



Laudato Si As The Guideline To Ecological Repentance

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Ecological problems have become the main issue in many aspects. Air pollution still becomes the concern in how to minimize it. Based on the data taken from *databoks* accessed in 6 July 2022, Cameroon is the most polluted country. Air pollution in Cameroon has reached 73 g/m³ in which much higher than what WHO said that the number for clean air is 10 g/m³. Deforestation and forest lost still become problem. Ritchie and Roser, as it is published in *ourworldindata.org*, mentioned over the decade since 2010, the net number of forest lost globally was 4.7 million hectares each year. The UN FAO predicts that 10 million hectares of forest were cut down each year. Among countries, Brazil suffers the most number of deforestation; the deforestation in this country reached 1.7 million hectares per year in 2015. The worse thing is Brazil is also on the list of country with the big number of forest change followed by Tanzania and Indonesia.

The factors that contribute to deforestation and forest lost are the increasing number of human population which leads to many other things such as the needs of food, house, and energy. In the past, people cut trees down to use the log as a fuel. Nowadays people cut down the trees to use the

area for housing and cultivation. When the human population is not as many as today, the needs of other resources such as clothing, material, tool, and so on is not as high as today. In short since the human's need is increasing, the resource needed to fulfil it is also increasing.

The use of resources results in waste. The consumption of fossil fuel results in the increasing rate of carbon monoxide released to the atmosphere. Plastic has been used for a long time in many activities and it becomes one of the major waste; more saddening is plastic waste needs a very long time to decompose. Human produces garbage more than other creatures; almost all human activities such as cooking, eating, even cleaning produce waste. This waste burdens the earth. Based on the data from the world count website, the waste we produce has weighed the earth 75% more than earth's waste absorption ability.

Deforestation, based on The World Count, is the second biggest contributor to global warming. There have been some efforts to slow down the number of deforestation and forest lost; the law on cutting down the forest has been tightened in Indonesia. Republika in 2021 reported that



Indonesia Government has successfully decreased the number of deforestation in Indonesia by 75.03% in 2018-2019. However, the effort to replant the trees are much slower than the number of deforestation.

The awareness to save the forest and earth is increasing indeed. The popularity of the study in renewable energy is the result of the awareness towards earth sustainability. There are 53 renewable energy engineering study programs at 44 universities in Germany. South Korea government has regulated the use of electrical car. All department stores and minimart in Jakarta do not provide plastic bag anymore; the customers are obliged to bring shopping bag. The regulation not to provide plastic straw has been applied in family and fast food restaurant in Indonesia, probably in other countries as well.

All the actions above are some examples of how people have become more aware to make the earth a better place to live. Pope Francis issued a document *Laudato Si* which was published in 18 June 2015 around the world in eight different languages. The official name for this document is Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* of the Holy Father Francis on Care for Our Common Home. From the title of the document, we can see that Pope Francis regards earth as home. Home is defined as a place where we can feel safe and belonged. Surely we want to make a place we called home to be always beautiful and comfortable. In order to have such kind of home, we have to take care of it.

Our home is sick. Human is on the brink of extinction if we don't start taking action to save our home. Many animals and plants have been

extinct because their loss their habitat or they cannot withstand the climate change or human exploit them irresponsibly. It is true that we have taken some actions to heal the earth. Let us see how importance those actions are in related with *Laudato Si* document.

Taken from *Laudato Si* official website, there are seven goals of *Laudato Si*: response to the cry of the earth, response of the cry of the poor, ecological economics, adoption of simple life style, ecological education, ecological spirituality, and community engagement and participatory action. Movements initiated to make the earth a better place to live as well as preserve the beauty of the earth to our descendants indeed contribute to fulfil those seven goals of *Laudato Si*. These movements can be regarded as our ecological repentance after we have sinned to the earth for a long time.

Humanity is called to recognize the need for changes of lifestyle, production and consumption, in order to combat this warning or at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it (*Laudato Si*, 23). From this excerpt from *Laudato Si*, it is clear that Pope Francis asks the whole nation, especially congregation, to have new habit. When we eat at the restaurant, we are used to ask for straw which is made of plastic. Plastic waste has become a problem since it takes a long time or even cannot be decomposed. Now people have gotten used to bring metal or bamboo straw. Many restaurants provide paper or bamboo straw. This new habit is promoted to contribute in minimizing plastic waste.

The regulation about not providing plastic bag in department store is also the new habit. It takes time to build this habit. At first the regulation



is pay some money to get the plastic bag. It seems like this regulation is not effective enough since some people are willing to pay to get the plastic bag. Then, the regulation was revised into not providing plastic bag; if the buyer forgets bringing one, he can purchase reusable shopping bag provided by the store. Now people are getting more aware and accustomed to bring their own shopping bag.

Here, I would echo that courageous challenge: “As never before in history, common destiny beckons us to seek a new beginning ... Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life” (Laudato Si, 207). From this excerpt of *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis invites us to initiate the movement of saving the earth since it has been a long time human being ignores the worsening situation happened to Earth. As it was stated earlier that human is seeking the way to implement renewable energy movement; there are many studies to achieve that. The recent trend in science is finding the best technology to support the success in preserving energy.

Solar panel, energy saving electronic equipment, and electric vehicles are massively used nowadays. The development of that kind of technology is pretty fast since we are in the urgency of seeking new source of energy. I happened to meet an online taxi driver who is working in mining company in Indonesia. He is near his retirement time and his friends invited him to open consultation company in energy since they believe Indonesia’s non-renewable source of energy is still abundant. However he said that actually our reserve

is getting lesser and lesser; it is because our fossil resource has been exploited for a long time. He also mentioned that he didn’t allow his son to take a study about mining and work in mining industry since this industry has a little hope in the future.

From this story, I’m sure it is the right time to develop the technology in renewable energy. As Pope Francis said in the previous excerpt of *Laudato Si* document that we need to seek a new beginning; it is the new beginning in using energy and find new source of energy. The purpose is clear: to have a sustainable life and to preserve this beautiful earth to our generation. It surely needs a lot of effort. Many experiments have been done to make sure that the new source of energy is safe and can reduce the waste and more importantly doesn’t bring even a bigger problem.

Here, I would like to offer Christians a few suggestions for an ecological spirituality grounded in the convictions of our faith, since the teachings of the Gospel have direct consequences for our way of thinking, feeling and living. More than in ideas or concepts as such, I am interested in how such a spirituality can motivate us to a more passionate concern for the protection of our world. A commitment this lofty cannot be sustained by doctrine alone, without a spirituality capable of inspiring us, without an “interior impulse which encourages, motivates, nourishes and gives meaning to our individual and communal activity”. Admittedly Christians have not always appropriated and developed the spiritual treasures bestowed by God upon the Church, where the life of the spirit is not dissociated from the body or from nature or from worldly realities, but lived in and with them,

in communion with all that surrounds us (Laudato Si, 216).

All movements to save the earth such as finding new source of energy, saving the energy, and building new habit in using resources are in line with Pope Francis's calling stated in *Laudato Si*. What do we need to do next? We have found new source of energy; we have studies that new source so it can be produced massively and be used in many more aspects in human life. As mention in previous quotation from *Laudato Si*, all those movements and efforts need conviction and spirituality to continue doing it. What we have achieved is the new beginning and in order to have the encouragement to continue doing we need to

always be passionate in developing what we have done so far.

Hopefully human race can liven the meaning of individual and communal activities in saving the earth. The scientist will always have passion in developing the technology and doing research about energy. We as community will always have willingness to contribute actively; let's continue doing the good habit to preserve energy. By taking action together our earth will always be a beautiful treasure left for the next generation. *Bonum commune* which has the philosophy of reaching goodness for all creatures can drive human race to reach goodness for all creature living on earth.

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