible to preserve life on earth. As on the ark, human survival alone is not enough, says bishop Malone. For human life to survive, all creation must also survive[82] We have entered in to an inseparable bond with God and nature.[83] The Pope connects this responsibility as a steward to the realm of faith. The responsibility within creation and their duty towards nature and the creator are essential parts of their faith. Otherwise the obligation as steward will not be rooted in his moral perception. This domination and stewarding has a collective character. Therefore the pope says that man has a duty not to hinder others from having their own part of God's gift: indeed he must co–operate with others so that together all can dominate the earth (CA 31).

2.4. Stewardship and Development

The challenge facing the international community today is how to reconcile the imperative duty of the protection of environment with the basic right of all people to development.[84] A true concept of development cannot ignore the use of elements of nature, the renewability of resources and the consequences of hazard industrialization' (SRS 34). It is man who is the protagonist of development (SRS 30). The human

82. J. MALONE, "Environmental Degradation", p. 692.

83. JOHN PAUL II, "Toward a True Ecology", in *The Pope Speaks* 33 (1981) 323–327, p. 325.

84. R. R. MARTINO, "All Human Needs must be Respected", in *LOR* (17 Jun 1992) 1–16, p. 13.

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person occupies a central place within the world and the promotion of the dignity and the right of all persons without distinction is the ultimate guiding norm of any development (PWC 7). Authentic development refers to the right relationship of a person with God, with nature and with other human beings. Responsible stewardship and genuine solidarity are not only directed to the protection of environment, but equally so to the inalienable right and duty of all people to development. The Holy See notes that the spiritual as well as the material wellbeing of the person must be taken into account in the development process because spiritual values give meaning to material progress. Referring to the parable of talents he says that the earth is treasure given to us not to be left alone but to be developed and transformed. He means by it that the environmental protection does not overlook development. Only a development that disrespects the environment will cause dangerous harm to the ecosystem.[85]

In SRS Pope gives a balanced view of development. Possession, consumerism, having, throwing away–all must be replaced by 'being'. In development one must take into account the nature of each being and of its mutual connection in an ordered system which is precisely the cosmos (SRS 34). Development cannot be limited to mere economic growth. Development consists not merely in the use, dominion over and indiscriminate possessions of created things, but rather in subordinating the possession, dominion and use to man's divine likeness and to his vocation to immortality (SRS 29). In order to be authentic it must be complete, integral that it has to promote the good of every person and of the whole person.

Ecological sustainability is also intrinsically related with social justice. We cannot build up an ecology as long as injustice prevails in world. The Pope exhorts that it is unjust that a privileged few should continue to accumulate excessive goods, squandering available resources, while masses of people are living in conditions of misery at the lowest level of sustenance. Thus the Pope warns the developed nations.

85. COR UNUM, "Teach Ecological Responsibility", p. 4.

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> It is a serious abuse and an offence against human solidarity when industrial enterprises in the richer countries profit from the economic and legislative weakness of poorer countries to locate production plants or accumulate waste which will have a degrading effect on the environment and on people's health.[86]

Through his different documents and instructions he proves himself as a pioneer in the realm of ecology. Therefore Paul Lakeland commeuts that John Paul's vision on development and ecological issues moved far enough in the straight direction for hope that still further steps may be taken.[87]

2.5. Stewardship and Life Style

If the ecological devastation is a moral and social problem the solution should also concern the moral and social sphere. Therefore ecospirituality calls for attitudinal and structural changes in both these spheres. John Paul says that we must learn to approach the environmental question with solid ethical convictions involviug responsibility, self-control, justice and fraternal love.[88] Catholic teaching has long cautioned against lifestyles that place material goods and consumption ahead of spiritual values and ethical principles. The pursuit of self-gratification places a burden on our lives as well as on others which will affect resources and environment. It is imperative that we must evaluate our consumptive habits and reorient to a new life style. The environmental problem is not a mere technical, biological or political problem as it is rooted on the basic selfish attitude of human beings. Hence an ethical formation is urgent. Simplicity, moderation and discipline as well as spirit of sacrifice must become a part of everyday life lest all suffer the negative consequences of the careless habits of a few (SRS 13). That means a change in the pattern of human behaviour that destroy or waste precious resources is inevitable. A stewardship model needs a culture of asceticism and the readiness to renounce ones own power and greatness, and make room for others particularly the weak.[89] Without a 'life-style of solidarity

86. JOHN PAUL II, "Nations Need an Environmental Ethic", p. 6.
87. P. LAKELAND, "Development and Catholic Teaching", p. 709.
88. JOHN PAUL II, "Nations Need an Envionmental Ethic", p. 6.

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and brotherhood' we cannot resolve the problems in ecology.[90] Following the same idea the Florida bishops say that we are obliged by the teaching and example of Christ to have special concern for the unborn, the poor, the oppressed, the defenceless and those who are vulnerable because of physical, social or economic disabilities.[91]

2.6. Stewardship and Common Good

The ecological question accompanies the problems of consumerism. In his desire to have and to enjoy rather than 'to be' and 'to grow' human being consumes the resources of the earth and his own life in an excessive and disordered way (CA 37). A central principle of the Catholic social tradition to take this lacuna is the concept of common good. Human beings, as stewards of creation are profoundly related to nonhuman creation, because, like all things they are creatures made by God. Human beings are fellow creatures and companions of all creation. Hence the term common good has a wider meaning. By common good the Pope seems to understand the good of the humans. It doesn't mean that the pope excludes the general understanding of bio-rights. Since earth is a common heritage the fruit of which must benefit all.[92] The term common good is not limited to the rights of human person but included to the good of the whole world. The common good involves all creation.[93] When Pope John XXIII, coined the term "the universal common good" he meant it for human rights, constitutional governments, nuclear disarmament and the changing role of woman. But when we use the term common good we think also of issues like climate change habitat preservation, sustainable economics and new systems of energy use.[94] Therefore Bishop

89. JOHN PAUL II, "Toward a True Ecology", p. 327.
90. JOHN PAUL II, "Environmental Ills Demand Political and Moral Answer", p. 2.
91. FLORIDA BISHOPS, "Companions in Creation", p. 610.
92. JOHN PAUL II, "Teach Ecological Responsibility", p. 4.
93. FLORIRIDA BISHOPS, "Companions in Creation", p. 610. The Pope's concept of common good is open to discussion as to whether it is inclusive or exclusive of beings other than human beings. When seen aganist the personalist concept, the basic anthropological outlook of John Paul II an adequate consideration of human person involves the vertical and horizontal dimension of human existence.
94. J. MALONE, "Environmental Degradation and Social Injustice", p. 690.

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Malone writes "now our awareness of threats to planetary ecology provokes still another transformation in the idea of the common good, namely, that we need to think and act in response to the planetary good or what we might call the good of creation".[95] In order to achieve this Pope calls our attention to a greater realization of the limits of available resources and the need to respect the integrity and cycles of nature (SRS 26). Christians must realize "their responsibility within creation" and "their serious obligation to care for all creation" (PWC 15-16).

Responsible stewardship demands a consideration for the common good–no one person, no one group of people in isolation are allowed to determine these relationship with the universe. The universal common good transcends all private interest, all national boundaries and reaches beyond the present moment to the future generations. Our responsibilities for the common good includes an obligation to contribute to the restoration of a healthy environment. Hence his proposal "a more internationally coordinated approach to the management of the earth's goods (PWC 5,9). This emphasis upon human rights and the good of nature suggests that while we are to "keep ever alive a sense of fraternity" (PWC 16) with nonhuman beings and natural entities, their value is still derived from their resource value to present and future generations of humans'.[96]

God gave the earth to the human race for the sustenance of all its members without excluding or favouring any one (CA 31). We find the same idea in *Gaudium et Spes 69*. "God destined the earth and its contains for the use of every individuals and all peoples. This will require a courageous reform of structures as well as new ways of relating among the peoples and the states".[97] Therefore it is the task of a state to provide for the defense and preservation of common good such as the natural and human environments which can not be safeguarded simply by market forces. Those who contribute for a common good recognize their obligation to the restoration of a healthy environment (PWC 15).

95. J. MALONE, "Environmental Degradation and Social Justice", p. 690.
96. W. FRENCH, "Catholicism and the Common Good of the Biosphere", p. 187.
97. R. R. MARTINO, "All Human Needs Must be respected", p. 13.

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2.7. Stewardship and Education

Education of ecological responsibilty is the guiding principle of the Pope's various statements.[98] The Pope writes that education in ecological responsibility is urgent: responsibility for oneself, for others, and for the earth (PWC 13). Not only is it necessary to increase efforts to educate in a keen awareness of solidarity and interdependence among the world's people. It is also necessary to insist on the interdependence of the various ecosystems and on the importance of the balance of these systems for human survival and well being.[99] Mere utilitarian considerations or an aesthetic approach to nature cannot be sufficient basis for a genuine education in ecology. It requires not only our attention but also our complete involvement on both level the level of science as well as political decisions. At the root of the problem we see an exploitative mentality, which is at variance with the gospel of Jesus.[100] We must learn to live in harmony, not only with God and with one another but with creation itself. Without proper education the awareness will not flourish. Since the ecological problem is mainly ethical, values and principles should be taken into consideration.

2.8. Stewardship and Universal Collaboration

Pope John Paul II calls the attention of all good wills for a solidarity in reshaping the biospherical system. By solidarity he implies an awareness and an acceptance of co-responsibility for the causes and solution related to ecological challenge. He says an issue like this cannot be neglected for it is vital for human survival.[101] The pontifical council *Cor Unum* invites all to see themselves as citizens of the world.[102] Since the ecological problem is moral and universal, the Pope invokes a new solidarity between developing and developed nations. Solidarity implies an awareness and an acceptance of co-responsibility for the causes and solutions relative to the ecological

98. COR UNUM, "Teach Ecological Responsibility", in *LOR* (28 Oct 1992) p. 4.
99. JOHN PAUL II, "Nations Need an Environmental Ethic", p. 4.
100. A. C. JOSOL (ed.), *Response to the Signs of the Time: Selected Documents*, p. 320.
101. JOHN PAUL II, "Environmental Ills Demand Political and Moral Answers", p. 2.
102. COR UNUM, "Teach Ecological Responsibility," p. 4.

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challenge. Recognition of the shared responsibility will enable mutual dialogue, trust and respect in seeking the solutions. Hence the Pope advocates that we must be more responsible for ourselves, our neighbours, our institutions and our planet, whatever may be our nation, religion or political stance.[103] The problems cannot be dealt with morally on a local level and therefore the common interest of all countries must be considered for which policies should aim at a sustainable development supported by sound environmental principles.[104] Since this issue has a moral aspect which touches everyone nobody can be indifferent to it. This interdependence of rich and poor nations demands reciprocal aid that can save the earth and its inhabitants. Thereby we achieve a global dimension in all our ecological concerns. To think that an individual or even a small group of environmentalists here or there could solve these problems, would of course, not only be overwhelming, but absurd. But as communities, as societies we can make impacts on the universe.[105] He also advices that the need for a joint action does not lessen the responsibility of each individual state. A joint action collaborating with all groups of people will enable the ecosystem well integrated. The Pope calls and accepts for any steps that will help to develop a sustainable ecosystem. Hence he says that as we Catholics invites our Christian brothers to share in our initiative so too we declare that we are ready to collaborate in theirs and we welcome the invitations presented to us (SRS 32).

3. Criticism

The Church's concern for ecology is very positive : that can be seen through different official documents, exhortations etc. There are many proponents of ecology who criticize the church for not taking this problem seriously enough. Daniel M. Cowdin writes that the Pope's treatment of environmental issues remains still in the framework of Catholic social teaching with its theocentric and anthropocentric foundation and not biocentric. Without some sort of ecological awareness transcendence of God

103. JOHN PAUL II, "That We be more Responsible for Ourselves, Our Neighbours, Institutions, and Our Planet", p. 8.
104. R. R. MARTINO, "Responsible Stewardship", p. 88.
105. A. PILLA, "Christian Faith and the Environment, p. 338.

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and human dignity cannot be treated in their fullness. Therefore he recommends a third legged foundation based on environment.[106] The Pope deals with SRS not strictly in a biocentric outlook. It seems that SRS holds the view that the world exists exclusively for the sake of human beings. Respect for nature *per se* is never mentioned. Moreover our 'respect for' and 'duty toward' creation is never explicitly spelled out as an obligation toward it analogous to our obligation toward God and other people. In *Centesimus Annus* also the Pope takes a theocentric and anthropocentric outlook. But we can say that the Pope when he speaks of anthropocentrism he means it enlightened anthropocentrism. At the root of the senseless destruction of the natural environment lies an anthropological error which unfortunately is wide spread in our day (CA 37). Sean McDonagh says: "Peace With all Creation" is an excellent document. But it should have also mentioned the rapid growth of population.[107] The Church's position is that such claims are part of the out modeled forecasting already rejected by the population specialists as simplistic and often erroneous.[108] S. McDonagh says that SRS did not capture either the magnitude of the problem or the urgency.[109] Besides it lacks realistic suggestion about conserving the earth or healing the damage which has already been done. But he forgets that the Church is not a mere social institution rather a moral consciousness giving the norms which is to be implemented by the state, people or individuals. Drew Christiansen says that a number of serious problems go un-discussed or are insufficiently examined in the Church documents.[110] Though

106. D. M. COWDIN, "John Paul II and Environmental Concern Problems and Possibilities", p. 44. According to Cowdin Catholic teaching is founded on two basic principles namely theocentrism and anthropocentrism, He suggests that the concept of biocentrism is also necessary for a sound theology.
107. S. McDONAGH, *The Greening of the Church*, p. 191.
108. J. T. McHUGH, "Birth Rate Does not Create Greatest Drain on Resources", in *LOR* (2 Sept 1992) 1-6, p. 2. Renato R. Martino also have the same idea regarding the population growth. "People are born not only with mouths that need to be fed, but also with hands that can produce and minds that can create and innovate". So population in itself is not a problem but injustice among people is to be the main concern. R. R. MARTINO, "All Human Needs Must Be Respected", p. 13.
109. S. McDONAGH, *The Greening of the Church*, p. 188.
110. D. CHRISTIANSEN, "Moral Theology, Ecology, Justice, and Development", p. 257.

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many problems are not discussed the basic problems are dealt and solutions are also given in the documents. The solutions are not merely political or technical but more ethical and spiritual.

Conclusion

Since the Vatican II, the role of the Church in the world problems and issues became more explicit, thanks to the conciliar decision that the Church must bring the modern world in to contact with the vivifying and perennial energies of Gospel. In order to achieve this the church has to intervene in the problems of the world and pronounce its own position and discoveries towards them. The Church could not in any way be silent to the contemporary issues and problems.

It is generally upheld that an awareness of the crucial issues of ecology came to the forefront in the 1970's. In 1970 itself the Church took this issue as its own and expressed its concerns and suggestions. Very often they were themes of unofficial pronouncements. However, official position documents also were there like *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, *Centesimus Annus*, *World Day of Peace Message*. In the analysis of these documents, it is to be noted that since the Church is by its existence universal, the papers also shared a universal outlook and perception.

At the same time the universal guidelines provided by Papal documents gave impetus to the local ecclesial bodies and institutions to respond creatively to the local issues. Hence the birth of declarations and papers by continental, national, local bishops conferences. These papers had a motivation to provide concrete solution they saw relevant to the local issues.

What characterized these responses were that they developed a homocentric and theocentric system within which the biocentric life received adequate consideration and meaning. They considered the pastoral and ecological problems more as a moral or ethical problem calling for ethical answer than merely economical and technological. They invite us to a way of life based not on having but on being ethical. In this way they serve as a critique of contemporary consumeristic attitude and promoter of fundamental principles of universal collaboration, social justice and common good.

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GENERAL CONCLUSION

Our study on stewarding the created world in this thesis was motivated by a historical consciousness of the signs of the times. It led to us certain conviction as well as certain perception. The data provided by the studies underlined a plea to protect the created world from its impending death. However there occurred a standstill as to the policies and methods to achieve this goal was not clear. Still, the studies could unearth the reasons behind the contemporary ecological problems. The only possible way to tackle any problem is to analyze the issue in its integrity. In the first chapter we tried to present the main ecological issues, so that a remedy can be proposed.

The main problems that are carving the modern world are air pollution, water pollution, soil erosion, greenhouse effect, depletion of ozone layer, devastation of forests, exploitation of nonrenewable resources etc. The causes are multifaceted and multi-directional. First and foremost it is the narcissistic egoistic attitude of the human beings to reduce everything to oneself without any concern for the integrity and value of the other. In other words ecological problems are basically due to greed and shortsightedness. In order to justify this utilitarian attitude some sort of philosophy of life also emerged in the course of history. This led to a wrong interpretation of the biblical narrative of creation so much so that it may be seen as giving the human being unlimited power over all the created beings. Ecology provides an awareness of limits. However the environment is beyond all nationalism, provincialism, rugged individualism. All human arrangements must be seen as symbiotic, mutually supportive ones. All beings within nature deserve respect. They all have their identity. They are an otherness that puts limits to the human beings will to dominate. Hence we can say that what we need is a holistic approach of living with every being.

Human beings have values but in themselves have no separate destiny apart from nature. Humans must measure but not the measure, of things and their value. Since the Western world was

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predominantly Christian and the ecological issues are affecting them most, remedies are to be handled urgently and seriously. The desacralization of the earth come forth by the united forces of Christendom, capitalism and technology. Human environment is more than merely a neutral realm for human life and actions. The repeated formula, "And God saw it was good", as well as Noahic covenant leaves no doubt that both animals and humans were blessed, even the simplest beings are blessed by God. Since fidelity to God implies loyalty to God's valuations of and affections for the whole creation, humans are called to be divine images, mirroring the justice and benevolence of God. However, in our study we see that the biblical mandate to subdue the earth does not give the human person arbitrary and absolute authority over the creation. From a perspective based on biblical notion of dominion, we cannot envision the value of any natural entity simply on the basis of its humanly-wrought development, improvements, or usefulness to ourselves. It is all the more a responsible duty bound authorization. Whatever it be this, an attitude of exploiting the nature continued and continues till today.

This is evident from the study of the different periods of history and their attitude to nature. In tradition philosophy cherished a dichotomized view of nature which was more detrimental and seen as something evil. Both Origen and Aquinas based their arguments upon a hierarchical teleological understanding of created nature derived, as many commentators noted not from biblical sources but from stoic and other ancient Greek philosophers. Hence nature is to be conquered and subdued according to the will of human beings. Old testament would hardly support any notion of human "dominion" as a matter of license. Rather implied in this description is both a human responsibility to rule nature as God's representative and a human accountability to God for ruling as God would rule.

It is the general consensus that theology is faith seeking understanding and that faith has its foundation in the scripture. If theology has its foundation in the scripture all that it teaches the human person towards a way of life, that is, ethics, is also related to the biblical teachings. In order to highlight this aspect in relation to the theme of our discussion namely ecology, in the second chapter we made an analysis of the biblical and theological foundations of human relation to the

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environment. This analysis underlines that the scripture is concerned with human relation to the abode of human existence as a relation of stewardship. A steward is responsible for preserving and advancing those interests defined by the owner and is accountable to the owner for having done so. As we have seen the term stewardship is the most appropriate dominion metaphor. Because this term is pictured not simply as overseer, but as workers and producers instead of seeing from a distance It says so because of the biblical understanding that human person is *imago dei* as well as *imago mundi.*

The human being is only an image of God by being an image of the world. We are the result of the history of the earth. Human beings cannot exist away from the rest of creation and its evolution. We are central in as much as we open to God's plan of creation. The simple reason is that creation preceded us and it is God's. We have to be true to our own created stage and real to the rest of creation. He or she must recreate creation permanently in the sense of God who creates.

As the initiator of a cosmic covenant, God has created a moral order of universal interdependence and biotic kinship entails human obligations. Human beings' relation to the created world is not arbitrary but covenantal. Then, a question can arise, what does it mean to be covenantal? Every beings have its value far beyond its utility to human beings. God loves the world with all its wholeness. Basing on God's commandment Noah is preoccupied with the collection of all sorts of species in the ark, which was a symbol of the earth, where all beings found its abode safely. This aspect of a unity and interrelation of all creation has a substantial emphasis in Bible.

The covenantal aspect again reiterates the above said aspect of stewardship in its multidimensional relationships. First of all it involves a relationship of stewarding the animal world. According to this view animals are second to human beings in God's creation. Both human beings and animals are created from the same source, soil. The relationship of human beings is generally closer and more intense to human beings than to animals. But it is not the closeness of relationship but the content of interests and how pressing and necessary they are

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for life. Moreover, from the philosophical tradition also human being is always characterised as a rational animal. This proves that man has something common with the animal world. Perceiving this relation the Bible especially the Old Testament always considered animals as the best companion of human beings (In Hindu tradition also we see that the Lord Krishna plays with the animals) and it always assessed the richness of a person according to the number of animals one holds.

In addition to the criteria to determine whether a person is blessed is always in terms of the prosperity in his animal holdings. It can be ascertained that animals are of value both in the eyes of God and in terms of human existence. As moral agents we have a duty to behave in such a way that the effect of our actions must promote and procure good, and as far as possible, reduce evil. In our treatment to created beings we have to take into consideration of the principle of proportionality, principle of minimum wrong, principle of distributive justice and the principle of restitutive justice. This world need to be stewarded, which in reality is possible only for the human beings who alone are endowed with reason and intellect. Intrinsic and instrumental value of all beings must be respected. But we maintain that not all kinds of beings are equally valuable since their experience differs radically in intensity and complexity. Relying on the Aristotelian teaching that animals have no rights as they have no reasoning power, Aquinas took the basis of reason and argues that an ill treatment of animals can very well lead to cruelty to human beings. We must begin to empathize with all sentient life and panempathetically embrace all forms of life.

In the second section of the second chapter we deal with earth, plants and wildlife on which the human beings have to exercise the stewardship, is fundamental to the teachings of Old Testament as well as New Testament. When we speak of the creation it is not only the organic beings that we refer to but also to the very place in which everything lives. The true relation to earth is to consider as the mother earth or the source of all life. Moreover, by a utilitarian approach to the green world, by artificially animating the capability to increase production, the very plant itself is reduced in its capability

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to live in its own way. As a consequence of all this, many of the species both of animals and plants are in the brim of extinction. We should know that endangered species represent an irreplaceable genetic heritage that is of great scientific and ecological importance. All these become more important when seen against the background of land treated in the Bible.

The land alike the animal world was always treated as something to be respected and protected in the Bible. Land is a physical source of fertility and life. In the biblical understanding land determined the wealth of a community and happiness in the eyes of God was determined by the harvest as per the belief of the biblical chosen people. Hence, any arbitrary use of land is beyond the comprehension of biblical theology. God alone has supreme authority over the land and it belongs totally to his will. This calls for the development of a land ethic. The land ethic, based on the understanding that it is created by God, brings the notion nature as the manifestations of divine love. Nature, which, like man, is God's creature, is created with a sensibility, or responsibility to its creator not different from that of man. Nature as a revelatory sphere of God's revelation will be emancipated only when its purity is maintained. This doesn't mean nature is God. A tendency of resacralization of the nature at the cost of human beings dignity can lead to pantheism. Those who want to destroy the dignity of human person will make use of nature as an ideology.

Relying on the above said perception different models of stewardship are emerged in history. The first one is named Celtic. But this goes to the extreme of pantheism and so it cannot be upheld as a Christian view of nature. According to the Benedictine Custodian model, the second, land is to be loved and this love towards the earth is to be showed by taming the earth in order that it may become productive. By taming, protecting and enabling to produce we become the custodian of the earth. Thirdly, in the Hildegard fertility model, the nature is a fertile world. Everything that a creature needs is lying hidden as treasures under the veils of nature. A saint in this thinking is one who goes closer and closer to it that one may be able to perceive that treasure immanent in the nature. Fourthly, there is a Franciscan fraternity model according

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which one cannot cherish a dualistic understanding of nature. It came after the view of Francis of assisi to see every creature as a brother or sister to human being. To him the whole created world is one family and in his famous canticle he hailed the earth as his mother, the sun as his brother, the moon as his sister and even death as a most kind and gentle host who was waiting to receive him. In the evolutionary concept of Teilhard de Chardin, everything is evolving to converge in Christ. Then, the matter once considered as futile and evil can no more be considered so far it also takes part in the evolving journey to Christogenesis. Finally, the universe itself is a sacrament. In the oriental tradition this idea is prevalent according to which the nature itself is an altar where supreme expression of glory is given to God. In this action of celebration the world itself is dedicated to the divine hands as a gift as well as offering.

Selfish dominace in any form is inconsistent with the models that emerged in the course of history. If our perspective is shaped by stories's of God's ownership of and providence toward all creation, of divine limitations, placed upon human uses of natural resources, then our understanding of ourselves in Gods image will include attitudes, dispositions, or bearings of respect, care and preservation toward that which God values. Such a perspective will be theocentric rather than anthropocentric. Therefore, anything that is to be offered to God must be sacred and must be kept as sacred.

In the third chapter, we have seen that the above said factors are well represented in the teachings of the Church. An analysis of the papal pronouncements and encyclicals proves that the popes of this century tried in their own way to address these issues. Following this attitude of the popes, many bishops, conferences and local synods of bishops also tried to respond to the plightful situation of the present environmental situation. All these teachings of the Church wanted to delineate a new way of life in conformity to the natural rhythm and structure. Moreover, it wanted the human person to be responsible for everything that he imparts on the ecology and be ready to restitute if any wrong is done. These teachings underlines the fact that the present day ecological issues are not mere biological concerns but more that it is an ethical concern and so an

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equilibrium in the ecological situation can only be achieved through asceticism and right attitude to the created world. Instead of seeing a war against pollution which pull together all kinds of divergent ideologies and interests in a common crusades, it is better to offer a crusade calling for personal ideological conversions and new life styles and ethical conduct of life. In an age of heightened ecological awareness, an awareness certainly needed today, it is all the more important to be beware of certain dangerous extremes which threaten the dignity of the human person, as well as the tradition of human rights. The sense of dominance makes his dignity but it can be emancipated only in a model of servanthood we find in Christ. Ecological problems becomes problematic when it turns away from Christian principles and morals from its concept of human persons.

We know that there are ecological problems which infringe the very existence of human beings and generally the whole universe. Since the problem is fundamentally moral, the present day ecological crisis can be remedied only by a stewardship model and an ethical conduct of life derived from a sacramental attitude to nature. This constitutes the future prospects of our research.

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