

It Should Not Be That Easy Using Green:
A Mapping of a Green Theo-Ecoethical
Hermeneutical Lens in Conversation with Pope Francis'
Peace Witness, *Evangelii Gaudium*, and *Laudato Si'*

by

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Abstract

Interrelated social and ecological crises increasingly threaten both human survival and the vitality of the Earth community. These crises are primarily anthropogenic, have spiritual and temporal implications, and are therefore of concern to Christian ethics. In light of this confluence, the working premise of this thesis is that magisterial responses to these contemporary crises can be examined and assessed through an ecumenically-informed green theo-ecoethical lens. Specifically, that lens is fashioned in relation to six green principles, *viz.*, ecological wisdom, social justice, participatory democracy, nonviolence, sustainability, and respect for diversity. A green theo-ecoethical lens is then employed to map, colligate, and assess the contributions of Pope Francis' peace witness, his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, and his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, to the fostering of socio-ecological flourishing. In turn, such mappings and assessments reciprocally inform the lens. The dynamic interplay between the green theo-ecoethical lens with its six operative principles and the ecotheological, ecospiritual and ecoethical reflections of Pope Francis bring into sharper

focus integral, socio-ecological flourishing that is a key goal for faithful Christian living in the world.

The green theo-ecoethical lens' nomenclature points to each of its constitutive parts (*viz.*, green, theological, ecological, and ethical dimensions), which are unfolded in relation to a colligational mapping of the six green principles, Pope Francis' peace witness, *Evangelii Gaudium*, and *Laudato Si'* in this thesis. Each of these constitutive parts was selected for its potential to contribute contextual cogency to a hermeneutical lens. Moreover, when acting in combination, the four constitutive parts support a methodological approach that is at once critical and normative, holding that a necessary response to contemporary crises is to turn the human project toward more fully incarnating substantive peace and integral justice. In sum, this thesis constructs an ecumenically-informed green theo-ecoethical hermeneutical lens. That lens is employed to enter into conversation with, colligate, and map the contributions of Pope Francis' social teaching and lived example toward fostering socio-ecological flourishing at this crucial stage in planetary history.

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The latter point is representative of Dr. O'Hara's creative pedagogy. As is echoed in comments from my peers, he teaches in a manner that is innovative, informative and gripping for his students. He maintains high standards of evaluation, yet at the same time, Dr. O'Hara remains popular with his students. This, in my experience, is a rare combination; one from which I and my peers have accrued professionally formative insights. Beyond his exceptional teaching in the classroom, Dr. O'Hara has been a remarkable and dedicated advisor, sticking with me during this project despite illness. I will always be grateful for the support and advice he offered me to get my career going. I can now feed and shelter my family in comfort, while doing what I love and contributing in a small measure to academia and the wider community, in large part due to Dr. O'Hara's influence in my life. I could have scarcely imagined such an outcome when I first came to St. Mikes. In myriad ways, it is true that I cannot thank Dr. O'Hara enough.

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While I was in Toronto, two other educators influenced the development of my views in Christianity and Ecology. The first of these people, Dr. Edmund O'Sullivan, was Dr. Creamer's advisor at OISE, and introduced the former to Berry. As such, in a sense he not only helped to bring me to Toronto but also greatly enriched my experience there with his Transformative Learning class. Dr. O'Sullivan is the only professor I know from which the students requested (and received) an extra class. The second University of Toronto professor who deserves thanks in regards to developing my understanding of religious ecology is Stephen Bede Scharper. He showed me in a grounded way how knowledge is not only factual but also relational. I am grateful he agreed to serve on my committee and examine this thesis.

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Introduction: Green Matters

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Thesis Statement

Interrelated social and ecological crises that threaten human survival and the vitality of the Earth community are primarily anthropogenic. Human responses to these crises, when undertaken with a certain green intentionality, can serve to move moral praxis toward considering socio-ecological flourishing. Human responses to these socio-ecological crises can also be examined, colligated, and mapped through a green theo-ecoethical lens. Specifically, in its initial application and further informing its key concerns, such a lens can be employed to map, colligate, and assess the interrelated contributions to the fostering of socio-ecological flourishing of Pope Francis' peace witness, his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, and his encyclical *Laudato Si'*.

1.1.2 General Introduction

Usher, Bryant, and Johnston note that it is “precisely through the interplay between one’s interpretative framework... and that which one seeks to understand that knowledge is developed.”¹ In *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis adds, “conceptual tools exist to heighten contact with the realities they seek to explain, not to distance us from them.”² It is with such epistemological dynamics in mind that this project constructs a hermeneutical lens. More specifically, this research crafts a green theo-ecoethical lens as its interpretive and mapping

¹ Robin Usher, Ian Bryant and Rennie Johnston, *Adult Education and the Postmodern Challenge: Learning Beyond the Limits* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1997), 184.

² Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium: Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father to the Bishops, Clergy, Consecrated Persons and the Lay Faithfull on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today’s World* (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 24 November 2013), #194, accessed 27 May 2015, http://w2.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium_en.pdf.

tool.³ The lens' nomenclature points to each of its constitutive parts that are developed as this thesis proceeds – i.e., green, theological, ecological and ethical dimensions. Each of these constitutive parts initially was selected primarily for its potential to contribute contextual cogency to a hermeneutical lens.⁴ Yet, particularly when acting in combination, the four constitutive parts also add other significant characteristics that serve to give a green theo-ecoethical lens a robust set of abilities that extend beyond the hermeneutical to the synthetic and the possible. In addition, the lens fosters a methodology that is at once critical and normative, holding that a necessary response during the “terminal phase of the Cenozoic era” is to turn the human project toward incarnating substantive visions of socio-ecological flourishing.⁵

The lens is green because it employs as its organizational framework the green principles of ecological wisdom, social justice, participatory democracy, nonviolence, sustainability, and respect for diversity. With intellectual roots treated more fully below, these principles were discerned through a cross-cultural process and affirmed at Global Greens Congresses in Canberra (2001) and Dakar (2012). This thesis further delineates the premise that being actively cognizant of these six principles helps to prevent an all too common slippage in use and misappropriation of the term ‘green.’⁶ More significantly, the principles simultaneously give a fuller meaning to the term, serving to elaborate on some of the nourishing content of ‘green.’

³ ‘Mapping’ is employed in this thesis to denote the representation of an intellectual geography of connections among ideas, concepts, and historical events.

⁴ Cf., Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*: Encyclical Letter of the Holy Father Francis on Care for our Common Home (Vatican City: VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 18 June 2015), #17, accessed 18 June 2015, http://w2.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si_en.pdf.

⁵ The source of the phrase in quotation marks is Thomas Berry, “The University,” chapter in *The Great Work: Our Way Into the Future* (New York, NY: Bell Tower, 1999), 79.

⁶ This point is developed and the significance of the Global Greens Congresses is unfolded in section 2.2.

The lens is theological since Christian ethical traditions, inclusive of but not limited to ecotheological ethical perspectives, are employed in this thesis to ground these green theo-ecoethical principles. In this regard, a concerted effort, which is not exhaustive due to space constraints, is made to show how each of the Global Greens' green principles has also been understood as an important Christian principle (or how they can be seen as nourishing faithful living in our world). Here, the main objective is to engage in the act of harvesting in parallel with what Peter Phan characterizes as the liberationist project of employing other disciplines' "third generalities" in order to provide a basis for naming important contextual realities from a Christian perspective.⁷

As such, the goal in Chapters Two through Seven is relatively simple – i.e., merely to demonstrate that others have been able to see each of the green theo-ecoethical principles as resonating with Christian values and that the articulation of these principles from non-Christian sources offers a wellspring of other thinkers' and activists' third generalities, which can, in turn, act as bridges (or, in Phan's terms, first generalities) to inform Christian moral life. For these epistemological dynamics to achieve their set goal, depth of analysis is less crucial than is a convincing presentation of theologians' third order reflections so as to locate the tenability of the green theo-ecoethical principles within Christian traditions. In short, it is sufficient to show that the green principles listed by the Global Greens have some resonances within the Christian tradition in order for this thesis to achieve its goals; only small spaces of confluence are necessary to grow the dialogue that is integral to a green theo-ecoethical lens.

⁷ Expanding upon Clodovis Boff's reflections in this regard, during his discussion of hermeneutical mediation, Phan includes the possibilities of the "the third generalities," the synthesized and final conclusions, of theologians, social scientists and humanities scholars acting as "first generalities" in the articulation of liberation theologies' "third generalities." Indeed, Phan's views might be termed a 'selective harvesting' of other disciplines third generalities as a key feature of the methods that serve to unite diverse liberation theologies. See, Peter C. Phan, "Method in Liberation Theologies," *Theological Studies* 61, no. 1 (2000): 52-55.

Chapters Eight through Ten thus serve a methodological function of grounding what amounts to an extended literature review in the opening chapters. That grounding takes place in conversation with Pope Francis' lived example and social teaching. In this regard, they help demonstrate the green theo-ecoethical principles' cogency for Christian ethical thought. Adapting Phan's description of liberationist methodology has the added advantage of crafting a framework that may facilitate dialogue about proper Christian roles in responding to ecojustice issues and fostering a vital future. Moreover, the green theo-ecoethical lens' theological character also helps to ensure a certain epistemological humility.⁸ Accordingly, while recognizing as did Bernard Lonergan that the ultimate goal of human inquiry flows from an innate desire to know "the universe in its full concreteness,"⁹ the theological character of the lens also acknowledges that such knowledge is ultimately held only by God. Integrating this insight helps to keep a green theo-ecoethical lens grounded in a critically normative manner,¹⁰ which remains open to revision when intellectual or contextual insights emerge that encourage a reconsideration of its foundational conclusions. This grounded quality is sourced, not only in its ability to effectively consider ecological issues, but perhaps more crucially, in its capacity to hold four sets of normative commitments in creative tension in order to flesh out a mutually-enhancing synthesis geared toward supporting states of socio-ecological flourishing. On this point, a rough, but highly significant, measure of inspiration is

⁸ Cf., Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #12.

⁹ Bernard Lonergan, "Cognitional Structure," chapter in *Collection*, eds. Frederick M. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 211. This essay was previously published in *Spirit as Inquiry: Studies in Honor of Bernard Lonergan* (Chicago, IL: Saint Xavier College, 1964), 230-42.

¹⁰ Booth describes Peace Studies as possessing a quality of "critical normativity." This quality identifies the presence of normative commitments within a critically constructed discourse. Ken Booth, "Critical Explorations," in *Critical Security Studies and World Politics*, ed. Ken Booth (London, UK: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005), 1-20. Critical normativity in this sense is present in Christian ethics, in general, and theo-ecoethical praxis, in particular, both of which inform the methodology for this research. Cf., the quote from Pope Francis that opens section 2.1.

taken from feminist theological hermeneutics as a liberationist method for reading texts and situations.¹¹

The lens is ecoethical in that it draws on the contributions of ecological ethicists working not only within Christianity but also drawing upon other religious, spiritual, and secular traditions. The selected ethicists hold worldviews that locate humans in essential relationships with each other and the natural world. We are now in a period of planetary history when the globe's 2 billion Christians are, out of necessity, involved in interrelated social and ecological crises. Moreover, in part because of the reality of a shared fate with all humanity and the rest of the created world, all persons may be shown to have a responsibility to support visions for a sustainable future. As such, a green theo-ecoethical lens has resonance in our times when visions of socio-ecological flourishing are desperately needed to assist in driving the holistic healing of an Earth community in peril.

Furthermore, in synthesizing its four constitutive parts, this hermeneutical lens is notably religiously and spiritually literate, critically normative, capable of considering matters of contextual pertinence, and teleological with a goal of adding a measure of momentum to both visions and practices supportive of socio-ecological flourishing. These features combine to give the lens a certain epistemological wholeness,¹² which is marked by an organically self-justifying character as both revealing and healing in multiple senses. For instance, in the former regard, it may be characterized as 'colligational' or as offering a 'unitive explanation.' The immediate source of this terminology is Alister McGrath's 2014 Boyle Lecture. Therein, building on the work of William Whewell (who employed the

¹¹ E.g., Sophia Bietenhard, "Freedom, Liberation and Context as Hermeneutical Tasks," in *Feminist Interpretation of the Bible and the Hermeneutics of Liberation*, eds. Silvia Schroer and Sophia Bietenhard (London, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 128-132.

¹² Cf., Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #138 and 141.

former term) and Margaret Morrison (who unfolds the latter), McGrath upholds the value of colligation to provide better refutations of the new atheism. In the process he tellingly explains, “one of the points that emerges from Whewell’s perceptive analysis is that a good theory is able to ‘colligate’ observations that might hitherto have been regarded as disconnected. We might think, for example, of Newton’s theory of gravity as ‘colligating’ observations that had up to that point been seen as unconnected—such as the falling of an apple to the ground, and the orbiting of planets around the sun.”¹³

Moving beyond McGrath’s apologetic application, this thesis will employ colligation to signify a joining together of what otherwise may appear as disparate ideas into a coherent whole that reveals their relationality. In order to activate such dynamics, this thesis constructs an interpretive lens by grounding principles of ecological wisdom, social justice, participatory democracy, nonviolence, sustainability, and respect for diversity within Christian moral thought. These principles are conceived as dialogical and interrelated, with each informing the others in significant ways. It is demonstrated that such a green theo-ecoethical lens provides a contextually cogent hermeneutical perspective. Notably, this cogency can be located within the lens’ feature of providing Christian ethics with a hermeneutical ability to effectively consider inter-related social and ecological crises, while simultaneously offering a vision of other possible worlds characterized by socio-ecological flourishing.

¹³Alister McGrath, “New Atheism–New Apologetics: The Use of Science in Recent Christian Apologetic Writing,” *Boyle Lecture* (22 January 2014), 6-7, accessed 18 April 2016, https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/content.gresham.ac.uk/data/binary/585/22jan14alistermcgrath_newatheism.doc. Beyond this apologetic application and in the green theo-ecoethical case, the aspiration here is to better foster socio-ecological flourishing.

In principle, a green theo-ecoethical lens could be applied to a number of different case studies. Indeed, the constructed lens has the potential to be applied beyond this project.¹⁴ In choosing the interlocking examples of Pope Francis' peace witness and social teaching for its initial mapping applications, a foundational contention is that a green theo-ecoethical lens also helps generate a vital, integral, and dynamic understanding of socio-ecological flourishing. In a large measure, this might be expressed by a teleological goal of contributing to the incarnation of green theo-ecoethical principles in this world. Presumably, it is such an incarnation of ethical principles, inclusive of integrative action, that popes in the contemporary period are seeking to invoke and foster when they exercise their magisterial office and attempt to lead by example. Since the magisterial office principally works on what Heather Eaton calls "the level of insight" (or it might be said, produces a crafted discourse),¹⁵ the lens that this project constructs is well-poised to identify, be informed by, and duly praise Francis' lived example and his major documents of Catholic Social Teaching for their green theo-ecoethical content. Furthermore, it is suitably positioned to suggest instances where Francis' lived and teaching example detracts from that moral project and might be moved in a direction that would better foster socio-ecological flourishing. In sum, this thesis demonstrates that a green theo-ecoethical hermeneutical lens is appropriately and fairly applied to assess Francis' lived example and social teaching in terms of their actual and potential contributions toward fostering socio-ecological flourishing by undertaking that series of applications at this crucial stage in planetary history.

¹⁴ E.g., section 12.3.

¹⁵ Eaton argues that the response to the current global climate crisis needs to work more out of insight and less from a mere data-based perspective. Heather Eaton, "The Spirit of Climate Change," *Responding to Climate Change: Scientific Realities, Spiritual Imperatives*, the 11th Conference of the International Environment Forum Responding to Climate Change: Scientific Realities, Spiritual Imperatives, Ottawa, ON (17 October 2007), accessed 13 June 2013, http://tyne.ca/ief2007/uploads/Heather_Eaton.doc. On the use of insight in a transformative manner cf., Kenneth R. Melchin and Cheryl A. Picard, *Transforming Conflict through Insight* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2008).

1.2 Methodology

This thesis' research and the articulation of its arguments were accomplished through the synthetic integration of three methods of investigation, each of which is described in more detail in subsequent paragraphs. Firstly, the work of this thesis is informed by Thomas Berry's "cosmological-historical approach,"¹⁶ which advances the insight that humanity and the rest of creation are inextricably linked within a continuously evolving, deeply relational, biospiritual reality. From within this worldview emerges an understanding of and a need for a functional ecotheological anthropology, which calls into question the tenability of anthropocentric ethics on both academic and applied levels. Secondly, after establishing an intimate link between socio-ecological flourishing and substantive peace, this thesis also draws on insights from peace research methodologies, notably those of Elise Boulding, related to fostering cultures of peace. Thirdly, the methodology used in this thesis also seeks to be representative of what a Transformative Learning perspective identifies as "grounded hope."¹⁷ In this instance, such grounded hope would view green theo-ecoethical praxis as a means for fostering another possible world characterized by socio-ecological flourishing. Colligating these three methods into an integrated approach, this thesis' methodology emphasizes the importance of context, taking intertwined social and ecological crises as key ethical *loci theologici* that can negatively affect the prospects for socio-ecological flourishing. The resulting method is both deconstructive and constructive as it not only identifies anthropogenic social and ecological pathologies that are detrimental to peace,

¹⁶ John Grim, "Exploring Thomas Berry's Historical Vision," in *The Intellectual Journey of Thomas Berry: Imagining the Earth Community*, ed. Heather Eaton (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014), 24. Section 1.2.1 unfolds Berry's cosmological-historical approach.

¹⁷ See, section 1.2.3.

justice, and the integrity of creation, but it also offers vital alternatives that promote human behaviours that are mutually-enhancing for humanity and the rest of creation.

1.2.1 Area One: Thomas Berry and His Cosmological Historical Approach

Berry's "cosmological-historical approach" offers a critical historical methodology applied within a biospiritual worldview that encompasses the entire (space-time) breadth of the 13.8 billion year universe story.¹⁸ Working from within an eco-ethical cosmology, Berry argues passionately that our time of ecological crisis points to an urgent need to foster a *Pax Gaia*, a peace of the Earth, wherein human interaction with all aspects of the natural world would constitute mutually-enhancing relationships.¹⁹ Berry, a self-styled "geologist,"²⁰ or Earth-thinker, urged that all "human establishments," such as education, religion, law, politics, and economics, be transformed so as to participate in fostering the transition to an "Ecozoic" era.²¹

Within this expanded context, human affairs gain their meaning through intercommunion. When humanity lives out this intercommunion in ways that are mutually enhancing for it and the rest of creation – i.e., in ways that incarnate the ethics of the Ecozoic era – then, value and worth will mark all professions, occupations and activities, precisely to

¹⁸ See, Thomas Berry, "The Catholic Church and the Religions of the World," chapter in *The Christian Future and the Fate of the Earth*, eds. Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009), 24. This essay was originally published in 1985 in the *Riverdale Papers vol. X*, as well as the *Teilhard Perspectives* 18, no. 1 (August 1985): 1-5.

¹⁹ Thomas Berry, "Introduction," chapter in *The Dream of the Earth* (San Francisco, CA: Sierra Club Books, 1988), xiii.

²⁰ For a story on the origin of Berry's self-identification as a geologist, see, Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim, "Introduction," chapter in Berry, *The Christian Future and the Fate of the Earth*, xxvi.

²¹ As unfolded in the next paragraph, the "Ecozoic Era" is Berry's neologism for what he considers both a necessary and dawning ecological age, characterized by mutually enhancing human-Earth relationships. Berry, "The Christian Future and the Fate of Earth," chapter in *The Christian Future and the Fate of the Earth*, 48–49. This essay was originally published as "Religious Responsibility for the Fate of the Earth," *Franciscan Global Perspectives* 2, no.2 (May-June 1988), 1-24, drawing from "Human Responsibility for the Fate of the Earth," *Riverdale Papers XI*, (n.d.) which was dated 1972.

the degree that they augment and contribute to the larger life community. This Ecozoic shift is necessary, in Berry's estimation, because it is only when we take our cues "from the very structure and functioning of the universe [that] we can have confidence in the future that awaits the human venture."²² Berry wrote about the imperative for social justice as early as 1972,²³ and for ecojustice, specifically, as early as 1988.²⁴ In this light, it is important to emphasize that his biospiritual vision, when sourced over the long arc of Berry's thought, features a social justice component.

For Berry, the establishment of mutually-enhancing relationships among all members of the Earth community is not an abstract proposition but a necessary adaptation of the human venture in recognition of the seriousness of the situation before us.²⁵ Accordingly, it may be that a recovery of integral ways of being can point the way for "progress" to be decoupled from its narrow associations with economic growth.²⁶ As a result, rather than putting Earth's diverse life community in peril, humans can find authentically progressive ways to creatively employ their universe-embedded abilities to assist in ensuring that the Earth project not only succeeds, but also flourishes. Such an integrated exercise of a socio-ecological imagination represents the key methodological foundation of this thesis.

²² Berry, "The New Story," chapter in *The Dream of the Earth*, 136-137.

²³ Thomas Berry, "Traditional Religion in the Modern World," chapter in *The Sacred Universe: Earth, Spirituality, and Religion in the Twenty-first Century*, ed. Mary Evelyn Tucker (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2009), 13. This essay was previously published in *Cross Currents* 22 (Spring 1972): 129-138.

²⁴ Berry, "The Christian Future and the Fate of Earth," 40.

²⁵ Berry, "An Ecologically Sensitive Spirituality," chapter in *The Sacred Universe*, 137. This essay was previously published in *Christian Spirituality Bulletin: Journal of the Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality* 5, no. 2 (Fall 1997): 1-6.

²⁶ Cf., Ivone Gebara, "Eco-Feminism: An Ethics of Life," in *Sacred Earth, Sacred Community: Jubilee, Ecology and Aboriginal Peoples*, ed. John Mihevc (Toronto, ON: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiative, 2000), 29-46; Berry, "An Ecologically Sensitive Spirituality," 132.

1.2.2 Area Two: Cultures of Peace

In *Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace*, Mennonite conflict transformation scholar-practitioner, Jean Paul Lederach, argues that relationships are at “the centre and horizon of the human community. ...[The moral imagination] therefore develops a vocation based on an unconditional commitment to build human relationships.”²⁷ In seeking to frame such an ethical vocation, a number of thinkers have been drawn to concepts of cultures of peace. Most significant for this thesis’ consideration of principled nonviolence is the work of Walter Wink.²⁸ Some thinkers who advocate closely connected insights have also invoked the singular ‘culture of peace.’ As an example, the singular variant of the term is central to Gregory Baum’s discussion of “the culture of peace” in his book *Amazing Church*, when he addresses the movement of the magisterial office toward pacifist positions.²⁹

Nonetheless, the methodological choice to use the plural is significant. In close parallel with the Christian theological formulation of Carl Starkloff, who situates inculturation as occurring in a place of the “in-between,” the plural variant of the term serves to emphasize the need for diverse incarnations of cultures of peace in particular cultures.³⁰ Thus, both recasting and augmenting a previous framing developed by the author, this research defines cultures of peace in non-imperialist terms. Namely, in the sense that cultures of peace are trans-cultural, they do not erase but transform individual cultures, and can be incarnated differently in multiple contexts as supporting socio-ecological flourishing.³¹

²⁷ John Paul Lederach, *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), 61.

²⁸ Wink’s thought is unfolded in section 6.1.

²⁹ Gregory Baum, *Amazing Church: A Catholic Theologian Remembers a Half-Century of Change* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2005), 83-100.

³⁰ For Starkloff’s use of the term “in-between,” which is adapted here, see, Carl Starkloff, *A Theology of the In-Between: The Value of Syncretic Process* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2002), 53.

³¹ The initial point about the importance of considering the trans-cultural nature of cultures of peace is made by the author in Christopher Hrynokow, Sean Byrne and Matthew Hendzel, “Ecotheology and

To fill in the content of this definition, the late Quaker historian, peace educator, and ecological activist, Elise Boulding, offers a helpful methodology. She states succinctly that “the main point about a culture of peace is that it deals creatively with difference and conflict.”³² In this light, she emphasizes that the real weight and driving force of history are not great battles or great men. Boulding further argues that despite the way it is too often written, history proper is really about ordinary people who cooperate on a daily basis and find ways to live together in what has overwhelmingly been a peaceful manner. Boulding characterizes such experiences as the “hidden side of history,” which is representative of vital peace, cooperation and sustainable practice. Moreover, writing at the turn of the millennium, Boulding cites examples of alternative ecologically-themed communities as embodiments of cultures of peace in the contemporary context.³³ This ecological grounding means that her understanding of a peace research methodology is particularly suited to this project. Notably, Boulding helps to expand the nourishing content of the cultures of peace concept in a green manner. She emphasizes, in rough parallel with Paul Hawken’s notion of contemporary blessed unrest,³⁴ but with a further substantive historical dimension, a methodology for discerning examples of creative individuals and groups. This insight can be employed to demonstrate a wide base upon which to build up a *telos* geared toward socio-ecological flourishing. This *telos* is a key path for an action-response to Pope Benedict XVI’s

Inculturation: Implications for Theory and Practice in Peace and Conflict Studies,” *Peace and Change: A Journal of Peace Research* 35, no. 2 (April 2010): 295-327.

³² Elise Boulding, “Building a Culture of Peace: Some Priorities,” *National Women’s Studies Association Journal* 13, no. 2 (2001): 56.

³³ Elise Boulding, *Cultures of Peace: The Hidden Side of History* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000).

³⁴ Citing the sheer numbers of groups working in the area, Hawken holds that, although underplayed in the media, the contemporary nonviolent, grassroots movement for social and environmental justice is both novel and the largest the world has ever known. Paul Hawken, “Blessed Unrest,” Bioneers 2006 Conference (October 2006), San Rafael, California, accessed 16 November 2013, <http://www.blessedunrest.com/video.html>. On listing (as Hawken does) as important activity for growing spaces for socio-ecological flourishing, cf. Niamh Moore, “Eco/feminism and Rewriting the Ending of Feminism: From the Chipko Movement to Clayoquot Sound,” *Feminist Theory* 12 (April 2011): 3-21.

observation that “humanity needs a *profound cultural renewal*; it needs to *rediscover those values which can serve as the solid basis* for building a brighter future for all.”³⁵

1.2.3 Area Three: Grounded Hope for a Sustainable, Just, and Peaceful World

Transformative Learning, as based on the work of Edmund O’Sullivan, builds on the insights of people – such as former collaborators Thomas Berry and the Buddhist peace educator, Joanna Macy – to clarify areas in which the educational project can participate in the “great turning” toward a sustainable and just future.³⁶ In doing so, O’Sullivan’s work encourages educators to form critical but normative commitments supportive of social justice, substantive peace, and ecological health. From a transformation learning perspective, the task of an educator is to be an activist and an advocate working for a greener, more peaceful and socially just world.

This normative triadic affirmation of social justice, substantive peace, and ecological health recalls an important point made by the Canadian philosopher and community peace-builder, Mary Jo Leddy. Based on her experience of living in solidarity with refugees in Toronto, Leddy asserts “what a difference to be not only against violence but for peace.”³⁷ In a similar spirit, “not as a fixed definition, but as a way to stimulate dialogue,”³⁸ a

³⁵ Pope Benedict XVI, “Message of his Holiness Pope Benedict XVI for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 1 January 2010: If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 8 December 2009), #5, accessed 7 May 2013, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/peace/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20091208_xliiii-world-day-peace_en.html. Emphasis in the original.

³⁶ E.g., Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone, *Active Hope: How to Face the Mess We’re in Without Going Crazy* (Novato, CA: New World Library, 2012).

³⁷ Mary Jo Leddy, *The Other Face of God: When the Stranger Calls Us Home* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011), 92.

³⁸ Amish Morrell and Mary Ann O’Connor, “Introduction,” in *Expanding the Boundaries of Transformative Learning: Essays on Theory and Praxis*, eds. Edmund O’Sullivan, Amish Morrell and Mary Ann O’Connor (New York, NY: Palgrave, 2002), xvii.

collaborative group of Transformative Learning practitioners offer the following summative characterization of their focal term:

Transformative Learning involves experiencing a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feelings, and actions. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically and irreversibly alters our way of being in the world. Such a shift involves our understanding of ourselves and our self-locations; our relationships with other humans and with the natural world; our understanding of relations of power in interlocking structures of class, race and gender; our body awarenesses, our visions of alternative approaches to living; and our sense of possibilities for social justice and peace and personal joy.³⁹

It is possible to note the influences of Berry and the Brazilian educator and philosopher Paulo Freire in the above definition.⁴⁰ Building on the contributions of these two thinkers, O’Sullivan provides a methodology of Earth conscientization, which is transformational on both the level of consciousness and in terms of tangibly shaping reality in line with the goal of jointly fostering substantive peace, social justice, and ecological health. To highlight its advocacy for socio-ecological flourishing, it is noteworthy when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens that Transformative Learning’s methodology locates humanity within a web of diverse cosmological and social relationships.⁴¹ O’Sullivan’s deep commitment to fostering profound equality is firmly placed within his sense of the larger cosmological context, what he labels “the Big Picture,” sustained by “emancipatory hope.”⁴²

³⁹ Collaborative definition quoted in Morrell and O’Connor, xvii; cf., David W. Orr, *Earth in Mind: On Education, Environment and the Human Prospect*, 10th Anniversary Edition (Washington, DC: First Island Press, 2004), 145.

⁴⁰ As he shared with the author, Edmund O’Sullivan had a collaborative relationship with Berry, even producing the draft of a book together on ecological education and experience, which served as the basis for his Transformative Learning projects. For Freire’s most influential treatment of this subject matter, see, Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York, NY: Continuum Publishing, 1999).

⁴¹ This point is developed as the thesis proceeds. See, for instance, section 3.2.

⁴² Edmund O’Sullivan, “Emancipatory Hope: Transformative Learning and the Strange Attractors,” in *Holistic Learning and Spirituality in Education: Breaking New Ground*, eds. John P. Miller, Selia Karsten, Diana Denton, Deborah Orr and Isabella Colalillo Kates (Albany, NY: University of New York Press, 2005), 71.

Such grounded hope is further delineated by the eco-liberation theologian and Christian ethicist Leonardo Boff.⁴³ Indeed, he brings to the fore several links between ecologically unsustainable outcomes and social oppression. As an example, Boff demonstrates how structural violence and militarism mark not only the natural world, but along with other forces, such as “tyrannosauric” manifestations of globalization, coalesce to oppress marginalized humans.⁴⁴ In such a manner, Boff explicitly connects cries of the Earth and the cries of the poor for justice,⁴⁵ demonstrating how both ecology and the unsustainability of oppression are methodological issues for those seeking a socially just peace. This understanding of deep sustainability is absolutely foundational to both the theoretical elements that inform, and the normative commitments that accompany, a green theo-ecoethical lens.⁴⁶

Even if we are not headed for planetary doom, it seems reasonable to conclude that issues of conflict and destructive violence will continue to plague the Earth community unless current moral conditions shift. Enriching a transformative understanding of grounded hope, Boff argues for the importance of imagining “alternality” for shifting an unjust status quo.⁴⁷ In this light, his vision offers an ethical map to move a greater mass of humanity toward contributing to a more substantively peaceful world by placing hospitality, co-living, respect, tolerance, and communality simultaneously at the centre and on the horizon of the moral community. For Boff, this is at the heart of a possible and necessary world.

⁴³ This hope is particularly remarkable when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, yet common, among ecotheologians in spite of the momentous and potentially despair-inducing challenges they address in their vocational work. Anne Marie Dalton and Henry C. Simmons, *Ecotheology and the Practice of Hope* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2010), xiii.

⁴⁴ Leonardo Boff, *Virtues for Another Possible World*, trans. Alexander Guilherm (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011), 27.

⁴⁵ Leonardo Boff, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, trans. Philip Berryman (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997), 114. Catholic bishops also employ this language see, section 4.1.

⁴⁶ E.g., the discussion of deep sustainability in section 12.1

⁴⁷ Boff, *Virtues for Another Possible World*, 79.

In the face of the ecological crisis, Boff's re-contextualized Franciscan vision, as explored in his *Francis of Assisi: A Model for Human Liberation*, is cogent.⁴⁸ In this sense, one can move beyond Boff's titles to conclude that the virtues he unfolds are not only representative of another possible world but also indicative of the type of liberating moral climate that must prevail if we are to avoid destructive conflict, violence, and ecological ruin in favour of socio-ecological flourishing, creative hope and the celebration of life that may carry the human project through this stressful time in planetary history. As such, through his socio-cosmic democratic approach employing alternality, which closely couples the liberation of oppressed persons with the liberation of an embattled Earth,⁴⁹ Boff helps delineate methodological foundations for the grounded hope. Further, this mode of hope represents substantively peaceful alternatives that are so crucial in our contemporary context when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens.⁵⁰

1.2.4 A Note on Synthesizing the Methodologies

The methodology of this thesis is best described as a colligational synthesis. Principally, it attempts to integrate the methodologies that support Berry's deep cosmological consciousness, Boff's concern for ecojustice, O'Sullivan's transformative focus, and Boulding's poignant rendering of the nature of cultures of peace. Brought together, these methodologies offer a cogent and robust analytical foundation for normative research. The task of such a synthesis is aided by the basic fact that all these thinkers can be characterized

⁴⁸ Leonardo Boff, *Francis of Assisi: A Model for Human Liberation*, trans. John W. Dierckmeier (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2006) and, also, Leonardo Boff, *The Prayer of Saint Francis: A Message of Peace for the World Today*, trans. Philip Berryman (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2001).

⁴⁹ See the discussion of socio-cosmic democracy in section 3.1.

⁵⁰ Substantive peace is employed here to reference a sustainable, positive, long-lasting, and nourishing peace, much more than the mere absence on war. Cf., Chapter Six on this point. A mutually informing connection between substantive peace and a green theo-ecoethical lens is developed in Chapter Nine. On socio-cosmic democracy see, section 5.2.

as taking a good portion of their moral compass from a concern for socio-ecological flourishing. The related symbiotic potential, which is activated by synthesizing their methodologies within the framework of this thesis, is further aided by instances of cross-fertilization among a number of these authors, including Pope Francis.⁵¹ The cumulative effect of activating this symbiotic potential is a vision-driven methodology with the ability to delineate a number of important considerations for fostering an ethical worldview that properly integrates socio-ecological flourishing. In short, it is a green theo-ecoethical methodology with the ability to reveal socio-ecological content in line with a set of critically normative goals.

1.3 Procedure

This thesis is organized into an introduction, nine chapters, and a conclusion. The Introduction offers an initial explanation of the scope and aims of the project. It includes a general discussion that delineates the importance of proper responses to intertwined social and ecological crises that move toward supporting the conditions necessary for a planetary future characterized by socio-ecological flourishing. The Introduction also contains a discussion of the methodology for the study. It presents the thesis statement and provides an initial comment concerning the need for a green theo-ecoethical lens, which is expanded upon via the mapping that takes place throughout the body of the thesis. A general goal throughout this mapping is to unfold the importance of being careful and critical in the use of the term ‘green.’ To accomplish this goal, this thesis draws on both theological and secular insights to show how slippage and misappropriation of the term ‘green’ is problematic in

⁵¹ E.g., Leonardo Boff, “An Unworthy Servant in the Service of Francis,” trans. Francis McDonough, *The Tablet* 269, no. 9106 (27 June 2015): 7, 9.

regards to goals of effectively responding to current social and ecological crises and incarnating a planetary community marked by socio-ecological flourishing. The Introduction concludes by presenting the six green principles developed by the Global Greens movement. This procedure is undertaken to show, that in parallel with the notion that peace ought to be about more than a negation (i.e., the mere absence of war),⁵² ‘green’ ought to encompass a set of commitments that are about more than establishing a society that, for example, does not wantonly chop down old growth forests. This project’s methodological approach to integration is the construction of a green theo-ecoethical lens along the lines traced above.⁵³

Chapter One is entitled “Introducing a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens.” Building on the foundation provided by the Introduction, Chapter One delineates the hermeneutical lens that, in its initial applications, is employed to map and navigate the interrelated areas of Pope Francis’ peace witness, his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, and his first social encyclical,⁵⁴ *Laudato Si’*. The lens further serves to make an integrated Christian ecoethical perspective present even when only one of its constitutive principles is the subject of focussed mapping. Additionally, in Chapter One, the lens is shaded as offering new

⁵² For example, in slight opposition to Johan Galtung’s original framing of positive peace as the absence of structural violence, with negative peace being shaded as the absence of interpersonal violence, Govier suggests that “we might charitably amend the concept so that positive peace amounts to the absence of *both* interpersonal *and* structural violence.” Trudy Govier, “Violence, Nonviolence and Definitions,” *Peace Research: The Canadian Journal of Peace and Conflict Studies* 40, no. 2 (2008): 64.

⁵³ See, section 1.2.

⁵⁴ Although Francis promulgated *Lumen Fidei* (2013), *Laudato Si’* is his first social encyclical in the sense of addressing the relationship of ideas to social structures as a main focus. In *Laudato Si’*, Francis is returning to an earlier tradition of social encyclicals that was somewhat tempered by the more individualist approach of Benedict XVI. Cf., Bernard Laurent, “*Caritas in Veritate* as a Social Encyclical: A Modest Challenge to Economic, Social, and Political Institutions,” *Theological Studies* 71, no. 3 (September 2010): 515-544. Furthermore, it is clear that *Lumen Fidei* is largely the work the Benedict XVI and reflects many of the Pope Emeritus’ theological preferences. Francis himself states in the document, that Benedict “had almost completed a first draft of an encyclical on faith. For this I am deeply grateful to him, and as his brother in Christ I have taken up his fine work and added a few contributions of my own.” Pope Francis, *Lumen Fidei*: Encyclical Letter of the Supreme Pontiff Francis to the Bishops, Priests, Consecrated Persons, and Lay Faithful on Faith, (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 29 June 2013), #7, accessed 26 December 2015, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20130629_enciclica-lumen-fidei.html.

understandings of the Global Greens' green principles as they are transformed in light of dialogue with the other perspectives described above. Indeed, as in any good dialogical process, something new emerged during this research as a result of the methodological approaches' interactive elements; the act of dialogue transformed the various perspectives as they entered into conversation within a framework of symbiotic partnership over the course of the mapping that took place during this project. The resultant colligational synthesis now informs the whole of the present document.

After the Introduction and Chapter One, the thesis moves to a series of chapters wherein the green theo-ecoethical lens introduced and justified in Chapter One is mapped in more detail (though still necessarily at large scale level), through a focus on its constitutive principles of ecological wisdom, social justice, participatory democracy, nonviolence, sustainability, and respect for diversity. A chapter is devoted to each of these principles. Delving into the literature associated with theological ethics, this series of six chapters is focussed upon demonstrating some senses in which each of these green principles could be considered a Christian moral principle, while also noting the tensions and promises associated with that claim. This task is accomplished by providing support for each of the principles in theological writings, magisterial statements and Christian praxis, while also noting areas of resistance from within the faith tradition related to such interpretations. Moreover, these chapters consider how the wider field of Christian Ecological Ethics can inform and be informed by these principles. As a result of this approach, the literature review is an element not confined to a single chapter, but instead is spread throughout this thesis.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ James McMillan posits that there are two main ways in which literature reviews are done, corresponding to quantitative and qualitative studies. A quantitative review is exhaustive (i.e., covering all available literature on a given topic), very specific and seeks to locate the new work in relationship with other relevant research studies. Further, the quantitative literature review is self-contained, ending prior to the

In Chapters Two to Seven, each of the six principles is shown to be in symbiotic relationship with the others. Chapters Eight, Nine, and Ten offer evidence of the applicability and dynamic nature of a green theo-ecoethical hermeneutical lens, even as the lens is enriched in these chapters. As such, these chapters offer a certain grounding of the theory generated in the process of writing this thesis, while the green theo-ecoethical lens continues to be formed when the material from the first chapter enters into conversation with Francis' lived example and social teaching.

Chapter Eight offers an initial application of a green theo-ecoethical hermeneutical lens, employing a mapping of the intersection among the examples of St. Francis and Pope Francis as they relate to substantive peace, with a particular focus on the lived example of the new pontiff. For its part, Chapter Nine employs the green theo-ecoethical lens to map the first major Catholic Social Teaching document authored by Pope Francis during his papacy, the apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013). Chapter Ten continues the conversation by employing it to map interrelated areas of green theo-ecoethical content in Pope Francis' first social encyclical, *Laudato Si'* (2015). Given the significance and authority of social encyclicals for Catholic moral deliberation and thought,⁵⁶ along with the particular subject matter of *Laudato Si'*, Chapter Ten is the most lengthy of all the chapters in this thesis. In light of the mapping facilitated through a green theo-ecoethical lens, the papal office and its

presentation of the authors' discussion of their research. In contrast, the qualitative review will, initially, be relatively brief. This brevity is because the section devoted solely to the literature review plays a foreshadowing role in relation to the undertaken qualitative research. Further, under this second strategy, aspects of the literature review material will emerge at various points in the authors' discussion of the themes relevant to their study. This thesis is theological and argumentative in nature and as such does not fit into an easy classification as either quantitative or qualitative. However, given that arguments and points in theological ethics often unfold better if supporting information is presented at appropriate points, for the most part, this thesis will have a decentralised approach to literature review and thus, as with much theological work, a greater affinity with McMillan's qualitative category. For McMillan's distinction between quantitative and qualitative literature reviews see, James H. McMillan, *Educational Research: Fundamentals for the Consumer*, 4th Edition (Boston, MA: Pearson Higher Education, 2004), 67-70.

⁵⁶ See, Richard R. Gaillardetz, *By What Authority?: A Primer on Scripture, the Magisterium, and the Sense of The Faithful* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003), 79-81.

recent Catholic Social Teaching is shown to be moving toward a fuller understanding of ecological issues. However, the multidimensional nature of the constructed hermeneutical lens means that the specific subject matter of the personal example or document mapped should not be overly influential in the selection criteria. More simply put, a green theo-ecoethical lens will have robust mapping abilities and hermeneutical applicability beyond narrowly defined environmental issues. Indeed the green, theological and ecoethical features of the lens combine to ensure an integral framework for mapping. Such a multidimensional approach to hermeneutics is doubly appropriate given that the papal office and Catholic Social Teaching itself are rarely narrow in their approach to contemporary challenges. As Francis writes, “again and again, the Church has acted as a mediator in finding solutions to problems affecting peace, social harmony, the land, the defence of life, human and civil rights, and so forth.”⁵⁷ Here, the place of ‘the land’ in a list that includes human rights, peace, social harmony, the valuing of life, and civil rights marks sets of interrelated and co-dependent practices and terms.⁵⁸ Furthermore, given the general excitement around Francis,⁵⁹ aspirations that are being tacked upon him, and the subject matter he addresses,⁶⁰ the Pope’s lived example and social teaching represent a timely focus. Specifically, Francis’ peace witness, his apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, and his encyclical, *Laudato Si’*, will form a cogent example of intertwined case studies. Moreover, in parallel with a liberationist hermeneutical circle,⁶¹ material from both Catholic Social Teaching and Pope Francis’ lived

⁵⁷ Francis. *Evangelii Gaudium*, #65.

⁵⁸ On ‘the land’, cf., section 2.4.

⁵⁹ See, section 9.3.

⁶⁰ A graphic illustration of these hopes related to the final case study of this thesis was the release of a popular fictionalized video in the run up to the promulgation of *Laudato Si’*, which characterized Francis as a superhero fighting against greed, poverty and environmental degradation. See, Observatorio do Clima, “Pope Francis: The Encyclical,” (11 June 2015), accessed 14 June 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=76BtP1GInlc>.

⁶¹ Cf., Phan, 51-52.

example will inform the construction of a green theo-ecoethical lens. The multidimensional nature of this approach to hermeneutics further seeks to activate a potential akin to the “doctrinal key” of the Earth Bible Project, which “provides a strategy to establish a link between text and context.”⁶² It follows that this entire thesis can be understood as a dialogical and conversational mapping,⁶³ marked by a normative set of commitments associated with a green theo-ecoethical lens. It is in this light that Chapters Nine to Twelve map Francis’ lived example, his apostolic exhortation, and his first social encyclical from a green theo-ecoethical perspective.

The Conclusion synthesizes some of the insights emerging from this research. The Conclusion is principally oriented toward commenting upon and summarizing the mapping that is this thesis’ most prominent feature. It is through two principal movements that this mapping proceeds – *viz.*, the construction of a green theo-ecoethical hermeneutical lens, and its initial applications and refinement in conversation with Pope Francis’ peace witness, *Evangelii Gaudium*, and *Laudato Si’*. Moreover, the Conclusion identifies areas of work that were not considered in depth in the thesis. It also identifies a selection of possible future applications of a green theo-ecoethical lens.

⁶² Ernst M. Conradie, “The Road towards an Ecological Biblical and Theological Hermeneutics,” *Scriptura* 93 (2006): 307.

⁶³ It is in such dialogical sense that ‘conversation’ features in the title of this thesis.

Chapter One: Introducing a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens⁶⁴

2.1 Introduction

Today, we frequently hear of a “diagnostic overload” which is not always accompanied by improved and actually applicable methods of treatment. Nor would we be well served by a purely sociological analysis which would aim to embrace all of reality by employing an allegedly neutral and clinical method.⁶⁵

-Pope Francis

This chapter expands on the process begun in the Introduction by further unfolding the reasoning behind choosing each of the constitutive parts of the lens. It begins by delineating the importance of intentionality when employing the word ‘green,’ especially with respect to concerns for not only ecological health but also social equity. Next, it describes some further hermeneutical and practical advantages to the theological nature of the lens. A third section then delves into similar advantages that accrue from the lens’ ecoethical nature. The conclusion provides a transition to a series of chapters providing a large scale mapping of select senses in which each of the green principles discerned by the Global Greens movement can also be understood to be a principle with resonance in Christian traditions—in sum, a mapping of how values articulated in *The Global Greens Charter* can be situated as green theo-ecoethical principles.

⁶⁴ Much shorter versions of portions (principally the opening sections) of Chapters One to Seven, developed after the ThD thesis proposal stage and with the present project in mind appeared as Christopher Hrynokow, “Holistic Christian Ecojustice and Peace: Considerations for a Green Political Theology,” in *Towards A Global, Christian Movement for Eco-Justice: Young Voices from North America* (Prepared by World Student Christian Federation), ed. Shantha Ready Alonso (Delhi: Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2015), 24-46.

⁶⁵ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #50.

2.2 The Significance of the Green Character of the Lens

A number of persons concerned with planetary health have used the term ‘greenwashing’ to describe, in rough parallel with the more common use of ‘whitewashing,’ a certain phenomenon of misdirection becoming increasingly evident in consumerist societies. The collaboratively edited activist website, Sourcewatch, defines greenwashing as “the unjustified appropriation of environmental virtue by a company, an industry, a government, a politician or even a non-government organization to create a pro-environmental image, sell a product or a policy, or to try and rehabilitate their standing with the public and decision-makers after being embroiled in controversy.”⁶⁶ Notably, this definition highlights how greenwashing extends beyond corporate marketing to encompass socio-political realities. This phenomenon is so complete that the term ‘green’ has often been misappropriated to serve segmented interests and to justify ecologically destructive products, policies and practices. As a result, unfolding what ‘green’ is meant to signify can be considered important to Christians concerned with ecojustice.

In employing ‘green,’ this chapter seeks to invoke the type of distinctions that can be raised by contrasting environmental and green politics in a certain light. While environmental politics can be constructed in a manner that serves segmented interests, green politics are meant to be more holistic, notably including a social justice component as part of an integral goal of fostering truly sustainable societies. In filling in the deep sustainability-nourishing content of ‘green,’ it is helpful to reference the events in April 2001, when green party members, activists and academics among them, from around the world came together in Canberra, Australia for the first Global Greens Congress. One of the key outcomes of the

⁶⁶ The Center for Media and Democracy, “Greenwashing,” (7 April 2013), accessed 7 June 2013, <http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Greenwashing>.

Canberra conference was the approval of the *Global Greens Charter*, which stipulated that greener politics ought to be based on the principles of ecological wisdom, social justice, participatory democracy, nonviolence, sustainability, and respect for diversity. These principles were selected based on a contextualization of academic research, a desired transformation of the negative impacts on marginalized people and the planet of current political practices, and insights emerging from the work of those committed to such transformation. They draw on the constitutions and charters of green parties from around the world as well as the *Earth Charter*, the *Millennium Declaration* made at Oaxaca in 1999, the *Accord between the Green Parties of the Americas and the Ecologist Parties of Africa*, along with statements and insights growing from the First Planetary Gathering of Greens held in advance of the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. After a two year cross-cultural consultative process (much of which took place via e-mail, lowering the documents carbon footprint), a draft was compiled by Dr. Louise Crossley (1942-2015), a distinguished Australian Antarctic Research scientist who also held a PhD in the History and Philosophy of Science. That draft was then debated and modified until consensus was reached among representatives from green parties all over the world in Canberra in 2001. This consensus is all the more remarkable given that there were over 800 participants from 72 countries, including youth representatives at that Global Greens Congress.⁶⁷

As the author experienced himself while campaigning during the 2008 Canadian general election, undoubtedly owing to their cross-cultural and dialogical origins, the green

⁶⁷ See Global Greens, "Global Greens Congress 2001," (April 2001), accessed 25 April 2013, <https://www.globalgreens.org/canberra2001>. Particularly helpful for sourcing the above was the *Spinifex* newsletters compiled at this link (though these now have to be searched independently due to a website update). A literature search reveals citations of the *Global Greens Charter* in diverse academic fields from the study of politics to health research. E.g., Michael Bentley, "An Ecological Public Health Approach to Understanding the Relationships Between Sustainable Urban Environments, Public Health and Social Equity," *Health Promotion International* 29, no. 3 (2014): 528-537; cf., the discussion of the *Earth Charter* in section 4.1.

principles also provide a valuable communicative framework for unfolding green transformative politics and programming to people with varying levels of knowledge on socio-ecological issues.⁶⁸ The principles were also re-affirmed at the 2012 Global Greens Congress in Dakar, Senegal. Significantly, the *Global Greens Charter*, like many documentary contributions to Christian peace witness,⁶⁹ also states that peace is more than the mere absence of war.⁷⁰

To show how ‘green,’ as conceived in the *Global Greens Charter*, represents a cogent unfolding of a term, consider the question, ‘is it possible to have a sustainable society that is not just?’ We might answer this question in the affirmative. However, a green political perspective based on ecological wisdom, social justice, participatory democracy, nonviolence, sustainability, and respect for diversity would also want to assert that such a society is not desirable. By way of example, one scenario in which it might be possible to have an unjust yet sustainable society would be under a strictly managerial approach to ‘environment’ and people. Such a managerial framing of environmental problems would rest on taking a solely pragmatic approach to the realization of a sustainable society, thereby decoupling ecological health from substantive peace and social justice. Further, such pragmatism could serve the advantage of an elite or powerful group who view the natural world and those humans who are not part of the dominant group as mere objects to be exploited in accord with a segmented interest in the flourishing of the few at the expense of

⁶⁸ This experience of the green principles’ communicative qualities was a prime stimulus for the development of this thesis’ colligation framework. On this point and the above described drafting process cf. the discussion of participation and the Quaker example, in particular, in section 5.1.

⁶⁹ E.g., Pope Paul VI, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World—*Gaudium et Spes*, (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 7 December 1965), #77-97, accessed 25 April 2013, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html. See, section 6.1 for a commentary on these paragraphs.

⁷⁰ Global Greens, “Global Greens Charter,” (2001, 2012), #9, accessed 23 August 2013, <http://www.globalgreens.org/globalcharter-english>.

the many. Such utilitarian elitism informed by an environmental fascism would have the ‘advantage’ of holding power to effectively research and enact truly binding environmental legislation that favours the elite few. These elites would be able to ‘eliminate’ outsiders, thus managing and reducing ecological stressors. In fact, in a point that may be worth developing further elsewhere, it is worrisome that such an outcome may be representative of our current socio-political trajectory. Such a result could only be averted if we bring more concerted attention to the implications of inequity combined with what John Barry labels “actually existing unsustainability.”⁷¹ Thus, this thesis will take the position that it is not a worthy human endeavour to fashion a sustainable society that is not just.

Certainly, this coupling is not a given for all people. However, when we follow a green lead and define ecojustice as the duty to keep social justice and ecological health closely coupled, it becomes impossible to set goals for a green society that are not just in broad social terms. This point is buttressed by a realization of the ultimate primacy of the Earth community for all human action.⁷² In this regard, Thomas Berry’s dictum that “we cannot have well humans on a sick planet” is explicitly situated in terms of social flourishing by the Green principles. Herein, ecological wisdom, social justice, participatory democracy, nonviolence, sustainability, and respect for diversity become important foundational quantifiers for how a balanced green politics ought to be constituted in the contemporary context.⁷³ Further developed, these principles could serve an important function in mapping

⁷¹ John Barry, *The Politics of Actually Existing Unsustainability: Human Flourishing in a Climate-Changed, Carbon-Constrained World* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2012), 17.

⁷² This point is further developed in section 8.1.

⁷³ For the source of the direct quotation see, Thomas Berry, “Legal Conditions for Earth Survival,” chapter in *Evening Thoughts*, 109. This insight is developed in Dennis Patrick O’Hara, *The Implications of Thomas Berry’s Cosmology for an Understanding of Human Health*, PhD Thesis, University of Saint Michael’s College (Ottawa: Thesis Canada, 1998). The landmark book by Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, first widely released in 1962, also helped to solidify the connection between ecosystem vitality and human health, with

the substance of a green Christianity by clarifying its content and marking its ecojustice features, while at the same time serving to address common critiques of ecologically-themed policies and practices (for instance, the often-invoked idea that green ethical thought and moral action places ‘trees above people’ could be addressed with reference to a number of these principles). This point will be further developed in chapters two through eight, where a basis for each of the six principles within Christian faith traditions is mapped.

2.3 The Significance of the Theological Character of the Lens

Although perhaps marginalized in present-day Western academic discourse, theology has a long genealogy and contemporary resonance that ensures spaces for its continuing contextual cogency. Here, it is important to pause and consider why theology is employed within this thesis. The reasons for its inclusion lie beyond the fact that this thesis is being written at an ecumenically-oriented school of theology within the context of a federated Catholic college.⁷⁴ Theology, as noted above, provides a certain epistemological humility.⁷⁵ It naturally has an affinity with those who decry anthropocentrism; for example, when the Abrahamic religions recall the existence of God and subsequently are reminded that humans are not the ultimate measure of all things. Part of theology’s contextual relevance is that it accords with the spiritually-infused worldview of the majority of humanity, not only in the

particular reference to the pathogenic nature of pesticides. See, Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (Boston, MA: Mariner Books, 2002).

⁷⁴ For a history of the University of St. Michael’s College (where this thesis is based) in this regard, see, Laurence K. Shook, *Catholic Post-Secondary Education in English-Speaking Canada: A History* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 129-209.

⁷⁵ See, section 1.1.2.

present, but also in terms of our ancestors who understood that there was a spiritual dimension to both reality and human life.⁷⁶

Significantly for the subject matter of this thesis, the theological nature of this lens, at least for those working from the perspective of the Abrahamic religions, also allows us to understand the ecological world as ‘creation.’ The resultant creation-referent worldview can have positive effects on human-Earth and human-divine relationships. This premise has strong support in Christian traditions. As an example, John Paul II in his landmark World Day for Peace Message, “Peace with God the Creator, Peace with All of Creation,” wrote, “Christians, in particular, realize that their responsibility within creation and their duty toward nature and the Creator are an essential part of their faith.”⁷⁷ The Social Affairs Commission of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops adds that “to enter into ever-deeper relationship with God—this ‘Lover of Life’—entails striving to develop right relations with nature and with other human beings.”⁷⁸ However, despite the bishops’ moral claim, an ecologically unfriendly orientation can all too often be sourced in a certain interpretation of the Abrahamic traditions’ view of creation that has permeated Western thought.⁷⁹ David Kinsley has labelled this interpretation “the mastery hypothesis.”⁸⁰ In short,

⁷⁶ Cf., section 12.1.

⁷⁷ John Paul II, “Message of his Holiness Pope John Paul II for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 1 January 1990: Peace with God the Creator, Peace with All of Creation,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 8 December 1989), #15, accessed 22 June 2013, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/messages/peace/documents/hf_jp-ii_mes_19891208_xxiii-world-day-for-peace_en.html.

⁷⁸ The Social Affairs Commission of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, “You Love all That Exists...All Things are Yours, God, Lover of Life: A Pastoral Letter on the Christian Ecological Imperative” (Ottawa: Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 4 October 2003), #2, accessed 17 April 2016, <http://www.cccb.ca/site/Files/pastoralenvironment.pdf>. On this point, cf., the discussion of *Laudato Si'*, #66 in section 11.2.5.

⁷⁹ A much less developed version of some of the material in the following paragraphs on dominion, Catholic Social Teaching, and Aldo Leopold appeared in Christopher Hrynok, “Responding to the ‘New Story’: Catholic Social Teaching and the Ecological Crisis,” *Perspective: A Semi-Annual Examination and Application of Catholic and Ignatian Thought* 7, no. 2 (March 2005), 4-17.

the mastery hypothesis represents an almost pure anthropocentrism in human-Earth relationships, which is manifested in the idea that because humans are made in “the image and likeness of God,” they are to be considered above all other creatures. In this view, creation and all “its bounty” are for humankind to use as it chooses. In a revealing (though condescending) analogy, Janet Martin Soskice labels such sentiments as “divine hamster cage anthropocentrism.” Within such an ethical framework, “God is the hamster owner and we are the hamsters. God creates the world as a kind of vivarium for human beings. The rest of the created order is our lettuce leaves and clean sawdust, completely at our disposal.”⁸¹

Although ecologically-oriented biblical scholars and Pope Francis offer alternative readings,⁸² those who support the mastery hypothesis may look on the granting of “dominion” over the natural world that occurs in Genesis 1: 28 as a divine ordinance providing justification for subduing and exploiting the Earth.⁸³ While based on what may be characterized a mishearing,⁸⁴ this understanding nonetheless translated into a situation where, for the most part, not only Christians but most Westerners could regrettably feel “quite self-righteous in their quest to tame, civilize and otherwise dominate nature even if that meant destroying large parts of it.”⁸⁵ In theo-ecoethical terms, such a hierarchical image serves to remind us of the limits on freedom and grace that accompany an overly utilitarian approach to nature as spaces for action and relationship are unduly limited. In this light, concepts of the

⁸⁰ David Kinsley, “Christianity as Ecologically Responsible,” in *This Sacred Earth*, ed. Roger S. Gottlieb (New York, NY: Routledge, 1996), 116.

⁸¹ Janet Martin Soskice, “Creation and Relation,” in *Readings in Modern Theology: Britain and America*, ed. Robin Gill (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995), 64.

⁸² E.g., Sarah Ann Sharkey, *Earth, Our Home: Biblical Witness in the Hebrew Scriptures* (Boerne, TX: Sor Juana Pres, 2004), 34-36; cf., Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #67.

⁸³ John Carmody, *Religion and Ecology: Toward a New Christian Theology of Nature* (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1983), 6.

⁸⁴ Cf. Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #75.

⁸⁵ Kinsley, 116.

dominion of humanity over the natural world must be re-examined in light of the impact of our technological cultures on the larger life community.⁸⁶

Such license for dominating nature can be found even in what are commonly viewed as the progressive documents of the Second Vatican Council. For example, *Gaudium et Spes* has the following to say about human-Earth relationships as part of its process of reading “the signs of the times”:

Meanwhile the conviction grows not only that humanity can and should increasingly consolidate its control over creation, but even more, that it devolves on humanity to establish a political, social and economic order which will growingly serve man and help individuals as well as groups to affirm and develop the dignity proper to them.⁸⁷

This statement can be considered progressive in the human social sense. Nonetheless, it concurrently advocates for an anthropocentric orientation governing interactions between human beings and the rest of creation. Indeed, in far too many instances, Catholic Social Teaching locates ecological responsibility in an accountability that lies beyond the created world. In ethical terms, this location of responsibility makes creation a human dominion and a moral testing ground for the next world.⁸⁸ In that light, the main issues surrounding ‘the environment’ become its shared use by humanity with little obvious ethical space for the other members of the Earth community. This take on shared use is evident in *Gaudium et Spes*’ assertion that “God destined the earth and all it contains for all people and nations so that all created things would be shared fairly by all humankind under the guidance of justice tempered by charity.”⁸⁹ Earlier in that document, “God’s plan” for nature “revealed at the beginning of time” is characterized as a call to “subdue the earth [in order to] perfect the

⁸⁶ Zachery Hayes, *A Window unto the Divine: Creation Theology* (Winona, MN: Saint Mary’s Press, 2008), 43.

⁸⁷ Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, #9; cf., section 6.1 of this thesis.

⁸⁸ This point is further developed in section 7.1 of this thesis.

⁸⁹ Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, #68.

work of creation.”⁹⁰ Also, as part of this mission, *Gaudium et Spes* speaks of “a law of the common destination of earthly goods,”⁹¹ so that ‘the environment’ is further commodified and characterized as being for human use.

This process of commodification, inherently linked as it is to the principle of human domination over creation, is further exemplified in John Paul II’s encyclical, *Laborem Exercens*, wherein the former Pope quantifies “external goods” of the natural world as being “from the bounty of God,” meant for human consumption.⁹² This type of anthropocentrism is particularly marked in *Populorum Progressio*, within which a virtual carbon copy of the common critique of Christianity’s role in bringing about the ecological crisis is presented as Catholic Social Teaching. In that document, Pope Paul VI asserts a scriptural basis for the idea of people’s dominion over other created things.

The Bible, from the first page on, teaches us that the whole of creation is for humanity, that it is men and women’s responsibility to develop it by intelligent effort and by means of their labour to perfect it, so to speak, for their use. If the world is made to furnish each individual with the means of livelihood and the instruments for growth and progress, all people have therefore the right to find in the world what is necessary for them.⁹³

Even John Paul II’s aforementioned World Day for Peace Message for 1990, which does contain many seeds of a progressive ecological ethic,⁹⁴ firmly locates the true character of the ecological challenge in “a profound moral crisis of which the destruction of the

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, #57.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, #71.

⁹² Pope John Paul II, “*Laborem Exercens: On Human Work*,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 14 September 1981), #47, accessed 29 May 2015, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091981_laborem-exercens.html.

⁹³ Pope Paul VI, “*Populorum Progressio: On the Development of Peoples*,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 26 March 1967), #22, accessed 17 April 2016, http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_26031967_populorum.html.

⁹⁴ In addition to the citation above in this section, see, section 10.2.

environment is only one troubling aspect.”⁹⁵ Herein, ‘moral’ is cast in anthropocentric terms, where terms like ‘dignity’ and ‘autonomy’ are only applied to *homo sapiens*.⁹⁶ As a result, the crisis can too easily be read as one of human relationships, removed from their connection with all creation. In short, the enlightenment turning to the self and the post-Reformation style of reflection on God,⁹⁷ which together mark so much of contemporary Christian thought, have failed to be properly overcome through a green, *holistic* realisation of the biocentric realities of the web of life. John Haught has summed up the charge against Christianity in this regard.

Hasn’t Christianity been too anthropocentric, too androcentric, too otherworldly and too cavalier about the intrinsic value of nature? Hasn’t theology so overemphasized the need to repair the “fall” of humanity that it has almost completely ignored the original goodness of creation? Hasn’t it heard the words of Genesis about human “dominion” over the earth as an imperative to exploit and deface it?⁹⁸

In so much as ecotheology can respond to this important series of questions, it represents the theological character of the green theo-ecoethical lens presented in this thesis. To make this point clear, the lens does not seek to ignore the anthropocentric nature of much theological reflection. Rather, it makes a normative choice to draw upon certain trends in the field that support socio-ecological flourishing, either actively working toward such a goal or otherwise seeking to effectively respond to social and ecological crises, which, in turn, are understood as significant problems for people of faith. However, the material presented above should be taken as evidence of the tension of employing theology in this regard. This serves to illustrate the importance of the full range of nomenclature of a green theo-

⁹⁵ John Paul II, “Peace with God the Creator, Peace with All of Creation,” #5. On the moral nature of socio-ecological crises, cf., section 10.4.

⁹⁶ John Paul II, “Peace with God the Creator, Peace with All of Creation,” #6-7.

⁹⁷ Elizabeth A. Johnson, “Losing and Finding Creation in the Christian Tradition,” in *Christianity and Ecology*, eds. Dieter T. Hessel and Rosemary Radford Ruether (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 8.

⁹⁸ Haught, “Christian and Ecology,” 270.

ecoethical lens; each of the lens' component parts balances and informs the others.⁹⁹ The selectivity inherent to the normative features of that particular balance recalls the way Thomas Berry employs the work of Aquinas, deliberately truncated in support of responses to ecological crises that honour the biospiritual reality of the natural world.¹⁰⁰ For example, in an interview, Berry skirted around Aquinas' anthropocentrism in a manner that left the medieval thinker looking very green.¹⁰¹

St Thomas Aquinas talked about why there are so many different things in the universe. Do we need all these things? His answer is that because the divine could not image itself forth in any one being, it created the great diversity of things so that what was lacking in one would be supplied by the others and the whole universe together would participate in and manifest the divine more than any single being. So we have to be very clear that the human is not the purpose of the earth or the purpose of the universe. The whole universe together participates in the divine and manifests the divine. The universe is primary; the universe is the ultimate and noblest perfection in things.¹⁰²

In a spirit that recalls Berry's approach to normativity, the green theo-ecoethical lens' critically normative character accords with a particular interest in contemporary, well-argued contributions from both faith-based and secular wellsprings to inform and enrich its commitments.¹⁰³ Many such resources have already been cited above and will continue to be referenced below with other sources. Furthermore, in the present case, it should be

⁹⁹ See, section 1.1.2.

¹⁰⁰ On the underlying passion behind Berry's approach to the normative in a time of ecological crisis, see, Heather Eaton, "Opening Comments at The Universe: A Glorious Celebratory Event Honouring the Life and Work of Thomas Berry 1914-2009," (25 June 2009), Saint Paul University, Ottawa, ON. On the use of Aquinas in theo-ecoethical endeavour cf., Daniel P. Scheid, "St. Thomas Aquinas and the Thomistic Tradition," in *Green Discipleship: Catholic Theological Ethics & the Environment*, ed. Tobias Winwright (Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2011), 129-147.

¹⁰¹ Thomas Aquinas held a very utilitarian view of the purpose of non-human creation as being for human use as evidenced by his response to the question of lawful killing. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, (1274), SS, Q64, accessed 24 June 2015, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/aquinas/summa.pdf>.

¹⁰² Thomas Berry, "Interview by Peter Reason," (2001), accessed 11 June 2015, http://www.peterreason.eu/Papers/Thomas_Berry_interview.pdf; cf., section 3.2.

¹⁰³ See, the discussion of the critically normative nature of this thesis' green theo-ecoethical lens in section 1.1.2.

remembered that Christian theological responses to socio-ecological crises occur on both the reflective and action-based levels, with the two levels often mixed in practice.

As a case that grounds this point, consider the ecotheological context of the United States of America.¹⁰⁴ On the reflective level of theology, American thinkers not already mentioned and working in this area include Rosemary Radford Ruether, Sallie McFague,¹⁰⁵ Matthew Fox and Mark Wallace. Each of these theologians has made significant contributions to the emerging field of Christian ecotheology, which seeks to examine Church teachings and concepts of faithful living in a culture where excess consumption and the economic market is, in a significant sense, worshiped.¹⁰⁶ As Berry poignantly asserts, under these conditions even the educational project is ineffective because the “the religions are too pious, the corporations too plundering and the government too subservient.”¹⁰⁷ As a malaise inducing result, the market does not take into account the true cost of so-called ‘wealth-production’ in terms of the integral functioning of the planet. When gross human product can

¹⁰⁴ Part of the material in the following paragraphs, written during the comprehensive stage of my ThD studies, appeared in an earlier version as Christopher Hrynkow, “Christian Responses to Green,” in *America Goes Green: An Encyclopedia of Eco-Friendly Culture in the United States*, ed. Kim Kennedy White (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2013), 443-445.

¹⁰⁵ Although educated in the U.S. and holding the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Professorship of Theology (Emerita) at Vanderbilt University, since 2000, Sallie McFague has been the Distinguished Theologian in Residence, Vancouver School of Theology. See, Sallie McFague, “CV,” (2009), accessed 26 December 2015, http://vst.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/CV_McFague_Fall_2009.pdf.

¹⁰⁶ By way of comparison, the American Buddhist scholar and activist, David Loy, proposes that despite its associations with secularism, the market is a dominant religion, which defines and shapes reality in our contemporary world. The religion of the market is so successful in this regard that its supporting premises are often held as normative. As such, we assume that natural value is assessed by price and conforming to market principles becomes an acceptable justification for morally questionable activity. Our acquiescence to the precepts of such thinking eventuates the inequality, poverty, ecological destruction and malnutrition that are the actual consequences of the commoditisation of labour, food and land. For Loy, the religion of the market’s “diminished understanding of what the world is and what life can be,” supported by advertising and the quasi-theological “social science” of mainstream economics, can make market economics seem irreformable. See, David T. Loy, “The Religion of the Market,” (1997), accessed 12 June 2015, <http://www.religiousconsultation.org/loy.htm>.

¹⁰⁷ Thomas Berry, “The University and its Response to the Ecological Crisis,” (1 April 1996), accessed 21 March 2008, <http://ecoethics.net/ops/univers.htm>.

grow as gross Earth product shrinks,¹⁰⁸ we have an instance of the “fictional context” of economics.¹⁰⁹ In response to this malaise, part of the ecotheological project also involves a recovery of voices from the past; several contemporary Christian thinkers seek to bring them forward in a new way to speak to people who think of the divine solely in terms of a “sky-God,”¹¹⁰ divorced from a material world, and the Earth as merely a testing ground for the afterlife.¹¹¹ To cite one example that may be taken as an antidote to this view, Daniel Scheid speaks of the “cosmic common good” (existing beyond intra-human moral bounds to embrace the entire created cosmos) when fashioning his Thomistic ecotheological insights.¹¹² Such a worldview provides a theological basis for affirming the intrinsic value of more-than-human ethical actors within the Earth and universe communities in accord with the character of a green theo-ecoethical lens.

Likewise, instead of focussing on the transcendence of God, American ecotheologians offer more grounded alternatives.¹¹³ Wallace emphasizes the immanence of the divine in Creation via the presence of the Holy Spirit in the natural world.¹¹⁴ Fox writes of the Cosmic Christ as facilitating the healing of Mother Earth.¹¹⁵ McFague speaks of the

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Berry, “The American College in the Ecological Age,” chapter in *The Dream of the Earth*, 105.

¹¹⁰ See, Mark I Wallace, *Green Christianity: Five Ways to a Sustainable Future* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010), 5.

¹¹¹ See, John F. Haught, *The Promise of Nature: Ecology and Cosmic Purpose* (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1993), 89.

¹¹² See, Daniel P. Scheid, “Thomas Aquinas, the Cosmic Common Good, and Climate Change,” in *Confronting the Climate Crisis: Catholic Theological Perspectives*, ed. Jame Schaefer (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2011), 125-144; cf., John Hart, *Cosmic Commons: Spirit, Science, & Space* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2013), 223-224.

¹¹³ Cf. Northcott on the contributions of American thinkers to issues at the intersection of the environment and Christian Ethics. See, Michael S. Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

¹¹⁴ See, Mark Wallace, “The Wounded Spirit as the Basis for Hope in an Age of Radical Ecology,” in *Christianity and Ecology*, eds. Dieter T. Hessel and Rosemary Radford Ruether (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 51-72.

¹¹⁵ Matthew Fox, *The Coming of the Cosmic Christ: The Healing of Mother Earth and the Birth of a Global Renaissance* (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 1988), 144-145.

world as the body of God.¹¹⁶ Ruether illustrates how patriarchy and dominant economic models are oppressive for women, the Earth, and ultimately subvert the Gospel message.¹¹⁷ Such a moral point of view responds to the charge, commonly laid by secular environmentalists, that Christianity encourages the domination of nature.¹¹⁸ In its place, green Christian thinkers seek to foster an ethic of participation and respect within the created world. Ecotheologians tend to not only be ecumenical, working across Christian denominations, but also inter-religious in their orientation.¹¹⁹ Further, in line with a particular orientation of a green theo-ecoethical lens,¹²⁰ such thinkers are notably open to the bioregional and spiritual insights from American Indigenous religions and worldviews, especially as those socio-ecological ways of being relate to bringing intentionality to the imperative of forming proper relationships with the natural world in their traditional territories as an extension of being in proper relationship with the divine.¹²¹

Due to its praxis-oriented nature,¹²² a green theo-ecoethical lens is also significantly informed by practical theological action and educational programming geared toward energizing the followers of Jesus to be in such proper relationships with the Earth community. Examples of such worship services working toward this end include the Episcopal Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York City combining the tradition of Anglican Evensong with green spirituality as part of a series of events dealing with

¹¹⁶ See, Sallie McFague, *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1993).

¹¹⁷ See, Rosemary Radford Ruether, "Ecological Theology: Roots in Tradition, Liturgical and Ethical Practice for Today," *Dialog: A Journal of Theology* 42, no. 3 (Fall 2003): 226-234.

¹¹⁸ See, section 10.2.

¹¹⁹ E.g., Whitney A. Bauman, Richard R. Bohannon II, and Kevin J. O'Brien, eds. *Grounding Religion: A Field Guide to the Study of Religion and Ecology* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2011).

¹²⁰ See, the discussion of the importance of Indigenous wisdom traditions for a green theo-ecoethical lens in section 3.2.

¹²¹ For an example of such insights see, George E. Tinker, *American Indian Liberation: A Theology of Sovereignty* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2008), 74-76.

¹²² See, the discussion of praxis in section 5.2.

ecological issues. Additionally, that cathedral hosts well-known winter solstice and St. Francis day celebrations each year.¹²³ ‘Creation care’ has been a popular term for organizing such eco-friendly activities among Christians,¹²⁴ which have a number of advantages from an eco-ethical view over the more hierarchical concept of ‘stewardship.’¹²⁵ Since 1993, the Evangelical Environmental Network has dedicated itself to “the ministry of Creation care.” The Evangelical Environmental Network’s programming includes publishing a magazine, educational seminars, a radio hour and advertising campaigns geared toward biblically-based Christians.¹²⁶ One notable campaign spearheaded by the Evangelical Environmental Network starting in 2002 asked the question, “What would Jesus drive?”¹²⁷ This slogan invoked the same form as the popular reflective question within the evangelical community, ‘What would Jesus do?’

Another prominent Christian umbrella group seeking to respond faithfully to the ecological crisis was The National Council of Churches of Christ Working Group on Eco-Justice (NCCC Eco-justice). Based in Washington, D.C., it had a genealogy of some thirty years and was comprised of representatives of the US national governing bodies of mainline Protestant and Orthodox Churches. NCCC Eco-justice’s purpose was to allow members to coordinate their activities in regard to the protection, healing and restoration of creation. Their central focus was on justice for both people and the non-human members of the Earth community. NCCC Eco-justice staff members coordinated education and action, dealing with

¹²³ The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine Staff, “The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine Staff,” (2015), accessed 18 June 2015, <http://www.stjohndivine.org/>.

¹²⁴ E.g., Calvin B. DeWitt, *Earthwise. A Guide to Hopeful Creation Care* (Grand Rapids, MI: Faith Alive Christian Resources, 2011); cf., Chapter Ten on caring for our common home.

¹²⁵ Cf., section 5.2.

¹²⁶ Evangelical Environmental Network Staff, “Evangelical Environmental Network,” (2015), accessed 18 June 2015, <http://creationcare.org/>.

¹²⁷ Roger S. Gottlieb, *A Greener Faith: Religious Environmentalism and Our Planet’s Future* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2009), 129-130.

issues such as climate change, water quality, biodiversity management and sustainable energy use. They also promoted and provided resources to integrate green sacred ceremonies into Christian spirituality.¹²⁸ In 2013, these works were spun off to another separate and independent organization, Creation Justice Ministries,¹²⁹ supported directly by a broad ecumenical coalition of protestant and orthodox churches. Also based in the US capital region, Creation Justice Ministries' current work includes campaigns on water, climate change, land stewardship, Earth Day Sunday programming, energy use, environmental health and toxins, and a campaign to protect a biodiversity hotspot, Bristol Bay, Alaska.¹³⁰

It is interesting to consider such praxis-oriented green theo-ecoethical examples in light of the 2003 Pastoral letter released by the Social Affairs Commission of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. The letter spoke of three ways for Christians to respond to the ecological crisis, namely, contemplative, ascetic (doing with less) and prophetic responses.¹³¹ As this section has shown, the Canadian Bishops would not have to look very far for international examples of Christians carrying out effective responses on each level. Indeed, in many ways ecologically-minded US Christians, despite living in a culture that is marked by high levels of consumption and accumulation, or indeed possibly partly because of this cultural location, are at the forefront of a number of creative initiatives to help green Christianity.¹³² Perhaps most significantly from a green theo-ecoethical perspective, it is

¹²⁸ The National Council of Churches of Christ Working Group on Eco-Justice Staff, "The National Council of Churches of Christ Eco-Justice Programs," (2013), accessed 8 March 2013, <http://nccecojustice.org/>.

¹²⁹ Noteworthy when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, here, is the choice of 'creation' over 'ecology' in the name. This distinction is discussed above in this section.

¹³⁰ Creation Justice Ministries Staff, "Creation Justice Ministries," (2015), accessed 15 June 2015, <http://www.creationjustice.org/>.

¹³¹ The Social Affairs Commission of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, "You Love all That Exists...All Things are Yours, God lover of Life," #15-17.

¹³² This is by no means to imply that there are not significant examples in other locations around the world. See, for instance, Madipoane Masenya, "An *Ecobosadi* Reading of Psalm 127.3-5," in *The Earth Bible*

noteworthy that most of these initiatives seek to foster a sustainable and just future for all the members of the Earth community; or in the terms of this thesis, they promote socio-ecological flourishing. This illustrates why the practical theological character of the lens is important for a planetary community in peril.

2.4 The Significance of the Ecoethical Character of the Lens

In the opening phrase of their entry on environmental ethics for the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Andrew Brennan and Yeuk-Sze Lo succinctly state, “Environmental ethics is the discipline in philosophy that studies the moral relationship of human beings to, and also the value and moral status of, the environment and its non-human contents.”¹³³ For reasons further articulated below,¹³⁴ a green theo-ecoethical lens prefers a more integral approach to ethics within the Earth and universe communities than is connoted by some of the language present in Brennan and Lo’s definition. For example, the lens developed below would problematize viewing more-than-human members of the Earth community as ‘contents’ of ‘the environment.’ In this regard, ecological language is more appropriate to the purposes of this project; ecological ethics provides a relational outlook that views humans as intimately linked to the natural world. Ecoethics has roots in both spiritual and secular traditions. In employing ecoethical features in its nomenclature, the lens gains access to the varied schools of interpretation and understanding from multiple moral traditions. Of particular note in regard to the ethical problems associated with ecology are the

Series, Volume Four: The Earth Story in Psalms and Prophets, ed. Norman C. Habel (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 109-122.

¹³³ Brennan, Andrew and Yeuk-Sze Lo, “Environmental Ethics,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2015 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed 26 December 2015, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2015/entries/ethics-environmental>.

¹³⁴ See, section 3.1.

ideas of Aldo Leopold concerning the relationships between humans and what he terms “the enlarged community” of the land.¹³⁵ Leopold’s most celebrated effort in this regard dates back to his 1948 book, *A Sand County Almanac*. Popularizing his previous work, this monograph helped to introduce Leopold’s concept of the “land ethic” to Western thought. His basic premise is that the history of ethics can be viewed as “an ecological evolution” by which, ever since Odysseus’ travels, a sequential enlargement of ethical criteria can be witnessed.¹³⁶

In the current context, Leopold argues (in a statement that perhaps rings most true in regards to dominant Western moral traditions) that the ethical sequence has not yet extended to the land. Today, as a result, “land, like Odysseus’ slave-girls, is still property. The land relation is still strictly economic, entailing privileges but no obligations.”¹³⁷ Accordingly, Leopold goes on to assert that the extension of ethics to the land is the next logical step in the human ethical sequence. Such an extension of the ethical sequence would shift our concept of the land from being viewed as something to be owned and controlled. Replacing that contextually inappropriate conception would be a vision of solidarity that situates the land within a larger-life community. He calls this expansion of moral categories both “an evolutionary possibility and an ecological necessity.”¹³⁸ Such an extension of ethical criteria would mean that the land would come to be treated with respect and care. As a result, wanton destruction of members of the ecological community would carry with it not only economic consequences but also moral sanctions.

¹³⁵ Aldo Leopold, “The Land Ethic,” in *Ethics in Practice: An Anthology*, ed. E.H. LaFollete (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1997); Cf., Thomas Berry’s use of Leopold’s thought in “Economics as a Religious Issue,” chapter in *The Dream of the Earth*, 77.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 634.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 635.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

This ethical formulation represents a more integral moral approach to the problem of the ecological crisis. As such, Leopold's project is engaged in a task of enlargement of the moral community "to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land."¹³⁹ This task involves changing social roles so that humankind's part in the ecological world shifts from being "conqueror of the land-community to a plain member and citizen of it. ...[This shift] implies respect for ...fellow-members, and also respect for the community as such."¹⁴⁰

Such a zone of respect is not located within any uniformity of action or behaviour. Rather, it is based upon a high value given to multiplicity in social associations and a new sense of moral worth generated from the certain scientific fact that "the trend of evolution is to elaborate and diversify the biota."¹⁴¹ Human animals are seen as having a special responsibility in relation to this fact, for humanity's "invention of tools has enabled ...[us] to make changes of unprecedented violence, rapidity and scope."¹⁴² These changes, most notably 'innovations' surrounding transportation, have had the further effect of removing many of us from both the land and our relationship with the food we eat.¹⁴³ Furthermore, it seems that such a situation of discontinuity all too frequently supports an unhealthy anthropocentric orientation. Allowing that orientation is problematic because it is also supportive of a moral disconnect between humans and the natural world.

Against such discontinuity stand several articulations of integral ecological ethics that are noteworthy when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens. Perhaps the most well-known of these is the *Earth Charter* that, in turn, has several resonances with this thesis'

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 636.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 637.

hermeneutical lens, including clauses showing the interconnected relationship between humans and the larger life community. Note also that the following selection ends with a spiritual statement:

Humanity is part of a vast evolving universe. Earth, our home, is alive with a unique community of life. The forces of nature make existence a demanding and uncertain adventure, but Earth has provided the conditions essential to life's evolution. The resilience of the community of life and the well-being of humanity depend upon preserving a healthy biosphere with all its ecological systems, a rich variety of plants and animals, fertile soils, pure waters, and clean air. The global environment with its finite resources is a common concern of all peoples. The protection of Earth's vitality, diversity, and beauty is a sacred trust.¹⁴⁴

This statement supports the effort of Leopold's land ethic to counter the ecologically destructive legacy of Western anthropocentrism by referring to the "indivisibility of the earth."¹⁴⁵ As a result of considering the entire life system as one, it is not only creatures and plants of obvious value to humans that are conceived as having 'worth.' In Leopold's system, the category of 'worthy' is extended so that all biological beings, even those held in low esteem by the majority of humans such as rats or cockroaches, are recognized as having a full set of rights in terms of existence.¹⁴⁶ Recalling *The Earth Charter's* content and Leopold's contributions, such an integral worldview is meant to be invoked most specifically in the ecoethical nomenclature of this thesis's hermeneutical lens.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter introduced a green theo-ecoethical lens by unfolding a mapping growing from its nomenclature. That mapping focussed on the lens' green, theological, and ecoethical character. An underlying premise of this chapter is that understanding 'green' as

¹⁴⁴ Earth Charter Commission, *The Earth Charter*, (2000), accessed 1 June 2015, http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/invent/images/uploads/echarter_english.pdf.

¹⁴⁵ Leopold, 641.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

encompassing ecological wisdom, social justice, participatory democracy, nonviolence, sustainability, and respect for diversity is important for Christians seeking to espouse a practical or moral theology that is supportive of ecojustice activism. Before explicitly returning to that point in the Conclusion, this thesis unfolds a selection of senses in which each of these six principles can resonate with Christian life and theological reflection and, also, how each of these principles inform a green theo-ecoethical lens. That process is begun in the next chapter, with a discussion and mapping focussed on ecological wisdom. This approach provides a helpful foundation, in dialogue with theological, peace studies and eco-ethical concepts, for mapping the importance of carrying forward a full understanding of ‘green’ among Christians who are concerned about the social and ecological health of this world. The basic premise underlying this approach is that if each of the six principles can be shown to have resonances in Christian traditions, then, acting together, they provide an excellent basis for not only for mapping (as the lens is principally employed in this thesis) but also for Christian orthopraxis.

Chapter Two: Ecological Wisdom as a Christian Principle and Its Implications for a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens

3.1 Ecological Wisdom and Christianity

This section will examine intersections between ecological wisdom and Christian faith, theological reflection, and practice. To begin, it is necessary to consider the meaning of ‘ecological wisdom’ as a concept. For its part, the *Global Greens Charter* situates ecological wisdom and its implications in the following manner:

We acknowledge that human beings are part of the natural world and we respect the specific values of all forms of life, including non-human species.

We acknowledge the wisdom of the indigenous peoples of the world, as custodians of the land and its resources.

We acknowledge that human society depends on the ecological resources of the planet, and must ensure the integrity of ecosystems and preserve biodiversity and the resilience of life supporting systems.

This requires:

- that we learn to live within the ecological and resource limits of the planet,
- that we protect animal and plant life, and life itself that is sustained by the natural elements: earth, water, air and sun where knowledge is limited,
- that we take the path of caution, in order to secure the continued abundance of the resources of the planet for present and future generations.¹⁴⁷

As with each of the principles outlined in the *Global Greens Charter*, there are a number of ways to understand ecological wisdom as an essential Christian principle, or in language that resonates with *Evangelii Gaudium*, how it and the other green theo-ecoethical

¹⁴⁷ Global Greens, “Global Greens Charter.”

principles can be understood as representing Gospel values.¹⁴⁸ Before addressing this matter directly, the reason for preferring ‘ecological’ over ‘environmental’ framing of wisdom will be considered briefly. The term ‘ecology’ implies relationships within the context of the life community, relationships we need for every breath we take. In contrast, ‘environment’ denotes that which surrounds the human and therefore carries a more limited and anthropocentric connotation.¹⁴⁹ In Christian terms, the notion of ecological relationship takes on a distinctive set of nuances as ecology is understood as integrally part of creation and all creation shares a special relationship with the divine, flowing from God’s roles as creator and sustainer of the natural world.¹⁵⁰ Christians also have a long relationship with wisdom as a concept. A recent example can be sourced in *Darwin, Divinity and the Dance of the Cosmos*. In that monograph, the United Church of Canada minister, Bruce Sanguin, explicitly links ecology and Wisdom.¹⁵¹ He suggests that a necessary greening of Christian faith ought to be grounded in ecological concepts and in the Earth community, writing succinctly, “it’s time for Christianity to get with the cosmological program.”¹⁵² He also strives to foster an eco-spirituality based upon an understanding of humanity’s location within an enchanted universe that is itself in relationship as the “kin-dom” (rather than the kingdom) of God.¹⁵³ To support this relational model for updating Christianity, Sanguin builds a large portion of his case

¹⁴⁸ E.g., Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #69. This document is discussed in detail in Chapter Nine.

¹⁴⁹ Cf., Edmund O’Sullivan and Marilyn Taylor, “Glimpses of an Ecological Consciousness,” in *Learning Toward an Ecological Consciousness*, eds. Edmund O’Sullivan and Marilyn Taylor (New York, NY: Palgrave 2004), 13-16.

¹⁵⁰ See, Acts 17: 24-28; cf., section 2.3.

¹⁵¹ See, Bruce Sanguin, *Darwin, Divinity and the Dance of the Cosmos: An Ecological Christianity* (Kelowna, BC: Copper House, 2007).

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 170-173.

upon the concept of Sophia (Wisdom),¹⁵⁴ which he notes enters Judaism and later, Christianity, through cross-cultural contact, notably with Hellenistic ideas.¹⁵⁵

Here and throughout this thesis, the upper case ‘Wisdom’ is invoked to indicate a mystical and God-driven connection among the divine, knowledge, and a creation understood as a series of intertwined relationships. For his part, Sanguin applies the Wisdom tradition to the contemporary ecological crisis to highlight the foolishness of biocide, which he understands as the “killing” of Earth and its biological systems, adding with reference to biodiversity loss, “if these animals are divine modes of presence, then extinction is not only biocide, the death of life, it is also deicide, the death of the Spirit, a 21st Century crucifixion of planetary proportions.”¹⁵⁶

Moving their analysis of the Wisdom tradition in a similar thematic direction, Rita Nakashima Brock and Rebecca Ann Parker assert that “Life is actually sustained ...by integration, interaction, and exchange in the present—it is ecological, not eschatological.”¹⁵⁷ As part of their grounding of the essential quality of life as ecological, they note that Jesus’ narrative teachings used stories of paradise to present his critique and resistance to the Roman Empire.¹⁵⁸ In accord with a green theo-ecoethical lens’ moral commitments, connecting Wisdom, ecology and liberation, Nakashima Brock and Parker’s exegesis includes a reconsideration of the story of Jesus feeding the multitude (e.g., John 6: 1-14). They argue that Jesus breaks the power that Roman Emperors had previously garnered by distributing bread to the poor with this act, “suggesting that he—not Rome—was the true

¹⁵⁴ See, *Ibid.*, 175, 206, 230, 236.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 201.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 149; cf., Wallace, “The Wounded Spirit as the Basis for Hope in an Age of Radical Ecology,” 60.

¹⁵⁷ Rita Nakashima Brock and Rebecca Ann Parker, *Saving Paradise: How Christianity Traded Love of this World for Crucifixion and Empire* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2008), 388.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 28.

source of life.”¹⁵⁹ For Nakashima Brock and Parker, such actions show that the material and the spiritual were inseparable for Jesus.¹⁶⁰ In the context of the present day, Christians tend to think of those who concern themselves with material things as somehow less important than those who can meditate on inner spiritual truth.¹⁶¹ In contrast, Jesus, like the Hebrew prophets before him, connected abundant life in the created world with spiritual wellbeing.¹⁶² According with Daniel Boyarin’s notion that Wisdom does not abandon Earth,¹⁶³ Nakashima Brock and Parker also conclude that “the Bible understands heaven as infusing the practical and the ordinary rather than being separate from it.”¹⁶⁴ It follows that Christian baptism acted like a “portal,”¹⁶⁵ locating humans within an Earthly paradise marked by the power of Logos/Sophia.¹⁶⁶ Through such Wisdom, Christians could strive toward lives of grace marked by features that are important from a green theo-ecoethical perspective, features like joy, efforts to enact justice, nonviolent peace witness, and love.¹⁶⁷ In the light of this power of such integral transformation supported by grace, consider Nakashima Brock’s and Parker’s translation of John 3: 16-17.

God so generously loved the world [*kosmos*] that he placed his only Son here, so that everyone who has confidence in him may not be lost or be destroyed but may have eternal life. God did not send his Son into the world to put the world on trial, but so that the world might be rescued through him.¹⁶⁸

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 30.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 34.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 33.

¹⁶² It is worth emphasizing that this vision of wellbeing is non-financial. Cf., the discussion of the prosperity gospel in section 11.2.4.

¹⁶³ Boyarin’s reflection on this point can be found in Daniel Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 104.

¹⁶⁴ Nakashima Brock and Parker, 34.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 115.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 37.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 88.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 40.

Reflecting upon similar issues that are significant when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, Margaret Barker employs Wisdom as a way to discern early Christian worldviews on creation and to bring them forward to address contemporary challenges associated with the ecological crisis.¹⁶⁹ According to the terms of Barker's analysis, the early Christians, as part of their rootedness in pre-rabbinical Jewish tradition, viewed the temple in Jerusalem and, in particular the Holy of the Holies, as a microcosm of the proper order of creation.¹⁷⁰ In opposition to the type of Christian fundamentalism that would understand this Earth merely as a testing ground for another (heavenly) existence,¹⁷¹ she makes a convincing case for the true fundamentals of the Biblical worldview as resting on the foundation that God is creator and united with creation in an eternal covenant, a creation covenant resting upon the unity of all things.¹⁷² In this light, Barker discerns a role for the liturgical ritual conducted by the high priest in maintaining the good order of creation, as he acted, in contrast with the Gentile priests, not just for people but giving worship on behalf of the entire creation.¹⁷³ According to these terms of reference, Adam is the original high priest,¹⁷⁴ and followers of Jesus, the new Adam, became inheritors of this role.¹⁷⁵ This line of analysis further demonstrates that early Christians were not concerned with salvation in isolation from creation, but rather viewed redemption as intimately connected to creation and Wisdom.¹⁷⁶ As such, reading the Bible in accord with Barker's interpretation of Wisdom, a number of themes important to the early Christians, from jubilee debt forgiveness to the ethical status of

¹⁶⁹ Margaret Barker, *Creation: A Biblical Vision for the Environment* (London, UK: T & T Clark International, 2010).

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 90; cf. Denis Edwards, *Jesus the Wisdom of God: An Ecological Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1995).

¹⁷¹ Cf., sections 2.3 and 7.1.

¹⁷² See, in particular, Barker, 19, 158, 277.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 206.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 193-196.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 160.

¹⁷⁶ Cf., *ibid.*, 73-74.

outsiders,¹⁷⁷ have implications for the modes of deep sustainable living on this planet that are so crucial from a green theo-ecoethical perspective.

Celia Deane-Drummond, who holds a professorship at the University of Notre Dame in addition to PhDs in theology and plant physiology, bases her recommendations for an ecoethical updating of theological concepts and faithful Christian living upon the Wisdom tradition. An ecoethical practice of Wisdom, she suggests, should permeate all aspects of Christian being in the world, from practical choices in terms of energy use in Church buildings, to choices about the genetic modification of organisms and the patenting of life, to ecoliturgies celebrating the beauty and life-giving wonders of creation.¹⁷⁸ Key to this approach is the virtue of prudence,¹⁷⁹ correlated by Deane-Drummond with practical wisdom.¹⁸⁰ This is an intriguing point for Christian activists to ponder. Prudence, thus correlated and also sustained by ecologically-oriented liturgies and a praxis-based life of service to people and planet, has the potential, from a green theo-ecoethical perspective,¹⁸¹ to rework the precautionary principle in a significant manner.¹⁸² This principle, which is so important to the environmental movement, can then be revitalized within a framework that is at once ecoethical, theoethical, and integral in the sense of encouraging deep, Wisdom-based, contemplation of humanity's essential location within the natural world.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 188-19260.

¹⁷⁸ See, Celia Deane-Drummond, *Eco-Theology* (Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 2008).

¹⁷⁹ The virtue of prudence, as invoked here, also has the advantage of locating morality within in socio-ecological context. Cf., James F. Keenan, "The Theological Virtue of Prudence," in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, ed. Stephen J. Pope (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 259.

¹⁸⁰ Deane-Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 160.

¹⁸¹ On green liturgy, cf., Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #236. See also, the discussion of praxis in section 4.2 of the thesis.

¹⁸² In legal and ethical terms, the "precautionary principle" can be defined as denoting: "a duty to prevent harm, when it is within our power to do so, *even when all the evidence is not in,*" See, Canadian Environmental Law Association Staff, "The Precautionary Principles: A Collection of Articles on this Subject," (2012), accessed 12 August 2013, <http://www.cela.ca/collections/pollution/precautionary-principle>. Emphasis in the original; cf., Deane-Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 7.

Crucially, in Deanne-Drummond's framing, eco-theological praxis in this vein is not representative of an un-contextual, utopian-style formulation.¹⁸³ By way of example, her reflection takes the problems of theodicy seriously.¹⁸⁴ In this regard, her delineation of the concept of "shadow sophia" is particularly informative. In the terms of Deanne-Drummond's analysis, "shadow sophia" is a latent aspect of "creaturely sophia," both of which are to be understood as separate from the similarly difficult to define divine Wisdom (Sophia).¹⁸⁵ Here, Deane-Drummond's analysis exposes the possibility of freedom in the present being expressed in dubious choices supportive of "shadow sophia," a problematic exercise of human abilities for abstract thought, whose actual implications may only become clear in an eschatological future where Sophia herself is made present to humanity.¹⁸⁶ This formulation will give pause for thought to activists seeking to work within orthodox categories of Christian theology. This concept allows Christians a path to name and come to terms with the presence of human-induced evil in the created world. Understanding the reality of evil in this manner can help justice-themed ecotheological reflection to remain suitably grounded and humble in relation to the task of greening Christian thought and practice that is so important from a green theo-ecoethical perspective.¹⁸⁷ Keeping in mind Deanne-Drummond's note of caution, when colligating the material presented in this section, a green theo-ecoethical perspective can assert that ecological wisdom can then be understood in a particular light – *viz.*, as received and nourishing holistic knowledge, passed down from divine revelation and through the sharing of both inter and intra generational Christian experiences about how to

¹⁸³ Cf., section 1.2.3.

¹⁸⁴ Deane-Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 177-178.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 63-67.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 176.

¹⁸⁷ Cf., Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #12; cf., section 2.3.

live faithfully in this world through right relationship with God, neighbour, and the rest of creation.¹⁸⁸

3.2 Ecological Wisdom Informing a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens

There are numerous cross-cultural resources that are important from a green theo-ecoethical perspective, not the least for the way that they can bring Christians to insights about faithful living informed by ecological wisdom. Entire cultures were formed around ecological wisdom and some remain vital to this day. As an example, many groups of Indigenous People on Turtle Island are understood to recognize fully the creative force of nature in their cultural context.¹⁸⁹ Such a recognition is represented in the special status accorded to the “Earth Mother archetype” in Indigenous American cosmologies.¹⁹⁰ By way of example, in the Navajo tradition, an illustration of the special importance given to ecological reality is found in the image of Corn Mother. This image is brought to life in the traditional practice whereby members of the Navajo nation will place an ear of corn beside a new-born child to acknowledge “the role of the mothering principle with powers beyond that of the human mother.”¹⁹¹ This image recalls the special status accorded to the Earth mother by many of the original peoples of Turtle Island. Today, that status is poignantly represented by the explicitly written presence of Pachamama in the Ecuadoran constitution, accompanying a notable development in Earth jurisprudence as that document enshrines legal rights for nature.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁸ On this point, cf., the discussion of *Laudato Si'*, #66 in section 11.2.5.

¹⁸⁹ ‘Turtle Island’ is an Indigenous name for the continent that settlers named North America.

¹⁹⁰ Berry, “The Historical Role of the American Indian,” chapter in *The Dream of the Earth*, 187.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² Cormac Cullinan, *Wild Law: A Manifesto for Earth Justice*, 2nd Edition (Totnes, Devon: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2011), 185.

Another important feature of the influence of integrated worldviews on a green theo-ecoethical perspective on ecological wisdom grows from the premise that Indigenous Peoples have inalienable rights. Of particular significance in this regard are rights to the land as its caretakers and guardians. One of the earliest Catholic pastoral letters addressing ecology, written by the Guatemalan Bishops, makes this point in its foundational paragraph before arguing with conviction for Indigenous Peoples' land rights (note here the invocation of "People of the Corn").

The *cry for land* is undoubtedly the strongest, most dramatic and most desperate call heard in Guatemala. It bursts forth from millions of Guatemalan hearts yearning not only to possess the land, but to be possessed by it. It is a cry from the "People of the Corn" who on the one hand identify with furrows, sowing, and harvest, and who on the other hand find themselves expelled from land by an unjust and punitive system. They are like strangers in the land which belonged to them for thousands of years; they are considered second-class citizens in the nation forged by their extraordinary ancestors.¹⁹³

In line with green theo-ecoethical concerns, this statement is strong concerning the dignity of the human person and social justice. However, it may stray from what members of the Movement for Peace and Sustainability in Mesoamerica name as "Mayan Cosmovision."¹⁹⁴ In short, the bishops may be relying upon a Eurocentric framing of human-Earth relationships. This is understandable given the great inequalities faced under the land tenure systems in Mesoamerica. Nonetheless, it should be emphasized that, for many

¹⁹³ Catholic Bishops of Guatemala, "Cry for Land: Joint Letter of the Guatemalan Bishops' Conference," (1988), #0.1, 11 June 2015, http://faculty.theo.mu.edu/schaefer/ChurchonEcologicalDegradation/documents/CryforLand_000.pdf.

¹⁹⁴ Though they will pragmatically reference sustainable development when explaining their work to Anglophone donors, the author witnessed inculturated rituals employing "Mayan Cosmovision" by members of the movement at multiple locations in rural El Salvador prior to undertaking peace, ecojustice and community building projects. On the former point and for more on the movement, see, Foundation for Sustainability and Peacemaking in Mesoamerica, "Alas," (2015), accessed 11 June 2015, <http://discover-peace.org/>. Taa' Pi't, an important "Guate-Maya" NGO, employs a definition which names Mayan Cosmovision as: "based on the harmonious relationship of all elements of the universe in which to be human is only one more element. The earth is the mother who gives life and maize (corn) is a sacred symbol which the culture revolves around." Taa' Pi't, "Mayan Cosmovision," (2009-2015), accessed 11 June 2015, <http://www.taapit.org/cie/en/about-us/cosmovision.html>.

Indigenous Peoples, land rights do not so much grow out of previous patterns of ownership, or even use,¹⁹⁵ but are in large part based on integral relationships with the land. Such relationships are summed up with a praiseworthy accessibility in the Tatastweyak First Nation's Statement of worldview, which was developed through a wide ranging survey of elders and other community members.

- We see the earth as the Mother that bears all things as her children.
- All things are related.
- We are part of the natural world.
- There is no separation between living and nonliving parts of the natural world.
- Animals and plants are Members of one's family.
- Spiritual, physical and emotional relationships with land and water are the essence of our culture.
- The land is validation of our past.
- Land, culture and spirituality cannot be separated.
- We have a responsibility as caregivers for Mother Earth.
- We have a responsibility to share with others but do not do so out of responsibility, but out of our spiritual connection to the Creator, instilled by the teachings of our ancestors.
- Personal and community history are part of the land.
- All things, including inanimate things, have a spirit.
- All things are at the same time spiritual and physical.
- Our relationships with Mother Earth are based on respect.
- Our spiritual, emotional and physical needs can only be met when we live in harmony with Mother Earth.¹⁹⁶

From a green theo-ecoethical perspective, this list is remarkably complete in terms of voicing an integral worldview flowing from ecological wisdom. As such, it also identifies a number of insights highly relevant to constructing a green theo-ecoethical lens. However, for Thomas Berry, Indigenous People's cultures are not alone in displaying this connection to the ecological community. According to Berry's rendering, all human cultures, including

¹⁹⁵ This is in contrast to Locke's labour-mixing value theory of ownership that has been so influential in Western thought. See, John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, ed. C.B. Macpherson (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1980), 27.

¹⁹⁶ Cree Nation Partnership (Tataskweyak Cree Nation and War Lake First Nation), *Keeyask Environmental Evaluation: A Report on the Environmental Effects of the Proposed Keeyask Project on Tataskweyak Cree Nation and War Lake First Nation* (January 2012), 18, accessed 10 June 2015, <http://keeyask.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/CNP-Keeyask-Environmental-Evaluation-Web-Jan2012.pdf>.

Western European ones, emerged from the Earth community. This emergence connected us to the ecological world and represents a path to connect and reconnect with ecological wisdom. As an example, the ability of Indigenous Peoples' ways of being to adapt and thrive in the face of threats posed by modernist progress-oriented discourses rests on solid integral foundations. For Berry, such foundations are illustrated powerfully in the history of artistic endeavour in the Americas.

The arts of...[Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island]...in these past five centuries indicate their capacity to absorb outside influences and to reshape them in accordance with their own genius. So with the beadwork of...[Indigenous Peoples]. There was beadwork prior to the arrival of the European, but it flourished with a new vigour once modern beads were available. Beads were then able to express visions that they had never expressed previously. They became a resplendent display of the interior grandeur of the human.¹⁹⁷

This quotation illustrates that the form of recovery that Berry advocates is not representative of a fundamentalist appropriation of the past. Rather, Berry's project becomes oriented toward a better tomorrow—a future set on achieving a lost balance among members of the Earth community in a fresh, vital and historically appropriate manner.¹⁹⁸ In this light, Berry's writings can be viewed as an attempt to establish a more authentic, motivational narrative as a challenge to the long held scientific-industrial myth that has been found to be dysfunctional in relation to both the human and the larger life communities.

The Cree minister, former moderator of the United Church of Canada, and Emeritus University of Winnipeg theology instructor, Stan McKay, grounds the importance of this essential recovery in a poignant manner with his recounting of an 'Aboriginal perspective' on the integrity of creation. In the process, he shares some insights concerning ecological wisdom that are highly valuable in constructing a green theo-ecoethical lens. According

¹⁹⁷ Berry, "The Historical Role of the American Indian," 188.

¹⁹⁸ See, section 1.2.1.

McKay's rendering, an Aboriginal spiritual worldview is worth pondering due to its nature as at once profound and simple, resting upon an affirmation of the interconnectedness of all life.¹⁹⁹ In this worldview, creation is irreducibly relational. The image of gift is employed, not in terms of creation being for the use of people,²⁰⁰ but rather in terms of life as a gift. McKay ties these elements together succinctly. "If creatures and creation are interdependent, it follows that it is not faithful to speak of ownership. Life is understood as a gift, and it makes no sense to claim ownership of any part of the creation."²⁰¹ Regrettably, the churches participated in the colonization of Aboriginal peoples in what became Canada,²⁰² in the process of taking "'possession' of a 'vacant, pagan land.'"²⁰³ The resultant destructive colonial system failed to communicate with both aboriginal people and the land, resulting in pollution and depletion of resources to the point that it harmed life, including the lives of the colonizers. From within an Aboriginal worldview, this activity is simply "insane, since we live in an environment that gives life but is sensitive to abuse."²⁰⁴ Aboriginal perspectives on the integrity of creation, growing out of the realities of marginalized peoples, thus "continue to challenge faceless corporations to be faithful to their humanity."²⁰⁵ This challenge represents a crucial moral project at the current time because "our earth mother is in a time of

¹⁹⁹ Stan McKay, "An Aboriginal Perspective on the Integrity of Creation," in *Liberating Faith: Religious Voices for Justice, Peace and Ecological Wisdom*, ed. Roger S. Gottlieb (Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield, 2003), 519-520; cf., Timothy Leduc, *Climate, Culture, Change: Inuit and Western Dialogues with a Warming North* (Ottawa, ON: University of Ottawa Press, 2010).

²⁰⁰ For an interesting take on how the reciprocity inherent in gift giving can mean that understanding creation as a gift actually lands humans into the territory of reciprocal relationship with the rest of the created world. See, Mark Manolopoulos, *If Creation is a Gift* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2009).

²⁰¹ McKay, 520.

²⁰² Cf., The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, "Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada," (2 June 2015), accessed 3 June 2015, http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Exec_Summary_2015_05_31_web_o.pdf.

²⁰³ McKay, 520.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 521.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

pain and she sustains many thoughtless children.”²⁰⁶ Accordingly, within an Aboriginal spiritual worldview, medicine for this pain is found in a deep respect, which grows from the integrity of creation, that “allows for diversity within the unity of the creator.”²⁰⁷ This fosters a communitarian and inter-generational set of ethics that are deeply integral, extending across communities, through dialogue, to the entire life community and future generations.²⁰⁸

Haudenosaunee wisdom also holds a similar tenet, which asserts that decisions should be made taking into account the contributions of the seven generations that precede the decision makers and, in addition, the lives of the seven generations that will follow and be affected by the choice.²⁰⁹ Thus, this methodology for decision-making grounds political processes with a multi-directional timescale more conducive to fostering socio-ecological flourishing than much contemporary Western political practice. Additionally, with its foundations in an integral worldview, Gitxsan law explicitly connects concern for future generations and creation care through the persons of the *Sidigim haanak’a*, who are charged with ensuring that “the environment is conducive for the animals to continue their lives.”²¹⁰ Taking on such roles serves to incarnate ecological wisdom in a green manner that is inherently spiritual and ecoethical.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 521-522.

²⁰⁹ A deeper discussion of Haudenosaunee worldview can be found in Paul Wallace, *White Roots of Peace: The Iroquois Book of Life* (Santa Fe, NM: Clear Light Books, 1994). See, also Oren Lyons, “The Politics of Human Beings against Mother Earth: The Nature of Global Warming,” Sol Kanee Lecture on Peace and Justice, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB (8 November 2007), accessed 27 June 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HiA4_e4YwZE.

²¹⁰ Patricia Dawn Mills, *For Future Generations: Reconciling Gitxsan and Canadian Law* (Saskatoon, SK: Purich Publishing Limited, 2008), 119.

3.3 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated several resonances with ecological wisdom in Christian traditions of faith, theology, and practice. It has also shown how integral views on ecological wisdom inform a green theo-ecological lens. The relationship between the lens and integral perspectives on ecological wisdom is a dialogical one, which has the potential to be mutually-enhancing. When viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, integral worldviews and the moral project of their essential recovery are particularly important for members of all cultures. This statement rings true because in the current socio-political context, anthropogenic social and ecological crises may be explained by the fact that too many people have lost their connections within the Earth community. This loss of connection negatively affects access to ecological wisdom.

Yet, a past state of deeper connectivity is present in our language. For example, we have tended to equate the word ‘Adam’ with the first man in Christian thought. However, according to an important aspect of the Jewish tradition, that name can be more closely connected to *Adamah*, which signifies Earth consciousness.²¹¹ Even the word ‘human’ has its etymological roots in ‘humus’ and is properly understood as connoting someone who is “of the earth.”²¹² As an ethical methodology for healing the disconnect that allows us to forget such relationships, Berry suggests that when our cultural coding and our genetic coding are working in harmony, human-induced violence against the natural world and other forms of destructive violence are kept in check. Today, however, especially in the West, our ways of being are causing harm within the Earth community. This has turned into a situation where

²¹¹ Michael Trainor, “A Footstool or a Throne? Luke’s Attitude to Earth (*ge*) in Acts 7,” in Norman C. Hable and Vicky Balabanski, eds. *The Earth Story in the New Testament* (London, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 132.

²¹² Ernest Klein, *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the English Language* (New York, NY: Elsevier Publishing Company, 1966), 749.

human-induced ecological violence, fuelled by a “supreme pathology,” translates into a malaise wherein “we are indeed closing down the major life systems of the planet.”²¹³ Hence, rather than somehow thinking we can extract ourselves from the Earth and universe communities from which we emerged and continue to be sustained, a contemporary imperative emerges to pursue ecological wisdom. It is in this integral sense that ecological wisdom, working in combination with the other principles, contributes meaning to the ‘green’ nomenclature of this thesis’ hermeneutical lens.

²¹³ Berry, “The Dream of the Earth: Our Way into the Future,” 206.

Chapter Three: Social Justice as a Christian Principle and Its Implications for a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens

4.1 Social Justice and Christianity

As argued in Chapter One, in order to properly support ecojustice, it is crucially important that green politics holistically integrates social justice into its program for action. This and other relevant moral sentiments are expounded upon by the Global Greens who include social justice in their global charter.

We assert that the key to social justice is the equitable distribution of social and natural resources, both locally and globally, to meet basic human needs unconditionally, and to ensure that all citizens have full opportunities for personal and social development.

We declare that there is no social justice without environmental justice, and no environmental justice without social justice.²¹⁴

This requires:

- a just organization of the world and a stable world economy which will close the widening gap between rich and poor, both within and between countries; balance the flow of resources from South to North; and lift the burden of debt on poor countries which prevents their development
- the eradication of poverty, as an ethical, social, economic, and ecological imperative
- the elimination of illiteracy
- a new vision of citizenship built on equal rights for all individuals regardless of gender, race, age, religion, class, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, disability, wealth or health.²¹⁵

In accord with the intra-human dimensions of these sentiments, many Christian thinkers over the past two millennia have affirmed the importance of a just society that is

²¹⁴ From a green theo-ecoethical perspective, the language from the *Global Greens Charter* here can be read as a relational claiming of ‘social justice.’ Cf. section 3.1 on this thesis’ hermeneutical lens’ preference for ‘ecological’ over ‘environmental framings.’

²¹⁵ Global Greens, “Global Greens Charter.”

supportive of the common good.²¹⁶ Previously, some Christian faith communities, such as the Salvation Army, the Mennonites and the Religious Society of Friends in particular, developed strong social justice and peacebuilding dimensions in their foundational theologies.²¹⁷ The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, however, were also remarkable when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens for the way mainstream Protestantism and Catholicism moved toward embracing social justice as a key dynamic in their teachings.²¹⁸ As a result, in the contemporary period, religious actors like Pope Francis can easily conclude that there is an “inescapable social dimension of the Gospel message and...encourage all Christians to demonstrate it by their words, attitudes and deeds.”²¹⁹ Here, Francis is echoing a point made in 1971 by the Synod of Bishops who affirmed, “Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, or, in other words, of the Church’s mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation.”²²⁰ This section will provide a large scale mapping of that confluence, exploring social justice and its relationship with Christianity. The next section will specifically name some of the implications of that mapping and social justice for a green theo-ecoethical lens. This mapping will take place firstly on an intra-human level and then explore the implications for a green theo-ecoethical perspective of upholding the need for social justice-infused transformation within the larger Earth community.²²¹

²¹⁶ E.g., David Hollenbach, *The Common Good and Christian Ethics* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 207-210.

²¹⁷ In many cases, this coupling now includes ecological concerns. E.g., Quaker Earthcare Witness Staff, “About Us,” (22 June 2015), accessed 25 June 2015, <http://www.quakerearthcare.org/article/about-us>.

²¹⁸ On this transition in the Catholic case, cf., Baum, *Amazing Church*, 36.

²¹⁹ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #258.

²²⁰ Synod of Bishops, *Justice in the World*, (1971), #6, accessed 20 April 2016, <http://www.shc.edu/theolibrary/resources/synodjw.htm>.

²²¹ Cf., section 1.2.3.

According to Walter Houston's exegesis, this imperative for social justice has biblical roots. Houston uses political theorists who focus on social justice, principally John Rawls and Amartya Sen, as conversation partners in order to write about three modes of justice that can be discerned in the biblical texts. He argues that these three modes hold special significance for not only Christians (and in the case of Hebrew texts, Jews), but also for people of other faiths and even concerned secular readers.²²² The first of these modes is 'justice as cosmic order' that centres on Houston's analysis of the created order, depicted in the Bible, and invoked by the prophets.²²³ Often, here, social justice is associated with the proper order of the natural world. It follows that those who exploit the poor will face the wrath of God for going against the created order (e.g., Prov. 14: 31). The second mode of biblical justice identified by Houston is 'justice as faithfulness.' He develops the theme of faithfulness by connecting it to patronage and with reference to God's role in the Exodus narrative (e.g., Exod. 3: 15).²²⁴ For Houston, this idea of patronage encourages the proper and just treatment of those for whom one has a special responsibility according to the codes of law in the book of Leviticus (e.g., Lev 25: 36).²²⁵ These codes, Houston argues, address actual historical inequality. As an example, he cites the codes' provisions addressing the proper treatment of slaves held by the Israelites and the realities of poverty that are frequently assumed to be ever-present features of society (e.g., Deut. 15: 4).²²⁶

Perhaps most importantly for a green theo-ecoethical perspective, a third mode delineated by Houston is 'justice as a community of equals.' Here, Houston notably

²²² See, Walter J. Houston, *Justice: The Biblical Challenge*, in *Biblical Challenges in the Contemporary World Series*, (London, UK: Equinox, 2010).

²²³ *Ibid.*, 45.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 65.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 69.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 69-70.

references the economic and social equality among the community of Israel as evidenced in jubilee and sabbatical provisions in Leviticus (e.g., Lev. 25: 1-22).²²⁷ He further makes use of the Pauline images of equality that transcend blood relationships and prohibit people in power positions from benefiting due to the suffering of others (e.g., Gal. 3: 28).²²⁸ In this regard, he argues that brotherhood and sisterhood in Christ along the former lines “must surely apply to everybody.”²²⁹

A major problem, of course, is that such equality-based sisterhood and brotherhood is not always evident in this world, even in Christian communities. Houston identifies two notable efforts to help transform the world into a more just direction that came to prominence in the Twentieth Century and have a continuing relevance today. They are the social gospel movement and liberation theology. Building on biblical insight transferred into the area of practical ethics, Houston notes that activists, inspired by the social gospel movement and liberation theologies, seek to work for a more just world.²³⁰ As a result of their good works, they can be understood as countering trends toward segmentation in both social and personal ethics. In this sense, these activists are living out their conviction that ethics can unite religion and life.²³¹ It follows that they provide an antidote to the type of dualism that social gospel theologian Walter Rauschenbusch identifies with an individualistic theology where personal pietism takes the place of Christian social duty.²³²

In a move that is informative for a green theo-ecoethical methodology, Christian activists seeking to overcome this problematic dualism can build upon the insight that

²²⁷ Ibid., 80-81.

²²⁸ Ibid., 132.

²²⁹ Ibid., 91.

²³⁰ This is not to say that the social gospel or liberation theologians are not Christian activists. Indeed, in a great number of cases they are politically active (see, below).

²³¹ Walter Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (New York, NY: Abingdon Press, 1917), 14.

²³² Ibid., 2.

solidarity with those on the margins is fundamental to religion.²³³ They can then discern alternative models of service in the Christian tradition, ones that are defensible by appeals to fundamental concepts of peace and justice.²³⁴ It follows that such Christian activists, by giving public expression to the struggle for a better world, underline the importance of what Rauschenbusch calls the “voice of prophecy,” in that they identify and challenge problems associated with oppressive ways of organizing society.²³⁵

In broad methodological terms, many Christian activists who incarnate this voice of prophecy can draw inspiration from liberation theology’s discussion of the relationship between theory and practice.²³⁶ Thus, in a move that informs a green theo-ecoethical approach to social change, a spirituality-informed rereading of the notion of praxis becomes key to the liberation project as hermeneutics inform practice in significant ways. This approach can sometimes cause controversy within faith communities; for example, when liberation praxis seeks to address the root causes of oppression and suffering as captured poignantly in Dom Hélder Câmara’s telling quip. “When I give food to the poor they call me a saint. When I ask why the poor are hungry they call me a communist.”²³⁷ By looking to the roots of suffering in this manner, Câmara is asserting that social and political injustices should be issues of concern for Christians, their churches, and theology.²³⁸

²³³ Ibid., 94.

²³⁴ Cf., *ibid.*, 23.

²³⁵ Ibid., 279.

²³⁶ E.g., Thomas Luis Schubeck, *Liberation Ethics: Sources, Models, and Norms* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1993), 23.

²³⁷ Hélder Câmara, quoted in Alastair McIntosh, “Thought for the Day—BBC Radio Scotland,” (Glasgow: BBC Scotland, 1 August 2006), accessed 22 August 2013, <http://www.alastairmcintosh.com/articles/2005-thought-for-day.htm#Spiral%201%20Aug%2006>. This quote is also found on inspirational posters. E.g., Marsha Quinn, “We Follow Pics,” accessed 26 June 2015, <http://wefollowpics.com/when-i-give-food-to-the-poor-they-call-me-a-saint-when-i-ask-why-the-poor-have-no-food-they-call-me-a-communist-dom-holder-camara/>.

²³⁸ See, section 6.1 for more on how Câmara can inform a green theo-ecoethical lens.

The resultant praxis-based methodology, as it informs a green theo-ecoethical lens, takes the form of a Marxist analysis, both structural (dealing with unjust socio-political forms) and humanist (applying concepts such as alienation). Liberationists employ this lens in an almost utilitarian manner to shed light on the plight of those living in poverty in this world. Slightly recasting Karl Marx's view of history and conflict, this methodology is premised on the tenet that all hitherto and currently existing human societies are founded upon injustice. Given this presupposition, as Latin American Liberation theologian Segundo Galilea notes, analysis takes on a special form of authenticity when it is undertaken by those who are engaged in the struggle for liberation. Furthermore, according to Galilea, it is precisely because of this focus on liberation that Christian praxis becomes a crucial theological locus.²³⁹ For a green theo-ecoethical lens, within a methodology of liberation, the task of legitimate Christian theological praxis is to help determine the forces that are acting in the service of oppression and to invoke the agency of the oppressed, seeking to transform the oppressor and the oppressive structure in order to work to erase the sin of human-induced alienation from this world. From this methodological perspective, the very nature of the hermeneutical circles among theory, context, and practice means that they are engaged most effectively by an embedded theorist—i.e., the agent who lets contemplation, abstraction, and the theorizing of others inform his or her work and rarely loses sight of both context and those in need of liberation. Thus, from a green theo-ecoethical perspective, a 'placed' theorist who 'dares' to allow herself or himself to enter into intimate relationships with local,

²³⁹ Segundo Galilea, *Liberation Theology and the Vatican Documents* (Quezon City, PH: Claretian Publications, 1984), 32.

national, global, and even the universal context is well positioned to work for integral liberation.²⁴⁰

In terms of support for such a methodological approach in the Roman Catholic case, the Second Vatican Council was a strong impetus for change, which in turn led some Catholics to embrace liberationist methodologies. According to Bevans' analysis, a significant consequence of the post-Vatican II period was a shift of the *locus theologicus* to include not only Scripture and Tradition but also context.²⁴¹ Thus, growing spaces for interdisciplinary-oriented mapping tools like this thesis' green theo-ecoethical lens, the data of disciplines like history, sociology, economics and anthropology became a valid foundation for theological inquiry within Catholic traditions. In sum, this contextually-oriented interdisciplinarity is key to a green theo-ecoethical lens as it casts a wide net to respond to contemporary challenges and to foster socio-ecological flourishing.²⁴²

Despite the fact that Gustavo Gutierrez's landmark book, *A Theology of Liberation*, was very much a work of the Latin American context,²⁴³ it nevertheless inspired a far-reaching range of cross-disciplinary theologies. Such praxis-based and contextualized reflections deal with many liberationist causes and lived realities. Applications of this contextual methodology include black theology,²⁴⁴ feminist theology,²⁴⁵ queer theology,²⁴⁶

²⁴⁰ On this point about taking the risk of intimacy with context, cf., the discussion on Pope Francis in section 11.2.1.

²⁴¹ This shift was not limited only to the Roman Catholic Context. See, Stephen Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002), 4.

²⁴² Here, recall the discussion of Phan's work in section 1.1.2.

²⁴³ Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1973).

²⁴⁴ For example, in laying some foundations for Black liberationist theology that questions the legitimacy of segregation and discrimination, William R. Jones argues that "divine racism" ought to appear as a logical contradiction (like a married bachelor) because it questions God's beneficence and love for all. See, William R. Jones, *Is God a White Racist?: A Preamble to Black Theology* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1973), 6-7.

²⁴⁵ E.g., Natalie K. Watson, *Feminist Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2003).

body theology,²⁴⁷ and womanist theology,²⁴⁸ to name a few of the more common categories and sub-fields. In practice, theological categories are now applied to many lived realities and intersecting identities wherein marginalized and oppressed people seek to employ Christian resources to seek more substantive justice.²⁴⁹ It is in this sense that a green theo-ecoethical lens is an example of contextual/theological/reflection.

Significant for this chapter is a recent ecological shift in the social justice work of a number of liberationists. The resultant perspective is well poised to discern “interlocking layers of oppression” that, in terms of social injustice and militarism, mark not only the natural world, but along with other forces, such as patriarchy, coalesce to suppress marginalized humans.²⁵⁰ In this light, it is telling from a green theo-ecoethical perspective that the title of one of Latin American liberation theologian Leonardo Boff’s monographs, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, makes this connection explicit.²⁵¹ In that volume and in a number of his other works, Boff demonstrates how ecology is necessarily an issue for those seeking a socially just peace.²⁵² The Bishops of Quebec recognized this point explicitly in 2001.

All of us must hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor, the cry of those deprived of their future and the distress of the earth ransacked by excessive consumption. In this spirit, the campaign undertaken during the Jubilee Year for the abolition of the Third World’s debt should be continued. It is impossible to complete such an initiative in the time frame of one year, such as that of the Jubilee. Therefore,

²⁴⁶ E.g., Patrick S. Cheng, *Radical Love: An Introduction to Queer Theology* (New York, NY: Seabury Books, 2011).

²⁴⁷ E.g., Lisa Isherwood and Elizabeth Stuart, *Introducing Body Theology* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998).

²⁴⁸ Diana L. Hayes, *Standing in the Shoes My Mother Made: A Womanist Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2011).

²⁴⁹ E.g., Marilú Rojas Salazar, “Experiences and Reflections on a Latin American Feminist Theology of Liberation Using an Ecofeminist Key Towards an Indigenous Women’s Perspective,” *The Ecumenical Review* 62, no.4 (Dec 2010): 411-422.

²⁵⁰ Heather Eaton, *Introducing Ecofeminist Theologies* (London, UK: T & T Clark, 2005), 114.

²⁵¹ Leonardo Boff, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 114.

²⁵² See, for another example, Leonardo Boff, *Virtues for Another Possible World*. Also see, section 1.2.3.

it is important to pursue international action and to continue this kind of pressure. Locally, we must remain vigilant regarding the debt of the poor and the growing difficulties with which they are constantly and increasingly confronted. The restructuring of financial institutions calls for special attention for they can diminish their services and their presence within communities.²⁵³

Another location of this confluence between care for the Earth and care for those living in poverty can be found in the biblical insight that “social justice is interrelated with the well-being of Earth.”²⁵⁴ With further reference to examples like the Jubilee provisions,²⁵⁵ the biblical witness can be said to capture what can be termed the ‘unsustainability of oppression.’ For example, in that such injustice is life destroying and, in Amos 5: 24, the Bible has an alternative ecologically-themed vision of “letting justice flow on like a river,” there emerges a deep contextual Christian imperative for social justice.²⁵⁶ This conclusion stands in accordance with Gregory Baum’s idea that the love of neighbour in our contemporary context requires the transformation of society.²⁵⁷ Indeed, such a transformation is essential to what he calls “preferential solidarity.”²⁵⁸ Moreover, it underlies Baum’s endorsement of the principle that to be Christian today means that social justice is not an optional activity. Rather, it is intertwined with bringing the gospel to this world.²⁵⁹ This insight is affirmed by US Bishops’ highlighting that the “Church teaches that social justice is an integral part of evangelization, a constitutive dimension of preaching the gospel, and an

²⁵³ Social Affairs Committee of the Assemblée des évêques catholiques du Québec, “Cry of the Earth; Cry of the Poor” (1 May 2001), accessed 10 June 2015, <http://www.eveques.qc.ca/documents/2001/20010501e.html>.

²⁵⁴ Arthur Walker-Jones, *The Green Psalter: Resources for an Ecological Spirituality* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009), 65.

²⁵⁵ For treatment of the Jubilee that blends social justice and land ethics, see, Christopher Wright, *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 198-210.

²⁵⁶ Cf., section 11.2.5.

²⁵⁷ Gregory Baum, *Compassion and Solidarity: The Church for Others* (Montreal: CBC Enterprises, 1987), 55.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 85.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 54; cf. the discussion of men-and-women-for-others and *Laudato Si’* in section 11.2.6.

essential part of the Church's mission."²⁶⁰ As is laid out more fully in the next section, it is on this level of lived gospel truth that social justice can be understood as an essential Christian principle, informing a green theo-ecoethical lens.²⁶¹

4.2 Social Justice Informing a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens

The involvement of liberation theologians in eco-ethical discourses is one of many paths that facilitate the mapping of social justice's significance for a green theo-ecoethical lens. Ellen Davis offers a poignant illustration of the type of hope, one with a deep ethical dimension, that emerges when we become cognisant of the unsustainable qualities of oppressive systems.

In such a situation, hope cannot mean naive expectation of personal prosperity, nor even perhaps one's own survival. Rather, it means looking to the inevitable collapse of the system, with the visionary realism that often emerges amongst the oppressed, knowing that on the other side of destruction there may be within a radically different kind of social and economic system, one that might truly be called community.²⁶²

In terms of re-imagining social justice within an integrated worldview, such a powerful exegesis, a form that invokes longing for ethical interconnectivity, has numerous applications supportive of green theo-ecoethical projects. For example, it can help provide a foundation to liberate all creation, as emancipatory concerns of humans extend to include the structural injustice that plagues human society, and can concomitantly move to address interrelated social and ecological crises. Through such means, Christians might hope not so much for a destruction of a system, as Davis would shade it, but rather a positive transformation of

²⁶⁰ United States Catholic Conference, "Communities of Salt and Light: Reflections on the Social Mission of the Parish, (1994), accessed 25 December 2015, <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/communities-of-salt-and-light-reflections-on-the-social-mission-of-the-parish.cfm>.

²⁶¹ Cf. the discussion of *Evangelii Gaudium* and social justice in section 10.3.2.

²⁶² Ellen Davis, *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture: An Agrarian Reading of the Bible* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 117.

relationships previously characterized by injustice. Social justice is crucial to any green theo-ecoethical transformation because those on the margins of local and global society suffer disproportionately because of present social and ecological crises. Such persons most often bear the least responsibility for these crises. As a result, an ethical imperative emerges to address inequalities within human societies as part of any substantive response to contemporary issues like global climate change.²⁶³

Integrating this insight helps to avoid a divisive dichotomy that sometimes tacitly or explicitly assumes that ecological activists unduly privilege things like trees over people, to the detriment of what ought to matter. A rarified example of such a dichotomous treatment of human-Earth relationships is found in the work of Robert Nelson. The American thinker employs religious language to argue that failing to drill for oil and gas in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge leaves it as a 'church' to 'environmental religion.' The refuge is a location of outstanding natural beauty and may indeed function as a church, in the sense of allowing people to connect with the creator, each other, themselves, and other members of the Earth community.²⁶⁴ Yet, Nelson denies the wildlife refuge has intrinsic worth or even uniqueness, apart from the presence of natural resources. As part of his line of argument equating (narrow) economic analysis with reality, he writes,

the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) in northeastern Alaska has become so religiously important to the environmental movement. It is not just the on-the-ground environmental features of the area—in Alaska and Canada there are in truth many similar desolate and isolated places bordering the Arctic. The only one truly distinctive feature of ANWR is that there is so much valuable oil and natural gas there—amounts that have an estimate gross worth of a trillion dollars. ...If this area is instead left “untouched,” the ANWR “church” would conceivably be the most expensive cathedral ever dedicated to any religion in the history of the world, forever

²⁶³ See, Christopher Hrynkow and Dennis Patrick O'Hara, “Catholic Social Teaching and Climate Justice from a Peace Studies Perspective: Current Practice, Tensions, and Promise,” *New Theology Review* 26, no. 2 (2014), 23-32.

²⁶⁴ Cf., Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #225.

redounding the glory of an environmental god and the American environmental movement.²⁶⁵

A green theo-ecoethical lens calls for a very different reading of the integrity of creation in such contexts.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated some senses in which social justice can be understood as Christian principle. Many of the thinkers cited above as well as the *Global Greens Charter* mitigate against false dichotomies of type advocated by Nelson by supporting an understanding of the intertwined nature of social justice and ecological health.²⁶⁶ It is in this crucial sense of coupling social and ecological concerns, so that all issues of equality, both local and global, are seen in a green light, that this thesis' green theo-ecoethical nomenclature is inseparable from both concerns for deep equality and the praxis of social justice.

²⁶⁵ Robert H. Nelson, *The New Holy Wars: Economic Religion vs. Environmental Religion in Contemporary America* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010), 66-67.

²⁶⁶ E.g., section 3.1.

Chapter Four: Participatory Democracy as a Christian Principle and Its Implications for a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens

5.1 Participatory Democracy and Christianity

The *Global Greens Charter* situates participation in a manner that accords with a progressive socio-political understanding of democracy.²⁶⁷

We strive for a democracy in which all citizens have the right to express their views, and are able to directly participate in the environmental, economic, social and political decisions which affect their lives; so that power and responsibility are concentrated in local and regional communities, and devolved only where essential to higher tiers of governance.

This requires:

- individual empowerment through access to all the relevant information required for any decision, and access to education to enable all to participate
- breaking down inequalities of wealth and power that inhibit participation
- building grassroots institutions that enable decisions to be made directly at the appropriate level by those affected, based on systems which encourage civic vitality, voluntary action and community responsibility
- strong support for giving young people a voice through educating, encouraging and assisting youth involvement in every aspect of political life including their participation in all decision making bodies
- that all elected representatives are committed to the principles of transparency, truthfulness, and accountability in governance
- that all electoral systems are transparent and democratic, and that this is enforced by law
- that in all electoral systems, each adult has an equal vote

²⁶⁷ Cf., on progressive politics in this vein, Bill Blaikie, *The Blaikie Report: An Insider's Look at Faith and Politics* (Toronto, ON: United Church Publishing House, 2011).

- that all electoral systems are based on proportional representation, and all elections are publicly funded with strict limits on, and full transparency of, corporate and private donations
- that all citizens have the right to be a member of the political party of their choice within a multi-party system.²⁶⁸

On the surface, the sweep of Christian history might be considered to offer a very different view of participation. For example, Christians went from being a persecuted minority within the Roman Empire to the official state religion.²⁶⁹ The consequences of the positioning of Christianity with respect to the state have provided Christian theologians with challenges for as long as their craft has existed.²⁷⁰ Christians have found ways to both oppose and accommodate themselves to political regimes ranging from empires to kingdoms, to fiefdoms, to dictatorships, to communist governments, and to democracies.²⁷¹ In this light, it is informative for the construction of a green theo-ecoethical lens to pause for thought and consider how participatory democracy can be considered a Christian principle.

One of the key issues at stake in participatory transformative politics is the provision of adequate critical spaces for multiple dialogues among people of varying cultural, religious, class, gender, social, and ethnic identities in a society.²⁷² As the peace theorist Ho-Won Jeong notes during his discussion of the sources of social conflict,

²⁶⁸ Global Greens, “Global Greens Charter.”

²⁶⁹ For a discussion of the transition from the persecuted to the favoured in the empire, see, Douglas John Hall, “Where in the World are We?” *The Princeton Lectures on Youth, Church and Culture*, Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ (2006), 3, Accessed 14 April 2016, http://www.ptsem.edu/uploadedFiles/School_of_Christian_Vocation_and_Mission/Institute_for_Youth_Ministry/Princeton_Lectures/Hall-Where.pdf.

²⁷⁰ For better or worse, Paul of Tarsus, often considered among the first Christian theologians, can be said to have entangled himself in this socio-political nexus as he sought to minister to those on the margins who were affected by the structure of the Roman Empire. Philip P. Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans: The Social Setting of Paul's Letter* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003).

²⁷¹ Cf., John Howard Yoder, *Christian Attitudes to War, Peace, and Revolution* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2009).

²⁷² For a grounding of this statement in terms of the Northern Irish context, see, Sean Byrne, “Transformational Conflict Resolution and the Northern Ireland Conflict,” *International Journal on World Peace* XVIII, no. 2 (June 2001), 10-11.

the absence of social space for facilitating dialogue between diverse identities and values facilitates violent struggles. To prevent unrestrained violence against innocent victims, members of different communities need assistance in recognising shared interests in survival and long-term prosperity. Solutions to the conflict would eventually have to be grounded in structural arrangements that respect cultural and political autonomy of different members of society.²⁷³

In this instance, Jeong's analysis points to a role for peacemakers in facilitating such dialogue. In order for such participatory and transformational political spaces to change exclusionary practices in a manner that is effective in fostering green theo-ecoethical values, those spaces will also have to be characterized by solidarity.²⁷⁴ As part of her discussion of power, and raising an interesting point related to the nature of solidarity, Trudy Govier writes, "You can control and influence only with the consent of other people, although you don't need their consent to destroy them or their property."²⁷⁵ However, influence is redefined when it is realized that interdependence is a moral category. In Roman Catholic social thought, this category for substantive peace and justice of the type supporting a green theo-ecoethical perspective is given firm faith-based foundations in *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, where John Paul II writes of the "perspective of universal interdependence."²⁷⁶ In social justice terms, this means that when inequity is prevalent, the common good has been adversely affected. As a result, a crucial solidaristic sense emerges in which all members of

²⁷³ Ho-Won Jeong, *Peace and Conflict Studies: An Introduction* (London, UK: Ashgate, 2000), 74.

²⁷⁴ The transformational language in this sentence recalls Mennonite peacebuilder, John Paul Lederach's preference for the transformation of systems (moving towards more positive and substantively peaceful relationships), rather than their destruction. See, John Paul Lederach, "Civil Society and Reconciliation," in *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict*, ed. Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall (Washington, D. C.: United States Institute of Peace, 2001), 848.

²⁷⁵ Trudy Govier, "Power," in *Introduction to Conflict Resolution Studies: CRS 1200, 2008-2009* (Toronto, ON: Custom Publishing, 2008), 130.

²⁷⁶ John Paul II, "*Sollicitudo Socialis*," (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 12 December 1987), #9, accessed 17 August 2013, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_30121987_sollicitudo-rei-socialis_en.html.

society suffer due to social injustice. In this green theo-ecoethical light, interdependence makes inequity a problem for the entire body politic.²⁷⁷

This position does not, however, imply that any given case of inequality should necessarily be turned over to the state to be dealt with in a rational and abstract manner. Indeed, the structures of the state may be contributing to the problem. Rather, from a green theo-ecoethical perspective, while the state can play a facilitative role and ought to be oriented toward providing the necessary structures so all its citizens can meaningfully participate in significant political deliberations, this is the exact time when people should stand together, as communities of interdependent individuals, to work out solutions that both heal and build toward a vital future. In the current geo-political situation, as *Gaudium et Spes* points out, “one of the most striking features of today’s world, and one due in no small measure to modern technical progress, is the very great increase in mutual interdependence between people.”²⁷⁸ Viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, the realization of such interdependence is at once central to a substantive vision of justice and representative of the truth of solidarity. Furthermore, from Paul VI’s perspective, “there can be no progress toward the complete development of the human person without the simultaneous development of all humanity in the spirit of solidarity.”²⁷⁹

Perhaps the faith communities that best illustrate how this type of solidarity is an underlying feature of participatory democracy are the Religious Society of Friends, the Quakers.²⁸⁰ Upholding a strong value of consensus and compassion, Quaker Meetings seek to

²⁷⁷ Cf., *Ibid.*, #17; #36.

²⁷⁸ Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, #23.

²⁷⁹ Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, #43.

²⁸⁰ Although most Quakers consider themselves Christians, some Quakers do not self-identify with the religion. See, Anthony Manousus, “Are Quakers Christians, Non-Christian, or Both?” *Friends Journal: Quaker Thought and Life Today* (1 February 2013), accessed 22 August 2013, www.friendsjournal.org/are-quakers-christian-non-christian-or-both/.

give voice to all participants, while also implicitly recognizing the weight of Wisdom and the views of elders in the dialogue, when developing community policies.²⁸¹ Decision-making with these participatory processes can be lengthy. However, that investment of time is the worthwhile cost for quality decisions for which the whole community can feel a sense of ownership. As Paul Stock states, “Quakers aim for unity of thought. By taking time to make decisions that are informed by all, the decision more appropriately reflects the needs of the community.”²⁸²

The specific type of meeting in which Quakers make community decisions is known as a Business Meeting or a Meeting for Business.²⁸³ Like all Quaker Meetings, the Meeting for Business is considered an act of worship. Business Meetings occur at various levels of Quaker organization from the local, to the regional, to the national and the international. The overarching goal is to discern the will of God, which is understood to be manifest in the consensus reached through the participatory process. Agenda items set through another participatory process are discussed and issues can be added to the agenda by the clerk. The clerk represents the Meeting and is meant to act rather like a skilled mediator by fostering consensus and even helping to give structure and intellectual weight to poorly versed sentiments. Commenting on the gifts of the clerk, Leonard Kenworthy emphasizes, “it is almost impossible to overstate the importance of the clerk or clerks in Quaker Meetings for Business. Much of the success or failure of such sessions depends upon their deftness, their

²⁸¹ Concerning the invocation of Wisdom in this sentence, see, section 3.1.

²⁸² Paul V. Stock, “Consensus Social Movements and the Catholic Worker,” *Politics and Religion* 5, no.1 (2012): 85.

²⁸³ Unless otherwise noted, the information on Quaker Business Meetings is drawn from the Scottish context as described in: Glasgow Quaker Meeting Staff, “Quaker Business Meetings How Friends Make Decisions,” (August 2002), accessed 22 August 2013, <http://www.qis.net/~daruma/business.html>.

sensitivity, their particular or ‘peculiar’ qualifications.’”²⁸⁴ There is a rough parallel here between the clerk and a chairperson. However, in a significant point for crafting green theo-ecoethical lens, the clerk is meant to be explicitly engaged in something more horizontal but also akin to servant-leadership,²⁸⁵ as he or she is held to be equal to all other participants in the room. Ideally, the Meeting should take the form of a circle or semi-circle, with all the participants in the line of sight of the clerk.

The Meetings for Business also differ from standard Western decision-making procedures in that they are oriented toward testimony and knowledge sharing with debate explicitly discouraged. For example, points from a previous friend’s testimony cannot be belittled by a subsequent speaker. Also, unless asked a direct clarifying question, a participant may normally only speak once on an issue, trusting that if the Spirit is on his or her side, another friend at the Meeting will raise any points that subsequently occur to someone who has already spoken. Furthermore, participants are actively encouraged to come to the Meeting with an open mind so that they may be properly prepared to discern the promptings of the Spirit in the other participants’ words. Access for all participants to the content of the dialogue is promoted by encouraging everyone to speak in a plain manner, free of inaccessible jargon or vocabulary. A green theo-ecoethical perspective helps discern a measure of this insight as present in Pope Francis’ approach to being Bishop of Rome.²⁸⁶

In the Quaker case, the clerk also helps to maintain a certain procedural structure to the Meeting, acknowledging those who feel moved by the Spirit to speak on an issue, and giving them adequate spaces to speak. In larger meetings, the clerk may be helped in these

²⁸⁴ Leonard S. Kenworthy, quoted in Leonard S. Kenworthy, *Quaker Quotations on Faith and Practice* (Philadelphia, PA: The Publications Committee of the Friends General Conference and Quaker Publications, 1983), 71.

²⁸⁵ Cf., section 9.5.6.

²⁸⁶ Cf., section 9.5.3.

facilitating roles by one or more assistant clerks. For all participants, active listening is understood to be essential because participants at the Meeting are meant to be seeking out Spirit-filled elements in each and every speaker's words. This orientation serves to prompt deep reflection. To encourage further reflection and to help mark every contribution as unique, a period of silence follows the contribution of each speaker. There is no voting. When the mood of the meeting seems to indicate a consensus, the clerk is given silence to compose 'a minute' on the particular subject, which is then read aloud to the assembled Friends. Participants at the Meeting can then speak to the minute if they feel it has not captured the nature of the consensus in a full manner. When consensus is reached regarding the minute, the community moves on to prayerfully consider the next issue. The clerk then strives to communicate the various minutes in a means accessible to those absent from the Meeting. For those Quakers who identify with their founding religious tradition, the totality of the Meeting for Business is a principled Christian act. In the terms of this chapter, the Quaker Business Meeting thus demonstrates a cogent practical example through which participatory democracy can be understood as a Christian principle. These threads are tied together nicely by Kenworthy.

The Meeting for Business is another of the unique contributions of Quakerism to the world. In fact it may be even more unprecedented than the Meeting for Worship. It is a rare form of democracy especially suited to religious fellowship, based on the belief that Divine Guidance is as available in transacting group business as it is in conducting group worship. It is a way of doing business in which the collective wisdom of the group is illuminated by the Light. It is a Meeting for Worship with a concern to do business. Nothing like it exists anywhere in Christendom.²⁸⁷

A sharp contrast certainly exists in this area between Quaker practice and official Roman Catholic governance. Nonetheless, given the case studies explored in this thesis, it should be noted that, when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, there are resources

²⁸⁷ Kenworthy, quoted in Kenworthy, 69.

for explicitly supporting an ethic of participation in the Catholic context. The thrust of the Second Vatican Council is clearly connected to more (although certainly not complete as judged in comparison to the Quaker example presented above) participation and collegiality within the Catholic Church,²⁸⁸ in contrast to some trends in papal governance and approaches to ecclesiology prior to Pope Francis' reign, it was a way of reaffirming subsidiarity as the council fathers devolved aspects of their power, status and decision making to local Churches and the laity.²⁸⁹ More recently, during his discussion of the option for the poor in his 2009 World Day for Peace Message on fighting poverty to build peace, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, extolled the value of an “*ethical approach to participation* capable of harnessing the contributions of civil society at local and international levels.”²⁹⁰ As we shall see below in Chapters Eight, Nine, and Ten, such ethical participation, buttressed by an endorsement of subsidiarity, is also frequently extolled by Francis.²⁹¹

²⁸⁸ For example, Remi De Roo writes: “One of the key teachings of *Lumen Gentium* is the image of the People of God, chosen by divine initiative, not just as separate individuals but as a community, with Christ as its Head, already here on earth offering a seed of unity, hope and salvation for all humankind and the entire cosmos. We reminded ourselves that servant-leadership needs to replace domination or power. The vertical and hierarchical development that, through the centuries, had shaped the governing Church institutions into a pyramid of power was cautiously redirected towards the more primitive and traditional image of the circle. For the first time ever, an Ecumenical Council recognized the rights of all the baptized. The laity have the right and sometimes the duty to express their opinions on matters pertaining to the common good, and pastors should leave them the freedom and scope for activity,” Remi De Roo, *Chronicles of a Vatican II Bishop* (Toronto, ON: Novalis, 2012), 57.

²⁸⁹ In accord with green theo-ecoethical values, this principle of subsidiarity asserts that: “Just as it is gravely wrong to take from individuals what they can accomplish by their own initiative and industry and give it to the community, so also it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do. For every social activity ought of its very nature to furnish help to the members of the body social, and never destroy and absorb them,” Pope Pius IX, *Quadragesimo Anno*: Encyclical of Pope Pius IX on Reconstruction of the Social Order, (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 15 May 1931), # 79, accessed 10 May 2013, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19310515_quadragesimo-anno_en.html.

²⁹⁰ Benedict XVI, “Message of His Holiness Benedict XVI for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 1 January 2009: Fighting Poverty to Build Peace,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 8 December 2008), #12, emphasis in the original, accessed 4 May 2013, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/peace/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20081208_xlii-world-day-peace_en.html.

²⁹¹ On the connections between subsidiarity and participation in Catholic Social Teaching see, Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, “Compendium Of The Social Doctrine Of The Church,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2 April 2004), #s189-191, accessed 18 April 2016, <http://www.vatican.va/>

5.2 Participatory Democracy Informing a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens

A green theo-ecoethical lens places a high ethical value on participatory governance at all levels. Such a perspective would support Benedict's call for an ethical approach to participation. However, it would also emphasize that such an approach must be consistently applied. In terms of such ethical consistency, consider an important issue that, when brought into focus by a green theo-ecoethical lens, can be taken as detracting from the authority of popes and bishops to speak on social and ecological issues, namely the Roman Catholic Church's practices of internal governance. Here, the green preference and tangible need in a time of socio-ecological crises for positive praxis,²⁹² bring another level of cogency to the question of why participatory decision-making is not more adequately modeled in the context of the institutional life of the Roman Catholic Church, most especially beyond the Episcopal level. On this issue, the multi-dimensional nature of the lens helps us to remember that even the freshness of Vatican II was limited in that only the Bishops really experienced an aspect of participatory governance.²⁹³ Indeed, someone with the social, moral, political, and religious capital of Dorothy Day was not even able to address the council because of her gender.²⁹⁴ An ecofeminist perspective, which informs a green theo-ecoethical lens to a significant extent, would call for much wider participation than was on offer at Vatican II.²⁹⁵

roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html; cf. section 5.1 for the *Global Greens Charter's* articulation of similar point.

²⁹² See, section 10.2.

²⁹³ On the freshness of Vatican II cf. section 6.2.

²⁹⁴ On the various form of capital referenced here, cf., Larry Iannaccone, "Economy," in *Handbook of Religion and Social Institutions*, ed. Helen Rose Ebaugh (New York, NY: Springer, 2006), 25-27. This more-than-economic capital accumulation is captured poignantly in Elaine Murray Stone's narrative biography of Day. See, Elaine Murray Stone, *Dorothy Day: Champion of the Poor* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2004). The source of the latter point (about Day) is the Catholic journalist Robert Blair Kaiser, who further argued in his 2012 Tablet Lecture at Heythrop College that the laity in a diocese ought to democratically elect their bishops, which would not be participatory governance in a green sense but would at least move to a geographically-

Another major environmental concept with implications for a green theo-ecoethical view on participation is stewardship. In particular, a poignant assertion in regard to green theo-ecoethical participation is that good stewardship of resources is not the complete answer to responding effectively to the ecological crisis.²⁹⁶ Offering a vital alternative, participatory democracy rejects the framework of a single ruler, deputies, and, indeed, the very tenability of a hierarchical organization of decision-making and authority upon which the concept of stewardship ultimately depends. Participation thus provides a framework for moving beyond a stewardship dichotomy toward a recognition of the integral value of all beings, what Boff calls “socio-cosmic democracy,” or what Berry calls “biocracy.” As Boff cogently explains,

participative and social democracy opens itself to a cosmic dimension, and this is necessary because we cannot exist without the community of life, our environment. The other beings of nature are linked to our existence. They also have rights. And as such, they must be included, as co-citizens, in the socio-cosmic democracy. In this way, the commonwealth of human beings will also be a commonwealth of nature and all forms of life.²⁹⁷

Significantly from a green theo-ecoethical perspective, for Berry, biocracy is part of an emerging historical vision that involves the realisation of a positive forward-moving commitment whereby “a period of mutually enhancing human-Earth relationships is being established.”²⁹⁸ In the West, this mutual enhancement needs to take the form of an ethical enlargement or essential recovery of integrated worldviews to the point that the more-than-human members of the Earth community are more fully accorded moral worth. Turning his focus explicitly to the political realm, Berry labels this phenomenon as the movement

based representative democratic feature within the Roman Catholic hierarchy. See, Robert Blair Kaiser, “Stories of Vatican II: The Human Side of the Council,” Tablet Lecture at Heythrop College, London, UK, video recording, (5 October 2012), accessed 9 May 2013, <http://www.thetablet.co.uk/page/lecture-Tablet2012>.

²⁹⁵ E.g., section 10.2.

²⁹⁶ Cf., H. Paul Santmire, “Partnership with Nature according to the Scriptures: Beyond a Theology of Stewardship,” *Christian Scholar’s Review* 32, no. 4 (Summer 2003): 381 – 412.

²⁹⁷ Leonardo Boff, *Global Civilization: Challenges to Society and to Christianity*, trans. Alexandre Guilherm (New York, NY: Routledge, 2014), 57.

²⁹⁸ Berry, “Introduction,” in *The Dream of the Earth*, xiii.

“beyond democracy to biocracy.”²⁹⁹ In such a biocratic movement, the larger-life community participates in our human decision-making processes. Within this expanded context, human affairs gain their meaning through intercommunion.³⁰⁰ When a biocratic reality has been fully realised, value and worth will then mark all professions, occupations and activities, precisely to the degree that they enhance and contribute to the larger life community. This socio-ecopolitical yardstick is representative of something akin to a creative synthesis because, in Berry’s estimation, it is only when we take our cues “from the very structure and functioning of the universe [that] we can have confidence in the future that awaits the human venture.”³⁰¹ Here, we arrive at an imperative for universal participation in a deep green sense that, in turn, informs a green theo-ecoethical lens.

5.3 Conclusion

This chapter has mapped some confluences with notions of participation and Christian traditions. It has also noted that a very wide, indeed, socio-cosmological interpretation of participation informs a green theo-ecoethical lens. For its part, the *Global Greens Charter* situates participation in a manner that accords more fully with a socio-political understanding of democracy.³⁰² In this regard, in a relevant sense, the Global Greens align themselves more with formulations of participation from Twentieth Century Catholic Social Teaching, departing from the Quaker example and views of Boff and Berry, and not going as far in terms of a socio-cosmic democratic or biocratic platform of emancipatory concerns.³⁰³ Yet,

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Berry, “The New Story,” 136.

³⁰¹ Ibid., 137.

³⁰² See, the opening of this chapter.

³⁰³ See, the discussion of participation in Catholic Social Teaching and socio-cosmic democracy and biocracy in section 3.1.

as we shall see more fully below, the *Global Greens Charter*'s discourse on participation actually accords very well with Pope Francis' views on participation. Moreover, it also resonates with the peace and conflict studies sense of participation unfolded at the beginning of this chapter. Yet, it must be emphasized from a green theo-ecoethical perspective that this view of participation is best shaded as necessary, but not sufficient, in terms of what Boff and Berry are upholding as an agenda for a politics that accompanies a truly integral worldview, and in this regard, a green theo-ecoethical lens seeks to support more socio-cosmic and biocratic views of democratic participation. This feature of the lens flows from a normative commitment to grow participatory spaces for the more-than-human members of the Earth and universe communities in political processes.³⁰⁴

³⁰⁴ Cf., the discussion of normativity in section 1.1.2.

Chapter Five: Nonviolence as a Christian Principle and Its Implications for a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens

6.1 Nonviolence and Christianity

The *Global Greens Charter* takes a multidimensional view on nonviolence, invoking the notion of cultures of peace that underpins this thesis's green theo-ecoethical lens.³⁰⁵

We declare our commitment to nonviolence and strive for a culture of peace and cooperation between states, inside societies and between individuals, as the basis of global security.

We believe that security should not rest mainly on military strength but on cooperation, sound economic and social development, environmental safety, and respect for human rights.

This requires:

- a comprehensive concept of global security, which gives priority to social, economic, ecological, psychological and cultural aspects of conflict, instead of a concept based primarily on military balances of power
- a global security system capable of the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts
- removing the causes of war by understanding and respecting other cultures, eradicating racism, promoting freedom and democracy, and ending global poverty
- pursuing general and complete disarmament including international agreements to ensure a complete and definitive ban of nuclear, biological and chemical arms, anti-personnel mines and depleted uranium weapons
- strengthening the United Nations (UN) as the global organisation of conflict management and peacekeeping
- pursuing a rigorous code of conduct on arms exports to countries where human rights are being violated.

³⁰⁵ See, section 1.2.2.

Recently, a number of theologians have been keen to demonstrate how nonviolence is an essential Christian principle that needs to be incarnated to a greater extent today.³⁰⁶ Often these theologians come to this subject matter with activist backgrounds. They have crafted similar multidimensional frameworks of nonviolence and peace as the one articulated by the Global Greens. As an example, seeking resonances for the project of realizing substantive cultures of peace from within his own faith tradition, social activist writer, former Jesuit priest, and current diocesan cleric, John Dear, argues that the Twentieth Century papal affirmations of scholarly approaches to biblical interpretation that are supported by the Vatican II documents can serve to downplay natural law and just war traditions,³⁰⁷ helping move Catholics toward an active (re)embrace of the “Gospel of Peace,” namely Jesus’ nonviolent peace witness.³⁰⁸

With consequences for a green theo-ecoethical lens, that peace witness is unfolded unambiguously by the Methodist biblical theologian and social activist, Walter Wink (1935-2011). According to Wink’s exegesis, Jesus’ teachings on nonviolence flow from the First Century context of the Middle East. Jesus was born in Galilee, a backwater of the Roman Empire. The *Pax Romana* into which he was born was by no means a just peace. It was built on the toil of women, slaves and labourers. As a result of practices of the empire such as tax farming (sub-contracting of the collection of duties and levies) and exorbitant interest rates, Galilean peasants were the victims of forces beyond their control. These individuals were

³⁰⁶ Although the *Global Greens Charter* employs “non-violence,” a green theo-ecoethical lens employs “nonviolence” as that rendering of the term tends towards presenting the concept as less of a negation and more of a standalone, integral idea. Cf., Global Greens, “Global Greens Charter.”

³⁰⁷ See, in particular, Pope Paul VI, “Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation—*Dei Verbum*,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 18 November 1965), accessed 24 April 2013, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651118_dei-verbum_en.html.

³⁰⁸ John Dear argues that Vatican’s II orientation toward *resourcement* and scripture allows for an important recovery of the Gospel of Peace. See, John Dear, *The God of Peace: Toward a Theology of Nonviolence* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2005), 115-125.

Jesus' kin. As a practical consequence, this situation meant that less wealthy Jews were losing control of the land.³⁰⁹ Diseases such as leprosy and what today would be termed mental illnesses afflicted those to whom Jesus ministered.³¹⁰ In terms of theodicy, these misfortunes were seen by some to be the result of personal sin or the unfaithfulness of the Jewish people to God.

For the early Christians, Jesus' creative nonviolence stood in opposition to such an interpretation of events, without ever denying a spiritual reality to this multi-dimensional suffering.³¹¹ Sanctioning an insight with resonance for a green theo-ecoethical lens, to those experiencing the harsh manifestations of the forces of empire, Jesus preached love for enemies and stood in solidarity with the oppressed. He invited women, foreigners, the poor, the destitute, and those who were considered sinners and outcasts, to eat with him. This scandalized some elements in the very communities that shared Jesus' faith tradition.³¹² Wink posits that the survival of the table fellowship stories in the canonical Gospels shows their profound importance for the earliest followers of Jesus. In these narratives, Jesus is giving testimony to the way that God's divine love shines and rains down equally upon everybody.³¹³ Such a spiritual interpretation did not mean that love for one's enemies ought to result in the acceptance of systems of domination. Yet, if everything had a spiritual reality and everything belonged to God, it did mean that everything had a purpose that was

³⁰⁹ Walter Wink, *Jesus and Nonviolence: A Third Way* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2003), 18.

³¹⁰ Walter Wink, *Unmasking the Powers: The Invisible Forces That Determine Human Existence* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1986), 47.

³¹¹ Walter Wink, *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 314.

³¹² Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, 129. See, also, Luke (15: 1-2): "Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, 'This man receives sinners and eats with them'."

³¹³ Walter Wink, *The Powers That Be: A Theology for The New Millennium* (New York, NY: Galilee Doubleday, 1999), 165.

subservient to God's love. However, in the face of the demonic powers of empire, whether consciously or not, most people in Jesus' time seemed to respond to oppression in one of two ways, namely, passivity or violence.

The first option, passivity, meant submitting to these forces—in colloquial terms, recognizing that the Powers are 'bigger than you' and 'making do' as best you can. The second response, violence, meant armed rebellion—a willingness to both fight and die for freedom from such oppression. In the Jewish context, the violent option resulted in revolt against the Roman Empire. Defeat in 70 CE saw the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem and the scattering of the people of Israel. With this background in mind, the early Christians argued that those who lived by the sword opened themselves up to the vengeance of the sword and were, furthermore, likely to precipitate the deaths of innocents.³¹⁴

Crucially for Wink, this early Christian peace witness provided a challenge to centuries of ingrained and socially replicated 'fight or flight' responses to conflict—people had always either coalesced with the Domination System or sought to overcome it with violence.³¹⁵ Taking either of these options meant that the logic of the Domination System itself remained unchallenged. According to Wink's reading of human history, such a repressive logic has its roots in the all too pervasive myth of redemptive violence, which erroneously holds that violence can represent a path to salvation and liberation.

In response to this pervasiveness, Wink argues that recognizing the powerful hold that the myth of redemptive violence had on people and their organizations, Jesus' teachings offered another option. This is the 'third way' of creative nonviolence. This third way holds that active resistance to domination is the only sustainable approach to transforming systems

³¹⁴ Wink, *The Powers That Be*, 114; cf., Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #263.

³¹⁵ Wink, *Jesus and Nonviolence*, 88; cf., Marlin E. Miller and Barbara Nelson Gingerich, eds., *The Church's Peace Witness* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1994).

of oppression. Jesus' third way rests on the idea that the entire system, both friends and enemies along with both oppressors and oppressed, belonged to God. Wink is quick to assert that this does not mean that God sanctioned oppression. Rather, it meant that there was something more important than the empire itself, an idea which was revolutionary in Roman times.³¹⁶ Citizens of the empire were meant to give their total allegiance to the empire's vision of order. The figurehead of the domineering system, the emperor, was worshiped as a god in the Roman world. When the earliest Christians refused to burn incense to Caesar's image, they were demonstrating that their ultimate allegiance lay beyond imperial policies.³¹⁷

Illustrated in terms of Gospel teaching concerning creative nonviolence, Wink brings a contextual analysis to Matthew 5: 41. "If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles." For Wink, this verse challenges an imperial policy that permitted Romans soldiers to press civilians into carrying their military packs one mile. Allowing or forcing someone to go beyond a single mile exposed the soldier in question to severe penalties. Under normal conditions, a soldier would have to conscript someone at the roadside to render this one-mile service; encountering a civilian willing to carry the pack another mile would have figuratively thrown a soldier off balance—perhaps even making a legionnaire, fearful of discipline from his superiors, plead with a Galilean peasant who embraced Jesus' creative nonviolent methodology to give him back the pack.³¹⁸ Following upon Wink's analysis, 'going the extra mile' takes on a whole new meaning; it was a creative nonviolent response to a situation of oppression.

³¹⁶ Cf., Alexandre Christoyannopoulos, *Christian Anarchism: A Political Commentary on the Gospel* (Exeter, UK: Imprint Academic, 2013).

³¹⁷ Wink, *Unmasking the Powers*, 101.

³¹⁸ Walter Wink, "The Third Way: Reclaiming Jesus' Nonviolent Alternative," *Sojourners* 1, no. 5 (December 1986): 28-30.

Embracing creative nonviolent methodologies for social change in concert with Green ecoethical values, people like Mohandas Gandhi, and Martin Luther King Jr. also took up the task of confronting the Domination System in a creative manner.³¹⁹ For Wink, that challenge is still present today. The resulting ethical imperative calls on theists, who seek to follow the path of nonviolence, to do their best to bring everything back toward its divine purpose. In accord with green theo-ecoethical terminology, this means recognizing that all objects, every person and the world's ecological systems, have a spiritual dimension that allows for the possibility of participation in an all-inclusive, divine love.³²⁰ Wink holds that this form of love must be the true nexus of redemption. Violence has no part to play therein. Embracing the methods of the oppressor and/or the repressive system and hating the enemy or employing violence is folly because it merely mimics that which it opposes.³²¹ Such mimicking of the tactics of domineering systems fails to break the very cycles of violence and oppression that are the source of suffering.³²² Wink argues that the only sustainable alternative in the face of the all-pervasive myth of redemptive violence is the third way of creative nonviolence taught by Jesus, a manner of proceeding that abhors both passivity and violence.³²³

³¹⁹ Wink, *The Powers That Be*, 111.

³²⁰ Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, 267.

³²¹ Consider here the Girardian notion of the "imitator paradox." Girard summed up the imitator paradox "mechanism" nicely with one of his typical (rather gendered) analogies in a 2001 interview with CBC's *Ideas* program: "you do everything to not imitate your model. If he wears a blue tie, you wear a red one, but you still imitate him madly in the sense that you desire everything that he desires. If you're my model and I fall in love with your wife, or your daughter, we're going to be rivals. Period. And this rivalry will play both ways because probably you are no longer in love with your wife because you've possessed her securely for many years. And my desire is going to revive yours. Therefore, you're going to become imitator as well as my model and everything will move both ways in perfect identity, finally, but always interpreted in terms of difference," René Girard, *The Scapegoat: René Girard's Anthropology of Violence and Religion*, ed. David Cayley (Toronto, ON: CBC Ideas Transcripts, 2001), 4.

³²² Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, 201.

³²³ Wink, *The Powers That Be*, 111.

In opposition to the idea that nonviolence only works in select contexts or with certain civil repressors (like the British in India), Wink responds that nonviolence works where violence would work and nonviolence does not work where violence would not work.³²⁴ Nonviolence, however, is always to be preferred because it confronts the myth of redemptive violence through viewing the transformation of the self and the world as real possibilities when nonviolence is employed in response to situations of conflict.³²⁵ In this light and from a green theo-ecoethical perspective, it should be remembered that aggression operating according to the dynamics of the myth of redemptive violence requires a loser, one who is often dead or permanently injured as a result of a destructive engagement. Making a point with deep resonance for a green theo-ecoethical perspective, Carolyn Nordstrom and Jo Ann Martin poignantly shade such violence as a social reality with no uncertain results for the losers in their bodies.

Violence starts and stops with people that constitute a society; it takes place in society and as a social reality; it is a product and a manifestation of culture. Violence is not inherent to power, to politics or to human nature. The only biological reality of violence is that wounds bleed and people die.³²⁶

In response to such bleeding and death, Winks adds that, even when it does fail, nonviolent action achieves a measure of victory because it stands as testimony to the divine promise that God's system will, in the eschatological future,³²⁷ prevail over violence and the win/lose dichotomy may be overcome.³²⁸ In accord with green theo-ecoethical insight, Wink further emphasizes that embracing a methodology for nonviolent structural change is related

³²⁴ Ibid., 177.

³²⁵ Wink, *The Powers That Be*, 200; Cf., Kenneth E. Boulding, *Three Faces of Power* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1989).

³²⁶ Carolyn Nordstrom and Jo Ann Martin, "The Culture of Conflict: Field Reality and Theory," in *The Paths to Domination, Resistance, and Terror*, eds. Carolyn Nordstrom and Jo Ann Martin (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992), 14.

³²⁷ Cf., section 2.3.

³²⁸ Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, 239.

to a fundamental choice about what kind of world we wish to live in and leave for future generations.³²⁹

According to Wink's analysis, we are the first generation of humans with the option of choosing a worldview.³³⁰ He argues that what we need today is to recognize the need to engage in the struggle to free the Powers on this planet within an integral worldview.³³¹ This is the worldview of Indigenous spiritualities and the truth contained within the ancient Chinese Yin-Yang symbol, which acknowledges a divine presence in all things.³³² Such movement is absolutely necessary because an integral worldview, so foundational for a green theo-ecoethical lens, sees a crucial connection between (1) all things, (2) every living being, and (3) past, future, and present generations. Knowing that this global system can be transformed through the building of more integral relationships leaves all peoples with an enormous challenge to realize such a condition of love. Accepting Wink's interpretation of the biblical narrative brings this challenge from Jesus' time into present day struggles to emulate divine love and transform contemporary incarnations of oppression and empire.³³³ In this manner, Wink takes insights about the social and political implications of the Gospel to a whole new level, recasting Matthew 5: 48's sticky exhortation to "be perfect as your heavenly father is perfect" as a challenge to love, as God does, all that exists.³³⁴

Through these means, Wink counters the idea that Christians ought to be warriors for God's kingdom by arguing that the witness of Jesus' ministry on earth calls all those who

³²⁹ See, the last paragraph of this thesis and the discussion of Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #160 in section 11.2.1.

³³⁰ Wink, *The Powers That Be*, 22.

³³¹ *Ibid.*, 184-185; cf., section 3.2.

³³² Walter Wink, "The New Worldview: Spirit at the Core of Everything," in *Transforming the Powers: Peace, Justice and the Domination System*, eds. Ray C. Gingerich and Ted Grimsrud (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006), 21-24; cf., section 8.1.

³³³ Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, 277.

³³⁴ Wink, *The Powers That Be*, 165-166; cf., The Social Affairs Commission of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, "You Love all that Exists...All Things are Yours, God lover of Life," #2.

wish to follow his example toward a third way, that of creative nonviolent action in resistance to systems of domination.³³⁵ Wink's work, of course, is unapologetically Christian, aimed at challenging those who take Jesus' teaching and the Bible seriously to actively seek to destroy the foothold that the myth of redemptive violence maintains in this world by embracing a transformative nonviolent struggle against oppressive forces in all their forms, inclusive of social injustice and race-based discrimination.³³⁶ In a significant sense, Jesus' challenge, as Wink understands it, helps situate nonviolence as a Christian principle, greatly aiding its colligation within a green theo-ecoethical lens.

6.2 Nonviolence Informing a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens

Sanctioning broad support for principled nonviolence and writing in one the first pieces of Catholic Social Teaching dealing with ecological issues, the Catholic Bishops of Guatemala advocated for land reform. In a point taken aboard as part of the construction of a green theo-ecoethical lens, they emphasized that Christian political action to achieve this goal must be nonviolent. "We cannot resort to violence because it is neither evangelical nor Christian, but generates further violence in an endless spiral. As Christians we have more confidence in those who are nonviolent than in the brute force of those who place all their trust in armed homicides."³³⁷

By employing the language of 'spiral' in relation to violence, the Guatemalan Bishops are invoking the legacy of Dom Hélder Câmara,³³⁸ the former Roman Catholic

³³⁵ Wink, *Jesus and Nonviolence*, 28.

³³⁶ Cf., section 4.1.

³³⁷ Catholic Bishops of Guatemala, "Cry for Land," #3.2.5.1.

³³⁸ See, also section 4.1.

Archbishop of Olinda and Recife in north-eastern Brazil.³³⁹ In 1970, Câmara was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize and *Spirale de Violence* was published.³⁴⁰ The following year, his text was translated into English and new readers were first introduced to the concept of a ‘spiral of violence.’ Câmara introduced a term that is now used, for instance, by Girardian thinkers analyzing issues at the intersection of religion and violence.³⁴¹ Considering that Câmara’s book on the subject is dedicated to two important figures for nonviolence, Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., it is not surprising that Câmara’s monograph is essentially a description of a methodology for social justice-oriented, nonviolent political action based on love, which he personified in his own life.³⁴²

Spiral of Violence takes its contextual motivation from experiences gained while living under a military dictatorship in Brazil during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Throughout this oppressive period of Brazilian history, the bishops of the Roman Catholic Church were able to exert “a certain clerical advantage” and raise dissenting voices to critique the regime.³⁴³ Câmara, however, realized that the troubles then afflicting his pastoral charges did not all originate with the military government. Indeed, Câmara wrote about common sources of injustice around the world, based upon what he discerned as the seven capital sins of the modern world, namely, racialism, colonialism, war, paternalism,

³³⁹ An earlier version of some of the material mapping Câmara’s approach to substantive peace as presented in the following paragraphs appeared as part of Christopher Hrynokow, “Spiral of Violence,” in *Religion and Violence: An Encyclopedia of Faith and Conflict from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. Ian Jeffrey Ross (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2011), 709-714.

³⁴⁰ Brian Darling, “Introduction,” in *The Spiral of Violence*, by Hélder Câmara (Denville, NJ: Dimension Books, 1971), 2.

³⁴¹ E.g., Richard A. Horsley, *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence: Popular Jewish Resistance in Roman Palestine* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993).

³⁴² See, Richard Marin, *Dom Hélder Câmara: Les Puissants et Les Pauvres* (Paris, FR: Les Éditions de l’Atelier, 1995); cf., the discussion on ethical consistency in section 5.1.

³⁴³ Câmara quoted in Darling, 19.

pharisaism, alienation, and fear.³⁴⁴ These seven sins are buttressed by violence. However, in Câmara's thought, as for both Wink and a green theo-ecoethical perspective, violence is not conceived as being only related to phenomena such as atomic bombs and people shooting each other. Instead, the bishop spoke of another explosive reality plaguing the planet, the "poverty bomb."³⁴⁵ Through such language and in a point that informs a green theo-ecoethical perspective, Câmara was able to effectively demonstrate how violence permeates all forms of injustice.

Câmara distinguished three types of violence that mark the modern world. He termed these types of violence No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3. For Câmara, violence No. 1 is based on the simple truth that poverty kills as surely as the bloodiest war.³⁴⁶ The mechanisms through which poverty wounds are not only physiological, but these aspects of violence are also psychological and moral.³⁴⁷ Thus, the current structure of the global political economy is a major cause of violence because it treats too many people as sub-human.³⁴⁸ As seen above and as further indicated by Boff's description of the current world system as "tyrannosauric" globalization,³⁴⁹ the present global political economy can be viewed as guilty of a similar mistreatment of people.³⁵⁰ As those examples highlight, viewing the world from Câmara's perspective, in tandem with a green theo-ecoethical lens, helps expose oppressive political economy as a form of violence; it becomes difficult to claim that any country is truly developed, because even the economically-richest countries have internal inequalities

³⁴⁴ Hélder Câmara, *The Spiral of Violence* (Denville, NJ: Dimension Books, 1971), 77.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 29.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 25.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 28.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 28, 30.

³⁴⁹ See, Chapter Three and, on Boff, Section 1.2.3.

³⁵⁰ Sallie McFague, "New House Rules: Christianity, Economics, and Planetary Living," *Daedalus* 130, no.4 (Fall 2001): 125-141.

supported by repressive systems, which, in turn, rest upon fractured relationships.³⁵¹

According to Câmara's analysis, such fractured relationships lie at the centre of violence No. 1.³⁵²

All too often, the result of this most basic form of violence is revolt. This response provides the nexus for violence No. 2.³⁵³ When faced with injustice and an oppressive system that fails to recognize their human dignity, young persons are particularly apt to take the option of violent revolt.³⁵⁴ Like Martin Luther King Jr. and in accord with green theo-ecoethical values, Câmara argued passionately that the use of violence by those seeking social transformation was folly.³⁵⁵ Specifically, the archbishop wrote that when violence is embraced as a means of liberation, it only leaves the entrenched regime with an excuse to use the coercive power of the state against the rebels. In this situation, we witness the emergence of violence No. 3. Such state-sanctioned violence groups all dissidents together in order to provide an erroneous justification for a large range of oppressive and dehumanizing acts, such as torture in the name of anti-communism.³⁵⁶ As a result of his insight, Câmara viewed all three of these forms of violence as interconnected examples of violence begetting violence.³⁵⁷ The implicit danger of leaving the interplay among violences No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3 unchecked is that the entire world would fall into a spiral of violence.³⁵⁸

In this light, Câmara continued, Gandhi is best considered a prophet. Modern incarnations of warfare and structural violence show a nonviolent methodology to be the only

³⁵¹ Câmara, 29.

³⁵² Ibid., 30.

³⁵³ Ibid., 30.

³⁵⁴ Ibid., 50.

³⁵⁵ Cf., section 1.2.3.

³⁵⁶ Câmara, 32-34; cf., Mario I. Aguilar, *Religion, Torture and the Liberation of God* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2015).

³⁵⁷ Câmara, 34.

³⁵⁸ Ibid., 40.

sustainable and practical way forward for groups seeking positive social change.³⁵⁹ In line with the concerns brought into focus by, and informing, a green theo-ecoethical lens, for Câmara, this is also true on a more micro level. On that level, he argues that political forces also assert a monopoly on legitimate violence, which often coalesces to maintain discriminatory institutions and practices. In accord with green theo-ecoethical values, it is also true, as Câmara recognized, that nonviolence is to be preferred in a context where nuclear war amounts to suicide, and even so-called localized wars, such as the Viet Nam conflict, extract a heavy toll in terms of human lives, money, and resources.³⁶⁰ In the present context, we might see the militaristic “nation-building” interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan in a similar light.³⁶¹ It follows that meeting violence with violence threatens to send the world into a downward spiral.³⁶²

Once this danger is more fully recognized, the true answer to violence becomes having the courage to take action to address the poverty, inequity and discrimination associated with violence No. 1,³⁶³ in line with creative nonviolent initiatives. This continuingly valid Gandhian insight, also carried through in the work of Martin Luther King

³⁵⁹ Cf., Ramin Jahanbegloo, *The Gandhian Moment* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013).

³⁶⁰ Câmara, 54.

³⁶¹ Cf., Francis Fukuyama, ed., *Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2008). Although, in the case of Afghanistan, there may have been other nonviolent approaches rather than militaristic nation-building that might have served to foster a substantive peace. Cf., Christopher Hrynokow, “Inculturation and Intervention in Afghanistan: Perspectives from Contextual Theology,” in *War, Human Dignity and Nation Building: Theological Perspectives on Canada’s Role in Afghanistan*, eds. Gary D. Badcock and Darren C. Marks (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), 117-139.

³⁶² Cf., Horsley, *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence*; René Girard, “The Mimetic Theory of Religion: An Outline,” in *2000 Years and Beyond: Faith Identity and the ‘Common Era’*, ed. Paul Gifford (London, UK: Routledge, 2003), 88-105; René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred* (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 1979).

³⁶³ Câmara, 55.

Jr.³⁶⁴ and so important for a green theo-ecoethical lens, marked the genesis of Câmara's agenda to end both domestic and international socio-economic inequality in all its forms.³⁶⁵ His ensuing liberatory campaign was called "Action for Justice and Peace."³⁶⁶ Its driving concept was that the peace- and justice-oriented nonviolent transformative program would, in contemporary parlance, 'think local and act global.' In regards to 'glocal' thinking, Câmara argued that a solidarity based on common humanity would empower every region to find better ways of establishing forms of living together that avoid the entrapping allure of a false peace.³⁶⁷ Accordingly, recalling Paul VI's well-known mantra, any lasting peace would have to be a just peace.³⁶⁸

As they inform a green theo-ecoethical lens, such peacebuilding projects are recognized as a great struggle because injustice is so prevalent throughout the world.³⁶⁹ Therefore, it is not merely contemplation but also action praxis-infused action that is required to transform oppressive structures and relationships.³⁷⁰ As such, Câmara concluded that ending injustice and stopping the spiral of violence at its origins means working toward a world where love would mark all human interaction. For Câmara, this could only mean loving everyone on this planet according to the dynamics of a caring family. If a particular brand of ideology, religion or nationalism would cause a diversion from that goal, then it

³⁶⁴ In presenting his case for the continuing validity of such insight, Bidyut Chakrabarty writes "that the moral politics of redemptive love and nonviolence that Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. consistently pursued represents an appealing vision for the present century." Bidyut Chakrabarty, *Confluence of Thought: Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013), 189.

³⁶⁵ Câmara, 63.

³⁶⁶ Ibid., 56.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., 58-59.

³⁶⁸ The mantra referenced here, what Paul VI himself called "incisive and dynamic formula," is: "If you want peace, work for justice," Pope Paul VI, "Message of His Holiness Pope Paul VI for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 1 January 1972: If You Want Peace, Work for Justice," (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 8 December 1971), accessed May 3 2013, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/messages/peace/documents/hf_p-vi_mes_19711208_v-world-day-for-peace_en.html.

³⁶⁹ Cf., Chapter Three.

³⁷⁰ Câmara, 56.

could be characterized as contributing to the continuation of the spiral of violence.³⁷¹ In the end, through what is a telling image when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, an integral transformation of relationships would be marked by the moment when the former oppressor realised that violence was no longer tenable and was welcomed to march in solidarity with those he/she had oppressed.³⁷² Through such means, what Bernard Lonergan named as a “creative minority,”³⁷³ inspired by what Câmara termed “Abrahamic hope,” could be established. People marked by such hope in this creative minority would end destructive injustice by recognizing and breaking the spiral of violence at its root in violence No. 1.³⁷⁴ In Câmara’s estimation, with the power of youth and other like-minded individuals striving for a more peaceful and just future on its side, this “Abrahamic minority” would then act as a catalyst through which nonviolent love and hope could be enabled worldwide.³⁷⁵ This vision has inspired a number of people deeply concerned with social and ecological justice,³⁷⁶ including the ecofeminist liberation theologian, Ivone Gebara, who found employment in Câmara’s praxis-based seminary.³⁷⁷

Another relevant document that offers ethical sources for a green theo-ecoethical lens is *Pacem in Terris*, which is sometimes called Pope John XXIII’s “last will and

³⁷¹ Ibid., 62-63.

³⁷² Ibid., 57.

³⁷³ Bernard Lonergan emphasizes “every...historical movement, however great, profound and lasting it may be, begins with a ‘creative minority:’ it is the minority that questions, thinks, understands, decides and takes the lead, the majority are taught, persuaded and led,” Bernard Lonergan, *De Scientia atque Voluntate Dei. Supplementumschematicum*, Primary document, 1950 (English translation held at The Jesuit Centre for Catholic Studies, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB), #24.

³⁷⁴ Câmara, 69.

³⁷⁵ Ibid., 77-83.

³⁷⁶ Rosemary Radford Ruether, “On the Front Lines of Faith,” *Sojourners*, 28, no. 6 (1999): 26.

³⁷⁷ Ivone Gebara, “What Do we Mean by Change: Conflict Arising from a Feminist Ethical Perspective,” (13 June 2019), Catholic Network for Women’s Equality Conference Lecture, Saint Paul University, Ottawa, ON.

testament.”³⁷⁸ This encyclical was promulgated during the conciliar period (after the first session) in 1963. It is noteworthy when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens as the first papal encyclical addressed, not just to bishops or Catholics, but to everyone of good will.³⁷⁹ In this same spirit of emancipation, *Pacem in Terris* outlines the rights and duties of persons in a world community in which people of different religions and political persuasions could (and ought to) live in harmony, justice, security, and freedom.³⁸⁰ It further predicts the imminent end of colonialism and as a reading of the “signs of the times” (just after the Cuban Missile Crisis) defines war,³⁸¹ especially nuclear war and the stockpiling of nuclear weapons, as untenable in relation to the contextual realities of the contemporary era.³⁸² In this sense, *Pacem in Terris* is representative of what peace theorists would call positive peace

³⁷⁸ For example, a recent heading paragraph for a conference at Georgetown University’s Berkley Centre for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, marking the fiftieth anniversary of *Pacem in Terris*’ promulgation defined the encyclical as “the *decisive* last will and testament of Pope John and the charter Vatican II needed to embrace an agenda for peace, human dignity and human rights.” Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs Staff, “Human Dignity in World Affairs: Celebrating *Pacem in Terris* and its Legacy,” (Conference held 13 April 2013), accessed 1 May 2013, <http://www.georgetown.edu/vatican-II-pacem-in-terris/index.html>. Emphasis added.

³⁷⁹ When viewed though a green theo-ecoethical lens, the address of the letter emerges as quite remarkable. Although the encyclical uses gender-exclusive language as translated into English on the Vatican website, it does make a concerted effort to be inclusive in terms of the audience addressed: “*To Our Venerable Brethren the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, Bishops, and all other Local Ordinaries who are at Peace and in Communion with the Apostolic See, and to the Clergy and Faithful of the entire Catholic World, and to all Men of Good Will*” Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*: Encyclical of Pope John XXIII on Establishing Universal Peace in Truth, Justice, Charity and Liberty (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 11 April 1963), # 1, accessed 12 June 2015, https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_11041963_pacem.html. Emphasis in the original.

³⁸⁰ See, in particular, John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, section IV.

³⁸¹ See, in particular, *ibid.*, #23. This methodology of reading the “signs of the times” is not only associated with John XXIII’s methodological inspiration for the Second Vatican Council but also can, presumably in related manner, be considered a biblical imperative: “The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and tested him by asking him to show them a sign from heaven. He replied, “When evening comes, you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,’ and in the morning, ‘Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.’ You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times,” (Matthew 16: 1-3, NIV). Interestingly for the subject matter of this chapter of the present thesis, *Sign of the Times* is also the title of Christian Peacemaker Teams’ newsletter. For more on this group, of which the Basilian Fathers’ Peace and Justice coordinator, Bob Holmes, is an activist member. See, Christopher Hrynkow, “Christian Peacemaker Teams, Solidarist Nonviolent Activism and the Politics of Peace: Peace Witness that Challenges Militarism and Destructive Violence,” *Journal of Peace Research: The Canadian Journal of Peace and Conflict Studies* 40, no. 1 (2009): 111-134.

³⁸² See, in particular, John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, #s 109-119.

(i.e., a situation peace which is inclusive of, but not just constituted by, the absence of war).³⁸³

The following passage provides a brief idea of the flavour of the encyclical. It references the possibility of a nuclear holocaust, which was palpable at the time of its issue and includes a statement of concern for the ecological impact of arms testing.³⁸⁴

There is a common belief that under modern conditions peace cannot be assured except on the basis of an equal balance of armaments and that this factor is the probable cause of this stockpiling of armaments. Thus, if one country increases its military strength, others are immediately roused by a competitive spirit to augment their own supply of armaments. And if one country is equipped with atomic weapons, others consider themselves justified in producing such weapons themselves, equal in destructive force.

Consequently people are living in the grip of constant fear. They are afraid that at any moment the impending storm may break upon them with horrific violence. And they have good reasons for their fear, for there is certainly no lack of such weapons. While it is difficult to believe that anyone would dare to assume responsibility for initiating the appalling slaughter and destruction that war would bring in its wake, there is no denying that the conflagration could be started by some chance and unforeseen circumstance. Moreover, even though the monstrous power of modern weapons does indeed act as a deterrent, there is reason to fear that the very testing of nuclear devices for war purposes can, if continued, lead to serious danger for various forms of life on earth.³⁸⁵

³⁸³ From a green theo-ecoethical perspective, this is an important distinction. We often assume that violence is located beyond our sphere of influence or takes place in far off places or, at the very least, “somewhere else,” Yet viewed a green theo-ecoethical lens, ‘structural violence’ encourages us to discern our own levels of participation in overt and covert violence. With such a theoretical lens, the insight that repressive forms of social organization are themselves a form of “structural violence” can emerge and be grounded in our consciousness. This term also relates to Peace theorist Johan Galtung’s distinction between “negative” and “positive” peace: “By making a fundamental distinction between personal and structural violence, it can be seen from two angles. Indeed, this is exactly the same as peace, which is understood as the absence of violence. A more expansive concept of violence leads to a more expansive understanding of peace: peace defined as the absence of personal violence and the absence of structural violence. These two forms of peace are referred to as negative peace and positive peace.” Johan Galtung quoted in Ragnar Müller, “Violence Typology by Johan Galtung (direct, structural and cultural violence),” (n.d.), accessed 23 April 2013, <http://www.friedenspaedagogik.de/content/pdf/2754>.

³⁸⁴ Cf., Alice L. George, *The Cuban Missile Crisis: The Threshold of Nuclear War* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2013), 77.

³⁸⁵ John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, #s110-111.

John XXIII continues his line of teaching on this matter by referencing not only human dignity but also a concern for other members of the larger life community, before ending with a definitive statement on the matter of nuclear arms.

Moreover, even though the monstrous power of modern weapons does indeed act as a deterrent, there is reason to fear that the very testing of nuclear devices for war purposes can, if continued, lead to serious danger for various forms of life on earth. ...Hence justice, right reason, and the recognition of man's dignity cry out insistently for a cessation to the arms race. The stock-piles of armaments which have been built up in various countries must be reduced all round and simultaneously by the parties concerned. Nuclear weapons must be banned.³⁸⁶

After John XXIII's untimely death, a key papal moment dealing with peace that was both important at a time of transition and set the tone for the council's treatment of peace issues in *Gaudium et Spes*, occurred when Paul VI journeyed to New York, NY to address the United Nations General Assembly. For this address, he symbolically chose the feast of Saint Francis,³⁸⁷ on October 4th, 1965, which had the additional advantage of being delivered at a time when the council was in session. In the speech he declared, famously, "No More War! War Never Again!"³⁸⁸ As council father, Remi De Roo notes, this speech had a significant impact in Rome during Vatican II, symbolized by Paul VI being welcomed back from New York, NY by those Bishops gathered in St. Peter's with rigorous applause.³⁸⁹

A key result of the momentum signified by such applause was *Gaudium et Spes* (arguably best understood as the Pastoral Constitution on the Church *in* the Contemporary

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, #112.

³⁸⁷ This choice rests, in part, on Francis of Assisi being associated with peace. E.g., Leonardo Boff, *Francis of Assisi*. Also see, sections 1.2.3 and 9.2.

³⁸⁸ Paul VI, "Address to the UN General Assembly," (4 October 1964), accessed 23 April 2013, http://unyearbook.un.org/1965YUN/1965_P1_SEC1_CH16.pdf.

³⁸⁹ Remi De Roo, "A New Pentecost: Vatican II Revisited," (11 October 2012), Public Lecture at Cathedral of the Holy Family, Saskatoon, SK.

World).³⁹⁰ *Gaudium et Spes* outlines the task of the Church in the world to “preach the gospel to all nations” by promoting justice, peace, and cultural development. Promulgated as part of the council’s last set of documents on December 7, 1965, it can be considered as the most intellectually developed document of the council.³⁹¹ In accord with this analysis and seeing his experience and those of the other council fathers at Vatican II as an educative process, De Roo speaks of the need to read the earlier documents of the council in light of the later ones, and in this regard advocated seeing *Gaudium et Spes* as generally the most authoritative.³⁹² In this light, it is particularly significant that *Gaudium et Spes* affirmed the principle that world issues matter for followers of Jesus. “The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ.”³⁹³ In this way, taking up the form of the salutary example of *Pacem in Terris* mentioned above, the document chooses to address both the faithful and the whole of humanity.³⁹⁴ Furthermore, as part of a renewing and vital pastoral approach to “error,” Vatican II issued few condemnations. However, in *Gaudium et Spes* there are condemnations of nuclear war and genocide.³⁹⁵

In fact, through *Gaudium et Spes* the Council addresses several peace issues as part of their “evaluation of war with a new attitude.”³⁹⁶ When viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, a noteworthy concentration occurs in the concluding section, “Problems of

³⁹⁰ Part of this momentum was also provided by the famous Catholic peace activists Dorothy Day and Dom Hélder Câmara campaigning in Rome during the fall sessions in an effort to assure that the council “did not forget the Poor” in its statements. Kaiser, “Stories of Vatican II.”

³⁹¹ E.g., Baum, *Amazing Church*, 44.

³⁹² Remi De Roo, “A New Pentecost: Vatican II Revisited.”

³⁹³ Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, #1.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, #2.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, #80; #79.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, #80.

Social Urgency” under the title, “The Fostering of Peace and The Promotion of a Community of Nations.” Here, for example, the Bishops: (1) emphasize that war threatens the entire human family; (2) declare that “artisans of peace” are blessed, with reference to Matthew 5: 9; (3) comment on the need to set up instruments of peace based on justice and love,³⁹⁷ with love mediating the demands of justice; (4) endorse a concept of positive peace, by writing that “peace is not merely the absence of war; nor can it be reduced solely to the maintenance of a balance of power between enemies; nor is it brought about by dictatorship. Instead, it is rightly and appropriately called an enterprise of justice;”³⁹⁸ (5) give qualified support to conscientious objection (based on alternative service);³⁹⁹ (6) provide a tempered embrace of principled nonviolence;⁴⁰⁰ (7) disallow the often-invoked principle that “all is fair between the warring parties” in a conflict;⁴⁰¹ (8) issue a general condemnation of total war due to its indiscriminate nature;⁴⁰² (9) affirm that arms racing is a trap, which does not provide for a steady peace; (10) write about war as “age-old slavery;” (11) speak of a “clear duty...to strain every muscle in working for the time when all war can be completely outlawed by international consent;”⁴⁰³ (12) endorse the need for an effective international authority to keep the peace among the nation-states and allow for positive cooperation to “foster peace;”⁴⁰⁴ (13) encourage leaders and educators to image alternatives to an unjust *status quo*

³⁹⁷ Ibid., #77.

³⁹⁸ Ibid., #78.

³⁹⁹ Ibid., #79.

⁴⁰⁰ Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, #78; See, the discussion of principled nonviolence in section 6.2.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., #79.

⁴⁰² Ibid., #80.

⁴⁰³ Ibid., #81. Remi De Roo, who attended Vatican II as Bishop of Victoria, reported in November 2012, when speaking at the new cathedral in Saskatoon, that it was the intention of several of the council fathers that *Gaudium et Spes* outlaw war altogether. He asserted that the document would have contained such a condemnation were it not for the fear of “communist threat” at that time. See, De Roo, “A New Pentecost: Vatican II Revisited,”

⁴⁰⁴ Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, #81; #82.

and exercise what is named above as their moral imaginations⁴⁰⁵ in the service of a “pressing need ...to instruct all in fresh sentiments of peace” based upon a change of heart;⁴⁰⁶ (14) speak of a need to free people from both want and economically oppressive structures;⁴⁰⁷ (15) further recognize several conflict stressors and, in this regard, encourage “Catholic specialists” to study issues like demographic shifts;⁴⁰⁸ (16) specifically recommend the establishment of Catholic aid organizations like Development and Peace to address “hardships...in needy regions” and stimulate the Catholic community to promote “international social justice;”⁴⁰⁹ and (17) extol the need for dialogue and cooperation between Catholics and all those “thirsting for true peace;”⁴¹⁰ remarkably arguing that Catholics should work “even with those who oppress the Church...together without violence and deceit in order to build up the world in genuine peace.”⁴¹¹

Though not without its flaws, the above is a praiseworthy list from a Peace Studies perspective, more remarkable when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens for the fact that it predates the foundational article in the field by some four years.⁴¹² Indeed, in a number

⁴⁰⁵ See, section 1.2.2.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid., #82. On the moral imagination, see, section 1.2.2.

⁴⁰⁷ Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, #84; #85. Earlier in the document, they also noted the misappropriation of resources that accompanies military buildup. “The arms race is one of the greatest curses on the human race and the harm it inflicts on the poor is more than can be endured” (#61).

⁴⁰⁸ Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, #87.

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid., #90. Note here, the upholding of a positive conception of peace. Interestingly, the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace cites its Catholic Social Teaching origins not in the conciliar document but in Paul VI’s 1967 encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, which also makes the connection between their titular terms explicit: “Development and Peace was established in 1967 by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops in response to Pope Paul VI’s encyclical letter *Populorum Progressio*, which affirms: “Development is the new word for Peace. Peace cannot be seen simply as the absence of war. It must be built daily, and it must strive towards a more perfect justice among human beings,” Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, #65. That founding principle of Development and Peace is still maintained today,” Development and Peace Staff, “History,” (n.d.), accessed 1 May 2013, <http://www.devp.org/en/aboutus/history>. Emphasis in the original.

⁴¹⁰ Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, #90.

⁴¹¹ Ibid., #92.

⁴¹² Peace Studies genealogy is often traced to Johan Galtung’s landmark article on peace research published in 1969. See, Johan Galtung, “Violence, Peace, and Peace Research,” *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3 (1969): 167-191. Though as is evident by this citation (note the journal title and issue number) peace research has a longer pedigree than Peace Studies proper. Other origins lie in the opposition to the Viet Nam

of ways, it is a list that is more complete than one that could be generated from most single sources studied as part of the author's PhD program in Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Manitoba. Although lacking in eco-ethical content, seeing the principles the Bishops advocate incarnated would certainly go a long way to establishing conditions for substantive peace in the contemporary world (i.e., making cultures of peace alive in multiple contexts).⁴¹³ Arguably, given the potential for spirals of violence to gain destructive momentum in our world,⁴¹⁴ such fostering is a clear and succinct act of the biblical and conciliar imperative to read the signs of the times. It also assists in arriving at a substantive vision of peace that underpins a differentiated and nuanced colligation of nonviolence within a green theo-ecoethical lens.

6.3 Conclusion

Peace Studies scholars and conflict transformation practitioners have made a distinction between principled and pragmatic nonviolence.⁴¹⁵ This distinction is made so that “principled nonviolence” comes to both suggest and support an integral approach to peacebuilding, which is relational rather than utilitarian in character. As a result, the

War and the civil rights movement in places like the USA and Northern Ireland. A longer genealogy would then mark a certain contemporariness with the work of people like Abraham Joshua Heschel and Martin Luther King Jr., who both employed language that would later be adopted by peace studies scholars and practitioners. That longer pedigree would also be significant, meaning that in *Gaudium et Spes* the bishops display a contemporary and conceptual sharpness in their writings on peace. For a taste of Heschel's and King's writings, inclusive of their concern for green theo-ecoethical principles of nonviolence and social justice, see: Abraham Heschel Joshua and Susannah Heschel, *Abraham Joshua Heschel: Essential Writings*, Modern Spiritual Masters Series (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2011), and Martin Luther King, *Why We Can't Wait* (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1967).

⁴¹³ Cf., section 1.2.2.

⁴¹⁴ See, Hélder Câmara, *The Spiral of Violence* (Denville, NJ: Dimension Books, 1971).

⁴¹⁵ On the distinction between principled and pragmatic nonviolence from a Gandhian perspective cf., L.K. Bharadwaj, “Principled Versus Pragmatic Nonviolence,” *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice* 10, no. 1 (1998): 79-81.

distinction implies a preference for moving beyond the tactical use of nonviolence.⁴¹⁶ Accordingly, a definitive feature of principled nonviolence is that it seeks consistency between means and ends in projects actively fostering positive social change.⁴¹⁷ There is also a realm of confluence here between principled nonviolence's relational underpinnings and the insights of the bishops, activists, and theologians surveyed above. Together they help discern a substantive vision of peace, which in turn, generates an imperative for nonviolent transformative change. For the likes of Câmara, Dear, and Wink, there are no other options. Cycles of domination and oppression will continue to be fed if a nonviolent approach to transformative change is not taken.⁴¹⁸ As a result of a green theo-ecoethical lens' multidimensional character, it is a valuable hermeneutical tool when seeking to respond to all three forms of violence described by Câmara.

These perspectives on what constitutes a nonviolent peace witness emerge as contextually cogent when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, which would also expose the importance of Gandhian reflections on the significance of an integral approach to authentically positive social change, summarized effectively (if not wholly) in an imperative to 'be the change we seek in the world.'⁴¹⁹ This orientation, connecting personal and social transformation in accord with green theo-ecoethical values, underpins the further imperative for ecological and social conversion of the integral sort that, when transferred into action and

⁴¹⁶ Cf., Gene Sharpe, *Waging Nonviolent Struggle: 20th Century Practice and 21st Century Potential* (Boston, MA: Porter Sergant Publishers, 1995).

⁴¹⁷ For a set of sources for principled nonviolence see, Martin Luther King Jr., *Stride Towards Freedom: The Montgomery Story* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2010); Martin Luther King Jr., *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?* (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1967).

⁴¹⁸ On the importance of nonviolent change in the face of systemic and virulent oppression, see, Latin American Bishops at Medellin, Columbia, "Peace," (6 September 1968), accessed 22 April 2013, <http://personal.stthomas.edu/gwschlabach/docs/medellin.htm#peace>.

⁴¹⁹ Though the phrase 'be the change you wish to see, in the world' is often attributed to M.K. Gandhi, it is most likely that he did not say this phrase, at least not in isolation, as for Gandhi personal and social transformation were inseparable. E.g., Brian Morton, "Falsar Word Were Never Spoken," (29 August 2011), accessed 27 December 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/30/opinion/falsar-words-were-never-spoken.html?_r=0.

behaviour change, addresses the global challenges of our time.⁴²⁰ Specifically, in the area of nonviolent activism for positive social change, it is informative for a green theo-ecoethical lens to note that Gandhi wrote, “nonviolence is a power which can be wielded equally by all—provided they have a living faith in the God of Love and have therefore equal love for all mankind. When nonviolence is accepted as the law of life it must pervade the whole of being-in-the-world and not only be applied to isolated acts.”⁴²¹ It is in this principled spirit that nonviolence contributes to a green theo-ecoethical lens.

⁴²⁰ For a green reading on the importance of Jesus’ personal example in this regard, see, Denis Edwards, *Ecology at the Heart of Faith: The Change of Heart that Leads to a New Way of Living on Earth* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2006), 48.

⁴²¹ Mohandas K. Gandhi, “Ahimsa, or the Way of Nonviolence,” in *A Peace Reader: Essential Readings on War, Justice, Non-Violence and World Order*, eds. Joseph J. Fahley and Richard Armstrong (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1992), 174.

Chapter Six: Sustainability as a Christian Principle and Its Implications for a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens

7.1 Christianity and Sustainability

The following series of statements from the *Global Greens Charter* are presented as a definition of their aspirational programming under a rubric of sustainability:

We recognise the limited scope for the material expansion of human society within the biosphere, and the need to maintain biodiversity through sustainable use of renewable resources and responsible use of non-renewable resources.

We believe that to achieve sustainability, and in order to provide for the needs of present and future generations within the finite resources of the earth, continuing growth in global consumption, population and material inequity must be halted and reversed.

We recognise that sustainability will not be possible as long as poverty persists.

This requires:

- ensuring that the rich limit their consumption to allow the poor their fair share of the earth's resources
- redefining the concept of wealth, to focus on quality of life rather than capacity for over-consumption
- creating a world economy which aims to satisfy the needs of all, not the greed of a few; and enables those presently living to meet their own needs, without jeopardising the ability of future generations to meet theirs
- eliminating the causes of population growth by ensuring economic security, and providing access to basic education and health, for all; giving both men and women greater control over their fertility
- redefining the roles and responsibilities of trans-national corporations in order to support the principles of sustainable development
- implementing mechanisms to tax, as well as regulating, speculative financial flows

- ensuring that market prices of goods and services fully incorporate the environmental costs of their production and consumption
- achieving greater resource and energy efficiency and development and use of environmentally sustainable technologies
- encouraging local self-reliance to the greatest practical extent to create worthwhile, satisfying communities
- recognising the key role of youth culture and encouraging an ethic of sustainability within that culture.⁴²²

It is often assumed that a Christianity orientated toward an afterlife displaces such an integrated ethic of sustainability.⁴²³ When he was Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Cardinal Bergoglio, the future Pope Francis,⁴²⁴ contrasted a feeling of wanting to flee the world with contemporary moral imperatives. “There was a period in Catholic Spirituality that existed that was called *fuga mundi*; now the concept is completely different—it is necessary to engage the world, but always from religious experience.”⁴²⁵ In perhaps even more grounded terms, Thomas Berry succinctly states, “there is no way that the human project can succeed if the earth project fails.”⁴²⁶ However, some Christians have not accepted Francis’ and Berry’s logic in this regard. A major source of this disagreement has been a soteriology that views this world as merely a testing ground, or “soul-school,” for a disembodied existence to come in the afterlife.⁴²⁷ This view of a post-earth existence would seem to give Christians an exit from interrelated social and ecological crises, locating ultimate human success beyond this world. Yet, as Adam Kotsko notes in making a point with resonance for a green theo-

⁴²² Global Greens, “Global Greens Charter.”

⁴²³ This point is developed and problematised in this section.

⁴²⁴ See, section 9.3.

⁴²⁵ Jorge Mario Bergoglio in Jorge Mario Bergoglio and Abraham Skorka, *On Heaven and Earth* (New York, NY: Crown Publishing, 2013), 228.

⁴²⁶ Thomas Berry, “Christianity’s Role in the Earth Project,” in *Christianity and Ecology*, eds. Dieter T. Hessel and Rosemary Radford Ruether (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 127.

⁴²⁷ For a discussion on this point of view see, John Haught, “Darwin and Contemporary Theology,” *Worldviews* 11 (2007): 49; cf. section 2.3.

ecoethical perspective, the way followers of Jesus understand the doctrine of salvation has ontological implications, by which he means that Christian teaching has tangible effects on human being and socio-political realities in this world.⁴²⁸ To cite one concrete example, Martin Palmer shares the story of certain North Americans whose understanding of their evangelical Christian faith means that they feel as many resources as possible should be consumed by people in order to bring the Earth to a crisis point and, thus, precipitate the second coming of Christ.⁴²⁹

Such views are increasingly being challenged, not least for their potentially damaging effects on the incarnation of deep sustainability as named in *The Global Greens Charter*. By way of example, writing from a biblically-centred perspective, Jonathan Wilson argues that the doctrine of creation has been neglected in Christian circles for the past three centuries, with negative results for faithful living in the world.⁴³⁰ Wilson traces this disregard for what he shades as an essential doctrine to an overly theological version of Christian faith that he names as predominant today. He holds that such Christianity problematically emphasized spiritual over temporal concerns, rather than seeing them as linked through creation in their essential relationships with the triune God. This malaise, which he characterizes as multiplying pathologies,⁴³¹ is symbolized poignantly for Wilson both in a normative Christian condemnation of the world and the connected, erroneous belief that eternal life in Christ is solely immaterially soul-based, and yet still fully human.⁴³² Wilson argues that such

⁴²⁸ See, Adam Kotsko, *The Politics of Redemption: The Social Logic of Salvation* (London, UK: T & T Clarke International, 2010).

⁴²⁹ Martin Palmer. Interview during “Beyond Belief: The Environment,” (24 March 2014), accessed 27 May 2015, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b03yn6xt>.

⁴³⁰ Jonathan R. Wilson, *God’s Good World: Reclaiming the Doctrine of Creation*. (Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Academic, 2013), 3. Although, as we have seen at multiple points in this thesis, creation has certainly not been wholly ignored in contemporary Christian discourse.

⁴³¹ Cf., Berry, “The Dream of the Earth,” 205-208.

⁴³² Wilson, 241.

error can be corrected by the firm coupling of the Christian doctrines of creation and redemption so that Christians come to understand the telos of creation as inseparable from the triune God's intention for the world.⁴³³

This conclusion accords with the Georgetown theologian John Haught's view that Christianity has a unique contribution to make among the world religions in an effort to promote planetary sustainability due to its eschatological vision of nature as promise.⁴³⁴ Other thinkers working in the area have put forward proposals to move toward formulations of Christian doctrine that offer better support for sustainable practices. Developments in this regard include proposals for greener Christologies,⁴³⁵ integrated versions of pneumatology,⁴³⁶ and renewed ways of imaging God's relationship with creation.⁴³⁷

Such a concern for integral sustainability is also displayed in Catholic Social Teaching. The 2003 letter from the Social Affairs Committee of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops offers a faith-based, integrative response to the ecological crisis based on prophetic, contemplative, and ascetic options.⁴³⁸ Another example of such a response can be found in the earlier statement that the Administrative Board of the United States Catholic Conference made as part of *A Jubilee Call for Debt Forgiveness*.

The debt burden can lead to ecological degradation if the need to generate hard currency through exports in order to make debt repayments results in intensified or reckless use of natural resources. Over-emphasizing export-oriented sectors such as

⁴³³ Ibid., 37.

⁴³⁴ John F. Haught, "Christianity and Ecology," in *This Sacred Earth: Religion, Nature and the Environment*, ed. Roger S. Gottlieb (New York, NY: Routledge, 1996), 282.

⁴³⁵ Sallie McFague, "An Ecological Christology: Does Christianity Have It?" in *Christianity and Ecology*, eds. Dieter T. Hessel and Rosemary Radford Ruether (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 41-43.

⁴³⁶ Mark I. Wallace, "The Wounded Spirit as the Basis for Hope in an Age of Radical Ecology," 67-68.

⁴³⁷ Sallie McFague, *A New Climate for Theology: God, the World and Global Warming* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2008).

⁴³⁸ The Social Affairs Commission of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, "You Love all That Exists....All Things are Yours, God lover of Life, #s 15-17.

logging, mining, or mono-cropping, for example, can result in depleted soils, denuded forests, exhausted fisheries, and polluted waters.⁴³⁹

In the above instance, the main principles of Catholic Social Teaching, like human dignity, global solidarity, and the fundamental option for those living in poverty, are linked within the fabric of care for creation in a single paragraph. Such writing demonstrates the ability of mainstream Christian ethical thought to integrate the idea that if the Redeemer, who is located at the centre of the faith, is also “the Creator, then surely God cares also for the other 99 percent of creation, not just the 1 percent (actually, less than 1 percent) that humans constitute.”⁴⁴⁰ This reformulation of “the option for the poor [as] an option for life”⁴⁴¹ represents the potential to green the faith along ecojustice-oriented lines, which view the entire life community as an ethical system. Wherever and whenever this challenge is taken up in the spirit of green theo-ecoethical orthopraxis, support for sustainability can then be viewed as an essential Christian response to the interrelated social and ecological crises.

7.2 Sustainability Informing a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens

Gaudium et Spes notes the importance of everyone sharing the advantages of economic and cultural development.⁴⁴² Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI explicitly added sustainability to this reflection. Benedict’s position can be summed up in his final World Day for Peace Message’s statement that “integral, sustainable development in solidarity and the common good require a correct scale of goods and values which can be structured with God

⁴³⁹ Administrative Board of the United States Catholic Conference, “A Jubilee Call for Debt Forgiveness,” (April 1999), #2, accessed 17 August 2013, www.dpcdsb.org/NR/rdonlyres/E2FD4B2B-7FF4-4E4E-BD16-B7C9633A6C8B/69974/AJubileeCallforDebtForgiveness.pdf.

⁴⁴⁰ McFague, “An Ecological Christology,” 35.

⁴⁴¹ Gebara, 99.

⁴⁴² E.g., Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, #87.

as the ultimate point of reference.”⁴⁴³ Benedict also frequently invoked Paul VI’s notion of integral human development involving whole persons in all their dimensions.⁴⁴⁴ In his message on cultivating peace through the protection of creation, Benedict further argued that economic development must keep in mind the natural environment and future generations.⁴⁴⁵ In the eyes of Woodeene Koenig-Brickerin, such sentiments and his effort to put them into practice earned Benedict the distinction of being the “greenest” pope.⁴⁴⁶ This thesis shall return to that point below.⁴⁴⁷

A green theo-ecoethical perspective on sustainability is also informed by a view of integral development. It would, however, emphasize the importance of any truly sustainable vision for development being checked more firmly against ecological limits than it is in Benedict’s rendering. Moreover, it takes inspiration from those who question, dovetailing in some areas but moving the language along differently in others, the value of dominant framings of progress and success that seem to distort current debates about sustainability.⁴⁴⁸ In this area, green theo-ecoethical values hold that the integral development of humans needs to be placed within complex webs of social and ecological relationships. A recurring image in Buddhist teaching that reinforces and informs a green theo-ecoethical understanding of such deep connectivity is Mahayana Buddhism’s rendering of Indra’s Net, an infinitely massive web with a multi-faced jewel at each point of connection, with each jewel reflecting

⁴⁴³ Pope Benedict XVI, “Message of His Holiness Benedict XVI for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 1 January 2013: Blessed are the Peacemakers,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 8 December 2012), #5, accessed 4 May 2013, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/peace/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20121208_xlvi-world-day-peace_en.html.

⁴⁴⁴ E.g., Pope Benedict XVI, “Message of His Holiness Benedict XVI for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 1 January 2007: The Human Person, the Heart of Peace,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 8 December 2006), #9, accessed http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/peace/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20061208_xl-world-day-peace_en.html.

⁴⁴⁵ Benedict XVI, “If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation,” #9.

⁴⁴⁶ Woodeene Koenig-Brickerin, *Ten Commandments for the Environment: Pope Benedict XVI Speaks Out for Creation and Justice* (Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 2009), 8.

⁴⁴⁷ See, section 12.2.

⁴⁴⁸ Cf., section 10.2.

all the other jewels in the net.⁴⁴⁹ Total connectivity on this level has implications for contemporary faithful living in the world. In this regard, Stephanie Kaza provides a poignant insight, at once informing understandings of sustainability, mindfulness, perception, and green theo-ecoethical praxis.

To extend the metaphor, if you tug at one of the lines of the net—for example through loss of species or habitat—it affects all the other lines. Or if any of the jewels becomes cloudy (toxic, polluted), they reflect the others less clearly. If clouded jewels are cleared up (rivers cleaned, wetlands restored), life across the web is enhanced. Because the web of interdependence includes not only the actions of all beings but also their thoughts, the intention of the actor becomes a critical factor in determining what happens. This, then, provides a principle of both explanation for the way things are, and a path for positive action.⁴⁵⁰

As such, in contrast to narrow definitions of sustainability that tend to view sustainability as a classical economic category or even limited to a type of enlightened development, a green theo-ecoethical lens takes sustainability in broad socio-ecological and praxis-based senses as foundational. It is in this verdant light that sustainability informs a green theo-ecoethical lens.

7.3 Conclusion

This chapter has mapped a confluence between wellsprings of the Christian tradition and increasingly necessary articulations of deep sustainability as buttressed by deep interconnectivity. This confluence is one of the areas that most evidently spills over into the other green principles as they inform a green theo-ecoethical lens. The section dealing with the latter point serves, once again, to demonstrate the way a green theo-ecoethical lens grows

⁴⁴⁹ Leslie Paul Thiele, *Indra's Net and the Midas Touch: Living Sustainably in a Connected World* (Boston, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2011), 17-19.

⁴⁵⁰ Stephanie Kaza, "To Save all Beings: Buddhist Environmental Activism," in *Liberating Faith: Religious Voices for Justice, Peace and Ecological Wisdom*, ed. Roger S. Gottlieb (Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield, 2003), 528.

in dialogue with diverse perspectives. This feature organically supports respect for diversity, another binding characteristic of the lens that is surveyed in the next chapter.

Chapter Seven: Respect for Diversity as a Christian Principle and Its Implications for a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens

8.1 Respect for Diversity and Christianity

The *Global Greens Charter* offers the following multifaceted description of respect for diversity:

We honour cultural, linguistic, ethnic, sexual, religious and spiritual diversity within the context of individual responsibility toward all beings.

We defend the right of all persons, without discrimination, to an environment supportive of their dignity, bodily health, and spiritual well-being.

We promote the building of respectful, positive and responsible relationships across lines of division in the spirit of a multi-cultural society.

This requires:

- recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples to the basic means of their survival, both economic and cultural, including rights to land and to self determination; and acknowledgment of their contribution to the common heritage of national and global culture
- recognition of the rights of ethnic minorities to develop their culture, religion and language without discrimination, and to full legal, social and cultural participation in the democratic process
- recognition of and respect for sexual minorities
- equality between women and men in all spheres of social, economic, political and cultural life
- significant involvement of youth culture as a valuable contribution to our Green vision, and recognition that young people have distinct needs and modes of expression.⁴⁵¹

To start this chapter's discussion of respect for diversity as a Christian principle with a praxis and faith-based example incarnating respect for diversity, consider the case of

⁴⁵¹ Global Greens, "Global Greens Charter."

Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT). This activist group's members hold highly-differentiated theological views on violence and peace that support work undertaken within an invitational dynamic to plan effective nonviolent actions.⁴⁵² Some of the author's previous research argues that, despite the ambiguous role of religions in conflict and systemic violence, CPTers, by practicing their version of the politics of peace, are participating in a "dialogue of life," wherein people from diverse communities come together to work on joint projects of violence intervention and prevention. Furthermore, that research notes that CPTers' participation in this dialogue of life is marked by a commitment to integral justice characterized by respect of social, cultural, and biological diversity.⁴⁵³

There are many ways to delineate support for approaches to diversity like those practiced by CPTers from sources in Christian thought. As an example, we can return to Thomas Berry, who considered the possibility of biodiversity collapse as tantamount to a tragedy for the entire human race. Berry argues that this statement is true because, even if people somehow survive the collapse of a diverse life community, we will have lost an essential existential reference point in the biologically diverse natural world. This point is expressed accessibly in Berry's poetic verse.

The child awakens to a universe,
 The mind of the child to worlds of wonder,
 Imagination to worlds of beauty,
 Emotions to worlds of intimacy.
 It takes a universe to make a child,
 Both in outer form and in its spirit.

It takes a universe to educate a child.
 It takes a universe to fulfill a child.
 And the first obligation of each generation

⁴⁵² See, Kathleen Kern, *In Harm's Way: A History of Christian Peacemaker Teams* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2014).

⁴⁵³ See, Christopher Hrynkow, "Christian Peacemaker Teams, Solidarist Nonviolent Activism and the Politics of Peace," 113.

To the next generation is to bring these two together
 So that the child is fulfilled in the universe
 And the universe is fulfilled in the child
 While the stars ring out in the heavens.⁴⁵⁴

As evidenced by “A Child Needs a Universe,” Berry sees a diverse universe as sustaining and creating us. As he writes elsewhere in his more academic work, “in our discussion of sacred community, we need to understand that in all our activities the Earth is primary, the human is derivative.”⁴⁵⁵ It is for this reason, among others, that Berry advocates recognizing a diverse and created world as “a communion of subjects rather than a collection of objects.”⁴⁵⁶ Many cultures, like the one represented by Chinese Confucian civilization and most of those connected to the Indigenous religions of Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas held and/or hold this fact of connection with the natural world as paramount.⁴⁵⁷

This notion of socio-ecological communion under conditions of diversity, which is so important when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, is also vital to ecotheological reflection. Furthermore, such a concept of connectivity is being rediscovered, revitalized, recovered, and brought forward in the contemporary context to varying degrees in all the world religions.⁴⁵⁸ It asks people to recognise the intrinsic value of the natural world and our

⁴⁵⁴ Thomas Berry, “A Child Needs a Universe,” (2005), accessed 13 March 2013, http://www.appvoices.org/index.php?/site/voice_stories/it_takes_a_universe_an_interview_with_thomas_berry/issue/523.

⁴⁵⁵ Thomas Berry, “Earth as Sacred Community,” chapter in *Evening Thoughts: Reflecting on Earth as Sacred Community* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 2006), 43.

⁴⁵⁶ Berry sees this situation of interconnectedness in the universe as arising from its quality as the “only self-referent mode of being.” It follows that: “Since all living beings, including humans, emerge out of this single community there must have been a bio-spiritual component of the universe from the beginning. Indeed we must say that the universe is a communion of subjects rather than a collection of objects.” Thomas Berry, “Ethics and Ecology: A Paper Delivered to the Harvard Seminar on Environmental Values,” (9 April 1996), accessed 1 May 2013, <http://www.earthcommunity.org/images/Ethics%20and%20Ecology%201996-Edited.pdf>.

⁴⁵⁷ Thomas Berry, “The Historical Role of the American Indian,” 189-190; cf., section 3.2.

⁴⁵⁸ Evidence of this reconstitution or recovery of ecological resources across diverse religious contexts is found in the “Green Rule” poster published by Faith and the Common Ground. This poster plays on the notion of the Golden Rule having universal manifestations by providing the Green Rule—“Do unto the Earth as you would have it do unto you.” On this poster, quotes from the traditions of Christianity, Islam, Baha ‘i,

place in that world as interconnected members of the Earth community.⁴⁵⁹ With that realization in place, social and ecological crises become crises of relationship that need healing on multiple levels.⁴⁶⁰ Dualist metaphysics, which separate humanity from the rest of the created community, fail to provide fertile soil to grow proper relationships between humans and other members of the Earth community.⁴⁶¹ An integral worldview thus emerges as necessary to what Thomas Berry defines as our most urgent task for present generations and their children, from which no person is exempt.⁴⁶² “The Great Work now, ...[is] to carry out the transition from a period of human devastation of the Earth to a period when humans would be present to the planet in a mutually beneficial manner.”⁴⁶³ As a green theo-ecoethical perspective emphasizes, within the accompanying organic and solidaristic worldview that ought to influence Christian life at this juncture in planetary history, if a member of the Earth community suffers injustice or degradation, then the health of the entire organism is negatively affected.⁴⁶⁴

8.2 Respect for Diversity Informing a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens

In addition, when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, upholding the value of diversity in this organic manner leads toward the realization that humanity shares not only a

Shintoism, Buddhism, Native Spirituality, Hinduism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, Janism and Judaism are offered as a path towards inter-religious dialogue and joint action on ecological issues. A study guide is available supporting the poster and its ethos. See, Faith and the Common Ground Staff, “Green Rule Study Guide: A Handbook to Discover the Sacredness of Creation within the World’s Faith Traditions,” accessed 14 June 2015, https://www.uri.org/files/resource_files/Green%20Rule%20Handbook.pdf.

⁴⁵⁹ E.g., Larry L. Rasmussen, *Earth Community, Earth Ethics* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996).

⁴⁶⁰ Cf., John Paul II, “Peace with God the Creator, Peace With all Creation,” #5; Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Gaia & God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth Healing* (San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins, 1992).

⁴⁶¹ Cf., Francisco J. Benzoni, *Ecological Ethics and the Human Soul: Aquinas, Whitehead, and the Metaphysics of Nature* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 178.

⁴⁶² Thomas Berry, “The Great Work,” chapter in *The Great Work*, 10.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴⁶⁴ Cf., Vandana Shiva, *Earth Democracy: Sustainability, Justice and Peace* (London, UK: Zed Books, 2006).

common humanity, but also a common fate with the entire natural world.⁴⁶⁵ Shared fate can then act to bridge diversities and build solidarity across the Earth community. Such insight encourages Christians, with further momentum from such theological concepts as the Trinity and the communion of the saints,⁴⁶⁶ to think in the longer term about sustainability issues, inclusive of the impact that the actions of humanity have on the legacy which we have inherited and will leave to future generations.⁴⁶⁷ Finally, following from a similar point made by Thomas Aquinas, that no one organism can reveal the splendour of God,⁴⁶⁸ it fosters a plurality of expression by embracing complexity, and diversity.

On a basic level, a green theo-ecoethical perspective thus upholds the value of the entire created world. Thus, creation is not a commodity to be disposed of or distributed according to human will. Rather, created matter is infused with spirit and is deserving of respect because of its quality as a window unto God, who is, according to an important strand of the biblical tradition, conceived of as being “all that is in all.”⁴⁶⁹ For Pierre Teilhard de Chardin,⁴⁷⁰ who inspired Thomas Berry,⁴⁷¹ features in the careers of prominent eco-ethical thinkers like John Grim, Dennis Patrick O’Hara and Mary Evelyn Tucker,⁴⁷² and is cited in

⁴⁶⁵ On the latter point see, Andrea Cohen-Kiener, *Claiming Earth as Common Ground: The Ecological Crisis Through the Lens of Faith* (Woodstock, VT: SkyLight Paths Publishing, 2009), 1.

⁴⁶⁶ E.g., Denis Edwards, *Ecology at the Heart of Faith: The Change of Heart that Leads to a New Way of Living on Earth* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2006), 122.

⁴⁶⁷ Cf., Benzoni, 178.

⁴⁶⁸ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), III, #97; cf., section 2.3.

⁴⁶⁹ E.g., Jer 23: 24, Sir 43: 27 and Eph 4: 6.

⁴⁷⁰ For an accessible social and intellectual biography of Teilhard see, Ursula King, *Spirit of Fire: The Life and Vision of Teilhard de Chardin* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996).

⁴⁷¹ E.g., *Thomas Berry: The Great Story*, VHS, produced by Nancy Stetson and Penny Morrell (Oley, PA: Bullfrog Films, 2002).

⁴⁷² For example, Berry, Grim, O’Hara, and Tucker have all published in *Teilhard Studies*. Examples of each authors’ work in this regard, Thomas Berry, “Teilhard in the Ecological Age,” *Teilhard Studies* 7 (Fall 1982), 1-33; John A. Grim and Andrea Cohen-Kiener, *Claiming Earth as Common Ground: The Ecological Crisis Through the Lens of Faith* (Woodstock, VT: SkyLight Paths Publishing, 2009), Mary Evelyn Tucker, “Teilhard’s Theory of Evolution,” *Teilhard Studies* 50 (Spring 2005), 1-22; Dennis Patrick O’Hara, “Merton, Berry, and Eco-Theology,” *Teilhard Studies* 37 (1999), 1-20; Mary Evelyn Tucker, “The Ecospirituality of Teilhard,” *Teilhard Studies* 51 (2005), 1-22.

Laudato Si',⁴⁷³ the universe is heading toward a reality characterized by a situation of unity in relationship, where all things will be drawn to God in love. In Teilhard's language, this destination is the "Omega Point,"⁴⁷⁴ the *telos* of all life, where God is not everything (the erasure of differentiation) but rather, is a sustaining and creative presence in all things. "God all *in everyone*," an theoethical formulation which Teilhard names as "essentially orthodox and Christian."⁴⁷⁵ It is with this assurance of the Catholic Christian nature of his thought that Teilhard ends his landmark book, *The Human Phenomenon*.⁴⁷⁶ In regards to establishing the orthodoxy of a Spirit-filled cosmos for Christians, with the advantage of avoiding the problems associated with heresy that dogged Teilhard during his lifetime,⁴⁷⁷ it is helpful when speaking about the spirituality of all things to be reminded of the Eastern Christian concept known in the West as 'panentheism,' which holds that God is in all things, as opposed to pantheism, which holds that God is all things.⁴⁷⁸ In green theo-ecoethical terms, all things are Spirit-filled, created and sustained by God who, to simplify Aquinas as cited above in this section, cannot be adequately understood without diversity beyond the human. If the theo-ethical validity of these principles is accepted, then all things, inclusive of diverse cultures, other religious traditions, other members of the Earth community, and all people deserve respect as a matter of principle.

⁴⁷³ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #83.

⁴⁷⁴ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man* (New York, NY: Perennial, 2002), 268-272.

⁴⁷⁵ Teilhard de Chardin, 307-309. Emphasis in original.

⁴⁷⁶ I.e., a better title for the book, *Le Phénomène Humain* (1955) commonly (or perhaps previously with an unfortunate lasting effect) translated as *The Phenomenon of Man* in English (see, note above).

⁴⁷⁷ See, Robert Nugent, *Silence Speaks: Teilhard de Chardin, Yves Congar, John Courtney Murray, and Thomas Merton* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2011), 13-32.

⁴⁷⁸ For a liberationist application of 'panentheism' in light of ecojustice concerns see, Boff, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 152-54.

In more expansive terms a green theo-ecoethical lens draws inspiration from the concept of cultures of peace,⁴⁷⁹ while also striving to maintain deep respect for diversity in its social and ecological expressions. This may seem a simple claim,⁴⁸⁰ and on a certain level should remain as such with cultures of peace and diversity informing each other in a mutually enhancing manner. However, a tangible link with cultures of peace might also be illustrated with reference to the Society of Jesus' property, which houses the Jesuit Ecology Project in Guelph, Ontario. The Ignatius Jesuit Centre of Guelph property includes a peace pole next to its 25 stations of the Cosmos (inspired by Thomas Berry),⁴⁸¹ stations of the cross inspired by John Paul's II 1991 description of a scriptural way of the cross, and stations of the World Religions.⁴⁸² The peace pole and these three sets of meditative aids, together with the natural surroundings, form a geography of peace centred on a deep green spiritual response to socio-ecological crises⁴⁸³ that respects religious diversity and physically links traditional Catholic piety to both peace and ecology in one place.⁴⁸⁴ It is with grounded hope for such tangible integration that respect for diversity informs a green theo-ecoethical lens.⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁷⁹ See, section 1.1.2.

⁴⁸⁰ Cf., McKay on simplicity and complexity see, section 3.2.

⁴⁸¹ The Ignatius Jesuit Centre is located just north of Guelph, Ontario on 600 acres of farmland, wetland, woodland, gardens, naturalized landscapes, and walking trails. In addition to a cemetery for Jesuits (where Bernard Lonergan is buried), the site houses a Community Shared Agriculture program, a certified-organic farm, an aboriginal sweat lodge complex, several hermitages, and the Jesuit Ecology Project. For a brief history of the Society of Jesus' property see, Ignatius Jesuit Centre of Guelph Staff, "150 Years of Ministry," accessed 10 July 2015, <http://www.ignatiusguelph.ca/about/milestones.html>. On the peace pole, see, Ignatius Jesuit Centre of Guelph Staff, "Project News: The Peace Pole Project," accessed 27 April 2013, <http://ignatiusguelph.ca/ecology/news.html>. Of particular interest in relation to the subject matter of this thesis is allocation of not only space but also events to pray for the Earth at the Peace Pole (in a manner that connects Earth and Peace). One such event directing people to meet at the Peace Pole, was advertised on a local site in Guelph. "Gather to pray with and for Earth. Walk together on the land in its changing seasons. Celebrate life and the gifts of Earth. Pray for the healing of our world." Visit Guelph Staff, "What's Happening: Earth Prayer," accessed 27 April 2013, <https://www.visitguelphwellington.ca/Modules/EventCalender/EventDetails.aspx?Info=19DUBdYdvgjzPeEo1Ke4iaruQqKJIDWH>.

⁴⁸² See, Marianne Karsh, "Stations of the Cosmos," *The Ignatius-Loyola News* (2009), accessed 27 April 2013, <http://oen.ca/uploads/2009Newsletter.pdf>.

⁴⁸³ See, section 10.2.

⁴⁸⁴ The Ignatius Jesuit Centre is often presented as a place of Peace, even in its logos and web presence. This a fuller vision of peace, as the centre's vision and mission statements put it succinctly: "The

8.3 Conclusion

This chapter explored respect for diversity and situated it as a principle within Christian moral traditions. It also suggested ways in which such respect for diversity informs a green theo-ecoethical lens. At this point, the thesis has now completed its most intensive form of literature review. It now has a basis for a lens with which to read Pope Francis' peace witness, *Evangelii Gaudium*, and *Laudato Si'*. These are the tasks to which this project now turns. However, as will become evident to the reader, the act of applying a green theo-ecoethical lens in this manner continues to influence and inform its construction. Indeed, the citations of Pope Francis' teachings in the preceding chapters demonstrates how colligating the lens' features is a continuous process presented over the course of this thesis. With that qualifier in mind, this research now moves to discuss Pope Francis' peace witness in dialogue with the example of his medieval namesake.

Ignatius Jesuit Centre of Guelph is a place of peace, grounded in the spirituality of St. Ignatius Loyola. We envision a global community of people who have integrated their inner and outer life with all Creation. ...We are committed to sharing the sacredness of Creation through the spiritual development and education of people, the fostering of community, and the care of the land." Ignatius Jesuit Centre of Guelph Staff, "Our Vision Statement" and "Our Mission," accessed 27 April 2013, <http://www.ignatiusguelph.ca/about/mission.html>.

⁴⁸⁵ On grounded hope in the relation to a green theo-ecoethical perspective cf., section 1.2.3.

Chapter Eight: St. Francis, Pope Francis, Substantive Peace, and a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens⁴⁸⁶

9.1 Introduction

Since the conclave that elected him concluded in March 2013, Pope Francis' approach to his new office has garnered much interest. Notably, in Francis' relatively short time as the Bishop of Rome, he has earned not only extensive coverage in the Catholic media, but also in secular outlets inclusive of a *Time* magazine person of the year title and a *Rolling Stone* cover story.⁴⁸⁷ Linking his early papacy to his medieval namesake through a green theo-ecoethical lens, this chapter brings select symbolic actions and teachings of Pope Francis into conversation with selected events from the life of St. Francis of Assisi and with the six principles from the above-mapped green theo-ecoethical lens. Those principles are employed to map and inform a green understanding of peace. This 'green peace' will be shown to be active and substantive in the contributions of both men focussed upon in this chapter. The present chapter ends with a cautious note of hope that, through his peace witness, Pope Francis may now be displaying the moral courage associated with his namesake, through greening the culture of the Roman Catholic Church to the benefit of fostering the incarnation of substantive peace in this world.

Employing a green theo-ecoethical perspective, the present chapter relates the figures of St. Francis and Pope Francis to a green understanding of peace. Green peace is defined as

⁴⁸⁶ An earlier version of this chapter, crafted after the thesis proposal stage of my ThD studies and with the present project in mind appeared as Christopher Hrynkow, "Transforming Cultures, Growing Substantive Peace: Pope Francis, St. Francis and a Green Peace," *Peace Studies Journal* 7, no.4 (December 2014), 25-38.

⁴⁸⁷ See, section 9.3.

a positive peace⁴⁸⁸ as informed and discerned through the green eco-theological lens. It is a substantive peace which is characterized by more than the mere absence of war,⁴⁸⁹ incarnated through the six green theo-ecoethical principles. To start this tri-partite conversation, this chapter now moves to a discussion of the medieval saint.

9.2 St. Francis and Ecology

Francis of Assisi's (1181-1226) reputation as a saintly follower of Jesus is such that he is sometimes called the 'last' or 'only' Christian.⁴⁹⁰ In a point that is returned to in the conclusion of this chapter,⁴⁹¹ he was originally named Giovanni (John). However, his father, Pietro, started calling him Francesco, invoking his family's French connection through trade and marriage. As a youth, Francis enjoyed popular Provencal music and fine clothes. He also aspired to be a famous knight. This ambition led to Francis being captured during a conflict with a neighbouring city state. His father was a shrewd businessman, and Francis was somewhat troublesome and costly to keep in his lifestyle. As a result and much to the frustration of his son's captors, Pietro purposely prolonged the negotiation of the ransom for over a year. Like so many great figures in the history of cultures of peace, being in prison gave Francis time to think. His subsequent thought process precipitated a profound moral conversion, which as Bernard Lonergan aptly notes, "changes the criterion of one's decisions and choices from satisfactions to values."⁴⁹²

⁴⁸⁸ Cf., Johan Galtung, *Theories of Peace: A Synthetic Approach to Peace Thinking* (Oslo, NO: International Peace Research Institute, 1967).

⁴⁸⁹ This point is developed in section 6.1. Here, nonviolence is recombined into a whole with the other six green theo-ecoethical principles.

⁴⁹⁰ William R. Cook, *Francis of Assisi: The Way of Poverty and Humility* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2008).

⁴⁹¹ See, section 9.6.

⁴⁹² Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 240.

After being ransomed, Francis started to incarnate an alternative set of solidarity-centric values. For example, he famously began to associate with lepers (not just those persons living with Hansen's disease but also with elephantiasis and other disfiguring conditions). Underpinning these efforts, he took inspiration for his emerging ethic of deep solidarity from the biblical description of the suffering servant. One day while he attended Mass, Francis heard the Gospel imperative to be perfect and, after going back to the priest for a second reading to make sure he had understood things properly, he forsook wealth to live on divine providence. Subsequently, Pietro sued his son to halt Francis' sale of the family's possessions. During the trial in Bishop Guido of Assisi's court, the young man returned all the remaining goods to his father, an act which left Francis nude. According to legend, the bishop then covered Francis with his cape to preserve modesty (symbolizing adoption by the church). Francis then took on the simple dress of the Umbrian peasantry and was granted the right to preach by being made a deacon. He preached in line with the decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council, affirming a path to salvation in communion with the pope in Rome, emphasizing the goodness of Earth community (understood as God's creation), and upholding values of penance, reform, and *caritas* (charity infused with love). Taking further inspiration from the example of the poor Christ,⁴⁹³ Francis sustained himself by working as a day laborer and begging. Further, he began to recommend that the brothers who were now gathering around him do the same.

Francis was lightly educated with skills in Umbrian and Latin.⁴⁹⁴ He was rather suspicious of overly academic theology, due to its prideful qualities. Nonetheless, Francis was supportive of the academic learning of St. Anthony of Padua, who numbered among the

⁴⁹³ Cf., Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #186.

⁴⁹⁴ Cook, *Francis of Assisi*.

first generation of Franciscan friars. Moreover, St. Francis made significant contributions to what today might be termed practical, applied or pastoral theology, both through his lived example and through contributions to a Christian spirituality of social justice and substantive peace. Famously, Francis heard a divine call to rebuild a crumbling church. At first he thought of this to be a particular call referring to San Damiano (a church, then in disrepair, near Assisi). Subsequently, both he and Pope Innocent III understood the experience as a call to rebuild the institutional church. This rebuilding was undertaken through a distinctive Franciscan spirituality based upon sharing the Gospel message through social action and lived example rather than by merely preaching with words.⁴⁹⁵ As a result of this orientation, according to his first biographer, Thomas of Celano, Francis was said to have made a tongue of his body.⁴⁹⁶ This characterization is likely the origin of the apocryphal summative dictum of Francis' approach to Christian faith, 'Preach the Gospel, use words if necessary,' which connects discipleship dedicated to Jesus with service and *caritas* for the social and larger communities.⁴⁹⁷

From a green theo-ecoethical perspective, it is important to emphasize that the early Franciscan movement was not solely a male endeavor. From the period, there is the prime example of St. Clare of Assisi,⁴⁹⁸ who, herself, experienced a profound moral conversion. She came from a wealthy Umbrian family known for their philanthropy. Clare was mentored by Francis. As part of the act of leaving her family to devote herself to following Jesus in the

⁴⁹⁵ Cf., Lawrence S. Cunningham, *Francis of Assisi: Performing the Gospel of Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2004).

⁴⁹⁶ See, Thomas of Celano, *St. Francis of Assisi: First and Second Life of St. Francis With Selections from the Treatise on the Miracles of Blessed Francis*, trans. Placid Hermann (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1963).

⁴⁹⁷ For example of this mantra employed in a green activist context, see, Steven Bouma-Prediger, *For the Beauty of the Earth: A Christian Vision for Creation Care* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 183.

⁴⁹⁸ See, Dawn M. Nothwehr, *Ecological Footprints: An Essential Franciscan Guide for Faith and Sustainable Living* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012).

style of the new movement, she shaved her head, which made her undesirable for marriage. Clare went to live at San Damiano and made her own distinctive contributions to Franciscan spirituality and liturgy, writing the Rule for the ‘Poor Clares.’ Clare outlived Francis by thirty years and recruited many women, including her sister and mother, to Franciscan life.⁴⁹⁹

Both Clare and Francis provide inspiration for those working toward peace and upholding the integrity of the ecological world today.⁵⁰⁰ For example, Leonardo Boff characterized Francis as a model for human liberation.⁵⁰¹ For his part, Cardinal Bergoglio,⁵⁰² shading Francis as a particular type of reformer, tellingly said at the end of the last decade that

in the history of the Catholic Church the true reformers are the saints. They are the true reformers, those that change, transform, carry forward and resurrect the spiritual path. ...Francis of Assisi contributed an entire concept about poverty to Christianity in the face of wealth, pride and vanity of the civil and ecclesial powers of the time. He carried out a mysticism of poverty, of dispossession and he has changed history.⁵⁰³

In his lifetime, St. Francis’ moral conversion meant he came to reject militarism. Further, he tried to broker peace on a number of occasions, including between Western Christians and the Sultan of Egypt during his time in the Middle East. Francis’ model of simple living and practicing hospitality, co-living, respect, tolerance, and communality is considered peaceful by many.⁵⁰⁴ These virtues can be seen in Boff’s favored definition of peace taken from the cross-culturally and collaboratively drafted, *Earth Charter*. “Peace is the wholeness created by right relationships with oneself, other persons, other cultures, other

⁴⁹⁹ For an interesting treatment of Clare’s life written in anticipation of the 750th anniversary of her birth, see, Margaret Carney, *The First Franciscan Woman: Clare of Assisi & Her Form of Life* (Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 1993).

⁵⁰⁰ Cf., Ilia Delio, *A Franciscan View of Creation: Learning to Live in a Sacramental World* (St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 2012).

⁵⁰¹ Cf., Boff, *Francis of Assisi*.

⁵⁰² See, section 9.3.

⁵⁰³ Bergoglio in Bergoglio and Skorka, 231.

⁵⁰⁴ Cf., Boff, *Virtues for Another Possible World*.

life, Earth, and the larger whole of which all are a part.”⁵⁰⁵ Similarly, as Dawn Nothwehr highlights, the inviolable nature of human dignity is at the heart of Franciscan views of personhood.⁵⁰⁶ Thus, many within the Franciscan tradition hold that structures or actions that do not simultaneously enhance relationships with creation and respect human dignity will not foster substantive peace and justice.⁵⁰⁷

When viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, this orientation illustrates that the story of Francis preaching to the birds is more than just an analogy. In the “Canticle of the Sun,” Francis of Assisi extended sisterhood and brotherhood to other members of the Earth community.⁵⁰⁸ He considered both humans and the rest of the Earth community to be children of God, fostering an ethic supportive of integral peace.⁵⁰⁹ Flowing from this worldview, his above-mentioned contemporary biographer, Thomas of Celano, reported that Francis walked respectfully over stones (because Christ had been called a stone), collected worms from the ground to prevent their deaths, and provided bees with sweetened water in the winter.⁵¹⁰ Citing such compassionate acts, Boff surmises that Francis found another way of relating to the rest of the Earth community. “Not living over and above these entities, not dominating these entities.”⁵¹¹ This may be considered a fine moral foundation from which to integrate the green theo-ecoethical principles.⁵¹²

⁵⁰⁵ Earth Charter Commission, 3.

⁵⁰⁶ See, Dawn M. Nothwehr, *The Franciscan View of the Human Person: Some Central Elements* (St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 2012).

⁵⁰⁷ Iliia Delio, “Is Creation Really Good? Bonaventure’s Position,” *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 83, no.1 (2009): 3-22.

⁵⁰⁸ Francis of Assisi, “The Canticle of the Sun,” in *Praying With Saint Francis*, trans. Regis J. Armstrong and Ignatius C. Brady (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), 3-4.

⁵⁰⁹ Cf., Boff, *The Prayer of Saint Francis*.

⁵¹⁰ See, Thomas of Celano.

⁵¹¹ Boff, *Virtues for Another Possible World*, 155.

⁵¹² This point is further developed below.

9.3 Pope Francis: Transforming Cultures toward Embracing a Fuller Understanding of ‘Green’

Pope Francis’ episcopal motto, *miserando atque eligendo* (lowly but chosen),⁵¹³ reflects a similar challenge to the ethics of domination as the one set by his medieval namesake. In light of this motto, it is worth considering how Pope Francis thought about leadership prior to assuming his present role.

I completely agree with the notion of humility. I also like to use the word *meekness*, which does not mean weakness. A religious leader can be very strong, very firm, but without exercising aggression. Jesus says that the one who rules must be like a servant. For me, that idea is valid for the religious person in any denomination. The true power of religious leadership comes from service. When the religious person stops serving, he begins to transform into a mere manager. ...The religious leader shares with, suffers with, and serves his brothers.⁵¹⁴

At the beginning of March 2013, the man who spoke these words four years earlier, Jorge Mario Cardinal Bergoglio, Archbishop of Buenos Aires, was 76 years old and his mandatory post-75 resignation letter was on file in the Vatican. He is now the 266th pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church. Though South American by birth, he has substantial ties to the country that surrounds the headquarters of his church. Pope Francis’ father emigrated from Italy and worked for a railway in Argentina as an accountant. His mother, a homemaker for five children, was a second generation Italian-Argentinean.⁵¹⁵ In an unusual move, Bergoglio chose a wholly new regal name. Indeed, his papacy is marked by some significant firsts. He is the first non-European to hold the papal office in over a millennium. Francis is the first pope from the ‘New World’ and the first from the Southern Hemisphere. He is also the first member of the Society of Jesus (the religious order commonly known as the Jesuits) to take

⁵¹³ It is worthwhile highlighting that this phrase has deep resonance also for Jewish people. Rabbi Claudio Jodorkovsky, “Contribution to Saskatoon Jewish-Christian Dialogue,” (8 June 2015), Weekly Lunch and Learn Group, Hosted by Congregation Agudas Israel, Saskatoon, SK.

⁵¹⁴ Bergoglio in Bergoglio and Skorka, 230.

⁵¹⁵ L’Osservatore Romano Staff, “Biography the Holy Father: Francis,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2013), accessed 10 June 2015, <http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/biography/documents/papa-francesco-biografia-bergoglio.html>.

the papal office.⁵¹⁶ As a younger priest, Bergoglio was Jesuit Provincial in Argentina, where he had to balance conservative politics with the social justice concerns and projects associated with liberation theologians. After leaving his leadership role in the wake of the controversy over his handling of Jesuit liberationists' imprisonment by the military regime, Bergoglio reinvented himself and became known for his humble nature and solidarity with those living in poverty. When serving as archbishop, he took public transit in Buenos Aires, even to visit the barrios, and helped care for differently-abled Jesuits with whom he lived in community. One Latin American Jesuit shared with the author's friend that when sent on business to the cathedral in Buenos Aires, he mistook Bergoglio for the doorman because the archbishop was so helpful and welcoming.⁵¹⁷

Other pastoral traits and orientations that emerge as remarkable when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens are evident in the early days of Francis' papacy. The new pope has placed more emphasis on the local church, repeatedly favouring identifying his office as that of Bishop of Rome as opposed to universal pontiff. This pattern started with Francis' initial words as pope, an apostolic blessing to the city and the world, broadcast live around the world, which set the tone for a papacy where the post-holder purposely acknowledges his dependence on other Catholics and people of good will in the wider world.⁵¹⁸ Recalling the example of the medieval saint,⁵¹⁹ though in a distinct and contemporary manner, Pope Francis has taught, through both word and action, solidarity with people (inclusive of

⁵¹⁶ On the Canadian Jesuits involvement in what this thesis would label 'green theo-ecoethical orthopraxis,' cf. section 8.2.

⁵¹⁷ Eduardo Soto Parra, "Personal Communication," 16 May 2013.

⁵¹⁸ Pope Francis, "Apostolic Blessing Urbi et Orbi: First Greeting of The Holy Father Pope Francis," (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 13 March 2013), accessed 9 June 2015, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2013/march/documents/papa-francesco_20130313_benedizione-urbi-et-orbi.html.

⁵¹⁹ See, section 9.2.

children and those on the margins of society) and displayed a concomitant concern for those living in poverty.

He has also advocated for a greater, if lacking in gender justice, role for women in Roman Catholic life, recommending tapping into what he names as the “incisive contribution of women’s genius” for building peace and harmony in families and with all of humanity.⁵²⁰ However, this praise for women’s peacebuilding aptitude has not transferred into changing the doctrine that the Church can only ordain men.⁵²¹ Francis has also initiated a process to reform the Curia, moving away from a centralization of the administrative power of the Catholic Church in Rome. He asked priests and bishops to be pastors who “take on ‘the smell of the sheep’.”⁵²² His appointment of a council of like-minded cardinals may be taken as an indication that the papal office is exploring avenues for deeper consultation. Additionally, Francis is personifying a less scripted papacy. For example, he frequently drops in with the minimum required notice in order to share meals and conversation with religious communities and workers.

These orientations have been marked further by a series of key symbolic actions through which Francis has been moving toward a simpler papacy. He literally refused to dawn the cape of power immediately after being elected. Moreover, he asserted that the papal apartments were too big and moved to an alternative location (a priests’ residence) at the edge of the Vatican, which allows him better access to lay people. Previously, the layout of the papal apartments had required visitors to pass through a buffer of Curial officials and

⁵²⁰ Pope Francis, “Address of Pope Francis to the Participants in the Italian National Congress Sponsored by the Italian Women’s Centre,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 25 January 2014), accessed 14 June 2015, https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/january/documents/papa-francesco_20140125_centro-italiano-femminile.html.

⁵²¹ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #104.

⁵²² *Ibid.*, #24. See, also section 10.3.2.

offices in order to meet with the pope. Francis also repeatedly urges people to pray with and for him. This was a feature of his ministry before the papal election, and one invoked in his first public appearance in the balcony in St. Peter's Square after the last conclave.⁵²³

Moreover, Francis has asked Catholics and instructed all clergy to see things through the eyes of the poor in a global perspective.⁵²⁴ In line with this imperative, he has directed papal nuncios to report on potential candidates for bishoprics in their home countries based on criteria including an inward spirit of poverty, pastoral skills, and external simplicity.⁵²⁵ Similarly, he has refused to travel in a papal limousine and is generally moving the papacy away from opulent symbols of power, including red slippers and ermine stoles. This is part of a general orientation of the Catholic Church out toward the world, as evidenced by his instructions to the newly appointed Vatican almoner. "You can sell your desk. You don't need it. You need to get out of the Vatican. Don't wait for people to come ringing. You need to go out and look for the poor."⁵²⁶ Francis' efforts to change the culture of the Vatican from one of consumption to one of solidarity with people living in poverty is reflected in luxury restaurants around the Vatican experiencing a marked decline in their bottom lines as a result of the loss of business from Curial officials.⁵²⁷ Although the February 2014 *Rolling Stone* cover story on the new pontiff is subtitled "the times they are a-changin',"⁵²⁸ Francis has yet to revise significant Roman Catholic doctrine. Nonetheless, when viewed through a green

⁵²³ Francis, "Apostolic Blessing Urbi et Orbi,"

⁵²⁴ Cf., section 11.2.3.

⁵²⁵ Cindy Wooden, "Pope Tells Nuncios to Help him Find New Bishops who are Meek, Merciful," *Catholic News Service* (21 June 2013), accessed 29 June 2015, <http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/1302707.htm>.

⁵²⁶ Konrad Krajewski quoted in Francis Phillips, "Pope Francis Wants a Church that is not Chained to a Desk," (6 December 2013), accessed 30 June 2015, <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/commentandblogs/2013/12/06/pope-francis-wants-a-church-that-isnt-chained-to-a-desk/>.

⁵²⁷ Luis Melo, "Personal Communication," 13 May 2014.

⁵²⁸ Mark Binelli, "Pope Francis: The Times They Are A-Changin'," *Rolling Stone* (February 2014), accessed 13 August 2014, <http://www.rollingstone.com/culture/news/pope-francis-the-times-they-are-a-changin-20140128>.

theo-ecoethical lens, he might be understood as fostering a remarkable cultural transformation in his church.

When viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, his choice of regal name is arguably the most telling symbolic action from the new papacy. Dispelling then current mumblings that his regal name might not be invoking the poor man of Assisi, Pope Francis tells the story of his selection with reference to a conversation with the Brazilian Cardinal, Claudio Hummes. During a time in the conclave when it seemed “a bit dangerous” he might win the papal election, Francis recalls Hummes, “hugged me. He kissed me. He said don’t forget about the poor...and that’s how in my heart came the name Francis of Assisi,... the man of the poor, the man of peace. The man who loved and cared for creation, and we don’t have a very good relationship with creation, do we? ...The man who gives us this spirit of peace, the poor man who wanted a poor church. ...Oh, how I would like a poor Church, and for the poor.”⁵²⁹ In this simple series of statements, we have the basis to assert that Francis is moving toward what has been unfolded above as a fuller understanding of the term ‘green.’⁵³⁰

9.4 Employing a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens to Map the Nourishing Content of Substantive Peace

This chapter proposes that a green theo-ecoethical lens is an appropriate hermeneutical tool with which to view St. Francis’ and Pope Francis’ contributions to substantive peace. This position is supported via a foundational (and titular) contention of

⁵²⁹ Francis, “Unscripted Remarks to Members of the Communications Media,” Quoted in Nicole Winfield and Daniela Petroff, “Francis Gives Intimate Glimpses of Conclave and Charms Journalists,” (16 March 2013), *Toronto Star*, accessed 10 June 2015, http://www.thestar.com/news/world/pope/2013/03/16/francis_gives_intimate_glimpses_of_conclave_and_charms_journalists.html; cf., Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #49; Francis, *Laudato Si’* #10.

⁵³⁰ See, Chapters One to Seven. This point is further developed in section 9.5.

this thesis that “it should not be that easy using green.”⁵³¹ As a remedy, the principles colligated in the form of a green theo-ecoethical lens offer an integrated vision of the nourishing content of both ‘green’ and ‘peace.’ As such, green peace is understood as a form of substantive peace that encompasses positive incarnations of each of the principles, which foster diverse and mutuality-enhancing expressions of cultures of peace. Indeed, in the terms of this thesis, as a matter of definition, there can be no substantive peace without an integral green peace; today there can be no enduring, emancipatory peace without the concomitant creative functioning of the green theo-ecoethical principles. In this light, the present chapter now moves to briefly explore how Pope Francis and the Franciscan tradition can be understood to inform and incarnate these principles.

9.5 A Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens, Pope Francis, and the Franciscan Tradition

9.5.1 Ecological Wisdom

Realizing the connections among all members of the Earth community is paramount to ecological wisdom. Simple living and care for the natural world are important markers of such wisdom. As evidenced in this chapter, both the Franciscan tradition and Pope Francis have recognized these connections. Further, they can serve as important models for people making efforts to live within ecological limits. In green theo-ecoethical terms, ecological wisdom can then be understood as expressed through peace with God, peace with human neighbours, and peace with all creation.⁵³² Furthermore, in some ways, Pope Francis’ approach to change within the Roman Catholic Church displays elements of the

⁵³¹ See, section 12.2.

⁵³² See, section 10.2.

precautionary approach,⁵³³ which is so important to ecological wisdom, moving forward slowly with love when considering change. This is one way to read the lengthy, careful, and consultative drafting process of Francis' first social encyclical, *Laudato Si'*,⁵³⁴ which helps to expand access to and deepen the available understandings of ecological wisdom as the pope solidifies his views on human-Earth relationships.

However, as it grows from the green theo-ecoethical lens mapped above, it is crucial to emphasize that 'green peace' as employed in this thesis is about more than narrowly defined environmental issues. Many ecotheologians, peace and conflict studies practitioners, and ecojustice advocates, the author of this thesis included, have noted that the papal office has moved under Pope Francis toward a deeper embrace of recognizing deep interdependence as a moral category. Now, the grounded hope is for additional tangible and positive consequences for the entire Earth community. As such, a green theo-ecoethical perspective hopes that this movement will take place on not only the level of insight but also be incarnated in additional, substantive, and concrete actions. An example could be the Vatican divesting from fossil fuels while simultaneously reinvesting in projects that support socio-ecological flourishing.⁵³⁵

9.5.2 Social Justice

Regarding social justice, peace theorists have long recognized that a society characterized by injustice and organized in a manner that perpetuates unjust forms of violence reduces the chances for the majority of people to flourish. The Franciscan tradition

⁵³³ See, section 3.1.

⁵³⁴ On the drafting process that preceded *Laudato Si'* see, Christa Pongratz-Lippitt, "Rainforest Bishop to Contribute to Forthcoming 'Green Encyclical'," *The Tablet* (2014), 14 August 2014, <http://www.thetablet.co.uk/news/663/0/rainforest-bishop-to-contribute-to-forthcoming-green-encyclical>.

⁵³⁵ Cf., section 7.2.

characteristically favoured social justice, something that is sometimes lost when St. Francis is commoditized to the point of being reduced to a mere garden ornament.⁵³⁶ In this light, as further informed by a green theo-ecoethical lens, it is telling that Pope Francis is advocating a Church for the poor within a global perspective. Moreover, this orientation is connected to his understanding of positive peace.⁵³⁷ As he writes when discussing duties for peace,

in the first place, this duty falls to those who are most privileged. Their obligations are rooted in human and supernatural fraternity and are manifested in three ways: the *duty of solidarity*, which requires the richer nations to assist the less developed; the *duty of social justice*, which requires the realignment of relationships between stronger and weaker peoples in terms of greater fairness; and the *duty of universal charity*, which entails the promotion of a more humane world for all, a world in which each has something to give and to receive, without the progress of the one constituting an obstacle to the development of the other.⁵³⁸

Here, a prophetic voice for social justice and the common good is not solely about justice within a given society but also touches on a form of equality within the community of nations that ultimately will benefit the whole Earth community. In this light and from a green theo-ecoethical perspective, Francis is moving toward making the institutional cultures of Catholicism reflect the poor and, thereby, more fully incarnate principles of integral social justice.

⁵³⁶ Dawn Nothwehr for example, worries about how St. Francis' ornaments can mark a shallow commoditisation of something quite substantive in terms of Francis of Assisi's faith witness for living in world that she characterizes as "more than your garden variety." See, Nothwehr, *Ecological Footprints*, 74.

⁵³⁷ See, section 6.1.

⁵³⁸ Pope Francis, "Message of His Holiness Francis for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 1 January 2014: Fraternity, The Foundation and Pathway to Peace," (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 8 December 2013), #4, accessed 11 June 2015, https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/peace/documents/papa-francesco_20131208_messaggio-xlvi-giornata-mondiale-pace-2014.html.

9.5.3 Participatory Democracy

Due to a shared concern for opening spaces for people to realize their fullest possible potential, positive peace and wide participation are intimately linked for peace theorists.⁵³⁹ St. Francis encouraged a great emancipation of the Christian community by bringing the gospel to the marginalized and preaching to non-human animals. The former Franciscan priest, Leonardo Boff, reads this approach as setting a foundation for a socio-cosmic democracy, which includes participation and voice for all members of the Earth community.⁵⁴⁰ Green political theorists also propose ways to allow all people to participate in decision-making, accountability and transparency of governance when they invoke participatory democracy.⁵⁴¹ These outcomes are supported by a deeply egalitarian society, which values the dignity of all participants so that power does not corrupt socio-political processes. In contrast, it is often noted that the Catholic Church is not a democracy.⁵⁴² However, when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, the possibilities for an organization with a 1.2 billion members with a presence in diverse contexts around the world are scintillating for their potential to integrate participatory insights.⁵⁴³ More than a glimmer of this potential is recognizable in the collegiality of Vatican II,⁵⁴⁴ which Francis has affirmed he supports. Moreover, Pope Francis' current orientation toward meaningful consultation may represent a significant move in this regard. For example, Pope Francis has challenged the Bishops of Latin America with the following series of questions, ending with a clear hint on how they ought to be answered: "Is pastoral discernment a habitual criterion,

⁵³⁹ E.g., Galtung, *Theories of Peace*, 44.

⁵⁴⁰ See, the discussion of Boff in section 5.2.

⁵⁴¹ Cf., Robyn Eckersley, *The Green State: Rethinking Democracy and Sovereignty* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004).

⁵⁴² This point is developed in section 5.1.

⁵⁴³ BBC Staff, "How Many Roman Catholics are there in the World?" (13 March 2013), accessed 1 June 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-21443313>.

⁵⁴⁴ Cf., De Roo, *Chronicles of a Vatican II Bishop*.

through the use of Diocesan Councils? Do such Councils and Parish Councils, whether pastoral or financial, provide real opportunities for lay people to participate in pastoral consultation, organization and planning? The good functioning of these Councils is critical. I believe that on this score, we are far behind.”⁵⁴⁵ In a point that this thesis will return to below, even more significant when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, is his advocacy for ‘cultures of encounter and dialogue.’⁵⁴⁶

9.5.4 Nonviolence

Beyond, but sometimes inclusive of diplomatic peacemaking, nonviolent solutions require creativity, solidarity, participation, and commitment to fostering cultures of peace.⁵⁴⁷ As this chapter will explore in greater depth below,⁵⁴⁸ both St. Francis and Pope Francis can be considered models in this regard. For example, St. Francis was often in accord with Wink’s reflection on creative nonviolence, working for systematic change through highly symbolic and disruptive acts like the aforementioned returning of his possessions to his father to point of nakedness. In the run up to the nonviolent, “Day of Prayer and Fasting for Peace in Syria” (September 2013), Francis said the event was undertaken, “in a spirit of penitence, to ask from God this great gift [of peace] for the beloved Syrian nation and for all the situations of conflict and violence in the world.”⁵⁴⁹ He continued in the same vein when

⁵⁴⁵ Pope Francis, “Address to the Leadership of the Episcopal Conferences of Latin America during the General Coordination Meeting,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 28 July 2013), #4, accessed 1 July 2015, https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2013/july/documents/papa-francesco_20130728_gmg-celam-rio.html.

⁵⁴⁶ E.g., section 10.3.4.

⁵⁴⁷ See, section 1.2.2.

⁵⁴⁸ See, section 9.6.

⁵⁴⁹ Pope Francis, “Angelus, St. Peter’s Square, Sunday, September 1, 2013,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1 September 2013), accessed 11 June 2015, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2013/documents/papa-francesco_angelus_20130901.html.

during his 2014 Easter message, which was broadcast around the world, he extolled the need for peace in Ukraine, Syria, Venezuela, South Sudan, and the Central African Republic.⁵⁵⁰

Francis further upheld the importance of substantive peace in relation to the situation of religious minorities in Northern Iraq, condemning the oppression and “intolerable suffering of those who only wish to live in peace, harmony and freedom in the land of their forefathers.”⁵⁵¹ At the same time (August 2014), Pope Francis’ first visit to Asia was explicitly themed around peace and reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula. Noteworthy when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens is that Pope Francis has a full conception of peace, which includes both positive and negative dimensions.⁵⁵² In related insight, he is also cognizant of the reach of violence. When viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, this multi-level awareness comes into focus in the following comments, as they invoke enabling mechanisms that allow people to reach toward their full potential like respect, love, relational orientation toward others, deep empathy for suffering, and the *sine qua non* of invoking the divine to justify violence, which are sourced from an address given during Francis’ visit to the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem as part of his May 2014 pilgrimage to the Holy Land. “May we respect and love one another as brothers and sisters! May we learn to understand the sufferings of others! May no one abuse the name of God through violence!”⁵⁵³

⁵⁵⁰ Pope Francis, “Urbi et Orbi Message of Pope Francis, Easter 2014,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 20 April 2014), accessed 14 June 2015, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/urbi/documents/papa-francesco_20140420_urbi-et-orbi-pasqua.html.

⁵⁵¹ Pope Francis, “Letter of the Holy Father to the Secretary General of the United Nations Organization Concerning the Situation in Northern Iraq,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 9 August 2014), accessed 14 June 2015, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/letters/2014/documents/papa-francesco_20140809_lettera-ban-ki-moon-iraq.html.

⁵⁵² In Galtung’s view negative peace involves direct violence. To cite some examples: murder, physical harm, and war. See, section 6.1.

⁵⁵³ Pope Francis, “Visit to Grand Mufti of Jerusalem: Address of Pope Francis,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 26 May 2014), accessed 14 June 2015, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/may/documents/papa-francesco_20140526_terra-santa-gran-mufti-jerusalem.html.

9.5.5 Sustainability

For peace to be sustainable, it requires a long term view that fosters positive relationships.⁵⁵⁴ St. Francis’ renunciation of the culture of consumption and militarism fosters a method for simple living that represents a deeply sustainable way to go about being faithful in the world as people learn to live with less and share what they have with other. In the same spirit, Pope Francis has condemned a “throwaway culture” that wastes life and food,⁵⁵⁵ damaging people and the ecological world. Indeed, in a point that will be developed in the next two chapters, Francis’ main social teaching documents have supported an ethic of deep sustainability.⁵⁵⁶ This orientation has transferred to other media. In an address to diplomats at the Vatican, Francis concludes with his “wish to mention another threat to peace, which arises from the greedy exploitation of environmental resources. ...Here too what is crucial is responsibility on the part of all in pursuing, in a spirit of fraternity, policies respectful of this earth which is our common home.”⁵⁵⁷ As evidenced in this chapter,⁵⁵⁸ he also offers a recipe for sustainable and resilient communities in advocating for bringing those persons on the margins of society into relationship with everyone. Recalling the manifold contributions of Dom Hélder Câmara,⁵⁵⁹ participation in such a shift helps to remove alienation from any violent revolutionary mix and thus is a form of peacebuilding in and of itself.

⁵⁵⁴ Cf., section 1.1.2.

⁵⁵⁵ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #53. See, also section 10.3.5.

⁵⁵⁶ See, in particular, sections 10.3.5 and 11.2.5.

⁵⁵⁷ Pope Francis, “Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to Members of the Diplomatic Corps Accredited to the Holy See,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 13 January 2014), accessed 14 June 2015, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/january/documents/papa-francesco_20140113_corpo-diplomatico.html. Note the language of “common home” here, which is taken up in *Laudato Si’*. See, Chapter Ten.

⁵⁵⁸ See, section 9.3.

⁵⁵⁹ See, section 6.1.

9.5.6 Respect for Diversity

In green theo-ecoethical ‘peace ecology’ terms,⁵⁶⁰ respect for diversity is often centered on respect for the dignity of the human person and the integrity of creation.⁵⁶¹ St. Francis’ close association with animals, people of different classes, diverse cultures and non-Christian religions has been brought forward as personifying an embrace of diversity. Though without changing Roman Catholic doctrine on same sex relationships, Pope Francis in his person has been modeling respect for diversity, perhaps most famously stating, “If someone is gay and he searches for the Lord and has good will, who am I to judge? ...The tendency [to homosexuality] is not the problem. ...They’re our brothers.”⁵⁶² It was these unscripted remarks, whose origins lie in an admittedly gendered response to a reporter’s question during an impromptu press conference on the plane ride back from his trip to Brazil for World Youth Day (July 2013), which are indicative of the noteworthy charisma of the present pope. These comments also tipped the balance in favor of Francis earning *Time* magazine’s person of the year for 2013.⁵⁶³ The subtitle of the *Time* cover story named him as the “people’s pope.”⁵⁶⁴ Adding layers to such a description and invoking the symbolism of Jesus’ model of servant-leadership,⁵⁶⁵ Pope Francis has also washed the feet of young

⁵⁶⁰ For a recent treatment of Peace Ecology from a Peace and Justice Studies perspective see, Randall Amster, *Peace Ecology: Deep Solutions in an Age of Water Scarcity and War* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm, 2015).

⁵⁶¹ Cf., Delio, “Is Creation Really Good?”; Boff, *Virtues for Another Possible World*.

⁵⁶² Pope Francis, “Press Conference Remarks,” quoted in John L. Allen, Jr, “Pope on Homosexuals: ‘Who am I to Judge?’” (29 July 2013), accessed 14 August 2014, <http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/pope-homosexuals-who-am-i-judge>.

⁵⁶³ Nancy Gibbs, “Pope Francis, The Choice,” (11 December 2013), *Time*, accessed 1 July 2015, <http://poy.time.com/2013/12/11/pope-francis-the-choice/>.

⁵⁶⁴ Howard Chua-Eoan and Elizabeth Dias, “Pope Francis, The People’s Pope,” (11 December 2013), *Time*, accessed 13 August 2014, <http://poy.time.com/2013/12/11/person-of-the-year-pope-francis-the-peoples-pope/?iid=poy-main-lead>.

⁵⁶⁵ Employing terminology relevant to a green theo-ecoethical lens Efrain Agosto emphasizes: “Jesus offers his disciples [and, by extension, the larger community] a servant leadership that is noble because it comes from the directive of the Divine Creator. It is not self-serving, but other-serving.” Efrain Agosto, *Servant Leadership: Jesus and Paul* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2005), 49.

prisoners, including those of a Muslim girl,⁵⁶⁶ and, in 2001, of persons living with AIDS in both Italy and Argentina.⁵⁶⁷ Ultimately, respect for diversity is at the heart of the pastoral charm of both St. Francis and Pope Francis.

In another noteworthy unscripted moment that emerges as significant when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, in November 2013, Pope Francis spontaneously embraced Vinicio Riva, who is a person living with neurofibromatosis, during a general audience in St. Peter's Square.⁵⁶⁸ This and other episodes in the new papacy demonstrate an emancipatory approach to diversity. Further, they recall the story of St. Francis' moral conversion and subsequent courage in embracing persons living with leprosy, at a time when the disease was assumed to be highly contagious and people showing symptoms were frequently ostracized.⁵⁶⁹ Citing a foundation for such moral conversion, Pope Francis has written that peace is an "*opus solidaritatis*" growing from our status as relational beings.⁵⁷⁰ Ultimately, it is this vision of solidarity as permeating integral relationships, though not without its flaws in either case, that underlies the premise that both the Franciscan tradition and Pope Francis offer resources for fostering substantive peace in our time.

⁵⁶⁶ See, Harriet Alexander, "Pope Washes Feet of Young Muslim Woman Prisoner in Unprecedented Twist on Maundy Thursday," (28 March 2013), accessed 3 July 2015, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/the-pope/9960168/Pope-washes-feeet-of-young-Muslim-woman-prisoner-in-unprecedented-twist-on-Maundy-Thursday.html>.

⁵⁶⁷ See, CBS News Staff, "Pope Francis's Sympathy to AIDS Victims, Drug Addicts," (13 March 2013), accessed 3 July 2015, <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/pope-francis-sympathy-to-drug-addicts-aids-victims/>.

⁵⁶⁸ See, Carol Kuruvilla, "Disfigured Man Speaks out about Pope's Loving Embrace: I felt like I was in Paradise," (26 November 2013), accessed 3 July 2015, <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/disfigured-man-speaks-pope-loving-embrace-article-1.1529537>.

⁵⁶⁹ Cf., Nothwehr, *Ecological Footprints*, 85; 176.

⁵⁷⁰ Francis, "Fraternity, The Foundation and Pathway to Peace," #4.

9.6 Conclusion: St. Francis, Pope Francis, and Peacemaking through a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens

When viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, one of the most well-known stories from the life of St. Francis points to his remarkable aptitude for peacemaking. It tells of him transforming a situation where the people of the village of Gubbio were caught in an apparently intractable conflict with a wolf who seemed to want to eat all the villagers. At the same time, the villagers wished to kill the wolf. Despite the extreme hostility, Francis was able to craft a mutually-enhancing peace agreement between the wolf and the people of Gubbio.⁵⁷¹ This was a forgiveness-based solution that saw the wolf live out the rest of his days in the community. Whether apocryphal or not, in light of a green theo-ecoethical lens, the power of this story is that St. Francis helped to break a spiral of violence.⁵⁷² Furthermore, it is significant that the subsequent peace transformed the villagers' orientation toward its most feared enemy as presented poignantly by their welcoming the wolf to live among them. When viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, this noteworthy outcome demonstrates how the medieval saint's legacy can provide inspiration for peacemaking that includes both social and ecological dimensions.

Pope Francis has also displayed the aptitude of a peacemaker who addresses the principles that are foundational for a green theo-ecoethical lens. In terms of geo-politics, this assertion can be supported by referencing Pope Francis' peacebuilding discussions with Vladimir Putin over Syria and Ukraine.⁵⁷³ In both cases, Francis encouraged resolution of the

⁵⁷¹ For a version of the story of Francis, the wolf, and the people of Gubbio see, Thomas Okey, trans., *The Little Flowers of St. Francis* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2003), 34-36.

⁵⁷² See, section 6.1.

⁵⁷³ See, RT News Staff, "Putin and Pope Francis's First Meeting Focuses on Christians' Plight in Mideast," (13 November 2013), accessed 3 July 2015, <http://rt.com/news/putin-pope-christians-east-274/>; see, Stephanie Kirchgaessner, "Pope Francis tells Putin: 'Sincere' Peace Efforts Needed for Ukraine," (10 June 2015), accessed 3 July 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/10/pope-francis-putin-sincere-peace-effort-ukraine-russia-vatican>.

conflict in manner that respected principles of social justice and the common good. In addition, the pontiff publicly offered “his house” at the Vatican to Palestinian and Israeli leaders as a place of mutual prayer for peace during his May 2014 visit to the Holy Land. Despite rising tensions, which at the time of writing have boiled over into increased levels of direct violence,⁵⁷⁴ this invitation was virtually impossible to decline. As a result, June 2014 brought images of the Presidents of Palestine and Israel, Mahmoud Abbas and Shimon Peres, embracing in the Vatican gardens with Pope Francis looking on. That occasion also included the participation of the (Eastern Orthodox) Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, who joined with Francis, Abbas, and Peres, in jointly employing shovels to contribute to the planting of an Olive Tree in the Vatican gardens,⁵⁷⁵ symbolically grounding the hope for peace in the Middle East. Then, the Pope and Ecumenical Patriarch, along with other Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders, all joined together in reciting multi-linguistic prayers representing their faith traditions’ intentions for “peace in the Holy Land, in the Middle East and in the entire world.”⁵⁷⁶ On what was a remarkable day, Francis spoke of peacemaking in a way that resonates well with the conceptual underpinnings of principled nonviolence and positive peace that informs a green theo-ecoethical lens.⁵⁷⁷

Peacemaking calls for courage, much more so than warfare. It calls for the courage to say yes to encounter and no to conflict: yes to dialogue and no to violence; yes to negotiations and no to hostilities; yes to respect for agreements and no to acts of

⁵⁷⁴ See, BBC News Staff, “Israel-Palestinian Violence: Israeli killed in Beersheva Bus Station Attack,” (18 October 2015), accessed 18 October 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34567988>.

⁵⁷⁵ Francis X. Rocca, “Pope Francis tells Presidents only God can Bring Peace to Holy Land: Israeli and Palestinian Presidents Embrace in Vatican Gardens During Historic ‘Invocation for Peace’,” (8 June 2014), accessed 3 July 2014, <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2014/06/08/pope-francis-tells-presidents-only-god-can-bring-peace-to-holy-land/>.

⁵⁷⁶ Pope Francis, “Invocation for Peace,” (8 June 2014), accessed 14 June 2015, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/june/documents/papa-francesco_20140608_invocazione-pace.html#Distinguished_Presidents.

⁵⁷⁷ See, the Peace and Conflict Transformation literature surveyed in section 1.2.2.

provocation; yes to sincerity and no to duplicity. All of this takes courage, it takes strength and tenacity.⁵⁷⁸

Further integrating these moral sentiments, at the close of 2014, Francis also helped foster a somewhat unexpected détente in United States-Cuban relations. This thawing of a conflict with roots in cold war ideologies took place even as the Pope principally focussed on another issue of peace and justice, closing the Guantanamo Bay detention camp,⁵⁷⁹ where there were still 113 prisoners.⁵⁸⁰ The détente earned him praise from both Cuban and American leaders. In the former case, President Raul Castro was given a rare Sunday audience to personally thank Pope Francis for his role in warming the long hostile relations across the Straits of Florida. After that audience, and looking forward to the pontiff's September 2015 visit to Cuba (en route to speak at the United Nations and a joint session of Congress, including on the subject of an effective anthropogenic climate change mitigation agreement),⁵⁸¹ President Raul Castro spoke, invoking Francis' wisdom, modesty, and concern for the poor.

When the Pope comes to Cuba in September, I promise to go to all his masses and I will be happy to do so. ...I told the prime minister if the Pope continues to talk as he does, sooner or later I will start praying again and return to the Catholic Church, and I am not kidding.⁵⁸²

⁵⁷⁸ Francis, "Invocation for Peace;" cf. the discussion of 'yes' in section 12.4.

⁵⁷⁹ See, John Hooper, "Pope Francis and the Vatican Played Key Roles in US-Cuba Thaw, Leaders Reveal: Pope Sent Letters to Obama and Castro Calling on Pair to 'Resolve Humanitarian Questions of Common Interest' While Vatican Helped Broker Talks," (17 December 2015), *The Guardian*, accessed 12 June 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/dec/17/us-cuba-pope-francis-key-roles>.

⁵⁸⁰ New York Times Staff, "The Guantanamo Docket," (September 2015) accessed 27 October 2015, <http://projects.nytimes.com/guantanamo/detainees>.

⁵⁸¹ Cf. section 11.4 on such agreements.

⁵⁸² Raul Castro quoted in Philip Pullella, "Raul Castro Meets Pope, Says Might Return to the Church," (10 May 2015), *Reuters*, accessed 12 June 2015, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/05/10/uk-pope-cuba-castro-idUKKBN0NV0AP20150510>.

The president kept this promise, attending all three public masses said by Francis during his reconciliation-themed visit to Cuba.⁵⁸³ From a green theo-ecoethical perspective, this noteworthy statement by Castro also points to how, on a more micro-level, Pope Francis' success in undertaking the hard work of being a peacemaker is perhaps more effective than, but certainly related to, his contributions to geopolitical peacemaking. That claim is evidenced poignantly by the fact that many who previously disagreed on a whole host of issues remain highly supportive of the direction taken by the present papacy. One factor operative here is that Francis has thus far been able to largely avoid entrenching himself in left and right wing ideologies that have caused division within and between local Roman Catholic communities. Indeed, on his trip to Cuba in September 2015, he explicitly extolled the value of love and service over ideology by asserting during his homily at Sunday Mass in Havana's Revolution Square that, "Service is never ideological, for we do not serve ideas, we serve people".⁵⁸⁴

Perhaps Francis, like the best of green politics, is offering an alternative to dominant ideologies. Although, in this regard, it is interesting to consider how even rumours concerning the content of his first social encyclical generated a certain pushback from what might be described as more right wing elements within the Catholic Church. That demographic may be identified by opposition to 'environmentalism,' or reform, or both.⁵⁸⁵

⁵⁸³ Philip Pullella and Jamie Hamre, "Pope's Trip Ties Cuba to U.S. with Message of Reconciliation. (22 September 2015). *Reuters*, accessed 6 October 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/09/22/us-pope-cuba-idUSKCN0RK07X20150922>.

⁵⁸⁴ Pope Francis, "Holy Mass Homily of His Holiness Pope Francis: Plaza de la Revolución, Havana," (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 20 September 2015), accessed 6 October 2015, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2015/documents/papa-francesco_20150920_cuba-omelia-la-habana.html.

⁵⁸⁵ For example, in May 2015, Ricardo Cascioli wrote in reaction to anticipation surrounding the then upcoming social encyclical that such anticipation was fervent because: "it looks as if finally a goal which until recently seemed unattainable is finally within reach, the Catholic Church swept into the ecological chorus of religions in support of the official doctrine on the climate." For Cascioli, the results erode the special status of human life espoused by Benedict XVI in favour of population control: "It's the usual story, to eliminate

For example, speaking just before the release of *Laudato Si'*, Republican Presidential candidate Rick Santorum, who is known for his devotional Catholicism,⁵⁸⁶ tried to detract from Pope Francis' authority to speak and teach on climate change. Santorum did so by making problematic claims about media misrepresentation of the present papacy, the Galileo affair,⁵⁸⁷ and Catholic bishops' tendency to overstep their bounds.

The perception that the media would like to give of Pope Francis and the reality are two different things. ...I'm a huge fan of his, and his focus on making sure that we have a healthier society. ...I support completely the Pope's call for us to do more to create opportunities for people to be able to rise in society and to care for the poor. That's our obligation as a society. The question is how we do it... The Church has gotten it wrong a few times on science, and I think we're probably [here speaking for the Catholic Church] better off leaving science to the scientists and focus on what we're really good on, which is theology and morality. When we get involved with political and controversial scientific theories, then I think the church is probably not as forceful and credible. ...I've said this to Catholic bishops many times: when they get involved with agriculture policy or things like that that are really outside the scope of what the Church's main message is, that we're better off sticking to things that are really the core teachings of the Church as opposed to getting involved, you know, with every other kind of issue that happens to be popular at the time.⁵⁸⁸

poverty, all you have to do is to physically eliminate the poor.” From Ricardo Cascioli, “Climate Change, Sustainable Development and the Catholic Church,” (15 May 2015), accessed 11 June 2015, <http://www.thegwpf.com/riccardo-cascioli-climate-change-sustainable-development-and-the-catholic-church/#sthash.DfNVluot.dpuf>. This chapter will demonstrate these claims do not rest on a solid foundation. Cf., the section on Francis' social teaching that follows.

⁵⁸⁶ For example, just before conceding his Senate seat in 2006, it is well-known that Santorum attended a private mass at the Omni William Penn Hotel in Pittsburgh. This service points to his particular take on Catholic identity, which, in turn informs his views on, for instance, homosexual acts. See, Dan Gilgoff and Eric Marrapodi, “Reversing JFK: Santorum's Bid to Marry Faith and Politics,” (7 January 2012) *CNN Belief Blog*, accessed 12 June 2015, <http://religion.blogs.cnn.com/2012/01/07/seeking-to-reverse-jfk-santorum-marries-catholicism-and-politics/>.

⁵⁸⁷ In opposition to the notion that the Galileo Affair represented an instance of conflict between Roman Catholicism and science invoked by Santorum here, during his impressive tracing of the genealogy of the conflict, Peter Harrison argues that the Roman Catholic Church was both a firm supporter of science and had scientific consensus on its side. As such, he continues, the Galileo Affair “might be better to characterize the episode as a conflict *within* science (or more strictly within astronomy and natural philosophy) rather than religion and science.” Peter Harrison, *The Territories of Science and Religion* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 173. Additionally, Owen Gingerich notes that Galileo's proofs for a heliocentric system have now been falsified and that he fanned the flames of a personality clash with Pope Urban VIII by putting the pontiff's favoured view in the mouth of fool character, Simplicius, in *The Dialogue on the Two Chief World Systems* (1632). Owen From Gingerich, *God's Planet* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 47-49.

⁵⁸⁸ Rick Santorum, “Interview with Dom Giordano,” (1 June 2015). *Talk Radio 1210 WPHT Philadelphia*, accessed 12 June 2015, https://embed.radio.com/clip/59060539/?ref_url=http%3A%2F%2Fphiladelphia.cbslocal.com%2F2015%2F06%2F01%2Frick-santorum-on-pope-francis-letter-on-climate-change-

Perhaps more prominently in the mainstream media, fellow Catholic Jeb Bush weighed in on these matters. Bush, on a campaign stop seeking the republican nomination to run for President of the USA, also found it expedient to share his thoughts in the run up to the release of Francis' first social encyclical. After praising the Pope for his "very cool" accessible style that was bringing people back to faith, Bush asserted his independence for the Catholic hierarchy by emphasizing that he did not take economic and policy advice from priests, bishops or popes.⁵⁸⁹ Bush further implied that the pope was stepping over his bounds with the subject matter of *Laudato Si'*.⁵⁹⁰ In what may be taken as a response to such sentiments, Francis employed an invitational tone, after the Angelus on June 14, 2015 to provide his own shading of the content of the papal letter that was to be released four days later.

As it was announced, an Encyclical Letter on the care of creation will be published. I invite you to accompany this event with a renewed attention to the situation of environmental degradation, but also of recovery, in its territories. This Encyclical is addressed to all: let us pray so that all may receive its message and grow in the responsibility towards the common home that God has entrusted to all.⁵⁹¹

As this invitational tone demonstrates and as the opening of Rick Santorum and Jed Bush's above-cited comments indicate (or, perhaps, necessarily concede), Francis is operating out of the papal office in a manner that revitalizes its function as a symbol of unity for the vast majority of Catholics. In this regard, it is informative to consider the premise that lasting and substantive witness for peace transforms a culture by moving relationships from

leave-the-science-to-the-scientist%2F&station_id=121&rollup_ga_id=UA-2438645-53&ads_ga_page_tracker=UA-17434257-35#.

⁵⁸⁹ See, Jeb Bush, "Bush says Pope Should Stay out of Climate Change Debate," (16 June 2015), accessed 3 July 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zj7LcxQQX7k>.

⁵⁹⁰ Cf., Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #61.

⁵⁹¹ Pope Francis, "Comments after the Recitation of the Angelus," (14 June 2015), *Zenit*, Junno Arocho Esteves, trans., accessed 14 June 2015, <http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/angelus-on-the-parable-of-the-seed>.

fear and destruction toward love and mutuality.⁵⁹² With the advantage of time, it is a relatively easy task to map how Francis of Assisi came to represent such a peace witness. If, through such dynamic processes that can already be sourced in his political peacemaking as presented above, Pope Francis can tactfully reorient the Roman Catholic Church to the point that it more fully incarnates some or all of the constitutive principles of a green theo-ecoethical lens, we will undoubtedly be able to not only see a transformation toward incarnating positive peace in that faith tradition but also in the wider world.

More simply put, the possibilities arising from Pope Francis employing his office to foster green peace or even a greener peace, as mapped through a green theo-ecoethical lens, hold the promise of adding a significant measure of momentum to the project of more fully incarnating positive peace on this planet. Such an integral peace witness is needed in our time, when consequences of challenges like global climate change for the world's most vulnerable make it increasingly untenable to separate social, political and ecological qualities of positive peace.⁵⁹³ In this light, the implications of Francis laying the proper foundations that will allow for the nurturing of a church for the poor with a global perspective come into focus in a cogent manner. Any movement toward such a green transformation, coupling social justice, ecological health, and substantive peace, has the potential to make a tangible global impact. One particular place for Francis to make such an impact is through his papal teaching office,⁵⁹⁴ a possibility to which this thesis turns in the following two chapters.

Moreover, any prospect for realizing the potential of Catholics and all people of good will, in

⁵⁹² For a similar point regarding sustainable peace, cf., John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1997); Lederach, "Civil Society and Reconciliation"; Lederach, *The Moral Imagination*.

⁵⁹³ Cf., Hrynkow and O'Hara, "Catholic Social Teaching and Climate Justice from a Peace Studies Perspective."

⁵⁹⁴ Cf., Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #15.

this regard, recalls both the fondest hopes and concrete suggestions of another namesake of St. Francis—John XXIII, who, remember, was christened Giovanni,⁵⁹⁵ and is remembered for his social teaching and work for peace on Earth.⁵⁹⁶ Grounding and building upon John XXIII's legacy, this transformation would, to adapt Thomas of Celano's description, be representative of the Roman Catholic Church making 'a tongue' out of both its structure and example, helping to foster the incarnation of diverse expressions of cultures of peace in this world.⁵⁹⁷

⁵⁹⁵ See, section 9.2.

⁵⁹⁶ E.g., John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*.

⁵⁹⁷ See, section 1.1.2.

Chapter Nine: “Let us Not Leave in Our Wake a Swath of Destruction and Death”—*Evangelii Gaudium* and Socio-Ecological Flourishing through a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens

10.1 Introduction

Evangelii Gaudium was Pope Francis’ first substantive piece of Catholic Social Teaching. This apostolic exhortation deals with many issues relevant to social, political, cultural and ecological worlds. Though it conforms to his early reign’s feature of not changing any of the principal doctrines of the Catholic Church,⁵⁹⁸ it is nonetheless also characteristic of what, when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, marks a noteworthy shift in approach to the papacy.⁵⁹⁹ In this case, that shift extends to Francis’ method of exercising his magisterial office. For example, *Evangelii Gaudium* is written in a comparably more pastoral style than can be found in much Catholic Social Teaching. Given the apostolic exhortations’ subject, the joy of the Gospel, and despite it being addressed “to the bishops, clergy, consecrated persons and the lay faithful,”⁶⁰⁰ it is important to consider not only how *Evangelii Gaudium* relates to the Roman Catholic tradition but also its significance to the wider Christian community whose non-Catholic members are also concerned with “the proclamation of the Gospel in today’s world.”⁶⁰¹ Indeed, the main text itself recognizes this point.⁶⁰² Further, Francis explicitly names an ecumenical call to justice, which invites a socio-ecological reading. “All Christians, their pastors included, are called to

⁵⁹⁸ Cf., Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #104. See, also section 9.3.

⁵⁹⁹ Cf., Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #41.

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid., cover page; cf., ibid., #200.

⁶⁰¹ Ibid., cover page.

⁶⁰² Ibid., #3.

show concern for the building of a better world.”⁶⁰³ This normative ecumenical remit is also active in Francis’ re-iteration of the value of exegetes, theologians, and social scientists in helping the Church’s doctrine mature and aiding in the discernment of its mission.⁶⁰⁴ This thesis holds that the confluences among present social and ecological crises are prime locations of such discernment. As such, it drew on a wide variety of Christian perspectives in Chapters One to Seven. In light of that foundation, the present chapter assesses select contributions of *Evangelii Gaudium* to socio-ecological flourishing by employing an ecumenically informed green theo-ecoethical lens. It begins by delineating the importance of socio-ecological flourishing from an ecumenical perspective. Next, this chapter turns to situating the lens, before applying its constitutive elements to a mapping of *Evangelii Gaudium*. The present chapter concludes by providing a transition to this thesis’ conversation with Francis’ much anticipated first social encyclical, *Laudato Si’*, the subject matter of the present thesis’ final case study chapter.

10.2 An Ecumenical Perspective on Socio-Ecological Flourishing’s Importance

Lynn White Jr., the medieval historian and son of a Calvinist minister, who also held a graduate degree in Theology from Union Theological Seminary, wrote arguably the most significant article on Christianity and Ecology in the 1960s. A reductionist but frequent citation of his article, “The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis,” emphasizes that Christianity is the most anthropocentric of religions and almost irredeemably responsible for the ecological crisis.⁶⁰⁵ This reading has been so popular that it has served in several

⁶⁰³ Ibid., #183.

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid., #40.

⁶⁰⁵ Lynn White, Jr., “The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis,” *Science* 155, no. 3767 (1967): 1203-1207.

instances as a barrier to mainstream Anglophone environmentalists forming partnerships with Christian actors in the service of a green common good. For example, Martin Palmer, an Anglican and General Secretary General of the Alliance of Religions and Conservation, recounts that during the late Twentieth Century many environmental groups assumed Christians would be hostile to their activist projects and should be avoided. “What Lynn White did is that he overstated and he gave ammunition to those who wanted to keep religion firmly out of the [environmental] debate.”⁶⁰⁶

Notwithstanding Palmer’s analysis, it should be emphasized that while White does argue that “Christianity made it possible to exploit nature,” he nevertheless encourages us to “ponder the greatest radical in Christian history since Christ: Saint Francis of Assisi,” because Francis “tried to depose man from his monarchy over creation and set up a democracy of all God’s creatures.”⁶⁰⁷ White closed his article by suggesting Francis be named the patron saint of ecology.⁶⁰⁸ In 1979, Pope John Paul II declared Francis of Assisi to be the patron saint for ecologists,⁶⁰⁹ later noting, “as a friend of the poor who was loved by God’s creatures, Saint Francis ...gives us striking witness that when we are at peace with God we are better able to devote ourselves to building up that peace with all creation which is inseparable from peace among all peoples.”⁶¹⁰ Moreover, Eastern Christians retained integral concepts throughout much of their theological development.⁶¹¹ Even in the case of Western Christian traditions in the contemporary period, the work of the American Lutheran thinker,

⁶⁰⁶ Palmer. See, also section 7.1.

⁶⁰⁷ Cf., section 9.2

⁶⁰⁸ White, 1205-06.

⁶⁰⁹ Pope John Paul II, *Inter Sanctos* (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 29 November 1979), accessed 27 May 2015, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/la/apost_letters/1979/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_19791129_inter-sanctos.html.

⁶¹⁰ John Paul II “Peace with God the Creator, Peace with All of Creation,” #16.

⁶¹¹ E.g., Anestis G. Keselopoulos, *Man and the Environment: A Study of St. Symeon the New Theologian*. (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2001).

Joseph Sittler, on Christianity and Ecology preceded White's contribution by more than a decade and was more firmly focussed on solving the problem of Christians valuing the Earth, with reference, for example, to continuing relevance of the doctrine of the Incarnation.⁶¹²

Furthermore, contemporary Christians working on ecological issues in both the academic and activist realms have often taken their cues from a variety of sources within the Christian intellectual and practical experience. These certainly include the Franciscan example,⁶¹³ but also range from close readings of the Bible that emphasize the goodness of creation,⁶¹⁴ to the Church fathers and mothers,⁶¹⁵ to drawing upon a wide range of contemporary ascetic practices.⁶¹⁶ Those engaged in constructing Christian foundations for a strong ecological ethic draw upon diverse perspectives and re-situate them within the faith tradition. Namely, among others, these sources include contemporary ecology sciences,⁶¹⁷ movements for inclusion,⁶¹⁸ and secular philosophers.⁶¹⁹ Such contributions can be taken as evidence that, despite Christianity's uneven environmental record, it is nevertheless possible to construct an integrated worldview critically sourced from Christian theologians and green initiatives, in order to offer positive responses to the challenges facing the Earth community due to anthropogenic ecological degradation.

⁶¹² See, Joseph Sittler, Jr., "A Theology for Earth," *The Christian Scholar* 37, no. 3 (September 1954): 367-374.

⁶¹³ Cf., Nothwehr, *Ecological Footprints*.

⁶¹⁴ E.g., Wilson, *God's Good World*.

⁶¹⁵ E.g., Jame Schaefer, *Theological Foundations for Environmental Ethics: Reconstructing Patristic and Medieval Concepts* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2009).

⁶¹⁶ E.g., Dennis Patrick O'Hara, "Thomas Merton and Thomas Berry: Reflections from a Parallel Universe," *The Merton Annual* 13 (2000), 222-234.

⁶¹⁷ E.g., Gretel Van Wieren, *Restored to the Earth: Christianity, Environmental Ethics and Ecological Restoration* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013).

⁶¹⁸ E.g., Daniel T. Spencer, *Gay and Gaia: Ethics, Ecology, and the Erotic* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1996).

⁶¹⁹ E.g., Michael S. Hogue, *The Tangled Bank: Toward an Ecotheological Ethics of Responsible Participation* (Cambridge: James Clarke and Co, 2010).

Citing such challenges, the Canadian ecofeminist theologian, Heather Eaton, shades her reflections on human-Earth and intra-human relationships within a framework of “socio-ecological crisis.”⁶²⁰ Considered in this thesis primarily in the plural ‘crises’ for its multiple manifestations, this notion of interrelated crises, demanding an ecojustice response, which couples social justice and a concern for ecological health, is understood in light of the integrity of creation. A framing of ‘responding to the ecological crisis’ is a central feature of many Christian initiatives to address anthropogenic ecological degradation. Expanding the plain meaning of such a crisis-response framing, Eaton’s understanding of responding to socio-ecological crisis can be situated within a certain approach to ecofeminist liberation theologies, which casts the religious project “in light of making justice, of right relationships with women, men, and all living beings.”⁶²¹ At the heart of such efforts lies a basic orientation centred on the belief that a Christian faith that takes the Jesus story seriously, when combined with a concern for social and ecological sustainability, will bear moral witness to “the intrinsic connection between all forms of oppression, and especially between that of poor people and degraded nature.”⁶²²

From a green theo-ecoethical perspective, the planet’s over 2 billion Christians can help in this regard when they act as if the dignity of the human person and the integrity of the natural world are inextricably linked. Further, this notion has a long ecumenical pedigree. For instance, the above-cited consensus may be a way to understand one of the goals of the World Council of Churches and several Roman Catholic orders who seek to have “Justice,

⁶²⁰ Heather Eaton, “Forces of Nature: Aesthetics and Ethics,” in *Aesth/Ethics in Environmental Change: Hiking through the Arts, Ecology, Religion and Ethics of the Environment*, eds. Sigurd Bergmann, Irmgard Blindow and Konrad Ott (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2013), 109.

⁶²¹ Ivone Gebara, “Ecofeminism: a Latin American perspective,” *Cross Currents* 53, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 103.

⁶²² McFague, “An Ecological Christology,” 33.

Peace, and the Integrity of Creation” as a mutual set of commitments or a covenant underlying all their programming.⁶²³ These groups often use ‘JPIC’ as an acronym, which has the advantage of invoking these three concepts together to symbolize how these foundational principles are essentially joined in a rough parallel with the doctrine of the Trinity.⁶²⁴

For people with privilege, applying these principles means that we must also humbly accept socio-ecological limits. This need not be an overly austere asceticism, but there remains an imperative to limit consumption through a type of green asceticism that frequently activates the potential for joy among ‘deep greens’ of both the secular and religious variety.⁶²⁵ Such intentional asceticism ultimately represents a more emancipatory dream for all members of the Earth community than does the currently (inaccessible for far too many) American Dream expressed through a big detached house, multiple carbon-burning vehicles, or processed food at every meal as part of a ubiquitous “addiction to commercial-industrial progress.”⁶²⁶ As Pope Francis notes, under present conditions people can be pulled in multiple, de-contextualizing directions.

People get caught up in an abstract, globalized universe, falling into step behind everyone else, admiring the glitter of other people’s world, gaping and applauding at all the right times. At the other extreme, they turn into a museum of local folklore, a world apart, doomed to doing the same things over and over, and incapable of being challenged by novelty or appreciating the beauty which God bestows beyond their borders.⁶²⁷

⁶²³ World Council of Churches Staff, “Justice, Peace, Creation: History,” (1998), accessed 27 May 2015, <http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/jpc/hist-e.html>; Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate Staff, “Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation,” (2015), accessed 27 May 2015, <http://omiusajpic.org/>.

⁶²⁴ Cf., Freda Rajotte, “Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation,” *Religious Education* 85, no.1 (Winter 1990): 5-14; Martin Robra, “Theology of Life—Justice, Peace, Creation: An Ecumenical Study,” *The Ecumenical Review* 48, no. 1 (1996): 28-37.

⁶²⁵ Cf., Bron Taylor, “Earth and Nature-based Spirituality (Part 1): From Deep Ecology to Radical Environmentalism,” *Religion* 31, no. 2 (2001): 175-93

⁶²⁶ Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry, *The Universe Story: From the Primordial Flaring Fourth to the Ecozoic Era; A Celebration of the Unfolding Cosmos* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1992), 254.

⁶²⁷ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #234.

Hence, a cogent mantra for our millennium, brought into focus by a green theo-ecoethical perspective, may be ‘chosen limitations for ecological, social, and self-growth.’ This mantra represents a paradox, but perhaps a ‘true paradox,’ which could become a campaign slogan for a healthy future when we learn to live simply so that others can simply live and, ultimately, have a chance to flourish.⁶²⁸

10.3 *Evangelii Gaudium* Mapped through a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens

The preceding thought raises two issues for the titular quotation of this chapter. First, it encourages us to consider how Catholic Social Teaching, as a branch of the educational project with transformative goals,⁶²⁹ serves to lend rhetorical support for (or detracts from) the promotion of socio-ecological flourishing. That subject will be addressed below. However, it also raises another important point that Catholic Social Teaching is not the last word on the promotion of ecojustice by Christians or even Catholics. Several grass-roots initiatives undertaken by Catholics (alone or as part of broad coalitions of action) do contribute to the fostering and realization (in part) of relationships that support the incarnation of ecojustice principles in this world. To provide a map linking this concern to the intimately related area of socio-ecological flourishing, this chapter turns to a green theo-ecoethical lens. As in the previous chapter, the six green principles are employed as a key to organize this map.

⁶²⁸ In the first part of this formulation, this thesis is borrowing from a phrase that is often credited to Gandhi but certainly has resonance for those concerned with issues of peace, justice, and the integrity of creation.

⁶²⁹ Cf., section 1.2.3.

10.3.1 Ecological Wisdom

Francis gives several nods to ecological wisdom in *Evangelii Gaudium*. The theological anthropology he presents notes humanity's embodied nature and how that connects us to the rest of the natural world on an immediate and sensory level. "Thanks to our bodies, God has joined us so closely to the world around us that we can feel the desertification of the soil almost as a physical ailment, and the extinction of a species as a painful disfigurement."⁶³⁰ As a primary basis for the initial and essential proclamation of the Gospel, he notes its wisdom-filled nature before asserting, "all Christian formation consists of entering more deeply into the kerygma."⁶³¹ Further, since ecological wisdom is premised on connectivity and valuing what is substantive, it is significant that while decrying a reductionist anthropology that views humans as mere consumers,⁶³² Francis teaches about the fragility of the natural world. "The thirst for power and possessions knows no limits. In this system, which tends to devour everything which stands in the way of increased profits, whatever is fragile, like the environment, is defenceless before the interests of a deified market, which becomes the only rule."⁶³³ The socio-ecological link implied in that passage is laid bare later in the document when, after discussing the plight of marginalized people, Francis proclaims, "there are other weak and defenceless beings who are frequently at the mercy of economic interests or indiscriminate exploitation."⁶³⁴

Francis bookends this statement as antithetical to what this thesis has mapped above as ecological wisdom and removes a major rhetorical basis for presently existing

⁶³⁰ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #215.

⁶³¹ *Ibid.*, #165.

⁶³² *Ibid.*, #54.

⁶³³ *Ibid.*, #55.

⁶³⁴ *Ibid.*, #215.

unsustainability, stating succinctly that “money must serve, not rule!”⁶³⁵ Indeed, it is quite evident that he is pointing to a materiality that is of a more biospiritual type than one that makes money the normative measure of all things. In this regard, it is informative to note the link Francis makes between the embodied nature of the Incarnation and the actual quenching of contemporary spiritual hunger.

Today, our challenge is not so much atheism as the need to respond adequately to many people’s thirst for God, lest they try to satisfy it with alienating solutions or with a disembodied Jesus who demands nothing of us with regard to others. Unless these people find in the Church a spirituality which can offer healing and liberation, and fill them with life and peace, while at the same time summoning them to fraternal communion and missionary fruitfulness, they will end up by being taken in by solutions which neither make life truly human nor give glory to God.⁶³⁶

Here, very much in the spirit of a green theo-ecoethical lens and through their application to humanity’s truest nature, healing and liberation come into focus as intimately coupled with the type of relationality and awareness of embodiment associated with ecological wisdom.

10.3.2 Social Justice

Francis is clear that “none of us can think we are exempt from concern for the poor and for social justice.”⁶³⁷ He continues that in order to avoid “a constant risk of distorting the authentic and integral meaning of the mission of evangelization,” the social dimension of the kerygma must be “properly brought out.”⁶³⁸ Further, Francis asserts the Gospel “is not merely about our personal relationship with God.”⁶³⁹ In connecting personal liberation with

⁶³⁵ Ibid., #58.

⁶³⁶ Ibid., #73.

⁶³⁷ Ibid., #201.

⁶³⁸ Ibid., #176.

⁶³⁹ Ibid., #180.

sensitivity to the needs of others,⁶⁴⁰ Francis names an important solidaristic dimension to Social Justice. “Whenever our interior life becomes caught up in its own interests and concerns, there is no longer room for others, no place for the poor.”⁶⁴¹ Indeed, he emphasizes a clear imperative to seek the common good as a primary invitation flowing from Christian truth. “Before all else, the Gospel invites us to respond to the God of love who saves us, to see God in others and to go forth from ourselves to seek the good of others.”⁶⁴² Francis is specific, yet pastoral, in his exhortation to “a generous solidarity” that generates moral imperatives for the economically wealthy. “The Pope loves everyone, rich and poor alike, but he is obliged in the name of Christ to remind all that the rich must help, respect and promote the poor. I exhort you to generous solidarity and to the return of economics and finance to an ethical approach which favours human beings.”⁶⁴³ Moreover, he explicitly names solidaristic praxis as a path toward positive social change. “Convictions and habits of solidarity, when they are put into practice, open the way to other structural transformations and make them possible.”⁶⁴⁴ In Francis’ rendering, moving out from narrow self-interest further provides a communitarian framework for the joy of the Gospel,⁶⁴⁵ giving us the context of one of the more famous quotes from *Evangelii Gaudium*. “An evangelizing community gets involved by word and deed in people’s daily lives; it bridges distances, it is willing to abase itself if necessary, and it embraces human life, touching the suffering flesh of Christ in others. Evangelizers thus take on the ‘smell of the sheep’ and the sheep are willing to hear their voice.”⁶⁴⁶

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid., #9.

⁶⁴¹ Ibid., #3

⁶⁴² Ibid., #39.

⁶⁴³ Ibid., #58.

⁶⁴⁴ Ibid., #189.

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid., #188.

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid., #24. See, also section 9.3.

As would surprise few commentators, a central focus of the social justice content of *Evangelii Gaudium* is the Catholic Social Teaching principle of a preferential option for those living in poverty.⁶⁴⁷ Indeed within the apostolic exhortation, Francis names basic features of the imperative for social justice in an unequivocal and ecumenical manner. “In all places and circumstances, Christians, with the help of their pastors, are called to hear the cry of the poor.”⁶⁴⁸ Francis further bonds this fundamental option with the primary mission of the “whole Church,” through the assertion that the Gospel itself supports “above all the poor and the sick, those who are usually despised and overlooked.”⁶⁴⁹ Thus, Francis asserts that “there is an inseparable bond between our faith and the poor.”⁶⁵⁰ As such, one of the goals of the proclamation of the Word, even in homiletics, ought to be to strengthen “commitment to fraternity and service.”⁶⁵¹

Recalling Houston’s delineation of justice as a community of equals,⁶⁵² Francis also invokes the notion that social justice outreach work correlates with the continuing relevance of a religious tradition when he asserts that one of the reasons a couple might not seek baptism for their child is “lack of pastoral care among the poor.”⁶⁵³ It is with this shading that we come to another of the famous phrases from *Evangelii Gaudium*, charmingly linked to Francis’ former magisterial office in Buenos Aires but repeated here for the benefit of the “entire Church. ...I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from

⁶⁴⁷ See, Donald Dorr, *Option for the Poor and for the Earth: Catholic Social Teaching* (Maryknoll, NY: 2012).

⁶⁴⁸ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #191.

⁶⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, #48.

⁶⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, #48

⁶⁵¹ *Ibid.*, #124.

⁶⁵² See, section 4.1.

⁶⁵³ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #70.

clinging to its own security.”⁶⁵⁴ Indeed, recalling the concepts of flourishing discussed above, he stipulates that the Church is called to be “at the service of a difficult dialogue,” which overcomes segregation and violence through bridging the gap between (1) “people who have the means needed to develop their personal and family lives,” and (2) those who are denied access to socio-political opportunity structures to the point they become “‘non-citizens’, ‘half-citizens’ and ‘urban remnants’.”⁶⁵⁵ Francis’ vision can thus be seen as fostering space for the substantive peace, marked by social justice, which is so crucial to a green theo-ecoethical lens.

10.3.3 Participatory Democracy

During the author’s formative primary and secondary education in parochial schools, it was an often repeated mantra that the Catholic Church is not a democracy. Inasmuch as this is true, even fewer people would tend to think of the Catholic Church as a participatory democracy. Yet, there are several rhetorical exhortations of participation and participatory structures in *Evangelii Gaudium*. In general terms, Francis asserts that a regrettably recurring feature of “sociopolitical activity is that spaces and power are preferred to time and processes.”⁶⁵⁶ A particularly interesting example, challenging the notion that the Bishop of Rome is the universal ordinary, with primacy over all local churches,⁶⁵⁷ Francis writes, “it is not advisable for the Pope to take the place of local Bishops in the discernment of every issue which arises in their territory. In this sense, I am conscious of the need to promote a sound

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid., #49.

⁶⁵⁵ Ibid., #74.

⁶⁵⁶ Ibid., #223.

⁶⁵⁷ See, Richard R. Gaillardetz, *Teaching with Authority: A Theology of the Magisterium in the Church*. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1997), 50-56.

‘decentralization’.’⁶⁵⁸ This orientation dovetails well with Francis’ words on the continuing relevance of the parish.

While certainly not the only institution which evangelizes, if the parish proves capable of self-renewal and constant adaptivity, it ...really is in contact with the homes and the lives of its people, and does not become a useless structure out of touch with people or a self-absorbed group made up of a chosen few. The parish is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God’s word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration.⁶⁵⁹

This praise of the grounded parish dovetails well with Francis’ exhortation of the need for integration in order to avoid “becoming Nomads without roots.”⁶⁶⁰ Hence, the importance of place and particular Churches in evangelization processes.⁶⁶¹ This place-based approach is certainly something that resonates with green visions of participation,⁶⁶² as evidenced in Francis’ exhortation that “we need to sink our roots deeper into the fertile soil and history of our native place, which is a gift of God. We can work on a small scale, in our own neighbourhood, but with a larger perspective.”⁶⁶³ Francis gives another nod in the direction of subsidiarity-based participation at the end of his discussion on the importance of a role for national bishops’ conferences. “Excessive centralization, rather than proving helpful, complicates the Church’s life and her missionary outreach.”⁶⁶⁴ Employing the same descriptor to cite the problem of “excessive clericalism,” he urges that spaces be made for lay participation in “decision-making.”⁶⁶⁵ Francis further extols the need for youth movements to

⁶⁵⁸ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #16.

⁶⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, #28.

⁶⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, #29; cf. the point, in section 9.5.3, about 1.2 billion Catholics organized geographically into parishes.

⁶⁶¹ *Ibid.*, #30.

⁶⁶² *Cf.*, section 5.1.

⁶⁶³ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #235.

⁶⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, #32.

⁶⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, #102.

“actively participate in the Church’s overall pastoral efforts.”⁶⁶⁶ He adds that, in particular, spaces must be fostered for the participation of women “both in the Church and in social structures.”⁶⁶⁷ Significantly from a green theo-ecoethical perspective in this regard, Francis promotes a gender inclusive (but anthropocentric) exegesis marking both men and women as created in the image of God.⁶⁶⁸ In support of participatory ethics, Francis further extols the need “to give priority to actions which generate new processes in society and engage other persons and groups who can develop them to the point where they bear fruit in significant historical events.”⁶⁶⁹

Recalling notions of deep participation, Francis also embraces the normative value of consensus among the faithful,⁶⁷⁰ regardless of their rhetorical abilities.

As part of his mysterious love for humanity, God furnishes the totality of the faithful with an instinct of faith – *sensus fidei* – which helps them to discern what is truly of God. The presence of the Spirit gives Christians a certain connaturality with divine realities, and a wisdom which enables them to grasp those realities intuitively, even when they lack the wherewithal to give them precise expression.⁶⁷¹

These dynamics are further fostered through a certain humbleness on the part of all members of the Church and priests, in particular, so as to help realize that they too are in need of Evangelization.⁶⁷² It is in light of this humbleness that another of Francis’ well-known phrases from *Evangelii Gaudium* is perhaps best read; a passage that we might also note reverses the assumed direction of evangelization, invoking a participatory image of community.

⁶⁶⁶ Ibid., #105.

⁶⁶⁷ Ibid., #103.

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid., #274.

⁶⁶⁹ Ibid., #223.

⁶⁷⁰ Cf., John J. Burkhard, “The *Sensus Fidelium*: Old Questions, New Challenges,” *CTSA Proceedings* 70 (2015): 27-34.

⁶⁷¹ Francis *Evangelii Gaudium*, #119.

⁶⁷² Ibid., #164.

I want a Church which is poor and for the poor. They have much to teach us. Not only do they share in the *sensus fidei*, but in their difficulties they know the suffering Christ. We need to let ourselves be evangelized by them. The new evangelization is an invitation to acknowledge the saving power at work in their lives and to put them at the centre of the Church's pilgrim way. We are called to find Christ in them, to lend our voice to their causes, but also to be their friends, to listen to them, to speak for them and to embrace the mysterious wisdom which God wishes to share with us through them.⁶⁷³

In line with the Quaker example delineated above,⁶⁷⁴ through acts of deep listening, this essential Christian orientation can then be incarnated into a participatory praxis. Such an approach to wrestling with diverse perspectives is supported by Francis' assertion that "we need to practice the art of listening, which is more than simply hearing. Listening, in communication, is an openness of heart which makes possible that closeness without which genuine spiritual encounter cannot occur."⁶⁷⁵ This orientation is at the heart of a green theo-ecoethical perspective on participation. Here is another example of confluence where important insights expressed by Francis not only inform this thesis' hermeneutical lens but come into focus through its application as supporting transformative projects so sorely needed in a time of intertwined social and ecological crises.

10.3.4 Nonviolence

There are many resonances within *Evangelii Gaudium* with the perspectives on principled nonviolence presented above.⁶⁷⁶ As we saw, Wink describes Jesus' 'third way,' which leaves behind passivity and violence in favour of transformational, active nonviolence.⁶⁷⁷ Similarly, Francis proposes that a transformative "third way ...is the best way to deal with conflict. It is the willingness to face conflict head on, to resolve it and to make it

⁶⁷³ Ibid., #49; cf., section 9.3.

⁶⁷⁴ See, section 5.1.

⁶⁷⁵ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #171.

⁶⁷⁶ See, section 6.1.

⁶⁷⁷ Wink, *The Powers that Be*, 97.

a link in the chain of a new process.”⁶⁷⁸ Reflecting on such processes, John Dear argues that the Twentieth Century papal affirmations of scholarly approaches to biblical interpretation that are supported by the documents of the Second Vatican Council can serve to downplay the natural law and just war traditions, helping move Catholics toward an active (re)embrace of the “Gospel of Peace.”⁶⁷⁹ For Dear, the sometimes amorphous “spirit of Vatican II” recovers Jesus’ much needed nonviolent peace witness.⁶⁸⁰ In accord with Dear’s characterization of the peace witness of the Second Vatican Council, Francis connects peacebuilding and the new evangelization.

The Church proclaims “the Gospel of peace” (*Eph* 6: 15) and she wishes to cooperate with all national and international authorities in safeguarding this immense universal good. By preaching Jesus Christ, who is himself peace (cf. *Eph* 2: 14), the new evangelization calls on every baptized person to be a peacemaker and a credible witness to a reconciled life.⁶⁸¹

Also recalling a green theo-ecoethical concern for naming and countering systems of domination,⁶⁸² Francis presents a vision of positive peace.⁶⁸³ Filling in his view of substantive peace as consisting of much more than the mere absence of war, Francis writes,

peace in society cannot be understood as pacification or the mere absence of violence resulting from the domination of one part of society over others. Nor does true peace act as a pretext for justifying a social structure which silences or appeases the poor, so that the more affluent can placidly support their lifestyle while others have to make do as they can. Demands involving the distribution of wealth, concern for the poor and human rights cannot be suppressed under the guise of creating a consensus on paper or a transient peace for a contented minority. The dignity of the human person and the common good rank higher than the comfort of those who refuse to renounce their privileges. When these values are threatened, a prophetic voice must be raised.⁶⁸⁴

⁶⁷⁸ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #227.

⁶⁷⁹ See, in particular, Paul VI, *Dei Verbum*.

⁶⁸⁰ See, discussion of Dear in section 6.1; cf., John W. O’Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II?* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 310-311.

⁶⁸¹ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #239.

⁶⁸² See, discussion of Wink section 6.1.

⁶⁸³ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #219.

⁶⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, #218.

Employing language that has resonances with Wink's project,⁶⁸⁵ Francis further shades peace as connected to a responsible citizenship that does not conform to "the powers that be."⁶⁸⁶ Thus, "progress in building a people in peace"⁶⁸⁷ is fostered through "an ongoing process in which every new generation must take part; a slow and arduous effort calling for a desire for integration and a willingness to achieve this through the growth of a peaceful and multifaceted culture of encounter."⁶⁸⁸ That process, in turn, is connected to an inclusive and justice-oriented participation as described above.⁶⁸⁹ Francis continues, "In a culture which privileges dialogue as a form of encounter, it is time to devise a means for building consensus and agreement while seeking the goal of a just, responsive and inclusive society."⁶⁹⁰ Mitigating against the manifestations of conflict that serve to fracture integral relationships, Francis' "culture of encounter" actively seeks to foster unity.⁶⁹¹ This ethical orientation informs his image of worldly existence as akin to a pilgrimage, presumably of craftspeople, wherein "trusting others is an art and peace is an art"⁶⁹² and "ecumenism can be seen as a contribution to the unity of the human family."⁶⁹³ It is this type of approach to nonviolent earthly sojourning that augments the prospects of Christian orthopraxis contributing to the incarnation of the green theo-ecoethical principles.⁶⁹⁴

⁶⁸⁵ Cf., section 6.1.

⁶⁸⁶ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #220.

⁶⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, #221.

⁶⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, #220.

⁶⁸⁹ See, section 10.3.3

⁶⁹⁰ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #239.

⁶⁹¹ *Ibid.*, #226.

⁶⁹² *Ibid.*, #244.

⁶⁹³ *Ibid.*, #245.

⁶⁹⁴ On nonviolence in this vein cf., Jim Wallis, "The Power of Protest at Mizzou," (12 November 2015), accessed 31 December 2015, <https://sojo.net/articles/power-protest-mizzou>.

10.3.5 Sustainability

Turning his attention to the common home of all families, the harms perpetrated by people against “our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us”⁶⁹⁵ are exposed in the opening of *Laudato Si’* as not only relational on what Berry might have characterized as an inter-subjective level but also as deeply personal.⁶⁹⁶ Providing part of his theological basis for a solution to the resultant relational malaise, Francis’ remark that “all creation shares in the joy of salvation” addresses the issue of the natural world’s eschatological status, in a manner that can strengthen an ethic for sustainability in a green sense.⁶⁹⁷ From a green theo-ecoethical perspective, this point is worth emphasizing because the moral community in Christian terms is frequently situated within the bounds of those who are understood to be saved. Creation, redemption, and the scope of the moral community are herein linked. Therefore, one key implication for sustainability in Francis’ statement may be that the other-than-human elements of the ecological world are accorded a measure of moral respect. This ethical extension can only help in processes of “reenchantment of the world,”⁶⁹⁸ which has expression in the Calvinist divine, Jonathan Edward’s, responses to modernity.⁶⁹⁹ Further, it lends support to a biospiritual worldview that mitigates against the wonton destruction of the natural world.⁷⁰⁰ Indeed, in the field of religion and ecology, a biospiritual worldview is firmly associated with an ethical orientation that assigns intrinsic values to both human and other-than-human members of the natural world, thus preventing processes of

⁶⁹⁵ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #1; cf., McKay, 521; Lyons, “The Politics of Human Beings against Mother Earth.”

⁶⁹⁶ On Berry’s view of intersubjectivity see, section 8.1.

⁶⁹⁷ The source of the direct quotation is Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #4; Cf., *ibid.*, #181. On the green theo-ecoethical potential here cf., section 7.1.

⁶⁹⁸ Cf., Morris Berman, *The Reenchantment of the World* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981).

⁶⁹⁹ See, Avihu Zakai, “Jonathan Edwards and the Language of Nature: The Re-Enchantment of the World in the Age of Scientific Reasoning,” *Journal of Religious History* 26, no. 1 (2002): 15-41.

⁷⁰⁰ Cf., Thomas Berry, “The Earth Community,” chapter in *The Dream of Earth*, 11.

commoditization that Francis associates with an unsustainable “throw away culture” that wastes life and food, wherein excluded people are the “leftovers.”⁷⁰¹ To further ground this point, Francis asserts, “we may not always be able to reflect adequately the beauty of the Gospel, but there is one sign which we should never lack: the option for those who are least, those whom society discards.”⁷⁰² This imperative transfers into a realm of socio-ecological duty which Francis phrases in ecumenical terms with reference to his medieval namesake.⁷⁰³ “Small yet strong in the love of God, like Saint Francis of Assisi, all of us, as Christians, are called to watch over and protect the fragile world in which we live, and all its peoples.”⁷⁰⁴ Such faithful vigilance, practiced widely, would help ensure the deep sustainability so central to a green theo-ecoethical lens.

10.3.6 *Respect for Diversity*

Before citing the Trinity as a location of diversity “where all things find their unity,” Francis states clearly that “when properly understood, cultural diversity is not a threat to Church unity.”⁷⁰⁵ It follows that the subject matter of the apostolic exhortation, the joy of the Gospel, cannot be confined to a single culture or even a small group of cultures.⁷⁰⁶ Moreover, in accord with a green theo-ecoethical perspective, diversity is associated with overcoming entropy and stagnation through resilience, strength, health, dynamism, creativity, and participation.⁷⁰⁷ Indeed, Francis supports this position with reference to the very heart of the Christian faith tradition. “We would not do justice to the logic of the incarnation if we

⁷⁰¹ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #53; cf., Thomas Berry, “The Viable Human,” chapter in Thomas Berry, *The Great Work*, 59.

⁷⁰² *Ibid.*, #195.

⁷⁰³ See, section 9.3.

⁷⁰⁴ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #216.

⁷⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, #117.

⁷⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, #118; #117.

⁷⁰⁷ Cf., *ibid.*, #129.

thought of Christianity as monocultural and monotonous.”⁷⁰⁸ Francis further connects solidarity with a peacebuilding concord. “Solidarity, in its deepest and most challenging sense, thus becomes a way of making history in a life setting where conflicts, tensions and oppositions can achieve a diversified and life-giving unity.”⁷⁰⁹

Returning to the titular subject of the apostolic exhortation, Francis asserts that one reason cultural diversity deserves respect is because it ensures the vitality of the Gospel. This is a cyclical process; when the Gospel and particular cultures meet in the context of faith communities, evangelization becomes so closely coupled to diverse cultures that they become integral to each other’s processes of meaning-making.

Once the Gospel has been inculturated in a people, in their process of transmitting their culture they also transmit the faith in ever new forms; hence the importance of understanding evangelization as inculturation. Each portion of the people of God, by translating the gift of God into its own life and in accordance with its own genius, bears witness to the faith it has received and enriches it with new and eloquent expressions.⁷¹⁰

Tying this process back to social justice in the proclamation of the Gospel, Francis defines one of the challenges of “inculturated preaching” as strengthening the “bond of charity,” understood to be infused with the covenantal love between “God and his people.”

⁷¹¹ Herein, in accord with a common feature in the field of theo-ecoethical ethics,⁷¹²

Evangelii Gaudium invokes an image of diversity from the natural sciences. In proposing an appropriate integral model he writes,

the polyhedron, which reflects the convergence of all its parts, each of which preserves its distinctiveness. Pastoral and political activity alike seek to gather in this polyhedron the best of each. There is a place for the poor and their culture, their aspirations and their potential. Even people who can be considered dubious on

⁷⁰⁸ Ibid., #117.

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid., #228.

⁷¹⁰ Ibid., #122.

⁷¹¹ Ibid., #143.

⁷¹² E.g., Ruether, *Gaia & God*.

account of their errors have something to offer which must not be overlooked. It is the convergence of peoples who, within the universal order, maintain their own individuality; it is the sum total of persons within a society which pursues the common good, which truly has a place for everyone.⁷¹³

In rough parallel with the evolutionary consciousness that is connected to a Green theo-ecoethical lens,⁷¹⁴ Francis also extends the imperative associated with respecting cultural diversity to the respecting of multiple charisms, emphasizing the importance of holding those that renew and build up the Church through a creative tension, “in communion, even when this proves painful.”⁷¹⁵ Recalling the concept of panentheism as discussed above,⁷¹⁶ within this endeavour the third person of the Trinity is held up as binding force. “Diversity must always be reconciled by the help of the Holy Spirit; he alone can raise up diversity, plurality and multiplicity while at the same time bringing about unity.”⁷¹⁷ If the Christian community can incarnate what Francis shades as a proper life-giving and nonviolent response to this challenge of diversity, then “the Church can be a model of peace in our world.”⁷¹⁸ This imperative for “social justice and peace” extends to work with people of all faiths.⁷¹⁹ In the case of people who do not identify with a faith tradition, an imperative for a state of being-in-the-world akin to what is described above as socio-ecological flourishing is cited by Francis through his upholding of “the commitment to defending human dignity, in building peaceful coexistence between peoples and in protecting

⁷¹³ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #236.

⁷¹⁴ See, sections 1.2 and 2.4.

⁷¹⁵ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #130.

⁷¹⁶ See, section 8.1.

⁷¹⁷ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #131.

⁷¹⁸ *Ibid.*, #130.

⁷¹⁹ *Ibid.*, #259.

creation.”⁷²⁰ With that point, this chapter has come full circle in its mapping of the green theo-ecoethical content of Francis’ first substantive piece of Catholic Social Teaching.

10.4 Conclusion

Despite Francis’ note of caution that the apostolic exhortation is not a social document,⁷²¹ an ecumenically-informed lens helps to map a good deal of green theo-ecoethical content in *Evangelii Gaudium*. Much of this content relates to the promise of Catholic Social Teaching, as identified above,⁷²² to help foster socio-ecological flourishing in a time of socio-ecological crises. Indeed, a good summary of this confluence is expressed by Francis himself.

An authentic faith – which is never comfortable or completely personal – always involves a deep desire to change the world, to transmit values, to leave this earth somehow better than we found it. We love this magnificent planet on which God has put us, and we love the human family which dwells here, with all its tragedies and struggles, its hopes and aspirations, its strengths and weaknesses. The earth is our common home and all of us are brothers and sisters.⁷²³

In terms of threats to our common home, one meta-issue currently at play is the prospect of global climate change, which can be taken to ignite the Christian “apocalyptic imagination.”⁷²⁴ Throughout much of this thesis’ drafting process, it was certain that Pope Francis was preparing an encyclical on social ecology, which we now know as *Laudato Si’*, with an expressed goal of moving forward the political process for an effective and binding

⁷²⁰ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #257; cf., the description of socio-ecological flourishing in section 10.2.

⁷²¹ *Ibid.*, #184.

⁷²² Cf., section 10.2.

⁷²³ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #183. This theme of common home is also brought forward in Pope Francis first social encyclical. E.g., *Laudato Si’*, #13.

⁷²⁴ Cf., Stefan Skrimshire, ed., *Future Ethics: Climate Change and Apocalyptic Imagination* (London, UK: Continuum, 2010).

global agreement to mitigate the negative effects of climate change.⁷²⁵ A certain preview of the political content of the present pope's first social encyclical can be found in *Evangelii Gaudium*, where Francis also fills in some of the nourishing content of what constitutes human flourishing.

I ask God to give us more politicians capable of sincere and effective dialogue aimed at healing the deepest roots – and not simply the appearances – of the evils in our world! ...I beg the Lord to grant us more politicians who are genuinely disturbed by the state of society, the people, the lives of the poor! It is vital that government leaders and financial leaders take heed and broaden their horizons, working to ensure that all citizens have dignified work, education and healthcare.⁷²⁶

Additionally, this passage points to how any focussed papal treatment of social ecology will necessarily be unable to limit itself to a single issue, even if that issue is as momentous as anthropogenic global climate change negatively affecting the prospects for the continuance of human life on the planet. Rather, it will likely take a more integral approach to treating socio-ecological crises. In 1989, John Paul II situated the ecological crisis as a moral crisis.⁷²⁷ Pope Francis provides a more detailed description of this ethical problem and necessary responses in *Laudato Si'*.⁷²⁸ Now, we are left to wait and work to see if the human project can effectively respond to the ethical challenges faced today. The green theo-ecoethical lens presented above shows that such a response cannot be limited to damage control nor can it consist simply of a crisis-response or a passive waiting.⁷²⁹

⁷²⁵ Cf., Elise Harris, "Pope's environmental encyclical to be titled 'Laudato Si' (Praised Be You)," (31 May 2015), accessed 1 June 2015, <http://www.angelusnews.com/news/vatican/popes-environmental-encyclical-to-be-titled-laudato-sii-praised-be-you-8074/#.VWy91kbzDNU>. The *Paris Agreement* drafted late in 2015 did not achieve a truly effective and binding agreement of the type invoked by Francis. See, Conference of the Parties, "Adoption of Paris Agreement," (12 December 2015), accessed 27 December 2015, <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2015/cop21/eng/109r01.pdf>.

⁷²⁶ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #205. On the topic of human flourishing, cf., *ibid.*, #192.

⁷²⁷ John Paul II, "Peace with God the Creator, Peace With all Creation," #5.

⁷²⁸ See, Chapter Ten.

⁷²⁹ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #180.

Francis emphasizes, “Jesus’ whole life, his way of dealing with the poor, his actions, his integrity, his simple daily acts of generosity, and finally his complete self-giving, is precious and reveals the mystery of his divine life.”⁷³⁰ It follows that *imitatio Christi* in our present context calls out for more than merely ensuring we do “not leave in our wake a swath of destruction and death which will affect our own lives and those of future generations.”⁷³¹ The contemporary imitation of Christ most certainly must guard against such a negative outcome. However, as implied in the work of Brock and Parker,⁷³² it must also reflect the mission of Jesus in the world as presented in the Gospel of John and rendered poignantly into English in the King James Bible. “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10: 10). This chapter suggests that such abundant life is cogently represented through the concept of socio-ecological flourishing. Though certainly not perfect in this regard,⁷³³ *Evangelii Gaudium* does offer sound resources for constructing an integrated ethic supportive of socio-ecological flourishing, which can be brought into focus through a green theo-ecoethical lens. It remains to be seen whether *Laudato Si’*, the subject of this thesis’ next chapter, and Pope Francis’ concomitant efforts for transformation of political and economic processes will bear substantive green fruit. If they do, not only the world’s Christian population, but also the entire Earth community will be able to be counted as beneficiaries of the transformative power of the Gospel as extolled in *Evangelii Gaudium*. Indeed, in light of the material presented above, a further significant point can be asserted; namely, that faithful living intentionally aimed toward increasing socio-ecological flourishing’s roots in this world, through the transformative power of the Gospel, could then

⁷³⁰ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #265.

⁷³¹ *Ibid.*, #215.

⁷³² See, section 3.1.

⁷³³ E.g., the discussion of gender justice in sections 9.3 and 12.4.

be counted as a “making all things new” (or, rather, renewed) in a deeply ecumenical sense.⁷³⁴

⁷³⁴ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #228; cf., *ibid.*, #24; #132.

Chapter Ten: Caring Deeply for our Common Home—Pope Francis’ *Laudato Si’* from a Green Theo-Ecoethical Perspective

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
through whom you light the night and he is beautiful
and playful and robust and strong.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Mother Earth,
who sustains us and governs us and who produces
varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs.

-Francis of Assisi, *Canticle of the Sun*⁷³⁵

11.1 Introduction

As may be implied by the atmosphere of anticipation that surrounded Francis’ release of his first social encyclical, the presence of greener elements in Catholic Social Teaching, along with the personal lifestyle and example of the person who holds the chair of St. Peter, becomes a matter of importance under contemporary conditions of social and ecological crises. As things stood even in the earliest days of his papacy, Pope Francis seemed promising in this regard on a number of levels, inclusive of his choice of regal name, simple living, invocation of an ethic of creation care and solidarity with the poor, along with hints of a movement toward a Church governance framework that more fully embraces pontifical humbleness and subsidiarity.⁷³⁶ As such, many people with green leanings were very much looking forward to *Laudato Si’*. Indeed, this anticipation was so intense that in early 2015, while reading some of the less subtle reporting, one would be forgiven for almost assuming

⁷³⁵ Francis of Assisi, 3-4.

⁷³⁶ These themes were, for example, raised in Francis’ first homily as Bishop of Rome. See, Euronews Staff, “Protect Creation Says Pope in First Address,” (19 March 2013), accessed 8 May 2013, <http://www.euronews.com/2013/03/19/protect-creation-says-pope-francis-in-first-address/>. See, also Chapter Eight.

that Catholic Social Teaching had never addressed ecological issues before.⁷³⁷ However, it is also important to acknowledge that transformation has already happened in terms of papal contributions to fostering green theo-ecoethical principles. For example, notably, Church history has witnessed a shift from a pontifical office that taught that Catholics could not hold pacifist positions to a man like John Paul II, who was essentially a pacifist pope, occupying that office.⁷³⁸ Filling in the content of substantive peace in a green theo-ecoethical manner can ensure that the exercise of the papal teaching office, perhaps undertaken in a more publicly-transparent and consultative manner, can serve to foster cultures of peace in diverse contexts around the world.

It was such potential global impact that was frequently invoked in the run up to the release of *Laudato Si'*.⁷³⁹ As is perhaps obvious, it is important to remember that any such impact rests on integration in the sense of praxis fostering concrete action. As this thesis now moves to map the content of the present papacy's first social encyclical, it is telling in this

⁷³⁷ This is particularly the case among some 'conservative' commentators who present Francis as breaking with an admirable tradition. For example, the *Forbes* columnist Stephen Moore, "speaking as a Catholic" charged Francis with employing the language of a "radical green movement that is at its core anti-Christian, anti-people, and anti-progress. He has aligned himself with a secular movement that is antithetical to the fundamental theological underpinning of Catholicism—the sanctity of human life and the value of all souls." Steve Moore, "Vatican's Turn To The Left Will Make The Poor Poorer," (5 January 2015), accessed 17 April 2015, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/stevemoore/2015/01/05/vaticans-turn-to-the-left-will-make-the-poor-poorer/>.

⁷³⁸ In regards to conscientious objection, the position that Catholics could not be pacifists was stated as recently as 1956 in the Christmas message of Pope Pius XII. This message prompted the US Justice Department to write to the US Bishops with queries about its implication for American Catholics claiming conscientious objector status. The Bishops, in turn, consulted the Jesuit Theologian John Cuthbert Ford who recommended that the bishops not give an interpretation to the US justice department as it was outside of their remit to do so both in terms of (1) interpreting a statement from the Holy See, and (2) of issues of individual conscience. See, Eric Marcelo Genilo, *John Cuthbert Ford, SJ: Moral Theologian at the End of the Manualist Era* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2007), 35-39. Although John Paul II specifically rejected the label of pacifist in 1991, stating that Catholics do not want peace at any price and adding that peace without justice was untenable (two positions that a green theo-ecoethical perspective might argue are compatible with pacifism, cf., section 6.1), he became widely known for his opposition to war under current technological conditions. John Paul II, "We Are Not Pacifists," *Origins* 20 (1991): 625 and Mark J. Allman, *Who Would Jesus Kill?: War Peace and the Christian Tradition* (Winona, MN: Saint Mary Press, 2008), 188-192.

⁷³⁹ E.g., Ed Stannard, "Pope Francis' Climate Change Encyclical Expected to Make Global Impact," (30 May 2015), accessed 3 July 2015, <http://www.nhregister.com/general-news/20150530/pope-francis-climate-change-encyclical-expected-to-make-global-impact>.

regard to consider how Francis' homily addressed the green principle of nonviolence during a Mass in front of some 60, 000 people in Sarajevo just two weeks before the promulgation of *Laudato Si'*.

Peace is God's dream, his plan for humanity, for history, for all creation. And it is a plan which always meets opposition from men and from the evil one. Even in our time, the desire for peace and the commitment to build peace collide against the reality of many armed conflicts presently affecting our world. ...Within this atmosphere of war, like a ray of sunshine piercing the clouds, resound the words of Jesus in the Gospel: "Blessed are the peacemakers" (*Mt* 5: 9). This appeal is always applicable, in every generation. He does not say: "Blessed are the preachers of peace," since all are capable of proclaiming peace, even in a hypocritical, or indeed duplicitous, manner. No. He says: "Blessed are the peacemakers," that is, those who *make* peace. Crafting peace is a *skilled work*: it requires passion, patience, experience and tenacity. Blessed are those who sow peace by their daily actions, their attitudes and acts of kindness, of fraternity, of dialogue, of mercy. ...These, indeed, "shall be called children of God," for God sows peace, always, everywhere; in the fullness of time, he sowed in the world his Son, that we might have peace! Peacemaking is a work to be carried forward each day, step by step, without ever growing tired.⁷⁴⁰

It is in this spirit of seeking to discern resources to aid in the moral project of building a substantive peace for humanity and all creation that the green theo-ecoethical mapping of *Laudato Si'* proceeds in this chapter.⁷⁴¹

11.2 The Green theo-ecoethical principles and *Laudato Si'*

11.2.1 Ecological Wisdom

This thesis proposes that the green principles listed in the *Global Greens Charter* resonate within the Christian tradition, and come into view if one seeks those resonances with a green theo-ecoethical lens.⁷⁴² In a statement that dovetails well with that basic point,

⁷⁴⁰ Pope Francis, "Homily of the Holy Father: Koševo Stadium," (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 6 June 2015), accessed 11 June 2015, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2015/documents/papa-francesco_20150606_omelia-sarajevo.html; cf., section 11.2.

⁷⁴¹ A mutually informing connection between substantive peace and a green theo-ecoethical lens is developed in Chapter Nine.

⁷⁴² See, section 2.5.

Francis shades the purpose of *Laudato Si'* in the following manner: “I would like from the outset to show how faith convictions can offer Christians, and some other believers as well, ample motivation to care for nature and for the most vulnerable of their brothers and sisters. ...It is good for humanity and the world at large when we believers better recognize the ecological commitments which stem from our convictions.”⁷⁴³ In line with this green normative approach and expressing the view that the ecological crisis is a call to profound conversion, Francis states, “Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience.”⁷⁴⁴ Extolling this vocational duty to the Earth community and in sharp contrast to the reductionist way that Lynn White Jr.’s contribution to the study of religion and ecology is often read,⁷⁴⁵ Francis ties together several of the green theo-ecoethical principles under a rubric of wisdom in *Laudato Si'*.

Believers themselves must constantly feel challenged to live in a way consonant with their faith and not to contradict it by their actions. They need to be encouraged to be ever open to God’s grace and to draw constantly from their deepest convictions about love, justice and peace. If a mistaken understanding of our own principles has at times led us to justify mistreating nature, to exercise tyranny over creation, to engage in war, injustice and acts of violence, we believers should acknowledge that by so doing we were not faithful to the treasures of wisdom which we have been called to protect and preserve.⁷⁴⁶

Indeed, right from the outset of the encyclical and in line with his stated goal of attempting “to get to the roots of the present situation, so as to consider not only its symptoms but also its deepest causes”⁷⁴⁷ and invoking the example of St. Francis,⁷⁴⁸ Pope Francis sets a relational tone by employing a gendered image recalling the ecological wisdom

⁷⁴³ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #64.

⁷⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, #217.

⁷⁴⁵ See, section 10.2

⁷⁴⁶ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #200.

⁷⁴⁷ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #15.

⁷⁴⁸ See, section 9.2.

of solidarity, beauty, and nurturing that accompanies understanding Earth as both sister and mother, stating that the planet, “our common home[,] is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us.”⁷⁴⁹ This relational naming lends credence to Francis’ assertion that the Bible makes “no place for a tyrannical anthropocentrism.”⁷⁵⁰ Rather, he continues, as amplified by the magisterium, Christianity holds that other-than-human creatures have a moral worth, which is intrinsic in not being “completely subordinated to the good of human beings.”⁷⁵¹ Giving further support to a green reading of wisdom, Francis emphasizes relationality in his explanation of ecology, stating, with pastoral frankness, “it cannot be emphasized enough how everything is interconnected.”⁷⁵² This relational reading of reality is given further expression in the manner that Pope Francis frames socio-ecological crises in terms of “what is happening to our common home.”⁷⁵³ For Francis, our embodiment ties us to this shared home in a deeply relational manner reminiscent of the green readings of ecological wisdom explored above.⁷⁵⁴

It is enough to recognize that our body itself establishes us in a direct relationship with the environment and with other living beings. The acceptance of our bodies as God’s gift is vital for welcoming and accepting the entire world as a gift from the Father and our common home, whereas thinking that we enjoy absolute power over our own bodies turns, often subtly, into thinking that we enjoy absolute power over creation. Learning to accept our body, to care for it and to respect its fullest meaning, is an essential element of any genuine human ecology. Also, valuing one’s own body in its femininity or masculinity is necessary if I am going to be able to recognize myself in an encounter with someone who is different. In this way we can joyfully accept the specific gifts of another man or woman, the work of God the Creator, and find mutual enrichment.⁷⁵⁵

⁷⁴⁹ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #1.

⁷⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, #68.

⁷⁵¹ *Ibid.*, #69.

⁷⁵² *Ibid.*, #138.

⁷⁵³ *Ibid.*, #17.

⁷⁵⁴ See, in particular, Chapter Two.

⁷⁵⁵ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #155.

As a result of this deep connectivity, in terms of the theological anthropology found in *Laudato Si'*, authentic human development is firmly placed within a moral perspective that is at once respectful of the human person and creation. “Authentic human development has a moral character. It presumes full respect for the human person, but it must also be concerned for the world around us.”⁷⁵⁶ Recalling Aldo Leopold’s contribution to land ethics,⁷⁵⁷ Francis also extends intrinsic value to whole ecosystems, advising that “we take these systems into account not only to determine how best to use them, but also because they have an intrinsic value independent of their usefulness.”⁷⁵⁸ Faith offers wisdom that can help in this regard, allowing us to engage in a renewing *ressourcement* akin to what this thesis has named above as “essential recovery” in relation to regrettably obscured green wellsprings of wisdom.⁷⁵⁹ “Cultural limitations in different eras often affected the perception of these ethical and spiritual treasures, yet by constantly returning to their sources, religions will be better equipped to respond to today’s needs.”⁷⁶⁰

As such, Francis thirsts for responses to socio-ecological crises that both recognize moral concerns for all of humanity and are rooted in a deep understanding of our anthropological location within an interdependent world. It is in light of this foundation for ecological wisdom that the encyclical’s characterization of technology and consumerism as too often serving segmented interests is perhaps best read. In this regard, *Laudato Si'* questions the limited conception of both human freedom and quality of life that a “techno-economic paradigm” spawns. “This paradigm leads people to believe that they are free as long as they have the supposed freedom to consume. ...We have too many means and only a

⁷⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, #5.

⁷⁵⁷ See, the discussion of Leopold in section 2.4.

⁷⁵⁸ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #140.

⁷⁵⁹ See, in particular, section 5.2; cf., Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #114.

⁷⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, #200.

few insubstantial ends.”⁷⁶¹ This lack of a substantive *telos* has negative consequences for the entire Earth community. As Francis tellingly writes, “a sober look at our world shows that the degree of human intervention, often in the service of business interests and consumerism, is actually making our earth less rich and beautiful, ever more limited and grey, even as technological advances and consumer goods continue to abound limitlessly.”⁷⁶² Thus emerges a need for the ecological wisdom inherent in the precautionary principle as described above.⁷⁶³ Indeed, Francis explicitly endorses this principle and its associated methodology for making decisions.

This precautionary principle makes it possible to protect those who are most vulnerable and whose ability to defend their interests and to assemble incontrovertible evidence is limited. If objective information suggests that serious and irreversible damage may result, a project should be halted or modified, even in the absence of indisputable proof. Here the burden of proof is effectively reversed, since in such cases objective and conclusive demonstrations will have to be brought forward to demonstrate that the proposed activity will not cause serious harm to the environment or to those who inhabit it.⁷⁶⁴

In this regard, Francis also provides a culturally-themed explanation as to why that very sensible principle does not characterize all socio-ecological decision making. “Some projects, if insufficiently studied, can profoundly affect the quality of life of an area due to very different factors such as unforeseen noise pollution, the shrinking of visual horizons, the loss of cultural values, or the effects of nuclear energy use. The culture of consumerism, which prioritizes short-term gain and private interest, can make it easy to rubber-stamp authorizations or to conceal information.”⁷⁶⁵ Here, ecological wisdom can buttress Pope Francis’ insight in a symbiotic manner so as to encourage the reflective consideration of both

⁷⁶¹ Ibid., #203.

⁷⁶² Ibid., #34

⁷⁶³ See, section 6.1

⁷⁶⁴ Francis, *Laudato Si*, #186.

⁷⁶⁵ Ibid., #184.

particular projects and the human project writ large in terms of their long term and wide impacts upon people and the planet. Hence, Francis' exhortation that

what is needed is a politics which is far-sighted and capable of a new, integral and interdisciplinary approach to handling the different aspects of the crisis. ...A strategy for real change calls for rethinking processes in their entirety, for it is not enough to include a few superficial ecological considerations while failing to question the logic which underlies present-day culture. A healthy politics needs to be able to take up this challenge.⁷⁶⁶

In its consideration of the incarnation of micro and macro endeavours reflecting such healthy politics, *Laudato Si'* echoes Thomas Berry's call for a redefining of progress and reinvention of the human in the wake of negative effects on the entire Earth community of a certain cultural amnesia and blindness to ecological wisdom.⁷⁶⁷ In its treatment of these areas, the encyclical also adds a clear invocation to wake up and act, by re-examining the essential location of humanity and turning the suffering of the Earth community into our personal suffering.⁷⁶⁸ It is in this light that Francis explains the purpose of *Laudato Si'*.

Following a period of irrational confidence in progress and human abilities, some sectors of society are now adopting a more critical approach. We see increasing sensitivity to the environment and the need to protect nature, along with a growing concern, both genuine and distressing, for what is happening to our planet. Let us review...those questions which are troubling us today and which we can no longer sweep under the carpet. Our goal is not to amass information or to satisfy curiosity, but rather to become painfully aware, to dare to turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering and thus to discover what each of us can do about it.⁷⁶⁹

In a similar vein and in what a green theo-ecoethical lens helps to discern as a remarkable parallel with the insights of Stan McKay about valuing all life as a gift and the concomitant requirement for humans to craft creative responses to socio-ecological crises,⁷⁷⁰

⁷⁶⁶ Ibid., #197.

⁷⁶⁷ See, the discussion of Berry in sections 1.2.1 and 11.2.5.

⁷⁶⁸ Cf., the discussion of the Gandhian principle of 'being the change we seek' in section 6.2.

⁷⁶⁹ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #19.

⁷⁷⁰ See, section 3.2.

Francis writes, “the destruction of the human environment is extremely serious, not only because God has entrusted the world to us men and women, but because human life is itself a gift which must be defended from various forms of debasement.”⁷⁷¹ It follows that those who hold economic and political power cannot engage in efforts to mask significant problems or otherwise hide their symptoms. Rather, they ought to be crafting policies that substantively address socio-ecological challenges, notably those that reduce carbon emissions and support renewable energy.⁷⁷² Such policy change emerges as absolutely necessary given the ultimate primacy of Earth for any human endeavour.⁷⁷³ In this regard, Thomas Berry’s dictum that “we cannot have well humans on a sick planet” is explicitly situated in terms of social flourishing.⁷⁷⁴ “If everything is related, then the health of a society’s institutions has consequences for the environment and the quality of human life.”⁷⁷⁵ Francis further connects this relationality in a manner that recalls the assertion, as presented above,⁷⁷⁶ that socio-ecological flourishing represents an important *telos* for the human project at the present juncture in planetary history.

What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up? This question not only concerns the environment in isolation; the issue cannot be approached piecemeal. When we ask ourselves what kind of world we want to leave behind, we think in the first place of its general direction, its meaning and its values. Unless we struggle with these deeper issues, I do not believe that our concern for ecology will produce significant results. But if these issues are courageously faced, we are led inexorably to ask other pointed questions: What is the purpose of our life in this world? Why are we here? What is the goal of our work and all our efforts? What need does the earth have of us? It is no longer enough, then, simply to state that we should be concerned for future generations. We need to see that what is at stake is our own dignity. Leaving an inhabitable planet to future

⁷⁷¹ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #5.

⁷⁷² *Ibid.*, #26.

⁷⁷³ See, section 8.1.

⁷⁷⁴ This point is first introduced and referenced in section 2.2.

⁷⁷⁵ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #142.

⁷⁷⁶ See, section 1.2.2.

generations is, first and foremost, up to us. The issue is one which dramatically affects us, for it has to do with the ultimate meaning of our earthly sojourn.⁷⁷⁷

Here, important questions about how we ought to live and what legacy we will leave behind emerge as deeply cogent within a relational framework that accords with ecological wisdom.⁷⁷⁸ Hence it is not surprising, because most people on Earth identify with a religion, that Francis affirms the importance of inter-religious initiatives that help foster what this thesis has named as socio-ecological flourishing. As the Pope states, “the majority of people living on our planet profess to be believers. This should spur religions to dialogue among themselves for the sake of protecting nature, defending the poor, and building networks of respect and fraternity.”⁷⁷⁹ Further, in accord with the spirit of the seven generations principle expounded upon above,⁷⁸⁰ *Laudato Si’* extends the Catholic Social Teaching principle of the common good to future generations as part of Francis’ broader treatment of ecological wisdom. “Intergenerational solidarity is not optional, but rather a basic question of justice, since the world we have received also belongs to those who will follow us... An integral ecology is marked by this broader vision.”⁷⁸¹ In harmony with a green theo-ecoethical lens, *Laudato Si’* images integral ecology as infused with spiritual content, extending to a lateral harmony within the Earth community, and accessible to all those who can slow down sufficiently to perceive the immanence of God. “An integral ecology includes taking time to recover a serene harmony with creation, reflecting on our lifestyle and our ideals, and contemplating the Creator who lives among us and surrounds us.”⁷⁸² Moreover, in accord with this broader vision, Francis argues that realizing the common good under conditions of

⁷⁷⁷ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #160.

⁷⁷⁸ This point is taken up in the last paragraph of this thesis.

⁷⁷⁹ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #201.

⁷⁸⁰ See, section 3.2.

⁷⁸¹ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #159.

⁷⁸² *Ibid.*, #225.

ecological crisis means that isolation in its manifestations in religions, disciplines, or social movements is no longer tenable.⁷⁸³ As one significant correlate in this regard, *Laudato Si'* develops the Vatican's contribution to ecospirituality in a more integral and, when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, markedly innovative direction, by arguing that a reality of connectedness accessed through ecological conversion provides creative energy of the sort that is necessary to effectively respond to contemporary challenges facing the Earth community.⁷⁸⁴ "As believers, we do not look at the world from without but from within, conscious of the bonds with which the Father has linked us to all beings. By developing our individual, God-given capacities, an ecological conversion can inspire us to greater creativity and enthusiasm in resolving the world's problems and in offering ourselves to God."⁷⁸⁵ This is certainly the type of conversion that opens those who participate in it to the treasures of a green theo-ecoethical understanding of ecological wisdom. The mapping of Francis' insights presented in this section of the present thesis demonstrates that such an understanding receives a significant measure of support within the pages of *Laudato Si'*.

⁷⁸³ Ibid., #201. Although this sentiment is somewhat tempered in terms of Christian dialogue with Eastern religions and natural scientists who may take offence to the 'us vs. them'- type sentiment that *Laudato Si'* expresses (with an exclamation mark). "How wonderful is the certainty that each human life is not adrift in the midst of hopeless chaos, in a world ruled by pure chance or endlessly recurring cycles!" Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #65.

⁷⁸⁴ On the significance of such innovation, see, section 12.2.

⁷⁸⁵ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #220.

11.2.2 Social Justice

Lending support to the green theo-ecoethical lens' multifaceted character, *Laudato Si'* asserts that "the world's problems cannot be analyzed or explained in isolation."⁷⁸⁶ Also in accord with this thesis' premise that it is important to be careful and critical about the use of the word 'green,'⁷⁸⁷ Francis, embracing the language of Boff and the above cited bishops' conferences,⁷⁸⁸ is emphatic that any green discourse today must "realize that a true ecological approach *always* becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear *both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.*"⁷⁸⁹ Solidifying this coupling, the second paragraph of the encyclical connects the plight of those living in poverty with sicknesses experienced by Mother Earth. This malaise is sourced in human action precipitated by sin for which all people are not so much guilty, as responsible.⁷⁹⁰ "This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor."⁷⁹¹ This theme is expounded upon and grounded throughout the encyclical. Notably from a green theo-ecoethical perspective, accepting the logic inherent in Heather Eaton's use of the term "socio-ecological crisis,"⁷⁹² Francis links injustice and ecological degradation. "We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental."⁷⁹³ Thus, the creaturely framework for social justice found in *Laudato Si'* is one that sees unique and inalienable human dignity as existing within the web of life in the

⁷⁸⁶ Ibid., #61.

⁷⁸⁷ See, section 2.2.

⁷⁸⁸ See, section 4.1.

⁷⁸⁹ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #49. Emphasis in original.

⁷⁹⁰ Cf., Abraham Joshua Heschel, "Towards a Just Society: Prayer," section in Heschel and Heschel,

85.

⁷⁹¹ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #2.

⁷⁹² See, section 10.2.

⁷⁹³ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #139.

world.⁷⁹⁴ As such, explicitly speaking as part of the human family, Francis emphasizes how socio-ecological crises affect people in their bodies; “we cannot fail to consider the effects on people’s lives of environmental deterioration, current models of development and the throwaway culture.”⁷⁹⁵ The joining of these concerns, within a framework of interconnected emphases on respect for both the human and ecological dimensions of creaturely existence, is accomplished through Francis’ vision of integral ecology.⁷⁹⁶ That coupling of the social and ecological extends to the decrying of environmental elitism and other ways of being-in-the-world that seek to limit access to ecological goods to select monocultural groups or particular upper classes of people.

In some places, rural and urban alike, the privatization of certain spaces has restricted people’s access to places of particular beauty. In others, “ecological” neighbourhoods have been created which are closed to outsiders in order to ensure an artificial tranquillity. Frequently, we find beautiful and carefully manicured green spaces in so-called “safer” areas of cities, but not in the more hidden areas where the disposable of society live.⁷⁹⁷

For Francis, it is also an unacceptable limit on local diversity that “the notion of the quality of life be imposed from without, for quality of life must be understood within the world of symbols and customs proper to each human group.”⁷⁹⁸ Within this framework of respect, *Laudato Si’* connects contextual realities, solidaristic ethics, the preferential option for people living in poverty, and an integral notion of the common good.⁷⁹⁹ “In the present condition of global society, where injustices abound and growing numbers of people are deprived of basic human rights and considered expendable, the principle of the common good immediately becomes, logically and inevitably, a summons to solidarity and a

⁷⁹⁴ Cf., section 7.2.

⁷⁹⁵ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #43.

⁷⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, #137.

⁷⁹⁷ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #45.

⁷⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, #144.

⁷⁹⁹ Cf., section 4.1.

preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters.”⁸⁰⁰ For Francis, these duties extend outwards through obligations to repay ecological debt accrued within the community of nations.⁸⁰¹ “Inequity affects not only individuals but entire countries; it compels us to consider an ethics of international relations. A true ‘ecological debt’ exists, particularly between the global north and south, connected to commercial imbalances with effects on the environment, and the disproportionate use of natural resources by certain countries over long periods of time.”⁸⁰² This concept of ecological debt flows from Francis’ repeated call to address social and ecological imbalances in a spirit of solidarity, which correlates with a realm of “*differentiated responsibilities*” in regards to ecological harms like those accruing from anthropogenic climate change.⁸⁰³ Moreover, in what is a significant move when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens and exactly echoing a term from Principle 7 of the Rio Declaration,⁸⁰⁴ Francis speaks of “common and differentiated responsibilities” as they apply to global governance of ecological commons.⁸⁰⁵ This summons is the moral framework within which Francis presents many of his practical recommendations for alternatives to high consumption technologies and cultures. For example, when advocating for less-polluting forms of producing energy, the encyclical not only specifically mentions solar power and the

⁸⁰⁰ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #158.

⁸⁰¹ Cf., Louise Grey, “World Goes into ‘Ecological Debt’,” (25 September 2009), accessed 10 July 2015, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/earthnews/6226391/World-goes-into-ecologicaldebt.html>. This concept of ecological debt has a long genealogy in different exploitative power relationships. See, Andrew Simms, *Ecological Debt: Global Warming and the Wealth of Nations*, 2nd Edition (London, UK: Pluto Books, 2009); cf., Frantz Fanon, *Les Damnés de la Terre* (Paris, FR: Edition La Découverte, 1985).

⁸⁰² Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #51.

⁸⁰³ *Ibid.*, #52. Emphasis in original.

⁸⁰⁴ Principle 7 reads, “states shall cooperate in a spirit of global partnership to conserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of the Earth’s ecosystem. In view of the different contributions to global environmental degradation, States have common but differentiated responsibilities. The developed countries acknowledge the responsibility that they bear in the international pursuit to sustainable development in view of the pressures their societies place on the global environment and of the technologies and financial resources they command.” From United Nations Conference on Environment and Development “Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,” (16 June 1992), accessed 27 December 2015, <http://www.unep.org/documents.multilingual/default.asp?documentid=78&articleid=1163>.

⁸⁰⁵ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #170.

need for knowledge-sharing within the global community, but it also states that the costs of such green programming “would be low, compared to the risks of climate change. In any event, these are primarily ethical decisions, rooted in solidarity between all peoples.”⁸⁰⁶

Mixing practical recommendations and ethical frameworks in this manner, within the pages of *Laudato Si'*, the preferential option for those living in poverty and the related concern for the integral development of all people both extend into the future and require our urgent immediate attention. “Our inability to think seriously about future generations is linked to our inability to broaden the scope of our present interests and to give consideration to those who remain excluded from basic economic development. Let us not only keep the poor of the future in mind, but also today’s poor, whose life on this earth is brief and who cannot keep on waiting.”⁸⁰⁷ In this sense and in line with the ethical orientation of the emancipatory projects that Martin Luther King Jr. was working on at the time of his death, a green vision of social justice takes on an urgency that cannot be tenably delayed even as it strives for a better future.⁸⁰⁸

In both thanking and encouraging people who, in the same spirit as King, work diligently for the care of our common home, Pope Francis continues a certain greening process in relation to the Catholic Social Teaching principle of the preferential option for the poor.⁸⁰⁹ “Particular appreciation is owed to those who tirelessly seek to resolve the tragic effects of environmental degradation on the lives of the world’s poorest.”⁸¹⁰ Hence, in line

⁸⁰⁶ Ibid., #172.

⁸⁰⁷ Ibid., #162.

⁸⁰⁸ Cf., the discussion on King in section 6.1.

⁸⁰⁹ Cf., section 7.1.

⁸¹⁰ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #13.

with some liberationist treatments of political economy,⁸¹¹ Francis is concerned with unjust core-periphery relationships both among nation-states and within them,⁸¹² which give structural support to unequal patterns of consumption.⁸¹³ Additionally, flowing from this liberationist orientation and in line with a green theo-ecoethical reading of the universal destination of created goods,⁸¹⁴ Francis clearly endorses a concept of limits to human property rights, stating emphatically that “God rejects every claim to absolute ownership.”⁸¹⁵ In terms of the encyclical’s general orientation, the thread of a green theo-ecoethical preferential option for people living in poverty is also evident in the endorsement of integrated responses to a *telos* pointed toward socio-ecological flourishing in *Laudato Si’*. “Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature.”⁸¹⁶ In this regard, Francis also proposes something akin to a preferential option for aboriginal peoples, especially when first peoples are being displaced from their lands in the service of agricultural and mining enterprises that harm socio-ecological flourishing, stating, “it is essential to show special care for Indigenous communities and their cultural traditions. They are not merely one minority among others, but should be the principal dialogue partners.”⁸¹⁷ Citing the example of Indigenous People in this rather monolithic manner may be taken as indicative of Francis’ frequent adoption of a liberationist methodology of discerning structural patterns active in

⁸¹¹ For a treatment of this connection from ecotheological perspective see, Cho Hyun-Chul, *An Ecological Vision of the World: Toward a Christian Ecological Theology for Our Age* (Rome, IT: Gregorian University Press, 2004), 220-227.

⁸¹² Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #176.

⁸¹³ *Ibid.*, #172.

⁸¹⁴ *Cf.*, section 2.3.

⁸¹⁵ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #67.

⁸¹⁶ *Ibid.*, #139.

⁸¹⁷ *Ibid.*, #146; *cf.*, Berry on the role of Indigenous Peoples in section 3.2.

instances of injustice,⁸¹⁸ in this case affecting aboriginal peoples in a manner that recalls George Tinker's analysis.⁸¹⁹

With reference to premature death among people and a lack of respect for the dignity of the human person, Francis notes the negative effects that people living in poverty bear as a result of ecological harms.⁸²⁰ "Exposure to atmospheric pollutants produces a broad spectrum of health hazards, especially for the poor, and causes millions of premature deaths. ...These problems are closely linked to a throwaway culture which affects the excluded just as it quickly reduces things to rubbish."⁸²¹ In this passage, social injustice and ecological abuse are firmly connected. Note also his insistence that when a foundational common good, like climate, is threatened by anthropogenic factors, then morality enters into play. "Humanity is called to recognize the need for changes of lifestyle, production and consumption, in order to combat this warming or at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it."⁸²² Here, the moral premise that human-generated ecological harms require ethical responses that are characterized by social justice in multiple forms is laid bare.⁸²³ To summon the moral courage to respond to such interlocking layers of oppression,⁸²⁴ as a model for both the purposes of this encyclical and his papacy, Pope Francis turns to St. Francis of Assisi's example of integral ecology as marked by an authentic simplicity and joyful concern about care for the vulnerable.⁸²⁵ In this regard, the pontiff emphasizes that St. Francis "shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor,

⁸¹⁸ See, section 4.1.

⁸¹⁹ See, the discussion of indigeneity in section 2.3.

⁸²⁰ See, also Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #s25, 48; cf., Hrynkow and O'Hara, "Catholic Social Teaching and Climate Justice from a Peace Studies Perspective," 24; 30-31.

⁸²¹ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #20; #22.

⁸²² *Ibid.*, #23.

⁸²³ Cf., Dennis Patrick O'Hara and Allen Abelsohn, "Ethical Responses to Climate Change," *Ethics and the Environment* 16, no. 1 (June 2011): 25-50.

⁸²⁴ Cf., section 9.5.2; section 4.1.

⁸²⁵ Cf., section 10.2.

commitment to society, and interior peace.”⁸²⁶ In this rendering of the personal, lived example of St. Francis, and in the material presented in the present section more generally, a significant confluence emerges. Namely, within the pages of *Laudato Si'*, social justice is linked to other green theo-ecoethical principles to provide a *telos* for practical action geared toward socio-ecological flourishing.⁸²⁷

11.2.3 Participatory Democracy

In terms of its general orientation, the document's placement of faith in specific geographic locations and its frequent citation of the writings of national bishops conferences mean that *Laudato Si'* lends itself to being read as the most decentralizing papal encyclical ever promulgated.⁸²⁸ When specifically addressing issues related to what Berry names as the “human establishment” of politics,⁸²⁹ Francis' prescribed governance regime involves “a healthy politics [that] is sorely needed, capable of reforming and coordinating institutions, promoting best practices and overcoming undue pressure and bureaucratic inertia.”⁸³⁰ As it purposely seeks to contribute to the incarnation of such vital politics, *Laudato Si'* sets a program of transformative goals for governance that includes not only the regulation of harms but also the promotion of the socio-ecological goods.⁸³¹ In this regard, Francis

⁸²⁶ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #10.

⁸²⁷ Part of this confluence can be attributed to the drafting method of *Laudato Si'*. That method was highly consultative. For example, Pope Francis asked several people, including James Martin, SJ, to draft their versions of a short encyclical under the title *Domus Communis* (our common home), which indicates the centrality of the common home (a solidaristic image) to the project that became the present pope's first social encyclical. Viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens that the main title of the encyclical became *Laudato Si'* (praise be), with “on care for our common home” now the sub-title, can still be taken as a solidaristic image, emphasizing how duties to God permeate our duties to our fellow human beings (with special duties to people living in poverty) and to the rest of the created world. On his contribution, see, James Martin, “The Theologians Respond: *Laudato Si'*,” (18 June 2015), accessed 31 December 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EdAJO-anDmY>.

⁸²⁸ E.g., Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #84; #88.

⁸²⁹ See, section 1.2.1.

⁸³⁰ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #181.

⁸³¹ Cf., section 1.2.3.

emphasizes that “political and institutional frameworks do not exist simply to avoid bad practice, but also to promote best practice, to stimulate creativity in seeking new solutions and to encourage individual or group initiatives.”⁸³² In terms of the social encyclical’s treatment of both state and non-state actors’ proper role in governance, Pope Francis is also clear in his preference that politics not represent a privileging of segmented interests. Rather, he encourages “honest and open debate” when addressing socio-ecological issues.⁸³³

We cannot fail to praise the commitment of international agencies and civil society organizations which draw public attention to these issues and offer critical cooperation, employing legitimate means of pressure, to ensure that each government carries out its proper and inalienable responsibility to preserve its country’s environment and natural resources, without capitulating to spurious local or international interests.⁸³⁴

In this manner, Francis decries short-term gain-oriented and consumerist models of politics, highlighting, in accord with the insight underpinning Stephanie Kaza’s rendering of Indra’s net,⁸³⁵ that “myopia of power politics delays the inclusion of a far-sighted environmental agenda within the overall agenda of governments.”⁸³⁶ The results have meant politics has failed to serve the common good, most especially on the international level.

We lack leadership capable of striking out on new paths and meeting the needs of the present with concern for all and without prejudice towards coming generations. The establishment of a legal framework which can set clear boundaries and ensure the protection of ecosystems has become indispensable; otherwise, the new power structures based on the techno-economic paradigm may overwhelm not only our politics but also freedom and justice.

It is remarkable how weak international political responses have been. The failure of global summits on the environment make it plain that our politics are subject to technology and finance. There are too many special interests, and economic interests

⁸³² Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #177.

⁸³³ *Ibid.*, #188.

⁸³⁴ *Ibid.*, #38.

⁸³⁵ See, section 7.2.

⁸³⁶ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #178.

easily end up trumping the common good and manipulating information so that their own plans will not be affected.⁸³⁷

In place of such myopic interests, Francis proposes that *Laudato Si'*, in a manner reminiscent of articulations of green politics, be taken as setting alternative goals for political action.⁸³⁸ Further, this *telos* represents a confluence that works in support of Transformative Learning's methodological feature of actively engaging in a triadic fostering of substantive peace, social justice, and ecological health.⁸³⁹ As this orientation transfers to the area of global governance, Francis is less concerned about efficiency in the sense of fast decision-making than the efficiency of just outcomes. As a result, for example, he advocates addressing climate change in a manner that simultaneously and effectively works toward eliminating poverty,⁸⁴⁰ growing from a sorely needed "agreement on systems of governance for the whole range of so-called 'global commons.'"⁸⁴¹ Further shading such teachings, early on in the document, *Laudato Si'* characterizes St. Francis's expansion of the moral community that accompanies viewing each and every creature as brother or sister, as "a conviction [that] cannot be written off as naive romanticism, for it affects the choices which determine our behaviour."⁸⁴² In this systematic approach to politics that opens spaces for the concerns of the more-than-human members of the Earth community, we have support for a participatory democracy wherein Francis moves the boundaries of the political community beyond what is expressed in the *Global Greens Charter* toward Berry's and Boff's respective visions of biocracy and socio-cosmic democracy.⁸⁴³

⁸³⁷ Ibid., #s53-54.

⁸³⁸ See, the discussion of green views on participation in section 2.2.

⁸³⁹ See, section 1.2.3.

⁸⁴⁰ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #175.

⁸⁴¹ Ibid., #174.

⁸⁴² Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #11. On St. Francis' view of the moral community cf., section 2.4.

⁸⁴³ See, section 5.2.

Nonetheless, as might be expected,⁸⁴⁴ and in parallel with the *Global Greens Charter*,⁸⁴⁵ *Laudato Si'* is much stronger on socio-political participation in regards to ecological challenges than in terms of its support for biocracy and socio-cosmic democracy. Yet, from a green theo-ecoethical perspective there remains a confluence here with the type of minimal conditions necessary for moving toward such holistic green politics. For example, the encyclical offers an interesting coupling of universe-embedded relationality and participation. “A fragile world, entrusted by God to human care, challenges us to devise intelligent ways of directing, developing and limiting our power. In this universe, shaped by open and intercommunicating systems, we can discern countless forms of relationship and participation.”⁸⁴⁶ Hence, Francis’ contribution in regards to foundations for a holistic, green, and participatory politics should not be minimized. In this light, a green theo-ecoethical lens helps to discern a good deal of participatory content within the pages of *Laudato Si'*. For example, Francis extols the importance of subsidiarity as part of his discussion of cultural ecology and responses to social-ecological crises.⁸⁴⁷ “Attempts to resolve all problems through uniform regulations or technical interventions can lead to overlooking the complexities of local problems which demand the active participation of all members of the community.”⁸⁴⁸ He also situates subsidiarity as essential for the common good, buttressed by respect for the human person and the “basic and inalienable rights ordered to his or her integral development.”⁸⁴⁹ In light of this participatory rendering, the common good and subsidiarity combine in a poignant manner to support the “overall welfare of society and the

⁸⁴⁴ Cf., section 10.3.3.

⁸⁴⁵ See, section 5.2.

⁸⁴⁶ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #s78-79.

⁸⁴⁷ Cf. the discussion of subsidiarity in section 5.1.

⁸⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, #144.

⁸⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, #157.

development of a variety of intermediate groups.”⁸⁵⁰ Similarly, in accord with the notion of wide participation that is integral to (even the nomenclature of) the green theo-ecoethical principles mapped above,⁸⁵¹ *Laudato Si’* is emphatic about an ethical imperative “to ensure that solutions are proposed from a global perspective, and not simply to defend the interests of a few countries.”⁸⁵² This orientation is also echoed when considering local levels of governance. In this regard, the importance of freedom of information and wide-participation among all stakeholders in order to make a proper determination of their own fate in a manner supportive of the common good is given credence when Francis discusses prudential decision-making on food justice issues.⁸⁵³

A broad, responsible scientific and social debate needs to take place, one capable of considering all the available information and of calling things by their name. It sometimes happens that complete information is not put on the table; a selection is made on the basis of particular interests, be they politico-economic or ideological. This makes it difficult to reach a balanced and prudent judgement on different questions, one which takes into account all the pertinent variables. Discussions are needed in which all those directly or indirectly affected (farmers, consumers, civil authorities, scientists, seed producers, people living near fumigated fields, and others) can make known their problems and concerns, and have access to adequate and reliable information in order to make decisions for the common good, present and future.⁸⁵⁴

Also in support of the principled consensus so important to participatory democracy as practised in Quaker meetings,⁸⁵⁵ during its re-imagining of environmental impact assessment, *Laudato Si’* asserts

a consensus should always be reached between the different stakeholders, who can offer a variety of approaches, solutions and alternatives. The local population should have a special place at the table; they are concerned about their own future and that of their children, and can consider goals transcending immediate economic interest. We

⁸⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁵¹ See, Chapter Four.

⁸⁵² Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #164

⁸⁵³ Cf., Cathy C. Campbell, *Stations of the Banquet: Faith Foundations for Food Justice* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003), 125; Deanne-Drummond on prudence in section 3.1.

⁸⁵⁴ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #135.

⁸⁵⁵ See, section 5.1.

need to stop thinking in terms of “interventions” to save the environment in favour of policies developed and debated by all interested parties.⁸⁵⁶

Francis continues that outcomes flowing from the realization of an ethical imperative to work toward a participatory consensus needs to support “widely accessible sources of renewable energy.”⁸⁵⁷ Further, they need to be broadly global in a participatory manner, fostering concrete results supportive of socio-ecological flourishing.⁸⁵⁸

A global consensus is essential for confronting the deeper problems, which cannot be resolved by unilateral actions on the part of individual countries. Such a consensus could lead, for example, to planning a sustainable and diversified agriculture, developing renewable and less polluting forms of energy, encouraging a more efficient use of energy, promoting a better management of marine and forest resources, and ensuring universal access to drinking water.⁸⁵⁹

In agreement with a key feature of participatory democracy as articulated from a green theo-ecoethical perspective, *Laudato Si'* advocates for the greater ultimate effectiveness of establishing processes over the holding of positions of power.⁸⁶⁰ Francis further supports the green participatory principle that political power ought to be held diffusely in order to best foster ecological health by arguing that “unless citizens control political power—national, regional and municipal—it will not be possible to control damage to the environment. Local legislation can be more effective, too, if agreements exist between neighbouring communities to support the same environmental policies.”⁸⁶¹ A preview of the potential of wide participation is discernible in common projects, “which work to promote the common good and to defend the environment.”⁸⁶² Recalling key elements of this thesis’ commentary on Christian Peacemaker Teams seeking to activate the dynamics associated

⁸⁵⁶ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #183.

⁸⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, #165.

⁸⁵⁸ *Cf.*, section 10.2.

⁸⁵⁹ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #164.

⁸⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, #178.

⁸⁶¹ *Ibid.*, #179.

⁸⁶² *Ibid.*, #232.

with a “dialogue of life,”⁸⁶³ Francis praises the way that solidaristic action can help build relationships, which in turn act as seedbeds for potential substantive spiritual experiences understood to take place within an Earth community.

Around these community actions, relationships develop or are recovered and a new social fabric emerges. Thus, a community can break out of the indifference induced by consumerism. These actions cultivate a shared identity, with a story which can be remembered and handed on. In this way, the world, and the quality of life of the poorest, are cared for, with a sense of solidarity which is at the same time aware that we live in a common home which God has entrusted to us. These community actions, when they express self-giving love, can also become intense spiritual experiences.⁸⁶⁴

This self-giving love is transformative in a green theo-ecoethical sense, extending the boundaries of the political community and breaking the hold of concentrated, myopic, and segmented power in favour of more diffuse solidaristic community action. Here and through the other insights mapped in this section, *Laudato Si'* can be read as lending a large measure of spiritually-infused support for foundational practices and ideas that, in turn, can allow for the growth of a green theo-ecoethical view of participatory democracy with benefit for prospects of increased levels of socio-ecological flourishing in this world.

11.2.4 Nonviolence

The violence of people against “our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us”⁸⁶⁵ is characterized in the opening of *Laudato Si'* as not only relational but also deeply personal, multiplying as a result of the sin in our hearts, and tangibly “reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life.”⁸⁶⁶ In this manner, the encyclical’s social ethics explicitly couple human ecology and the common

⁸⁶³ See, section 8.1.

⁸⁶⁴ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #232.

⁸⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, #1; Cf., section 3.2’s discussion of Mother Earth.

⁸⁶⁶ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #2.

good, imaging them as joined through intimate bonds.⁸⁶⁷ Moreover, in accord with a green theo-ecoethical view on substantive peace,⁸⁶⁸ for Francis, this intimacy is related to a deep image of nonviolence, “the common good calls for social peace, the stability and security provided by a certain order which cannot be achieved without particular concern for distributive justice; whenever this is violated, violence always ensues. Society as a whole, and the state in particular, are obliged to defend and promote the common good.”⁸⁶⁹ The Pope also extends this sentiment toward a cosmic common good,⁸⁷⁰ in a manner recalling both Thomas Berry’s poignant assertion that the universe cannot be considered a mere collection of objects and Wink’s reflections on the character of the nonviolent “third way” of Jesus.⁸⁷¹ In this regard, Francis’ exegesis offers support for a substantive vision of peace that actively challenges the ethics of domination.

The biblical accounts of creation invite us to see each human being as a subject who can never be reduced to the status of an object. Yet it would also be mistaken to view other living beings as mere objects subjected to arbitrary human domination. When nature is viewed solely as a source of profit and gain, this has serious consequences for society. This vision of “might is right” has engendered immense inequality, injustice and acts of violence against the majority of humanity, since resources end up in the hands of the first comer or the most powerful: the winner takes all. Completely at odds with this model are the ideals of harmony, justice, fraternity and peace as proposed by Jesus.⁸⁷²

In concert with this fuller meaning of principled nonviolence oriented toward establishing incarnations of substantive peace as expressed in this thesis’ hermeneutical lens,⁸⁷³ *Laudato Si’* is clear that we have an inescapable duty to actively defend and promote a green common good. For example, invoking the anthropogenic nature of ecological

⁸⁶⁷ Ibid., #156.

⁸⁶⁸ See, the concluding footnote in section 1.2.3.

⁸⁶⁹ Francis *Laudato Si’*, #157.

⁸⁷⁰ Cf., the discussion of Scheid’s concept of a “cosmic common good” in section 2.2.

⁸⁷¹ See, discussion of Berry’s work in section 8.1; Wink, *Jesus and Nonviolence*, 88.

⁸⁷² Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #s 81-82.

⁸⁷³ Cf., the characterization of Francis’ peace witness in section 9.6.

degradation in support of a Cãmarian-style of countering spirals of violence with responsibility-taking based upon a dialogical approach,⁸⁷⁴ Francis opens the fifth chapter of the encyclical in the following manner:

So far I have attempted to take stock of our present situation, pointing to the cracks in the planet that we inhabit as well as to the profoundly human causes of environmental degradation. Although the contemplation of this reality in itself has already shown the need for a change of direction and other courses of action, now we shall try to outline the major paths of dialogue which can help us escape the spiral of self-destruction which currently engulfs us.⁸⁷⁵

Also in line with Cãmara's example of nonviolent social change in terms of the educational project,⁸⁷⁶ particularly as it is brought forward by Ivone Gebara,⁸⁷⁷ Francis is clear that Christian formation ought to foster socio-ecological flourishing, which serves to promote cultures of nonviolence and peace. "All Christian communities have an important role to play in ecological education. It is my hope that our seminaries and houses of formation will provide an education in responsible simplicity of life, in grateful contemplation of God's world, and in concern for the needs of the poor and the protection of the environment."⁸⁷⁸ As Elise Boulding highlights, such an integral approach to the educational project serves to promote cultures of nonviolence and peace.⁸⁷⁹

Continuing his coupling of ecological concern with a preferential option for those living in poverty, and citing the lack of a robust human ecology as problematic, Francis solidifies the connection between (1) virulent proliferations of eco-alienation, and (2) violence in urban contexts. "The extreme poverty experienced in areas lacking harmony, open spaces or potential for integration, can lead to incidents of brutality and to exploitation

⁸⁷⁴ See, discussion of Cãmara's thought in section 6.1.

⁸⁷⁵ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #163.

⁸⁷⁶ Rosemary Radford Ruether, "On the Front Lines of Faith," 83.

⁸⁷⁷ See, discussion of Gebara in section 6.1.

⁸⁷⁸ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #214.

⁸⁷⁹ See, Elise Boulding, *Cultures of Peace: The Hidden Side of History* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000).

by criminal organizations. In the unstable neighbourhoods of mega-cities, the daily experience of overcrowding and social anonymity can create a sense of uprootedness which spawns antisocial behaviour and violence.”⁸⁸⁰ Moreover, he emphasizes that dominant techno-economic cultural models encourage the adoption of unsustainable ways of being in the world.⁸⁸¹ As a result of their hyper-consumerist character, they also reinforce what Francis names as “an economy of exclusion and inequality” because they are obtainable by only a small percentage of the world’s population.⁸⁸² For example, to cite a fact commonly named by ecological activists, if every person on the planet consumed at the same at the same level as the US national average, it would take the resources of five planets to maintain that standard of living.⁸⁸³ As such, for Francis, in accord with a green theo-ecoethical perspective, dominant techno-economic cultural models represent another seedbed of violence. “Obsession with a consumerist lifestyle, above all when few people are capable of maintaining it, can only lead to violence and mutual destruction.”⁸⁸⁴ In that sense, Francis remarkably shades the *Earth Charter* as a peacebuilding document that encourages “us to leave behind a period of self-destruction and make a new start” by embracing a perspective of “universal awareness” in joyful celebration of vital work for peace and justice.⁸⁸⁵ In this regard, with a formulation that recalls a portion of C  mara’s and Gandhi’s prescription for

⁸⁸⁰ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #149.

⁸⁸¹ *Ibid.*, #s53-54.

⁸⁸² Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #53.

⁸⁸³ Natural News Staff, “Supporting World Population at U.S. Consumption Rates Would Require Five Earths,” (26 March 2008), accessed 26 July 2016, <http://www.naturalnews.com/022890.html>.

⁸⁸⁴ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #204.

⁸⁸⁵ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #207. On the *Earth Charter*, see, section 2.4. Interestingly, Leonardo Boff has cited a Spanish version of the *Earth Charter* (indicating a common source with the *Global Greens Charter*, see section 2.2) as one of the documents, along with a selection of his books and a draft UN document on the common good of Mother Earth and humanity, that he passed to Pope Francis through trusted intermediaries to provide “bricks” that would help the pope build the foundations for *Laudato Si’*. Boff, “An Unworthy Servant in the Service of Francis,” 7, 9; cf., Harvey Cox, *The Silencing of Leonardo Boff: The Vatican and the Future of World Christianity* (Oak Park, IL: Meyer Stone Books, 1988).

breaking the hold of spirals of violence in this world,⁸⁸⁶ *Laudato Si'* upholds nonviolent love with reference to a saint popularly known, through a grounded and ecologically-themed handle, as 'the little flower of Jesus.'⁸⁸⁷ "Saint Therese of Lisieux invites us to practise the little way of love, not to miss out on a kind word, a smile or any small gesture which sows peace and friendship. An integral ecology is also made up of simple daily gestures which break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness."⁸⁸⁸

The treatment of such green joy in *Laudato Si'* is firmly connected to peace in a manner that can be read from a green theo-ecoethical perspective as shading simple living as violence intervention and prevention, which, as per Wink's thought, necessarily eschews domination.⁸⁸⁹ Francis, describing the violent hubris of ecological harm, writes in a pastoral tone, "once we lose our humility, and become enthralled with the possibility of limitless mastery over everything, we inevitably end up harming society and the environment."⁸⁹⁰ This choice against both domination and consumerist orientation, in favour of growth understood in terms of positive relationships, comes into view through a green theo-ecoethical lens as an integral part of the peace witness in *Laudato Si'*. This feature is further evidenced pastorally in Francis' profile of what may be named as 'chosen green simplicity' during his discussion of peace and joy in the encyclical.

Such sobriety, when lived freely and consciously, is liberating. It is not a lesser life or one lived with less intensity. On the contrary, it is a way of living life to the full. In reality, those who enjoy more and live better each moment are those who have given up dipping here and there, always on the look-out for what they do not have. They

⁸⁸⁶ See, discussion of Câmara's thought in section 6.1.

⁸⁸⁷ Capturing some of the creative energy associated with the wild in ecotheological discourse, this title properly refers to wild flowers, of fields and valleys, and explicitly not tended ones planted in gardens. See, Therese of Lisieux, *Soeur Therese of Lisieux, the Little Flower of Jesus: A New and Complete Translation of L'Histoire D'une Ame, With an Account of Some Favours Attributed to the Intercession of Soeur Therese*, ed. T.N. Taylor (London, UK: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1912), 275.

⁸⁸⁸ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #230.

⁸⁸⁹ See, discussion of Wink's thought in section 6.1.

⁸⁹⁰ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #224.

experience what it means to appreciate each person and each thing, learning familiarity with the simplest things and how to enjoy them. So they are able to shed unsatisfied needs, reducing their obsessiveness and weariness. Even living on little, they can live a lot, above all when they cultivate other pleasures and find satisfaction in fraternal encounters, in service, in developing their gifts, in music and art, in contact with nature, in prayer. Happiness means knowing how to limit some needs which only diminish us, and being open to the many different possibilities which life can offer.⁸⁹¹

Here, we can begin to see how *Laudato Si'* offers a specific and effective antidote to a 'prosperity gospel' that equates God's favour with "spiritual, physical and financial mastery [and] that dominates not only much of the American religion scene but also some of the largest churches around the globe."⁸⁹² Indeed, in concert with green theo-ecoethical values, Francis firmly situates Christian spirituality as removing the basis for the dynamics of domination by supporting a lived ethic of substantive peace and joy in line with chosen green asceticism.

Christian spirituality proposes a growth marked by moderation and the capacity to be happy with little. It is a return to that simplicity which allows us to stop and appreciate the small things, to be grateful for the opportunities which life affords us, to be spiritually detached from what we possess, and not to succumb to sadness for what we lack. This implies avoiding the dynamic of dominion and the mere accumulation of pleasures.⁸⁹³

In describing green ascetic practices, Jeffrey Jacob notes that practitioners of voluntary simplicity often seek to connect what may at first seem paradoxical states, the inner peace flowing from simple living and world peace.⁸⁹⁴ Francis embraces this proposition with his concept of positive peace being firmly linked to inner peace within a spiritual worldview, which can cultivate wonder at the magnificence of creation. "An adequate

⁸⁹¹ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #223; cf., Boulding, *Cultures of Peace*.

⁸⁹² Kate Bowler, *Blessed: A History of the American Prosperity Gospel* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013), 3.

⁸⁹³ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #222.

⁸⁹⁴ Jeffrey Jacob, *New Pioneers: The Back-To-The-Land Movement and the Search for a Sustainable Future* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 93. Cf. the discussion of Boulding in section 1.2.2.

understanding of spirituality consists in filling out what we mean by peace, which is much more than the absence of war. Inner peace is closely related to care for ecology and for the common good because, lived out authentically, it is reflected in a balanced lifestyle together with a capacity for wonder which takes us to a deeper understanding of life.”⁸⁹⁵ Herein, voluntary simple living becomes a more emancipatory path to positive peace, which in turn contributes to world peace in line with the Gandhian insight that simple living supports wider spaces for the realization of socio-ecological flourishing.⁸⁹⁶ Significantly, this is a path accessible to a much wider swath of humanity than is represented in the segmented group of economic and political power brokers who currently control too many of the other factors, including instruments of mass violence, that mitigate against substantive world peace.⁸⁹⁷ The delineation of that path, in concert with other insights mapped in this section and further connected in the conclusion that follows, combine to colligate a significant measure of support for green theo-ecoethical understandings of principled nonviolence and positive peace within the pages of *Laudato Si*’.

11.2.5 Sustainability

To help move the world toward sustainability, Francis is not afraid to once again activate the “apocalyptic imagination.”⁸⁹⁸

Doomsday predictions can no longer be met with irony or disdain. We may well be leaving to coming generations debris, desolation and filth. The pace of consumption, waste and environmental change has so stretched the planet’s capacity that our contemporary lifestyle, unsustainable as it is, can only precipitate catastrophes, such as those which even now periodically occur in different areas of the world. The

⁸⁹⁵ Francis, *Laudato Si*’, #225.

⁸⁹⁶ Cf., the reference to Gandhian concept of living simply so that others may simple live in section 10.2.

⁸⁹⁷ Cf., Benedict, “If you Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation,” #11.

⁸⁹⁸ Cf., Skrimshire.

effects of the present imbalance can only be reduced by our decisive action, here and now. We need to reflect on our accountability before those who will have to endure the dire consequences.⁸⁹⁹

The implication is simply that we, as a species, can do better.⁹⁰⁰ Indeed, Francis attempts to humanize our fate in this regard by exposing its moral consequences. For example, in the opening section of *Laudato Si'*, he states that violence and sin perpetuated by the dominion discourse is a violation of a familiar responsibility that ought to permeate human-Earth relationships,⁹⁰¹ compounded by a certain amnesia that forgets the reality of the basic nexus of sustainability.

This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. ...We have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of the earth (cf. *Gen 2: 7*); our very bodies are made up of her elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters.⁹⁰²

In accord with green theo-ecoethical values, “re-membering” the reality of our embodied nature within the web of life inherent in Francis’ description of the Earth as our sister is a key feature of the treatment of sustainability in the pages of *Laudato Si'*.⁹⁰³ In this light, Francis advises we have to wake up to unpleasant truths about presently existing unsustainability and its social consequences.⁹⁰⁴ “We all know that it is not possible to sustain the present level of consumption in developed countries and wealthier sectors of society, where the habit of wasting and discarding has reached unprecedented levels. The exploitation

⁸⁹⁹ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #161.

⁹⁰⁰ On the invocation of ‘simply’ here cf., McKay in section 3.2.

⁹⁰¹ See, section 2.3 on the mastery hypothesis.

⁹⁰² Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #2

⁹⁰³ Cf., Davis, 8-20; section 7.2.

⁹⁰⁴ Cf., Al Gore, *An Inconvenient Truth: The Crisis of Global Warming* (Toronto, ON: Penguin Group, 2007).

of the planet has already exceeded acceptable limits and we still have not solved the problem of poverty.”⁹⁰⁵

According to *Laudato Si'*, some of the chief reasons for this malaise are misunderstandings of the Earth-embedded nature of the economy,⁹⁰⁶ and the development of similarly narrowly focused operating principles that have given rise to socially and ecologically destructive practices, which also fail to take into account the true costs of production.⁹⁰⁷ For example, Francis writes,

the principle of the maximization of profits, frequently isolated from other considerations, reflects a misunderstanding of the very concept of the economy. As long as production is increased, little concern is given to whether it is at the cost of future resources or the health of the environment; as long as the clearing of a forest increases production, no one calculates the losses entailed in the desertification of the land, the harm done to biodiversity or the increased pollution. In a word, businesses profit by calculating and paying only a fraction of the costs involved.⁹⁰⁸

This is, of course, a bit of rhetorical exaggeration to make a key point about the limits of currently dominant models of economics. In response to the socio-ecological deficit being compounded by contemporary mainstream economics, a number of Christian thinkers and ecological economists have posed alternatives.⁹⁰⁹ In parallel with processes informing a green theo-ecoethical lens, there has been a circular learning process in this area for some time among those concerned with formulating an economics that actively accords moral worth to marginalized people and those crafting ecologically-informed reflections on the long term effects of certain economic processes. Helping set the stage for such mutually-enhancing dialogical processes, E.F. Schumacher's landmark book *Small is Beautiful: A*

⁹⁰⁵ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #27.

⁹⁰⁶ Cf., Mathis Wackernagel et. al., “Tracking the Ecological Overshoot of the Human Economy,” in *The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* (July 2002): 9266-71.

⁹⁰⁷ Cf., section 2.3.

⁹⁰⁸ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #195.

⁹⁰⁹ E.g., Sallie McFague, *Life Abundant: Rethinking Theology and Economy for a Planet in Peril* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2001); Herman E. Daly and Joshua Farley, *Ecological Economics: Principles and Applications*, 2nd Edition (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2011).

Study of Economics as If People Mattered, first released in 1973, argued, as part of its support for the precautionary principle that “ecology, indeed, ought to be a compulsory subject for all economists, whether professionals or laymen, as this might serve to restore a modicum of balance.”⁹¹⁰ In the same spirit as many of the critics who also offer constructive alternatives, Pope Francis’ critique of dominant models of economics extends to a call for a moral shift from present narrow interpretations of development toward deeper sustainability. “The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change.”⁹¹¹ Hence, for Francis, there is a need to politicize economics for the sake of the common good. Indeed, he continues, all those “who wield greater power,”⁹¹² inclusive of the multi-national corporations so justifiably maligned in much environmental literature,⁹¹³ are meant to serve the common good. Francis situates the problem of low political achievement in this area by again connecting the plight of those living in poverty with forces oppressing the larger Earth community.

Today, it is the case that some economic sectors exercise more power than states themselves. But economics without politics cannot be justified, since this would make it impossible to favour other ways of handling the various aspects of the present crisis. The mindset which leaves no room for sincere concern for the environment is the same mindset which lacks concern for the inclusion of the most vulnerable members of society.⁹¹⁴

As a solution to such fragmentation, Francis begins by citing a reality of deep interconnectivity, wherein, “we are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant

⁹¹⁰ E.F. Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful: A Study of Economics as If People Mattered* (London, UK: Vintage Books, 1993), 109.

⁹¹¹ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #13.

⁹¹² *Ibid.*, #196.

⁹¹³ For a perspective that both surveys the problem and agrees with Francis’ avowed principle that multinational corporations have a role to play in ecological security see, Katrina Suzanne Rogers, “Ecological Security and Multinational Corporations,” *Environmental Change and Security Project Report 3* (1997): 29-36

⁹¹⁴ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #196.

interaction with it.”⁹¹⁵ Francis then names limits on the human project if it is to be viable, notably delineating some of the consequences of the sinful hubris inherent in a failure to properly recognize humanity’s true anthropological location,

in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbour and with the earth itself.⁹¹⁶ According to the Bible, these three vital relationships have been broken, both outwardly and within us. This rupture is sin. The harmony between the Creator, humanity and creation as a whole was disrupted by our presuming to take the place of God and refusing to acknowledge our creaturely limitations.⁹¹⁷

As an antidote to this unsustainable malaise and in line with O’Sullivan’s perspective on Transformative Learning,⁹¹⁸ which encourages an ethic of accompaniment within the Earth community,⁹¹⁹ the Pope writes, “accordingly, our human ability to transform reality must proceed in line with God’s original gift of all that is.”⁹²⁰ In this light, Francis is clear that the natural world is properly considered God’s creation. Recalling Jonathan Wilson’s more hierarchical framework in *God’s Good World*,⁹²¹ biblical exegesis in *Laudato Si’* upholds the divine ownership of creation owing to its ability to engender correct moral behaviour.⁹²²

A spirituality which forgets God as all-powerful and Creator is not acceptable. That is how we end up worshipping earthly powers, or ourselves usurping the place of God, even to the point of claiming an unlimited right to trample his creation underfoot. The best way to restore men and women to their rightful place, putting an end to their claim to absolute dominion over the earth, is to speak once more of the figure of a

⁹¹⁵ Ibid., #139.

⁹¹⁶ To this familiar triad, later in the encyclical, Francis adds a fourth category of “relationship with the self” during his ecological exegesis of the story of Cain and Abel and as bridge to his discussion of the flood narrative in Genesis. “Disregard for the duty to cultivate and maintain a proper relationship with my neighbour, for whose care and custody I am responsible, ruins my relationship with my own self, with others, with God and with the earth. When all these relationships are neglected, when justice no longer dwells in the land, the Bible tells us that life itself is endangered.” From Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #70.

⁹¹⁷ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #66.

⁹¹⁸ See, the discussion of Transformative Learning in section 1.2.2

⁹¹⁹ Cf., the discussion of Christian Peacemaking Teams in section 8.1.

⁹²⁰ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #5.

⁹²¹ See, section 7.1.

⁹²² Cf. the discussion of Walter Houston’s work in section 4.1.

Father who creates and who alone owns the world. Otherwise, human beings will always try to impose their own laws and interests on reality.⁹²³

Hence, there is a certain accord among Berry, O’Sullivan, and Pope Francis that comes into focus with the aid of a green theo-ecoethical lens. First, there is a confluence concerning the need to recognize what Berry names as a “psycho-spiritual” dimension to the universe.⁹²⁴ Secondly, the three men join a growing chorus in support of an ethos for substantive peace and justice underlying transformative principles.⁹²⁵ “Education should facilitate making the leap toward the transcendent which gives ecological ethics its deepest meaning. It needs educators capable of developing an ethics of ecology, and helping people, through effective pedagogy, to grow in solidarity, responsibility and compassionate care.”⁹²⁶ One specific way these bounded, sustainability-supporting imperatives are grounded is in terms of the demarcation of limits to economic growth found in *Laudato Si’*.

Given the insatiable and irresponsible growth produced over many decades, we need also to think of containing growth by setting some reasonable limits and even retracing our steps before it is too late. We know how unsustainable is the behaviour of those who constantly consume and destroy, while others are not yet able to live in a way worthy of their human dignity. That is why the time has come to accept decreased growth in some parts of the world, in order to provide resources for other places to experience healthy growth.⁹²⁷

Partly in response to this limited and unsustainable definition of growth, the Canadian Bishops name a significant space for ascetic living as essential to living out a Christian ecological imperative.⁹²⁸ As Thomas Berry helps illustrate with his reflections on unsustainable qualities of American politics, jurisprudence, and the USA’s exported cultural

⁹²³ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #75.

⁹²⁴ Thomas Berry, “Christian Cosmology”, chapter in *The Christian Future and the Fate of the Earth*, 29.

⁹²⁵ See, section 1.2.2.

⁹²⁶ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #210.

⁹²⁷ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #193.

⁹²⁸ See, section 2.3 for a discussion of the Canadian Bishops’ vision on this point.

example,⁹²⁹ the challenge of incarnating such an ascetic ethic and the problems identified by Francis in the above passage are compounded by the dominant socio-cultural models we presently have available to us. Hence, there is an urgent need for deeper sustainable practices; namely, vibrant green alternatives that effectively foster socio-ecological flourishing. In this light, Francis argues for a virtue-cultivating education along transformative lines, wherein practical actions to care for creation, undertaken for the proper reasons, become acts of love.

Education in environmental responsibility can encourage ways of acting which directly and significantly affect the world around us, such as avoiding the use of plastic and paper, reducing water consumption, separating refuse, cooking only what can reasonably be consumed, showing care for other living beings, using public transport or car-pooling, planting trees, turning off unnecessary lights, or any number of other practices. All of these reflect a generous and worthy creativity which brings out the best in human beings. Reusing something instead of immediately discarding it, when done for the right reasons, can be an act of love which expresses our own dignity.⁹³⁰

Another significant socio-ecological sustainability issue negatively affecting people's dignity today revolves around water. On a basic level, Francis emphasizes that "fresh drinking water is an issue of primary importance, since it is indispensable for human life and for supporting terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems."⁹³¹ Water is of crucial importance to Christians as part of their faith lives. Moreover, human nature and the thirst that necessarily accompanies embodied life for *homo sapiens* makes fresh water essential for all people.⁹³² Therefore, when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, one can easily see the poignancy of Thomas Berry's insight included in this quotation from the Canadian Bishops in 2003.

⁹²⁹ *Thomas Berry* [DVD].

⁹³⁰ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #211.

⁹³¹ *Ibid.*, #28.

⁹³² Cf. the discussion of embodiment in section 11.2.1.

Water is the source of all life, and a primary symbol in religious traditions. Water cleanses, purifies, refreshes and inspires. The Bible speaks of living waters, of becoming a fountain of living water, of longing for running water, and of justice flowing as a mighty river.⁹³³ Yet how can anyone speak about “the waters of life” if these waters can no longer sustain life? As Thomas Berry writes, “if water is polluted it can neither be drunk nor used for baptism. Both in its physical reality and its psychic symbolism it is a source not of life but of death.”⁹³⁴

For Francis, as for the Canadian Bishops and in accord with green theo-ecoethical values, this problem cannot be solved through the privatization of water sources.⁹³⁵ Under present conditions, *Laudato Si'* emphasizes that “one particularly serious problem is the quality of water available to the poor.”⁹³⁶ Simply put, this is not an acceptable inequality, as safe drinking water is a prerequisite for participating in the human project; it is a right to life issue connected to the inalienable dignity of all people.⁹³⁷ Hence, the lack of potable water is a social debt that, for Francis, needs to be paid by those who benefit from the inequality.⁹³⁸ To emphasize the point about water as a foundation necessary for the realization of anything approaching deep sustainability akin to what this thesis has named as socio-ecological flourishing, Francis writes, as part of his consideration of environmental impact assessment policies, that “we know that water is a scarce and indispensable resource and a fundamental right which conditions the exercise of other human rights. This indisputable fact overrides any other assessment of environmental impact on a region.”⁹³⁹

⁹³³ Cf., section 6.1.

⁹³⁴ The Social Affairs Commission of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, “You Love all That Exists...All Things are Yours, God Lover of Life,” #8; cf., Heather Eaton, “Water and the World Council of Churches,” *The Ecumenist: A Journal of Theology, Culture and Society* 50, no.3 (Summer 2013): 10-15. The citation in the document, for which Heather Eaton was a theological consultant is to Thomas Berry, “Economics as a Religious Issue,” *Riverdale Papers X* (1985), 4.

⁹³⁵ The Social Affairs Commission of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, “You Love all That Exists...All Things are Yours, God lover of Life, #s11-13; Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #31.

⁹³⁶ *Ibid.*, #29.

⁹³⁷ Cf., section 3.2.

⁹³⁸ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #30.

⁹³⁹ *Ibid.*, #185.

Touching on some of the eschatological issues related to sustainability that come into focus through a green theo-ecoethical lens,⁹⁴⁰ Francis is clear about humanity's embedded location within the ecological world making the rest of the ecological world something beyond a mere background, soul-school or moral testing field. "Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live."⁹⁴¹ Supplying Christian support for the premise that humanity is essentially embedded within the Earth community,⁹⁴² Francis emphasizes that salvation is, through Christ's renewing power, actively extending to all creation.⁹⁴³ As a result, his first social encyclical's characterization of the ultimate destination of all things provides multiple images of vibrant relationships and timeless sustainability.⁹⁴⁴ "Eternal life will be a shared experience of awe, in which each creature, resplendently transfigured, will take its rightful place and have something to give those poor men and women who will have been liberated once and for all."⁹⁴⁵

As a feature of his treatment of sustainability, issues of unsustainability and their effects on social ecology, Francis notes the importance of fast, safe, frequent and accessible public transportation systems, the lack of which contribute to undue human suffering. "Many specialists agree on the need to give priority to public transportation. Yet some measures needed will not prove easily acceptable to society unless substantial improvements are made in the systems themselves, which in many cities force people to put up with undignified conditions due to crowding, inconvenience, infrequent service and lack of safety."⁹⁴⁶ From a green theo-ecoethical perspective, given both the numerous other examples of endorsements

⁹⁴⁰ See, section 2.3.

⁹⁴¹ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #139.

⁹⁴² Cf., section 3.1.

⁹⁴³ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #s98-100.

⁹⁴⁴ Cf., section 7.1.

⁹⁴⁵ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #244.

⁹⁴⁶ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #153.

of practical initiatives peppered throughout *Laudato Si'* and a plethora of alternative transportation options, it would have been appropriate for Francis to specifically support initiatives like free public transport, cycling, and an active transportation infrastructure that could improve people's quality of life in line with his concerns.⁹⁴⁷ However, when considering quality of life issues more broadly, Francis does leave space for such practical solutions when he extends his reflections to important issues surrounding work. His treatment of work includes an endorsement of employment that allows for the exercise of creativity as an antidote to superficial consumerism.⁹⁴⁸ A similar orientation to work features in Berry's thought.⁹⁴⁹

Productive diversification offers the fullest possibilities to human ingenuity to create and innovate, while at the same time protecting the environment and creating more sources of employment. Such creativity would be a worthy expression of our most noble human qualities, for we would be striving intelligently, boldly and responsibly to promote a sustainable and equitable development within the context of a broader concept of quality of life. On the other hand, to find ever new ways of despoiling nature, purely for the sake of new consumer items and quick profit, would be, in human terms, less worthy and creative, and more superficial.⁹⁵⁰

Any in-depth consideration of present unsustainable practices and beliefs from an integral perspective would help discern the need to not only overcome superficial consumerism but also mitigate against other factors contributing to present socio-ecological crises. For its part, a green theo-ecoethical perspective would emphasize that inasmuch as these factors are anthropogenic, they are moral problems and fall within the realm of concern for ethics, generally, and Christian ethics, in particular, as they point back to a human location for change. As a result of the magnitude of the problems now faced and the specific

⁹⁴⁷ Cf., Christopher Hrynkow, "Alternative Transportation," in *Climate Change: An Encyclopedia of Science and History*, eds. Brian C. Black, David M. Hassenzahl, Jennie C. Stephens, Gary Weisel and Nancy Gift (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2013), 51-59.

⁹⁴⁸ E.g., Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #237.

⁹⁴⁹ See, section 1.1.2

⁹⁵⁰ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #192.

nature of human accountability for the resultant malaise, Berry shades the great creative work of our generation in terms of a reinvention of the human so that we might be present to the rest of the Earth community in a mutually enhancing manner. “The historical mission of our times is to reinvent the human—at the species level, with critical reflection, within the community of life-systems, in time-development context, by means of story and shared dream experience.”⁹⁵¹ Although the cosmological story element is relatively underdeveloped in *Laudato Si'*, Francis contributes to this reinvention both through his articulation of interdependence as key to human life and his naming of the need for substantive change in a manner that recalls Berry’s sentiments on the magnitude of transformation required.

Many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change. We lack an awareness of our common origin, of our mutual belonging, and of a future to be shared with everyone. This basic awareness would enable the development of new convictions, attitudes and forms of life. A great cultural, spiritual and educational challenge stands before us, and it will demand that we set out on the long path of renewal.⁹⁵²

The paths of renewal invoked here are substantively sustainable. As this section has served to demonstrate, when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, much nourishment for that particular journey is provided by Francis in his first social encyclical, offering symbiotic support for an integral understanding of sustainability from a Christian perspective.

11.2.6 Respect for Diversity

Considering the present pope is the spiritual and temporal head of a church that in the first half of the last century did not even allow its members to attend passage of life

⁹⁵¹ Thomas Berry, “Reinventing the Human,” chapter in *The Great Work*, 159.

⁹⁵² Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #202.

ceremonies like weddings and funerals in the buildings of another Christian denomination,⁹⁵³ Francis' approach to religious diversity in *Laudato Si'* is remarkable when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens. In ecumenical terms, the invocation of the thought and example of the Patriarch Bartholomew is a case in point here.⁹⁵⁴ In the citations of Bartholomew, and perhaps organically given the subject matter of the encyclical, this respect for diversity also extends to the ecological world. One poignant example of a confluence of support for religious and ecological diversity occurs when Francis quotes a Sufi mystic, Ali-al Khawas, during his first social encyclical's affirmation of a sacramental cosmos. "The universe unfolds in God, who fills it completely. Hence, there is a mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person's face."⁹⁵⁵ Here, appreciation for diversity flows in multiple directions.

Drawing upon Teilhard,⁹⁵⁶ Ilia Delio asserts the need for a deeper integration of an evolutionary and cosmic Christian worldview from the papal magisterial office. Indeed, she explicitly names such an integral perspective as lacking within *Laudato Si'*.⁹⁵⁷ Were he still alive, Thomas Berry might agree.⁹⁵⁸ Notwithstanding a regrettable lack of consistency in this regard, the preceding citation from the encyclical can be read through a green theo-ecoethical lens as generating support for Berry's sentiment, expressed as part of his historical-cosmological approach to responding to the ecological crisis and growing from his work in the

⁹⁵³ Chester Gillis, *Roman Catholicism in America* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1999), 92.

⁹⁵⁴ See, Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #s7-9.

⁹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, #233.

⁹⁵⁶ See, section 8.1.

⁹⁵⁷ Ilia Delio, "Lex Credendi, Lex Vivendi: A Response to *Laudato Si'*" (30 June 2015), accessed 22 July 2015, <http://globalsistersreport.org/column/speaking-god/spirituality/lex-credendi-lex-vivendi-response-laudato-si%E2%80%99-27446>.

⁹⁵⁸ Cf., Thomas Berry, "An Historical Moment," (2001), *Earth Light Library*, accessed 17 April 2016, http://www.earthlight.org/essay43_berry_pff.html; section 11.2.5.

history of religions program at Fordham University,⁹⁵⁹ that even beyond the developments of Vatican II, Catholicism needs to see more than mere rays of truth in other religious traditions.⁹⁶⁰ Instead, Berry recommended the integration of the insight that diversity is systemically advantageous when it is held in creative and not destructive tension with what surrounds it.⁹⁶¹ It follows that Ecozoic Christianity would not crave unity on what Berry labels the “quantitative level” by seeking to make everyone Christian—a quest justified by the assumed possession of complete truth. Rather, community would be recognized as a fact of the universe on a “qualitative level” that allows for the “law of diversity” to be lived out as part of an integral Christianity, located within the primordial sacred community of the universe.⁹⁶²

Poignantly marking a deep cross-cultural, multi-denominational and inter-religious solidarity common to both a green theo-ecoethical lens and ecological Christian thinkers,⁹⁶³ Berry argues that this shift necessarily involves something far beyond concluding that other religions have access to forms of natural reason.⁹⁶⁴ Indeed, he posits that it is only through deep dialogue with other spiritual traditions, a dialogue in which the “floods of light” of other revelatory experiences are mutually recognized, that Christians will ever approach a fuller

⁹⁵⁹ See, Tucker and Grim, xix. An earlier version of the material mapping Berry’s approach to diversity presented in the following paragraphs appeared as part of Christopher Hrynokow, “Review of *The Christian Future and the Fate of Earth*,” *Toronto Journal of Theology* 26, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 126-128.

⁹⁶⁰ Through *Nostra Aetate*, Vatican II famously expressed the sentiment that “other religions found everywhere try to counter the restlessness of the human heart, each in its own manner, by proposing ‘ways,’ comprising teachings, rules of life, and sacred rites. The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions. She regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and of life, those precepts and teachings which, though differing in many aspects from the ones she holds and sets forth, nonetheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men.” From Paul VI, “Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions—*Nostra Aetate*,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 28 October 1965), #2, accessed 15 July 2015, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_nostra-aetate_en.html.

⁹⁶¹ Thomas Berry, “The Catholic Church and the Religions of the World,” chapter in *The Christian Future and the Fate of the Earth*, 22.

⁹⁶² *Ibid.*, 21; 18; 25.

⁹⁶³ E.g., Paul F. Knitter, “Deep Ecumenicity versus Incommensurability: Finding Common Ground on a Common Earth,” in *Christianity & Ecology*, edited by Dieter T. Hessel and Rosemary Radford Ruether (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 366.

⁹⁶⁴ Berry, “The Catholic Church and the Religions of the World,” 19.

understanding of the inspiration for human religious life.⁹⁶⁵ Francis supports this proposition, and like Berry, specifically notes the need for an embrace of cross-cultural diversity in concert with a green theo-ecoethical perspective. “Given the complexity of the ecological crisis and its multiple causes, we need to realize that the solutions will not emerge from just one way of interpreting and transforming reality. Respect must also be shown for the various cultural riches of different peoples, their art and poetry, their interior life and spirituality.”⁹⁶⁶ Berry, for his part, bases his conclusions here on a recasting of the Thomistic idea that God is both the creator and sustainer of diversity.⁹⁶⁷ Similarly skirting Aquinas’ anthropocentrism,⁹⁶⁸ *Laudato Si’* employs the Angelic Doctor’s example to support the premise that the “universe as a whole, in all its manifold relationships, shows forth the inexhaustible riches of God.”⁹⁶⁹ When this insight is viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, it follows that diversity is necessary so that we can begin to better understand the universe, spirituality, divinity, humanity, and, indeed, ourselves. In this sense, we move toward understanding what is lacking in one aspect of creation, inclusive of ourselves, when such deficiencies are brought into focus by other forms of existence on the planetary level.⁹⁷⁰

In so much as such respect for diversity is an antidote to egoistic individualism, in the chapter of the encyclical addressing education, Francis may be read as reaching into his Jesuit formation to give socio-ecological expression to Pedro Arrupe’s influential, justice-infused

⁹⁶⁵ Ibid., 16.

⁹⁶⁶ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #62.

⁹⁶⁷ Thomas Berry, “The Universe as Cosmic Liturgy,” chapter in *The Christian Future and the Fate of the Earth*, 107.

⁹⁶⁸ Cf., section 2.3.

⁹⁶⁹ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #86.

⁹⁷⁰ Berry, “The Catholic Church and the Religions of the World,” 17.

position that “today our prime educational objective must be to form men-and-women-for-others.”⁹⁷¹

We are always capable of going out of ourselves towards the other. Unless we do this, other creatures will not be recognized for their true worth; we are unconcerned about caring for things for the sake of others; we fail to set limits on ourselves in order to avoid the suffering of others or the deterioration of our surroundings. Disinterested concern for others, and the rejection of every form of self-centeredness and self-absorption, are essential if we truly wish to care for our brothers and sisters and for the natural environment. These attitudes also attune us to the moral imperative of assessing the impact of our every action and personal decision on the world around us. If we can overcome individualism, we will truly be able to develop a different lifestyle and bring about significant changes in society.⁹⁷²

Providing foundations for this other-oriented process of formation, *Laudato Si'* connects ecological wisdom to respect for diversity in an integral and biospiritual sense.⁹⁷³ As Francis writes in his characteristic pastoral style, “because all creatures are connected, each must be cherished with love and respect, for all of us as living creatures are dependent on one another. Each area is responsible for the care of this family.”⁹⁷⁴ This actively interlacing ethic of care and its concomitant respect for diversity is the basis for the transformative vision of faith developed in *Laudato Si'*, inclusive of “the awareness that each creature reflects something of God and has a message to convey to us, and the security that Christ has taken unto himself this material world and now, risen, is intimately present to each being, surrounding it with his affection and penetrating it with his light.”⁹⁷⁵

In further contrast to a fragmentary approach to difference, Pope Francis affirms the importance of diversity in the service of the common good, invoking a renewing form of solidarity that is so helpful for fostering the incarnation of green theo-ecoethical values. “We

⁹⁷¹ Pedro Arrupe, “Men and Women for Others,” (1973), accessed 14 July 2015, <http://online.ministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/men-for-others.html>; cf., the biographical details presented about Pope Francis in section 9.3.

⁹⁷² Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #204.

⁹⁷³ See, section 1.2.1.

⁹⁷⁴ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #43.

⁹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, #221.

require a new and universal solidarity. ...All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents.”⁹⁷⁶ *Laudato Si'* also links the value of diversity to an ethical imperative not to displace ecological harms to marginalized people and future generations.⁹⁷⁷ “Where certain species are destroyed or seriously harmed, the values involved are incalculable. We can be silent witnesses to terrible injustices if we think that we can obtain significant benefits by making the rest of humanity, present and future, pay the extremely high costs of environmental deterioration.”⁹⁷⁸ Indeed, *Laudato Si'* shades such degradation as representative of a fracture in our most essential spiritual and social relationships, because “the human person grows more, matures more and is sanctified more to the extent that he or she enters into relationships, going out from themselves to live in communion with God, with others and with all creatures.”⁹⁷⁹ For Francis, further expounding upon the tragedy of anthropogenic loss of biodiversity as overstepping the bounds of what is permitted, that solidarity extends to valuing diverse species within creation in an intrinsic manner, not merely as sources of cures or genes, to the benefit of our relationships with neighbour and God.⁹⁸⁰

It is not enough, however, to think of different species merely as potential “resources” to be exploited, while overlooking the fact that they have value in themselves. Each year sees the disappearance of thousands of plant and animal species which we will never know, which our children will never see, because they have been lost forever. The great majority become extinct for reasons related to human activity. Because of us, thousands of species will no longer give glory to God by their very existence, nor convey their message to us. We have no such right.⁹⁸¹

⁹⁷⁶ Ibid., #14.

⁹⁷⁷ Cf., section 3.2.

⁹⁷⁸ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #36.

⁹⁷⁹ Ibid., #240.

⁹⁸⁰ Cf., section 3.1.

⁹⁸¹ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #33.

In line with his concern for biodiversity, when considering the present and potential negative effects of the internationalization of biodiversity hotspots like the Amazon as overseen by transnational corporations, Francis decries monocultures as being introduced without thought for ecological integrity of specific bioregions.⁹⁸² Applying such concern for countering tendencies for monoculture to global political economy and anthropology, *Laudato Si'* delineates a major source of diversity-destroying momentum. “A consumerist vision of human beings, encouraged by the mechanisms of today’s globalized economy, has a levelling effect on cultures, diminishing the immense variety which is the heritage of all humanity.”⁹⁸³ Extending this sentiment in a more biocentric direction,⁹⁸⁴ *Laudato Si'* decries as shallow any worldview or system that quantifies all things in a calculative manner, measuring ‘resources’ merely for their potential as objects of exploitation. Under such lamentable conditions, Francis continues, “biodiversity is considered at most a deposit of economic resources available for exploitation, with no serious thought for the real value of things, their significance for persons and cultures, or the concerns and needs of the poor.”⁹⁸⁵

It follows that, for Francis, respect for cultural and local human diversity is also ecological. “There is a need to incorporate the history, culture and architecture of each place, thus preserving its original identity. Ecology, then, also involves protecting the cultural treasures of humanity in the broadest sense. More specifically, it calls for greater attention to local cultures when studying environmental problems.”⁹⁸⁶ Indeed, solidifying respect for diversity across social, political and ecological categories that inform green theo-ecoethical values, Francis cites “the earthly Jesus and his tangible and loving relationship with the

⁹⁸² Ibid., #s38-39.

⁹⁸³ Ibid., #144.

⁹⁸⁴ Cf., *ibid.*, #118.

⁹⁸⁵ Ibid., #190.

⁹⁸⁶ Ibid., #143.

world” as fostering the wisdom that not one creature is forgotten by God,⁹⁸⁷ before making a pastoral plea for substantive conversion, inclusive of an image of a duty to foster what this thesis has named as socio-ecological flourishing.

Then too, there is the recognition that God created the world, writing into it an order and a dynamism that human beings have no right to ignore. ...How then can we possibly mistreat them or cause them [creatures] harm? I ask all Christians to recognize and to live fully this dimension of their conversion. May the power and the light of the grace we have received also be evident in our relationship to other creatures and to the world around us. In this way, we will help nurture that sublime fraternity with all creation which Saint Francis of Assisi so radiantly embodied.⁹⁸⁸

Here, Francis leaves us with a telling image for Christians in terms of our duty to respect diversity; namely, that our relationships with all creatures ought to bear tangible evidence of their grace-filled nature. From a green theo-ecoethical perspective this is a timely challenge, which, when taken up, does not only represent a ‘faith-full’ path to respond to contemporary social, political, and ecology crises, but also a vital challenge to both support and actively contribute to movements toward fuller socio-ecological flourishing. Hence, it is not surprising that the closing section of *Laudato Si’* states that the document was “given in Rome at Saint Peter’s on 24 May, the Solemnity of Pentecost.”⁹⁸⁹ Though the Encyclical was officially released almost a month later, this stated date, marking the gift of the Holy Spirit to the community of Jesus-followers,⁹⁹⁰ dovetails well with the renewing spirit of *Laudato Si’* as mapped in this chapter, one inherently respectful of a green theo-ecoethical diversity.

⁹⁸⁷ Ibid., #100.

⁹⁸⁸ Ibid., #221.

⁹⁸⁹ Ibid., closing of postscript.

⁹⁹⁰ Cf., Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, ed. Daniel J. Harrington (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992), 45-47.

11.3 Conclusion

In contrast to Francis' (easily problematised) stated position that *Evangelii Gaudium* is not a social document,⁹⁹¹ the Pope is clear in his ambition for *Laudato Si'*. "It is my hope that this Encyclical Letter, which is now added to the body of the Church's social teaching, can help us to acknowledge the appeal, immensity and urgency of the challenge we face."⁹⁹² This is a helpful distinction considering the spaces that are opened up within Catholic, ecumenical, inter-religious, and secular contexts by this pope broadly endorsing integral responses to present socio-ecological crises.⁹⁹³ Indeed, such is the gravity of these crises, combined with the basic facts that (1) continuing ecological degradation is reducing our capacity to respond as a species to this malaise, and (2) the concomitant importance of tenable solutions aimed at socio-ecological flourishing as supported within *Laudato Si'* at this juncture in planetary history, that Francis, invoking the example of *Pacem in Terris*, moves beyond even the example of John XXIII in addressing his first social encyclical to "every person living on this planet."⁹⁹⁴ This choice of address is based upon a personal desire to "enter into dialogue with all people about our common home."⁹⁹⁵ This pastoral twist on talking to the world, which phrased differently or coming from another pope may have been taken as imperialist or condescending, has been greeted warmly by those working on healing human-Earth relationships from bases within a variety of traditions. For example, after recommending making each day meaningful,⁹⁹⁶ the Dalai Lama used the occasion of his participation on a panel during his 80th birthday visit to the Glastonbury Festival to endorse

⁹⁹¹ Cf., section 10.2.

⁹⁹² Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #15.

⁹⁹³ Cf., Chapter Eight.

⁹⁹⁴ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #3.

⁹⁹⁵ Ibid. Although Francis, in what is perhaps an unfortunate inconsistency, also states at the beginning of Chapter Two that the encyclical is "addressed to all people of good will." Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #62.

⁹⁹⁶ Dalai Lama, "Dalai Lama: 80th birthday speech at Glastonbury 2015," (28 June 2015), accessed 4 July 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2XPO8B2QZ1g>.

the sentiments of *Laudato Si'*.⁹⁹⁷ Such considered praise was echoed in the words of the *Sadhana* network of Hindu progressives.

Because of our belief in the urgency of care for all of ecology, we join Pope Francis in protecting the natural world, people who live in poverty, and indeed all humanity. Most urgently we call for a strong climate agreement, a much-needed first step in protecting our environment and our brothers and sisters around the world from the most devastating effects of climate change. The current crisis provides an opportunity to demonstrate to the world the hope present within our faith, and live out our responsibilities as stewards/viceregents/caretakers of our Creator.⁹⁹⁸

Additionally, the famous activist Rabbi Michael Learner, who is dedicated to *tikkun*, the repair of the world, cited Francis' "spirituality progressive" leadership in this regard wrote, on the eve of the official release of *Laudato Si'* (but after an Italian version had been leaked),⁹⁹⁹ in terms of the importance of faiths coming together to support an alternative to the dominant economic paradigm, which is hurting people living in poverty and the planet.¹⁰⁰⁰ Viewing these examples through a green theo-ecoethical lens, we can see the potential of Francis to act as a bridge across traditions in the service of the common good.¹⁰⁰¹ In so much as these green links are made, Francis may be read as reviving the feature of the

⁹⁹⁷ Dalai Lama, "'Religious leaders have a duty to speak out about climate change:' The Dalai Lama speaks at Glastonbury," (28 June 2015), accessed 4 July 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/music/video/2015/jun/28/religious-leaders-duty-climate-change-dalai-lama-glastonbury-video>.

⁹⁹⁸ Sunita Viswanath and Christopher Fici, "Sadhana: Coalition of Progressive Hindus Welcomes Pope's Encyclical on Climate Change," (22 June 2015), accessed 4 July 2015, <http://www.tikkun.org/tikkundaily/2015/06/22/sadhana-coalition-progressive-hindus-welcome-popes-encyclical-on-climate-change/>.

⁹⁹⁹ See, Joshua J. McElwee, "Version of Encyclical Leaks; Vatican Calls for Respect of Embargo," (15 June 2015), accessed 15 July 2015, <http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/version-encyclical-leaks-vatican-calls-respect-embargo>.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Michael Learner, "The Pope Might Save the Planet...if You Would Join an Interfaith Effort to Support His Direction!" (17 June 2015), accessed 4 July 2015, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rabbi-michael-learner/the-pope-might-save-the-p_b_7606804.html.

¹⁰⁰¹ There is a multi-directionality in play here facilitating this bridge building; Francis also echoes papal contributions in "the reflections of numerous scientists, philosophers, theologians and civic groups, all of which have enriched the Church's thinking on these questions." From Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #7. His in text citation of Patriarch Bartholomew I under the theme of coming together in a common cause can be taken as evidence of the ecumenical implications of this multi-directionality. See, Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #s7-9.

papacy as *pontifex maximus*,¹⁰⁰² a great bridge-builder. One who, in this case, is helping to unite people in the service of a “dialogue and action, which would involve each of us as individuals, and also affect international policy” that,¹⁰⁰³ in turn, fosters a socio-ecological common good.

It is within this multifaceted, ethical paradigm that Francis seeks to address the democratic deficit and ecological debt that is accruing because, to put it rather charitably, “politics and business have been slow to react in a way commensurate with the urgency of the challenges facing our world [and] ...recent World Summits on the environment have not lived up to expectations because, due to lack of political will, they were unable to reach truly meaningful and effective global agreements on the environment.”¹⁰⁰⁴ Turning its attention specifically to the area of climate change, *Laudato Si’* characterizes the lack of effective global governance regimes to protect the poor and planetary systems as a failure of “honesty, courage and responsibility, above all on the part of those countries which are more powerful and pollute the most.”¹⁰⁰⁵ Of course, as Francis notes,¹⁰⁰⁶ some authentic progress has been made in regards to ecologically beneficial agreements, such as through international treaties that result in a certain measure of consensus and cooperation in the form of global agreements largely respected by nation-states and business corporations. Such agreements, like the *Montreal Protocol* concerning ozone layer depletion,¹⁰⁰⁷ help to show that Francis is not working within a framework of negative utopia when he names a faith-based imperative

¹⁰⁰² Reviving the association of the popes with the Roman *pontifex maximus* and invoking an image of reaching out to the world, Francis uses the twitter handle “pontifex” (originally claimed by Benedict XVI) see, <https://twitter.com/Pontifex>. Note the plethora of tweets on June 18, the release date of *Laudato Si’*.

¹⁰⁰³ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #15.

¹⁰⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, #s165-166.

¹⁰⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, #169.

¹⁰⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, #168.

¹⁰⁰⁷ For information on this and other UN instrument to mitigate against ozone layer depletion see, United Nations Environment Protection Agency, “Ozone Secretariat: Treaties and Decisions,” (2014), accessed 11 July 2015, <http://ozone.unep.org/en/treaties.php>.

to take socio-ecological action and not to delay in activating conscience and exercising responsibility in a manner that does not burden people living in poverty.¹⁰⁰⁸ Indeed, the present encyclical's grounded vision in this regard can be characterized as an important prophetic faith witness,¹⁰⁰⁹ despite the presence of debates that obscure socio-ecological duties.¹⁰¹⁰

This prophetic quality of naming important truths in the face of rhetorical interference is explicitly referenced in *Laudato Si'*. "Even as this Encyclical was being prepared, the debate was intensifying. We believers cannot fail to ask God for a positive outcome to the present discussions, so that future generations will not have to suffer the effects of our ill-advised delays."¹⁰¹¹ As such, from a green theo-ecoethical perspective, the prospect of Francis helping transform this pathological situation also coalesces with the possibility of the realization of an adequately greener world characterized by socio-ecological flourishing.¹⁰¹² On the international scene, via his peacemaking work, Francis has already helped to positively shift international policy to the benefit of substantive peace.¹⁰¹³ As mapped in this chapter, *Laudato Si'* emerges as a clear, accessible document that is presented in a pastoral manner. In simple terms that resonate with Francis' style, there is enough here to act. Indeed, "Truly, much can be done!"¹⁰¹⁴ The proverbial ball is now in the court of not only Catholics, but also the people and nations of this world. Socio-ecological conversion, transferring to personal, structural and policy change, is urgently needed. Given the tangible reality of living as it is marked by ecological limits, the multifaceted nature of a green theo-ecoethical lens

¹⁰⁰⁸ Cf., section 1.2.3 on green readings of utopia.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Cf., section 2.3.

¹⁰¹⁰ Cf., section 9.6.

¹⁰¹¹ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #169.

¹⁰¹² Cf., *ibid.*, #105.

¹⁰¹³ See, section 9.6.

¹⁰¹⁴ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #180.

adds weight to the premise that ecological conversion must spread beyond a creative minority, acting as a positive contagion ‘infecting’ all members of the Earth community, inclusive of politicians and other people benefiting disproportionately from an unjust global system. Indeed, a vital future now depends on the contagion of such green conversion.

Conclusion

12.1 Contextual Applications of a Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens: An Initial Comment

This thesis presented a case for the importance of thinking about the meaning of ‘green’ in an integral manner. Building upon an outline provided by the *Global Greens Charter*, it has also demonstrated how ecological wisdom, social justice, participatory democracy, nonviolence, sustainability, and respect for diversity have certain resonances in Christian traditions and are cogent principles for faithful living today. Also unfolded above is a further mapping whereby select theological and ecoethical concepts pointed to by the green theo-ecoethical lens’ nomenclature are enriched through a conversation with Pope Francis’ lived example and social teaching. Viewed as a whole, these two mapping movements mark an initial set of considerations for crafting a green theo-ecoethical lens.¹⁰¹⁵ An underlying supposition of this thesis is that such a lens can be fruitfully applied to Christian efforts to help heal the contemporary challenge of interrelated social and ecological crises.

As with the subject matter it colligates, the lens cannot be considered perfect or complete in any platonic sense. Nonetheless, its multi-dimensional character, drawing upon diverse wellsprings in its mapping, helps ensure a sufficient basis for action in a world in need of positive socio-ecological change.¹⁰¹⁶ For each Christian individual or group taking on a goal of healing damaged relationships within the Earth community and seeking to ground relevant principles with vitality for others, a major task is to contextualize such a lived

¹⁰¹⁵ The two colligated sets of mapping constructed in this thesis are found in (1) Chapters One to Seven and (2) Chapters Eight to Ten respectively.

¹⁰¹⁶ A parallel here can be drawn to current efforts to expand boundaries of intersectionality in social science, using such social-cultural categories as: class, gender, and race to provide an analytical framework for more effectively responding to and understanding ecological challenges like anthropogenic climate change. E.g., Phoebe Godfrey and Denise Torres, eds., *Systemic Crises of Global Climate Change: Intersections of Race, Class and Gender* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016).

theology so as to apply it to their respective situations, socio-political lives, and activist projects. As becomes evident when such contextualizing proceeds, one crucial thing that needs to happen from a green theo-ecoethical perspective at this historical moment is that a critical mass of humans needs to start to more adequately address socio-ecological issues. To be effective, this critical mass must engage deep sustainability, not only on the level of the intellect, but also on the levels of action and love. A green theo-ecoethical lens, owing to its aforementioned multi-dimensional character, can help in this regard, pointing the way to paths marking the journey toward achieving deep sustainability.

Much of the research dealing with practice in Religion and Ecology at the moment focusses on the good green work done by spiritually motivated people in the service of the Earth community.¹⁰¹⁷ Crucially, it follows that a green theo-ecoethical lens must be supportive of such initiatives by helping provide the foundations for green theo-ecoethical praxis. However, it is important to note that due to its critically normative and humble nature,¹⁰¹⁸ it is not necessary that the emic understanding of people undertaking such moral projects include green theo-ecoethical terminology.¹⁰¹⁹ This qualifier emerges from the green theo-ecoethical lens' prioritizing the outcomes of the incarnation of green values in a substantively peaceful manner over any form of self-aggrandisement, in rough parallel with the manner in which principled nonviolence helps to build broad coalitions of insight and

¹⁰¹⁷ E.g., Lucas F. Johnston, *Religion and Sustainability: Social Movements and the Politics of the Environment* (Bristol, CT: Equinox, 2013).

¹⁰¹⁸ See, the discussion of critical normativity in section 1.1.2. Also recall here the connection between the theological element of the green theo-ecoethical lens' nomenclature and epistemological humbleness articulated in section 1.1.2.

¹⁰¹⁹ For more on the distinction between the emic (self-understanding relevant to an actor, located within a culture) and etic (social analysis applied at a distance by someone like a scholar) see, Daniel Druckman, *Doing Research: Methods of Inquiry for Conflict Analysis* (London, UK: Sage Publications, 2005), 249-250.

action based on common values and aspirations for just outcomes.¹⁰²⁰ In this regard, the ethic dimension of the green theo-ecoethical lens acts as a check. Here, the most simple and profound synthesis of the green theo-ecoethical values is located.¹⁰²¹ In sum and as is evident above, part of the synthetic nature of the green theo-ecoethical lens is that it exists on both interpretive and value-based levels.

In a related area, given the participatory, inter-species, inter-religious, and ecumenical features of a green theo-ecoethical perspective, this thesis' focus on the exercise of forming a green theo-ecoethical praxis located within a single religious tradition may seem odd. On the level of action, for example, a number of Christians concerned with ecojustice issues are known for forming multiple alliances that often reach beyond those who hold Christian identities, across Christian denominations, to green-oriented people from other religious traditions and to secular environmental activists. Such ecumenical, inter-religious, and cross-cultural coalitions have helped to vitalize greener expressions of faith geared toward social and ecological flourishing in a time of Earth's crisis.¹⁰²² In the spirit of recommendations made by Stephen Scharper,¹⁰²³ what is significant for this thesis is that such activism and broad coalitions can seek inspiration from something akin to a green theo-ecoethical praxis. Through similar dynamics, in other cases, Christian ecological activists may selectively employ green theo-ecoethical arguments to calm fears concerning the essentially (or, in some cases, orthodox) Christian nature of their commitments to ecojustice.¹⁰²⁴

¹⁰²⁰ Cf., the discussion of principled nonviolence in section 6.2.

¹⁰²¹ Cf., McKay on the confluence of the simple and the profound in section 3.2.

¹⁰²² Cf., Gottlieb, *A Greener Faith*.

¹⁰²³ See, Stephen Bede Scharper, *Redeeming the Time: A Political Theology of the Environment* (London, UK: Continuum, 1998).

¹⁰²⁴ For instance, Catholic activists employ Catholic Social Teaching to calm fears concerning the Catholicity of their ecojustice projects. E.g., Sister Joan Brown shown quoting John Paul II's above cited World Day for Peace Message for 1990 in *Renewal: Stories from America's Religious-Environmental Movement*. DVD. Produced by Marty Ostrow and Terry Kay Rockefeller (New York, NY: Alburn Media, 2009).

Here, we are able to recognize a value to an “internal” Christian conversation, which is not insignificant given the over two billion people who currently identify with that faith tradition.¹⁰²⁵ Nonetheless, this does not discount the need to build broad coalitions of responsible action so as to better reach out to the other five billion plus people and the larger life community with whom Christians share the planet and crucial elements of a common fate.¹⁰²⁶ In this sense, any green theo-ecoethical perspective, though certainly concerned with how greener faith practices are fostered within Christian contexts, could not be insular insomuch as it would maintain a focus on the necessity of substantive peace extending across denominational, religious, cultural, gender, and class boundaries and out into the larger Earth community. This character of the lens is related to the importance of the green principle of respect for diversity being understood in expansive terms. Indeed, from a green theo-ecoethical perspective, the entire set of concerns colligated by the six principles must constitute a key part of the meaning of any integral meaning of “Peace with God the Creator, Peace with All of Creation.”¹⁰²⁷ Here, one can see the ultimate link between a green theo-ecoethical perspective and substantive peace;¹⁰²⁸ namely, providing a mutually-enhancing positive feedback loop so that human relationships with the-more-than-human world are understood to be essentially located within the Earth community, our common home.¹⁰²⁹

¹⁰²⁵ In 2011, there were about 2.18 billion Christians in the world. Pew Research Center’s Forum on Religion and Public Life Staff. *Global Christianity: A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World’s Christian Population* (Washington, D.C.: Pew Centre, December 2011), 9.

¹⁰²⁶ Figure based upon subtracting the number of Christian from the total world population of humans. See, section 12.4.

¹⁰²⁷ Cf., John Paul II, “Peace with God the Creator, Peace with All of Creation,” #5; #16.

¹⁰²⁸ Cf., Christopher Hrynkow and Dennis Patrick O’Hara, “Earth Matters: Thomas Berry, The Pacifism of Religious Cosmology and The Need for Ecojustice,” *Journal for Peace and Justice Studies* 22, no. 2 (Fall 2012): 3-28.

¹⁰²⁹ Cf., Chapters Nine and Ten.

12.2 Implications

This project's approach channeled normative influences into a methodology informed and driven by a synthesis among Berry's delineation of the importance of historical-cosmological consciousness, O'Sullivan's poignant rendering of a contextual imperative for Transformative Learning, and Boulding's cogent reflection on the substantive value of cultures of peace.¹⁰³⁰ In the present case, that energy was directed toward developing a green theo-ecoethical lens that serves to avoid a phenomenon of slippage around the term 'green.' As noted above, particularly virulent detracting forces in the latter regard are instances when 'green' is misappropriated to serve segmented interests, such as those of large profit-driven corporations,¹⁰³¹ which are damaging to socio-ecological flourishing. In simple terms, a foundational and titular contention of this project is that 'it should not be that easy using green.'¹⁰³²

As a remedy, this thesis offers an integrated vision of the nourishing content of 'green,' marked by normative commitments to fostering the incarnation of six interrelated principles, namely, ecological wisdom, social justice, participatory democracy, nonviolence, sustainability, and respect for diversity. Further, this thesis has developed an initial articulation of an original green theo-ecoethical lens that strives to be a cogent research tool with applicability beyond this project. In its first applications, this lens was employed in the

¹⁰³⁰ See, section 1.2.4.

¹⁰³¹ As an illustrative example here, consider how a number of persons concerned with planetary health have used the term "greenwashing" to describe, in rough parallel with the more common use of "whitewashing," a certain phenomenon of misdirection becoming increasingly evident in today's mass societies. See, section 2.1.

¹⁰³² Cf., the main title for this project. Inspiration is drawn here from Kermit the Frog's musical rendering of the phrase, "It is not that easy being green." Jim Henson, "Kermit Sings Being Green on Sesame Street," (1970), accessed 24 January 2014, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51BQfPeSK8k>. Note that Henson, voicing Kermit, and the writer, Joe Raposo, did not use conjunctions in this song. Cf., Ecumenical Green Project, "It Ain't That Easy Being Green Workshop," (20 October 2012), accessed 24 January 2014, <http://www.soea.sk.ca/event/other/2012-10-20/~736>.

thesis to offer a normative mapping focussed upon (1) a potentially influential pope's peace witness,¹⁰³³ (2) Francis' apostolic exhortation that marked his first substantive contribution to the magisterium of the Catholic Church,¹⁰³⁴ and (3) his first social encyclical, which seeks to influence personal relationships, political practice, and faith life to the benefit of socio-ecological flourishing.¹⁰³⁵ Considering both the papacy's and Catholic Social Teaching's purpose, it is fitting that such exercises of the papal office and magisterial imperative can legitimately be evaluated in terms of their contributions toward providing (1) adequate responses to contemporary, intertwined social and ecological crises, and (2) fostering positive conditions for socio-ecological flourishing in this world. Moreover, as the penultimate chapter was crafted immediately after the release of Francis' first social encyclical, this project can be counted among the initial sustained mappings of *Laudato Si'*. This confluence is also significant because that document holds much promise to finally overcome Catholic Social Teaching's status as the Catholic Church's 'best kept secret,'¹⁰³⁶ to benefit the prospects for the realization of increased levels of socio-ecological flourishing within the Earth community.¹⁰³⁷

As explored through a green theo-ecoethical lens, Francis' approach to being Bishop of Rome also allows us occasion to revisit the conclusions of certain authors regarding the papacy's actual and potential contributions to green living in the world. For example, we might discern within the present papacy's outreach activities a certain positive evolution of

¹⁰³³ See, Chapter Eight.

¹⁰³⁴ See, Chapter Nine.

¹⁰³⁵ See, Chapter Ten.

¹⁰³⁶ For an example of use of related nomenclature see, Edward P. DeBerri and James E. Hug with Peter J. Henriot and Michael J. Schultheris, *Catholic Social Teaching: Our Best Kept Secret*, 4th Edition (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2004), 3.

¹⁰³⁷ See, Chapter Ten.

the Vatican's ecospirituality in a greener direction.¹⁰³⁸ Alternatively, the present thesis articulates a number of foundations to suggest, most especially in terms of popular reception, that Francis is a contender for the title of 'greenest' pope, in a perhaps fuller sense of 'green' (as mapped by this thesis' hermeneutical lens) than his recent predecessors as Bishop of Rome.¹⁰³⁹ Yet, as we have also seen through the mapping presented above,¹⁰⁴⁰ Pope Francis is certainly helpful, but by no means perfect, in the resources he offers to foster a healing of intra-human and human-Earth relationships. As such, the normative elements of the green theo-ecoethical lens will hold out hope for further greening of the papacy during the reign of Francis and his successors so that the papal magisterial office, in terms of insight, action, and lived example, can more fully foster socio-ecological flourishing among both Catholics and other human members of the larger life community.¹⁰⁴¹

From a green theo-ecoethical perspective and given the location of this research, it is also noteworthy that the thesis entered into dialogue with several of the areas of specialization listed in the "Toronto School of Theology ThD and PhD Handbook, September 2013." In keeping with that handbook's description of the areas of study associated with ethics, this thesis has included treatments of the following areas: (1) Bible and ethics, (2) Ethical traditions: Virtue Ethics, social gospel, Feminist Ethics, Liberationist Ethics, "new" voices, Ecological Ethics and Political Ethics, and (3) Church Social Teachings: WCC, Vatican and national conferences of Bishops.¹⁰⁴² If only for bringing these

¹⁰³⁸ Cf., Christopher Hrynkow and Dennis Patrick O'Hara, "The Vatican and Ecospirituality: Tensions, Promises and Possibilities for Fostering an Emerging Green Catholic Spirituality," *Ecozon@: European Journal of Literature, Culture and Environment* 2, no. 2 (Autumn 2011): 177-197.

¹⁰³⁹ Cf., the discussion of Benedict in section 7.2.

¹⁰⁴⁰ See, Chapter Eight to Ten.

¹⁰⁴¹ Cf., section 9.5.3.

¹⁰⁴² See, Toronto School of Theology Staff. *ThD and PhD Handbook* (Toronto, ON: Toronto School of Theology, 2013), "Appendix 1: Fields of Study, Areas of Concentration and Subjects," 25 November 2013, http://www.tst.edu/webfm_send/526.

areas of specialization into conversation while also remaining firmly grounded in Christian Ecological Ethics, this project might be taken to represent appropriate doctoral research. Moreover, the research was undertaken at the Elliot Allen Institute for Theology and Ecology, within the Toronto School of Theology and as part of a conjoint degree program with the University of Toronto. These locations are, respectively, markers of an ecotheological academic specialization, an ecumenical learning context, and the Canadian intellectual tradition. All three of those areas have resonances in this project, making this a ‘placed’ thesis in multiple senses.

12.3 Suggestions for Future Research

The green theo-ecoethical lens, as mapped and constructed above, could be applied to a wide variety of case studies. For example, as the chapter mapping *Evangelii Gaudium* serves to demonstrate,¹⁰⁴³ even when the focus of a document or initiative is not specifically ecological, the lens can help colligate the green implications of that document or initiative, thus facilitating the focal source’s mapping as a resource for a green theo-ecoethical praxis. It could also be used to map the potential contribution to socio-ecological flourishing of Christian doctrines like the Trinity or practices such as Marian devotion. Indeed, within Christian traditions, most practices and doctrines could become a focus for a green theo-ecoethical lens as constructed above.

The general method of this thesis could also be modified to work on other faith traditions. Future research could explore a religious tradition like Islam, working through each of the principles and showing their relevance and resonance for Muslim thought and orthopraxis in order to construct an Islamic green theo-ecoethical lens. Such a lens could then

¹⁰⁴³ See, Chapter Nine.

be applied to map shifting patterns of Islamic orthopraxis. For example, a green theo-ecoethical lens could be applied to something as basic as current practices surrounding the Five Pillars of Islam. For Muslims, the Five Pillars are often central to Islamic orthopraxis, representing essential duties toward God that spill over into socio-political worlds.¹⁰⁴⁴ An Islamic green theo-ecoethical lens would be well poised to explore one area wherein these duties to God move more laterally; namely, socio-ecological justice. It would address the research question, what support for socio-ecological flourishing can be found through the Five Pillars of Islam? Or, such a lens could be employed in the analysis of contemporary books such as the common word initiatives' *Islam, Christianity and the Environment* (2011).¹⁰⁴⁵ Already ecumenical in its construction, the Christian green theo-ecoethical could also be employed in mapping that text and then the results could, perhaps through a Christian-Muslim dialogue session, be fruitfully compared for both divergences and common good in support of socio-ecological flourishing. This tangible possibility represents a potential inter-religious application of a green theo-ecoethical hermeneutical lens.

12.4 General Concluding Statement: Pope Francis and Green Theo-Ecoethical Values at a Historical Moment

As previously footnoted above, Thomas Berry succinctly argued that there was no way the human project could succeed if the Earth project fails.¹⁰⁴⁶ A green theo-ecoethical lens, as unfolded in this thesis, builds on this insight by adding that the content of such human success is contextually significant, especially as it relates to social justice and the

¹⁰⁴⁴ E.g., John L. Esposito, *Islam: The Straight Path*, 4th Edition (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), 85-140.

¹⁰⁴⁵ This book grew out of a September 2010 symposium held at the Jordanian baptism site for Jesus. See, Ingrid Mattson, Murad Hoffman, Martin Arneth, Dietmar Mieth. *Islam, Christianity and the Environment* (Amman, JO: The Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, 2011).

¹⁰⁴⁶ See footnote 428.

cosmic common good. A key question before all humans as we head toward 8 billion people sharing a finite “spaceship Earth” is how to ensure that we can flourish as a planetary community under those conditions.¹⁰⁴⁷ A premise of this thesis is that a green theo-ecoethical lens offers a hermeneutical tool that can be employed in support of those dedicated to timely moral projects like fair living within an Earth community and otherwise mitigating against conflict stressors under present demographic conditions.

As part of the council fathers’ response to the early symptoms of this malaise and previewing the interconnected set of concerns and commitments represented by a green theo-ecoethical lens, *Gaudium et Spes* outlines the task of the Church in the world to “preach the gospel to all nations” in a nonviolent manner by promoting justice, peace, and cultural development.¹⁰⁴⁸ Gregory Baum notes that the ethical horizon of *Gaudium et Spes*, embracing the fostering of freedom, equality, and participation within a framework of universal solidarity, marks an important new point in the life of the Church.¹⁰⁴⁹

Largely in accord with the type of connectivity inherent in a green theo-ecoethical lens, Francis has moved to integrate this framework of universal solidarity advocated in *Gaudium et Spes*,¹⁰⁵⁰ and has repeated Paul VI’s famous ‘no to war’ sentiment by affirming the value of negative peace (in this case the absence of the direct violence of war).¹⁰⁵¹ He, however, went further by embracing a conception of positive peace that emphasised, in

¹⁰⁴⁷ There are currently over 7.3 billion people in the world. We are projected to reach a global population of 8 billion people in 2025. See, Worldometers Staff, “Worldometers, Real Time World Statistics: Current World Population,” (10 June 2015), accessed 10 June 2015, <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/>. The concept of ‘spaceship Earth’ was developed by the Quaker peace theorist Kenneth Boulding during the same period as the Second Vatican Council. See, Kenneth E. Boulding, “Earth as a Space Ship,” (10 May 1965), accessed 13 May 2013, <http://www.colorado.edu/economics/morey/4999Ethics/BouldingEARTH%20AS%20A%20SPACE%20SHIP1965.pdf>.

¹⁰⁴⁸ See, section 6.1.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Baum, *Amazing*, 44.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Cf., Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #172.

¹⁰⁵¹ See, discussion on negative peace in section 6.1; Galtung, *Theories of Peace*.

harmony with the Rio Declaration’s language of “both common and differentiated responsibilities,”¹⁰⁵² to foster equality and participation for all peoples within an Earth community understood to be God’s good creation. Indeed, lest there be any doubt concerning his commitment to principled nonviolence action and positive peace, which are so important to a green theo-ecoethical lens, consider a statement Francis made in St. Peter’s Square early in his papacy.

Today, dear brothers and sisters, I wish to add my voice to the cry which rises up with increasing anguish from every part of the world, from every people, from the heart of each person, from the one great family which is humanity: it is the cry for peace! It is a cry which declares with force: we want a peaceful world, we want to be men and women of peace, and we want in our society, torn apart by divisions and conflict, that peace break out! War never again! Never again war! Peace is a precious gift, which must be promoted and protected.¹⁰⁵³

Here, a green theo-ecoethical lens helps us discern the importance of an unambiguous instance where Francis’ expressed vision included not only an emphatic ‘no’ to the direct violence of war, recalling Paul VI’s words, but a ‘yes’ to so much more.¹⁰⁵⁴ Hence, a green theo-ecoethical perspective helps us to conclude that although the present pontiff’s writings and peacebuilding actions are certainly not without their flaws, notably in term of a marked absence of an integral view of gender justice,¹⁰⁵⁵ Pope Francis nonetheless presents a substantive view of positive peace whose main threads provide multiple supports for potentially transformative green theo-ecoethical principles at this important juncture in

¹⁰⁵² This point is developed in section 11.2.2.

¹⁰⁵³ Pope Francis, “Angelus, St. Peter’s Square, Sunday, September 1, 2013,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1 September 2013), accessed 11 June 2015, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2013/documents/papa-francesco_angelus_20130901.html; cf., section 6.1.

¹⁰⁵⁴ For another instance of this ‘yes’ see section 9.6.

¹⁰⁵⁵ This point is further developed below in this section.

planetary history, when “our common home” is marked by a reality of “socio-ecological crisis.”¹⁰⁵⁶

Not only for the world’s 1.2 billion Catholics, but also for those from outside of that faith who are inspired by the present pope, Francis’ contributions, on the levels of both insight and action,¹⁰⁵⁷ open up particular spaces for “creative energy” to help incarnate ecological wisdom, social justice, participatory democracy, nonviolence, sustainability, and respect for diversity.¹⁰⁵⁸ This project of incarnating these important green theo-ecoethical principles is buttressed by the Pope’s advocacy for a “new and universal solidarity” extending to both marginalized people and the larger Earth community.¹⁰⁵⁹ The wellspring of this particular space is remarkable when viewed through a green theo-ecoethical lens, most especially given its source in a papal office that would have been ill-equipped to foster such a realm of insight and action in a similar way before the spring of 2013, when Francis began to practise his distinct invitational and pastoral approach to being Bishop of Rome (Francis’ preferred descriptive title for his current appointment).¹⁰⁶⁰

Yet, we have now arrived at a “historical moment,” wherein those that take papal teaching and action as a reflective model can bear witness to the manifestations of structural violence inherent in what,¹⁰⁶¹ as seen above, Sallie McFague names as “the intrinsic connection between all forms of oppression, and especially between that of poor people and degraded nature.”¹⁰⁶² Here, in a key point informing a green theo-ecoethical lens that is also

¹⁰⁵⁶ Pope Francis names a “growing conviction that our planet is a homeland and that humanity is one people living in a common home.” Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #164, the source of the language of ‘socio-ecological crisis’ is Eaton see section 10.2.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Cf., the discussion of Eaton’s point about insight in section 1.1.2.

¹⁰⁵⁸ On “creative energy” see, Berry, “The Viable Human,” 67.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Francis, *Laudato Si’*, #14.

¹⁰⁶⁰ See, section 9.2

¹⁰⁶¹ Cf. Berry, *The Great Work*, 7.

¹⁰⁶² McFague, “An Ecological Christology,” 33.

present in the writings of various Bishops' conferences and Pope Francis, Leonardo Boff adds that the liberation of the Earth community and marginalized people living in poverty are intimately connected.¹⁰⁶³ The Catholic tradition has a mixed record in this regard.¹⁰⁶⁴ However, for Boff, as for Câmara before him, what is essential is that liberation comes about through imaginative exercises of principled nonviolent action.¹⁰⁶⁵ Because they hold the potential to foster this type of creative spirit, despite his own myopic flaws in terms of gender,¹⁰⁶⁶ the spaces Francis helps to open up for fostering the green theo-ecoethical values can nonetheless be viewed as locations wherein the religious and human projects are, in accord with Ivone Gebara's formulation, understood "in light of making justice, of right relationships with women, men, and all living beings."¹⁰⁶⁷

When made fuller through the integration of ecofeminist and liberationist insights such as those brought forward by Christian thinkers who inspired the crafting of a green theo-ecoethical lens like Câmara, McFague, Boff, and Gebara, these spaces are well positioned to foster personal, spiritual, social, and political transformations in support of ecological wisdom, social justice, participatory democracy, nonviolence, sustainability, and respect for diversity. Indeed, when adequately integrated in this manner, the threads of the present pope's peace witness as presented above serve as a corrective both for gender myopia and the failure of the Catholic Church to fully apply its social teaching principles to itself. The implication here is that Francis' approach to caring for our common home, inasmuch as it supports the green theo-ecoethical values, also cries out for much deeper equality than the

¹⁰⁶³ See, discussions of Boff in section 1.1.2 and 4.1 and Pope Francis in section 11.2.2.

¹⁰⁶⁴ See, example, White, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," 1203-1207 and Gutierrez, *Las Casas* and the discussion of the mastery hypothesis in section 2.3.

¹⁰⁶⁵ See, Boff, *Virtues for Another Possible World*; the discussion of Câmara in section 6.1.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Cf., Francis' comments about problems flowing from "the myopia in power politics." Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #178.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Gebara, "Ecofeminism," 103. See, also section 10.2 on this point.

dominant discourse that peppers Catholic Social Teaching with a view of gender complementarity.¹⁰⁶⁸ This is an important point to emphasize because such a dichotomous view of male and female roles limits the prospects for gender justice and autonomy within the institutional Catholic Church. As a result, for example, it becomes clear that green theo-ecoethical values combine to require much transformation of Catholicism as it is expressed in this world. This required transformation reaches far beyond narrowly understood personal spirituality to the way Catholics live out their lives as members of cultures, communities, and societies. In fact, the values and practices of ecological wisdom, social justice, participatory democracy, nonviolence, sustainability, and respect for diversity as colligated by this thesis' green theo-ecoethical lens clearly call the institutional Roman Catholic Church toward a deep transformation in terms of areas like its governance, wealth, and differential gender roles.

Nonetheless, as we have begun to see above, the relationship here need not be unidirectional in terms of activating the potential to foster an integral peace associated with the green theo-ecoethical principles. In this regard, Francis' social teaching and peacebuilding actions may be said to help bring deeper socio-ecological consciousness to concepts like principled nonviolence and positive peace as they are normally articulated among peace theorists, social activists, and conflict resolution practitioners. The result may be both a fuller and more vital understanding of positive peace and a concomitant ecological expansion of a range of actions and concerns for principled nonviolent activism that is so crucial to any authentic transformation in line with the green theo-ecoethical principles.

In turn, at their best, Francis' peacebuilding efforts and his social teachings' treatment of contemporary ethical imperatives to address injustice in its many manifestations can open transformative spaces. When such spaces are made fuller by the integration of the full range

¹⁰⁶⁸ Cf., Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #155.

of green theo-ecoethical values, inclusive of ecofeminist and liberationist insights, they are well positioned to give momentum to much a needed confluence. That confluence would be marked by a web of multidirectional and dynamic connections, energizing a mutuality enhancing feedback loop between greener incarnations of both substantively peaceful, ‘faith-full’ living in this world to the benefit of a growth in socio-ecological flourishing with the Earth community. This deep green outcome represents so much more than a negation of war. Rather, it is a strong affirmation of the intrinsic value of the whole Earth community in the face of the structural and direct violence that threatens our common home; a “yes!” to vital and diverse life represented by cultures of dialogue, encounter, nonviolence, and peace.¹⁰⁶⁹

As such, despite the claim that religion, and in particular Christianity, has nothing to offer environmental activism,¹⁰⁷⁰ this thesis’ mapping has been able to colligate a variety of insight-based contributions to green theo-ecoethical transformation. Such contributions organically expand further when the hermeneutical category of ‘green action,’ which as we have seen is about more than just ‘the environment’ narrowly conceived, is brought under consideration. In this sense, inclusive of but also beyond how they are explored through a green theo-ecoethical lens, the case studies concerning Pope Francis’ peace witness, *Evangelii Gaudium*, and *Laudato Si’* may finally serve to lay to rest the myth, present in the popular socio-ecological imaginary, that Christianity has nothing to contribute to green action.¹⁰⁷¹ Indeed, whether or not Francis is successful in his goal of helping to achieve a binding and effective anthropocentric climate change mitigation treaty (something more than

¹⁰⁶⁹ On the invocation of ‘yes’ here, cf. the discourse on the ‘no to war’ at the opening of this section. On this sentence’s closing moral sentiment, cf. Francis on the need to foster the “growth of a peaceful and multifaceted culture of encounter” as discussed in section 10.3.4.

¹⁰⁷⁰ See, section 10.2.

¹⁰⁷¹ Cf., *ibid.*

the *Paris Agreement*),¹⁰⁷² he will undoubtedly have mustered, in part facilitated through the excitement surrounding his papacy, via his magisterial office, and with added momentum generated from his practical pastoral example,¹⁰⁷³ a certain amount of energy to ground hope for the transformation of the human establishments so that they may better foster socio-ecological flourishing.¹⁰⁷⁴ As this thesis' interpretative lens helps reveal, that accomplishment, in so much as it activates any measure of creative and transformative energy, is a cogent achievement for any leader *miserando atque eligendo*.¹⁰⁷⁵ Moreover, in accord with Berry's notion of the great work of our time so important to a green theo-ecoethical perspective,¹⁰⁷⁶ the incarnation of such creative and transformative energies into tangible outcomes supportive of socio-ecological flourishing is also a substantively peaceful legacy for past, present, and future generations of the Earth community. Certainly, realizing this promise is not an easy task. However, it most assuredly represents a 'green' legacy in a full sense of that term as developed in this thesis;¹⁰⁷⁷ one worth working toward at this historic moment as we, as a species, decide through 'what we have done, what we have failed to do,'¹⁰⁷⁸ what we will leave behind.¹⁰⁷⁹

¹⁰⁷² See, section 10.4. Yet, Francis also cites the developments of COP 21, along with other international initiatives like the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development goals as examples of peacebuilding hope that overcomes indifference and "demonstrates our capacity to show solidarity and to rise above self-interest, apathy and indifference in the face of critical situations." Pope Francis, "Message of His Holiness Francis for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 1 January 2016: Overcome Indifference and Win Peace," (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 8 December 2015), #6, accessed 1 January 2016, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/peace/documents/papa-francesco_20151208_messaggio-xlix-giornata-mondiale-pace-2016.html.

¹⁰⁷³ See, Chapter Eight.

¹⁰⁷⁴ On the transformation of the human establishments in this light see section 1.2.1. On the grounded hope necessary to foster such transformation see, section 1.2.3.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Recall 'lowly but chosen' is Francis' Episcopal motto. See, section 9.3.

¹⁰⁷⁶ See, section 8.1

¹⁰⁷⁷ Cf., the discussion of this thesis' title in section 12.2.

¹⁰⁷⁸ The phrase in single quotation marks modifies the Confiteor said at Roman Catholic Mass to a communitarian statement implicitly referencing the anthropogenic nature of socio-ecological crises.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Cf. Derrick Jensen and Aric McBay, *What we Leave Behind* (New York, NY: Seven Stories Press, 2011).

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