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**Remembering the Creator Spirit in the State of  
Ecological Crisis**

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**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Bachelor of Arts in Theology**

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## Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work achieved through my personal reading, scientific research method and critical reflection. It is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Award of Baccalaureate in Theology. It has never been submitted to any other college or university for academic credit. All sources have been cited in full and acknowledged.

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## **Dedication**

To St. Francis of Assisi, the Patron of Ecology

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## **General Introduction**

The creation accounts of the Book of Genesis presents to us a cosmos that is created out of chaos and presents a picture of it as orderly and balanced (Gen. 1:25). Genesis also shows us that human beings and animals were living in a state of harmony and communion. God assigned the entire living world to the stewardship of humanity and commanded human beings to care for nature (Gen. 1:28). The entrance of sin into the world due to human disobedience to the will of God resulted in the rupture of this communion and brought about disharmony, suffering and death in the world. From then on the power of sin has occupied the central stage of history and human beings have plundered the resources of the earth to satisfy their greed and selfish motives. And the consequence of such selfishness is what we see in our days as the environmental crisis and ecological deterioration. It is the result of humanity's forgetfulness of the Creator Spirit and Its indwelling presence in the cosmos. In this paper my attempt is to point out the relationship that exists between the created world and the Creator Spirit.

The first chapter begins with the definition of ecology and the ecosystem. From the basic understanding of these two fundamental terms an analysis of the problem of ecological deterioration follows, and here a proper description of the problem is presented. The second and most important point in the first chapter is the exploration of the causes of the environmental crisis. There are a number of causes that are dealt with in this paper, and they are mainly anthropological, theological and pneumatological. Effort has been made to point out the root of the crisis as spiritual, and in this regard the concern has been to point out that it is the humanity's greed, provoked by the element of sin, that makes it to forget the divine spirit who indwells the

cosmos and gives life to all and sustains them in communion. The crisis is because we do not recognize our place in the universe of God's creatures.

The second chapter deals with the Holy Spirit in its relation to creation. Attempt has been made to rediscover the role of Spirit in Creation and to identify the Spirit as the Breath of life and as God's active and vital presence in the universe. The divine spirit is presented as the new beginner, the principle of communion, the healer of ecological wounds, the one who heals, sanctifies and restores creation to its original form of harmony.

# Chapter One

## Understanding Creation in Crisis

### Introduction

I find no better words to introduce this chapter than those of J. Moltmann expressed in the preface of his work *God in Creation* where he says:

what we call the environmental crisis is not merely a crisis in the natural environment of human beings. It is nothing less than a crisis in human beings themselves. It is a crisis of life on this planet, a crisis so comprehensive and so irreversible that it cannot unjustly be described as apocalyptic. It is not a temporary crisis. As far as we can judge, it is the beginning of a life and death struggle for creation on this earth.<sup>1</sup>

The aim of this chapter is to put the issue of environmental/ecological crisis in perspective, and I have tried to do justice to the problem by introducing the topic with a brief but essential description of the meaning of ecology, followed by a basic treatment of what an ecosystem is. This helps us to understand the core of the issue as the interrelationship and harmony existing among creatures, and which provides us with a proper background to investigate the central point of this chapter; namely the ecological crisis which is rightly understood as the loss of harmony and communion in the universe. The chapter is concluded with a proper treatment of the anthropological and theological/pneumatological causes of the problem under consideration. The purely material causes of the issue are not treated at all as the intention of the work is not a scientific study of ecology but an attempt to arrive at what Moltmann calls “the ecology of God’s Spirit”.

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<sup>1</sup> J. MOLTMANN, *God in Creation*, xi

## 1.0 Ecology: a definition

Right at the beginning of this work that concentrates mainly on the ecological crisis and the Holy Spirit, it seems apt to me to give a description of ecology which will certainly help us to understand the nature of the issue under consideration.

As understood by its first proponent Ernst Haeckel, "ecology is the study of the interrelationship of all living and non living systems among themselves and with their environment".<sup>2</sup> According to Leonardo Boff "it is not about studying the environment or biotic (living) or abiotic (inert) beings in themselves. What is specific about ecological discourses lies not in the study of one pole or the other but in the interaction and interrelationship between them".<sup>3</sup> Hence, for L. Boff, "what is under consideration is not the immediate but the total environment. A living creature cannot be seen in isolation as a mere representative of its species. It must always be seen and analyzed in relation to the totality of vital conditions that constitute it and in balance with all the other representatives of the community of living beings present".<sup>4</sup> In the light of the foregoing statements Boff continues to assert that "ecology is a knowledge of the relations, interconnections, interdependencies, and exchanges of all with all, at all points, and at all moments. From this standpoint ecology cannot be defined by itself, in isolation from its implications for other kinds of knowledge... it is a knowledge of interrelated knowledges".<sup>5</sup>

Still in the words of Boff "ecology is defined only within the framework of the relations that it connects in all directions and with every type of knowledge about the way in which all beings are dependent upon one another, constituting the vast fabric of their interdependencies. They

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<sup>2</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 3

<sup>3</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 3

<sup>4</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 3

<sup>5</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 3

make up, as the technical expression goes, a vast homeostatic system, which means a vast balanced and self regulating system".<sup>6</sup> Boff offers other definitions by other authors like the Brazilian ecologist Lutzenberger who defines it as the science of the symphony of life, and the science of survival, and Haeckel himself describing it as "economics of nature".<sup>7</sup>

From all the foregoing definitions and from the analysis that Boff makes of them it comes out clearly that the key word here is interconnectedness. Beings in nature cannot be isolated from others and it is the symphony that exists between them that sustains them. From this basic and rudimentary understanding of the meaning of ecology and interconnectedness as the core of ecology, it seems apt to treat the question of ecological crisis.

## **1.1 The Ecological Crisis**

Today more than ever the world around us is speaking of only one thing: the ecological crisis - the way in which the eco systems of the planet earth are disturbed due to exploitation and lack of care and how such a disturbance brings about an imbalance in the system due to the extinction of some species and the overpopulation of others. The hurricanes, tornados, cyclones, earthquakes, rise in the global temperature, melting of ice in the northern hemisphere, unusual rise in the water level of the oceans etc., and the consequent cry for the protection of the environment, reduction of carbon and green house gas emissions, the slogans of integrity of creation, earth is home etc., are talks of every day. Climate change is a topic not only of environmental scientists but also of politicians, religious leaders and even ordinary citizens. At this juncture a proper treatment of this subject is due. Perhaps before speaking about what the crisis is, it seems apt to me to give a proper definition of what an ecosystem is.

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<sup>6</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 3

<sup>7</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 4

### 1.1.1 Ecosystem

According to the online encyclopedia, Wikipedia, the term ecosystem refers to the

combined physical and biological components of an environment. An ecosystem is generally an area within the natural environment in which physical (a biotic) factors of the environment, such as rocks and soil, function together along with interdependent (biotic) organisms, such as plants and animals, within the same habitat. Ecosystems can be permanent or temporary. Ecosystems usually form a number of food webs.<sup>8</sup>

The above quotation gives us a glimpse into the interdependence that exists between the organisms, both living and non living that have as their home the ecosystem. Such a view of interconnectedness and the dangerous impacts of climate change on the ecosystems become all the more visible when the science encyclopedia speaks of the ecosystem as

a community of plants and animals occupying a certain area, together with the soil and other non-living materials. It can be as small as a water-filled hole in a forest tree, or as big as big as the forest itself. In a perfect ecological system, all the components are balanced: the plants provide all the food and oxygen needed by the animals and all the waste products are recycled to produce new plant material. Many of the world's natural ecosystems have taken hundreds or thousands of years to reach a balanced state and, given a stable climate, they would remain balanced for thousands more years were it not for human interference.<sup>9</sup>

This explanation rightly gives us the view of the ecosystem as a community and speaks of the balance that any ecosystem is supposed to have in order for it to exist. It also shows us how the animals and the plants need one another for their proper existence.

### 1.1.2 What is the Crisis

Making an analysis of the above mentioned definitions, we can understand ecological crisis as the phenomenon that is brought about by human exploitation of the environment and which endangers the existence of many species of plants and animals and brings about catastrophic changes in the natural living environment of the creatures and threatens to eradicate life from the

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<sup>8</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ecosystem>

<sup>9</sup> C. HEADLAM, *Science Encyclopedia*, 195

face of our planet. Speaking from a thoroughly theological point of view, we can say that it is the loss of the integrity of creation, the loss of the state of harmony in which the Creator created the world. In the words of Moltmann the ecological crisis is “a crisis of the whole system with all its part-systems, from the dying of the forests to the spread of neuroses, from the pollution of the seas and rivers to the nihilistic feeling about life which dominates so many people in our mass cities”.<sup>10</sup> Elisabeth Johnson uses a religious analogy to describe the situation as she states: “the earth is entering into its passion and death, with newly victimized species and life-systems crying out from the depths”.<sup>11</sup>

### **1.1.3 Ecological Crisis: a subtle and complex reality**

Many authors on the issue speak of it as a subtle crisis. According to Sallie McFague “ecological deterioration is sufficiently gradual that it can appear imperceptible”.<sup>12</sup> This is actually the dangerous element of the problem that we become so used to it that we fail to notice the changes that happen around us. In the words of McFague “it is more like alcohol or other drug addiction than war: it creeps up on us daily so that we become used to it”.<sup>13</sup> McFague describes it as an addiction and speaks of the insidious character of it.<sup>14</sup> In this sense we become used to every form of pollution and environmental exploitation that happen around us that we do not really sense the dangerous potholes that await us on our journey as sojourners of the earth with other creatures. It is also due to the fact that the impact of such degradation is often so slow and gradual that we do not recognize it as in the case of a war. Elisabeth Johnson gives a visual image of the slow pace of the issue when she presents it as “happening in slow-motion, as we

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<sup>10</sup> J. MOLTSMANN, *God in Creation*, 23

<sup>11</sup> E. A. JOHNSON, *Women, Earth and Creator Spirit*, 9

<sup>12</sup> S. McFAGUE, *The Body of God*, 2

<sup>13</sup> S. McFAGUE, *The Body of God*, 3

<sup>14</sup> Cf. S. McFAGUE, *The Body of God*, 3

count the days. But speeding up the camera of time even a little reveals how rapidly the situation is deteriorating".<sup>15</sup>

S. McFague underlines the human responsibility in the issue as she states that "being in denial and distant from nature, we can and do refuse to acknowledge the insidious disease that is infecting the ecosystem that supports us all – from the microorganisms in the ocean to the human child. At most we treat the problem like a bad cold that will eventually go away if we make a few minor life-style changes, such as recycling or car pooling".<sup>16</sup> She goes on to affirm further that "we are the perpetrators of the ecological crisis. Like addicts (and we are addicted to our non-ecological high-tech life-style), we find every available avenue to deny what others would clearly see: that life in this planet is diminishing both in variety and in quality, and we human beings, some more than others, are to blame".<sup>17</sup>

Contrasting the issue with a nuclear war, McFague affirms the complexity of the crisis. In her words

ecology, most simply, means planetary "house rules", knowledge of and obedience to the ways of living appropriately in our home, the earth. This sounds straight forward, but the more scientists discover about the incredible complexity of the interrelationships and interdependencies among the millions of species of plants and animals on the planet, as well as the myriad ways they interact with and depend on the soil, water, chemicals atmosphere, gases, temperature and so forth, the less certain they become about how we should act. We do not know enough, and we may never know enough, to prevent the ecological decay all around us.<sup>18</sup>

For her what we need to realize is "our proper relationship to our planet. One of the most critical house rules we must learn is that we are not lords *over* the planet but products *of* its processes; in fact, we are the product of a fifteen-billion-year history of the universe and a four-billion-year

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<sup>15</sup> E. A. JOHNSON, *Women, Earth and Creator Spirit*, 5

<sup>16</sup> S. McFAGUE, *The Body of God*, 3

<sup>17</sup> S. McFAGUE, *The Body of God*, 4

<sup>18</sup> S. McFAGUE, *The Body of God*, 6-7

history of our earth. We are an intimate and integral part of what we want to know: planetary knowledge is self-knowledge”.<sup>19</sup> “Hence ecological knowledge is not about something “out there”; it is about ourselves and how we fit into the scheme of things. The most important ecological knowledge we can have, then, is not how we can change the environment to suit us, but rather how we can adjust our desires and needs to what appear to be the house rules”.<sup>20</sup> From this brief understanding of the complexity and the subtle nature of our topic regarding the crisis, it seems fitting to proceed to investigate the causes of this crisis.

## **1.2 Causes of Ecological Crisis/Degradation**

There are a number of causes that are responsible for the degradation of the environment. The priority here shall not be for scientific and purely material causes but to anthropological and theological ones, as our aim is to state the role of the Spirit in the ecological movement.

### **1.2.1 Anthropocentrism**

“Anthropocentrism describes the tendency for human beings to regard themselves as the central and most significant entities in the universe, or the assessment of reality through an exclusively human perspective”<sup>21</sup>. The term can be used interchangeably with humanocentrism, while the first concept can also be referred to as human supremacy. The views are especially associated with certain religious cultures like Christianity and Judaism.<sup>22</sup> According to the online encyclopedia Wikipedia “anthropocentrism is a major concept in the field of environmental

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<sup>19</sup> S. McFAGUE, *The Body of God*, 6

<sup>20</sup> S. McFAGUE, *The Body of God*, 6

<sup>21</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/anthropocentrism>

<sup>22</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/anthropocentrism>

ethics and environmental philosophy, where it is often considered to be the root cause of problems created by human interaction with the environment”<sup>23</sup>.

Today, there is no doubt in the fact that human beings have made themselves the centre of the earth. There is a prominent mentality in the human beings that everything in the world is for their use and wellbeing and that everything is finalized to them. Everything must start from human beings and return to them: everything must be at their service.<sup>24</sup> This is true with regard to the entire creation. This view has its roots in the command of God to man in Genesis 1:28 where man is told to fill the earth and subdue it. Instead of understanding it as an invitation to care for the environment, to preserve, cultivate and to be a steward of it, humanity has taken the path of exploiting it for its own selfish interests.<sup>25</sup> As Moltmann puts it, “according to the anthropocentric world view heaven and earth were made for the sake of human beings, and the human being is the crown of creation; and this is certainly what is claimed by both its supporters and its critics as ‘biblical tradition’”.<sup>26</sup> In the anthropocentric approach, everything culminates in the human being and nothing has intrinsic value and nothing has otherness and meaning apart from the human being.<sup>27</sup> Almost all the material causes of the ecological degradation are linked to this human-centeredness.

According to Boff “the imperial and anti-ecological anthropology at work in the contemporary dreams, projects, ideals, institutions, and values can be summed up in one word: anthropocentrism”.<sup>28</sup> “The term means that everything throughout the fifteen-billion-year story

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<sup>23</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/anthropocentrism>

<sup>24</sup> Cf. L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 69

<sup>25</sup> Cf. N. FOGLIACCO, *Creation: Class notes*, 149

<sup>26</sup> J. MOLTSMANN, *God in Creation*, 31

<sup>27</sup> Cf. L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 70

<sup>28</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 70

exists solely for the human being, man and woman".<sup>29</sup> Boff continues to say that this anthropocentric attitude "violates the first universal law; namely that we constitute an immense cosmic and planetary community, and we must live in harmony and solidarity with one another because we are all interdependent and have the same origin and destiny".<sup>30</sup>

### 1.2.2 A Culture of Domination and Exploitation

Undoubtedly, one of the prominent causes of the current ecological crisis is man's urge to dominate the earth. J. Moltmann affirms the starting point of this crisis and Christianity's share in it when he says "the ecological crisis of the modern world has its starting point in the modern industrial countries. These grew up in the midst of civilizations which had been shaped by Christianity".<sup>31</sup> According to Moltmann, "the crisis of the modern world is not due merely to the technologies for the exploitation of nature; nor can we put it down to the sciences which made human beings the lords of nature. It is based much more profoundly on the striving of human beings for power and domination".<sup>32</sup> Boff, while pointing out the positive aspects of human beings' will to power, affirms that it becomes destructive when it is transformed into a power to dominate.<sup>33</sup> According to Boff

this will to domination is sometimes manifested as annihilating the power of the other (oppression), sometimes as subjecting it (subordination), and sometimes as co-opting and harnessing it (hegemony)... this domination strategy stirs the impulses to command everything, control everything, force everything, make everything fit, and subject everything. It encourages ontologized (rather than functional) hierarchies, subordination, dualisms (who orders whom), and disruptions of solidarity, which is the dynamic of all beings in the universe.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 70

<sup>30</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 71

<sup>31</sup> J. MOLTSMANN, *God in Creation*, 20

<sup>32</sup> J. MOLTSMANN, *God in Creation*, 20-21

<sup>33</sup> Cf. L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 74

<sup>34</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 74

What emerges from the statement of Boff is that a culture of domination and exploitation only leads to subordination, tension, chaos and destruction. In the case of nature it leads to the disruption of solidarity among creatures.

The social doctrine of the Church too offers valid insights into this attitude of domination that human beings assume towards creation. In its teaching on the relationship between man and the environment, the pontifical council for justice and peace asserts that the underlying cause of the environmental crisis can be seen in “man’s pretension of exercising unconditional dominion over things, heedless of any moral considerations which, on the contrary must distinguish all human activity”.<sup>35</sup> The Council further states that “the tendency towards an ill-considered exploitation of resources of creation is the result of a long historical and cultural process”.<sup>36</sup> “The aspect of the conquest and exploitation of resources has become predominant and invasive, and today it has even reached the point of threatening the environments hospitable aspect: the environment as ‘resource’ risks threatening the environment as ‘home’”.<sup>37</sup> “Nature appears as an instrument in the hands of man, a reality that he must constantly manipulate, especially by means of technology”.<sup>38</sup> “A vision of man and things that is sundered from any reference to the transcendent has led to the rejection of the concept of creation and to the attribution of a completely independent existence to man and nature”.<sup>39</sup>

### **1.2.3 The Ecological Crisis as the Effect of Sin**

Strictly connected to the foregoing point is the ecological crisis as the effect of sin. It is the sin against nature. This sin consists in humanity’s greed for pleasure and for more. At a superficial

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<sup>35</sup> Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 249

<sup>36</sup> Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 249

<sup>37</sup> Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 249-250

<sup>38</sup> Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 250

<sup>39</sup> Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 251

level it is a sin against creation but at a deeper level, it is a sin against the Creator Spirit. Human beings distance themselves from the environment and turn it into an object of prey.<sup>40</sup> “By the very fact that the natural elements are related primarily to the human beings, they are taken out of their original context and deprived of the essential relationship which they have to one another”.<sup>41</sup> “The exploitation of the earth’s resources inflicts an incurable wound on the living body of the cosmos, and is tantamount to the obliteration of God’s image from the face of the earth”.<sup>42</sup> It is also a sin of self-assertion on the part of human beings which can be identified right from the first man and woman. It is actually through the sin of the first man that the first discord in creation took place. From then on it has been a history of corruption that estranged humanity more and more from God. According to Boff, the ongoing disruption of the basic connectedness of the whole of the universe and with its Creator is something that the human being has introduced, fueled and perpetuated, and it has its root in the original sin.<sup>43</sup> This sin has pneumatological nuances in the sense that it is a sin against the Spirit who gives life to the world. So any crime against life in the universe is a crime against the Creator spirit. “When we quench life we quench the Holy Spirit. When the Spirit of life leaves us all that is left are distractions, death and desolations”.<sup>44</sup> Man wants to create himself, and to arrange always and exclusively that which concerns him. But this means living contrary to the truth, living contrary to the creator Spirit. Sally McFague gives a moving description of the ecological view of sin when she presents sin against nature as the “sin against the many different bodies – the bodies of other people, other animals and nature”<sup>45</sup> and calls it “a sin against God in the model of the world as God’s body”.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Cf. N. FOGLIACCO, *Creation: Class notes*, 146

<sup>41</sup> N. FOGLIACCO, *Creation: Class notes*, 146

<sup>42</sup> N. FOGLIACCO, *Creation: Class notes*, 146

<sup>43</sup> Cf. L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth. Cry of the Poor*, 59

<sup>44</sup> J. MOLTSMANN, *The Source of Life*, 54

<sup>45</sup> S. MCFAGUE, *Body of God*, 114

<sup>46</sup> S. MCFAGUE, *Body of God*, 114

Giving a relational understanding of sin in the Hebrew and Christian traditions, she connects it with nature and says: “sin is, therefore, thinking feeling and acting in ways contrary to reality, contrary to the proper, right relations among the beings and entities that constitute reality”.<sup>47</sup>

According to McFague

to say that sin has an ecological dimension means that we must view beings, organisms, in relation to their environment. The environment of all beings, according to our model of the universe as God’s body, is the ‘divine milieu’: we live and move and have our being, along with all other beings in God. Therefore, sin or living a lie will be living disproportionately, falsely, inappropriately within this space, refusing to accept the limitations and responsibilities of our place.<sup>48</sup>

The insight that McFague gives us regarding the ecological view of sin is striking in the sense that it relates the issue with human irresponsibility, our refusal to accept our proper place in the universe of God’s creatures.

### **1.2.3 The Forgetfulness of the Creator Spirit/ The Pneumatological Deficiency**

Genesis 1:2 speaks of the Creator Spirit as the wind that was hovering over the primordial chaotic waters. In this line Samuel Rayan asserts that “the whole of creation took place under the presidency of the hovering Spirit of God. When God’s Spirit brooded over the waters, chaos changed into cosmos”.<sup>49</sup> Denis Edwards goes a step further and connects the activity of the Creator Spirit with the process of evolution and says “The Creator Spirit is the dynamic, energizing power of God enabling our observable universe to exist and to evolve from the first moment of its existence fourteen billion years ago”.<sup>50</sup> Edwards continues on this line and affirms that “The Spirit is seen as the immanent power of ongoing creation that enables the universe of

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<sup>47</sup> S. MCFAGUE, *Body of God*, 114

<sup>48</sup> S. MCFAGUE, *Body of God*, 115

<sup>49</sup> S. RAYAN, *Come Holy Spirit*, 10

<sup>50</sup> D. EDWARDS, *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*, 30

creatures to exist”.<sup>51</sup> What we experience today in terms of the loss of the integrity of creation is due to the fact that the Spirit is no longer in charge to provide the creation with order and harmony. Human pride and will to dominate and exploit have pushed the Creator Spirit to the background and have taken the centre stage. Humanity has forgotten the *ruah*, air, wind that gives life to the whole of creation and unites it in a state of harmony. The bible has ample references to describe the Holy Spirit as the Breath of life. It is enough to look at passages like Gen. 2:7; 6:3, 17; 7:15; Job 33:4; 34: 14-15; Ezek. 37:9; Eccl. 12:7; psalm 104: 29-30. It is also important to note the interconnection between the Word and the Spirit in God’s creative act. This too has plenty of references in the Bible. Psalm 33:6 explicitly links the two images together in the one divine act of creation: “by the Word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth”. The Book of Judith also gives us the same idea in 16:14.

And the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed speaks of the Holy Spirit as the giver of life. It is through the Spirit that the entire creation receives life. In Genesis 2:7 we see that God makes man from the dust of earth and breathes into his nostrils the breath of life. In the words of Denis Edwards “even when in the creed we affirm faith in the Creator Spirit as the “Giver of Life”, there seems little connection between this life giving Spirit and the ecological issues that confront us”.<sup>52</sup> As this statement suggests human beings do not recognize the presence of the Creator Spirit in the world around them. And the ecological crisis that we experience today is a return to the chaos of the primordial state as a fruit of the forgetfulness of the Creator Spirit. From chaos the Spirit brought out the cosmos, the ordered and balanced whole and human beings bring the cosmos back to disorder and imbalance, and thus to chaos.

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<sup>51</sup> D. EDWARDS, *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*, 31

<sup>52</sup> D. EDWARDS, *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*, 27

## **Conclusion**

Our world is returning to the primordial chaos. Life around us is silently vanishing. Forests turn into deserts, and springs and rivers into dry lands. We are in an exodus, heading not to the land of freedom and liberation which guarantees life and prosperity but to the valley of silence and death. The nature around changes, but not for good. Day after day stories of nature's fury falls into our ears. Silence and gloom pervades everyone. Late have we realized that it is a destiny that we brought upon ourselves. The wrath of nature has befallen us. We need to undertake a journey back into order and harmony.

In this chapter, my effort has been to portray the tragic picture of ecological deterioration which we did in different steps. The first step in this chapter was to give a basic definition of ecology and the ecosystem which paved the way for a proper analysis of the central issue of this chapter, namely the ecological crisis. Secondly we dealt with the causes of this crisis, and it has been done from a strictly anthropological and theological perspective, which will enable us to proceed to the next chapter.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Remembering the Creator Spirit**

#### **Towards an Ecology of the Holy Spirit**

##### **Introduction**

This chapter is focused on the rediscovery of the divine Spirit as a solution to the problem we explored in the former chapter, namely the ecological crisis. The intention is to provide a proper understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit in creation, both in its origin and continuity. This we do by analyzing the Old Testament understanding of the Spirit as the Breath of God, the Giver of Life. In the same line we seek to grasp the many ways in which the Spirit is connected to creation. The second part of this chapter will be dedicated to find a solution to the ecological crisis, and this will be a pneumatological and spiritual one which lies at the source of any problem.

##### **2.1 Holy Spirit in Creation**

The creative activity of the Spirit of God is an undeniable and essential component of biblical revelation and Christian doctrine. The Spirit of God journeys with creation right from its genesis throughout the history of the chosen people of God, and directs the events of history through its mysterious presence in creation, and the risen Lord assures us of the enduring presence of the Spirit until the end of time as our advocate and consoler. In the following points we shall try to enumerate more specifically the ways in which the Spirit is at work in creation.

### 2.1.1 The concept of the Breath of God: the Old Testament Perspective

The book of Genesis presents the Spirit of Yahweh as hovering over the chaotic waters of creation. In the bible the English word “spirit” is used to translate the Hebrew word *ruah* and Greek word *pneuma*. Both of these have the meaning of “breath” and “wind”.<sup>53</sup> In Edwards’ opinion “behind the idea of the Spirit of God there is the image of the Breath of God”.<sup>54</sup> While in some ancient texts this Breath of God refers to a unique or particularly powerful quality in a human being, in general it “points to the creative and renewing presence and action of the one God of Israel”.<sup>55</sup> “The Breath of God expresses the power of God at work in creation, in ecstatic prophecy, in the rise of kingship and, later, in messianic expectation”.<sup>56</sup> Edwards brings the creative aspect of the Breath of God when he says that “it refers to the life-giving and empowering presence of God in nature, in the history of Israel, and in the lives of individual human beings”.<sup>57</sup> Wilfrid Harrington too stresses the dynamic aspect of the Spirit of Yahweh when he says that “in the Old Testament the Spirit of Yahweh is the presence and the mysterious power of God Himself”.<sup>58</sup>

Edwards gives us a number of biblical passages wherein the Spirit is thought of as the Breath of Life. “Creatures live only because God gives them this life-giving Breath”.<sup>59</sup> In Genesis God forms the first earthling from the dust of the ground and breathes into the human’s nostrils “the breath of life” (Gen 2:7). “Because of this breath of life the earthling ‘became a living being’”.<sup>60</sup> Gen 6:3 gives us the idea that human beings cannot live if they do not have the divine breath

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<sup>53</sup> D. EDWARDS, *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*, 27

<sup>54</sup> D. EDWARDS, *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*, 27

<sup>55</sup> D. EDWARDS, *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*, 28

<sup>56</sup> D. EDWARDS, *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*, 28

<sup>57</sup> D. EDWARDS, *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*, 28

<sup>58</sup> W. HARRINGTON, *Spirit of the Living God*, 17

<sup>59</sup> D. EDWARDS, *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*, 28

<sup>60</sup> D. EDWARDS, *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*, 28

abiding in them. There is also a reference to the breath of life in the description of the flood. In Gen 6:17; 7:22 it is said that the great flood will “destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life”. Gen 7:15 also refers to the breath of life when it is said “two of all flesh in which there is the breath of life”.

The wisdom books, the prophets and the psalms too have innumerable reference to the idea of the breath of life especially in human beings. In the Book of Job Elihu says: “The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life” (Job 33:4). Again a little later Elihu declares about all living things: “if he should take back his spirit to himself, and gather to himself his breath, all flesh would perish together and all mortals return to dust” (Job 34: 14-15). The Book of Ezekiel also gives us the image of the Breath of God which enables dry bones to be brought to life (Ezek 37:9). Eccl 12:7 too has this idea. Psalm 104: 29-30 sings of all God’s creatures: “When you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust. When you send forth your spirit, they are created and you renew the face of the ground”.

Edwards goes further and speaks of the interconnection of the images of breath and word in the Old Testament and identifies the attribution of creation to both God’s creative Word and His life-giving Breath.<sup>61</sup> This idea is clearly expressed in Psalm 33 when the Psalmist sings in verse 6: “By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth”. The same connection is brought forth in the Book of Judith: “Let all your creatures serve you, because you spoke, and they were made. You sent forth your spirit, and it formed them” (16:14).

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<sup>61</sup> D. EDWARDS, *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*, 28

## 2.1.2 Holy Spirit: the Initiator of Newness<sup>62</sup>

Gen 1:2 tells us that the Spirit is present in the initial creation. “It creates, causes, and orders each being to emerge in its time and circumstance. It is acting and intensely present in the creation of the definitive being, who is first in the course of the cosmogenic process and has now arrived, Jesus of Nazareth”.<sup>63</sup> The gospels attribute the incarnation of the Son to the Spirit: “It is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her” (Mt 1:20). St. Luke says that the Spirit established a dwelling over her, and according to Boff, this is tantamount to saying that she was raised to the divine height; and so the one born of her is holy and Son of God (cf. Lk 1:35).<sup>64</sup> Boff makes a connection between creation and resurrection when he says: “It is the Spirit who raises Jesus from among the dead, beginning a totally full kind of life, one no longer subject to entropy and already displaying divine characteristics”.<sup>65</sup> This idea is well expressed in Rom 1:4 ad I Tm 3:16. Boff continues further attributes the creation of the Church to the Spirit: “It is the Spirit who gives rise to the Church, the community that bears the legacy of Jesus forward in history”.<sup>66</sup> This idea is also expressed in 2:32 of the Acts of the Apostles. Boff states further that it is the Spirit as enthusiasm and life who becomes present in each human being.<sup>67</sup>

## 2.1.3 Holy Spirit as Creator of Complexities and Differences

That the Spirit is the creator of differences and complexities we can observe from the world around us, both material and spiritual. In this regard Boff says: “The multiplicity of beings, biodiversity, the diversity of constructive energies in the universe point to the diversified activity

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<sup>62</sup> Cf. L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 167

<sup>63</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 167

<sup>64</sup> Cf. L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 167

<sup>65</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 167

<sup>66</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 167

<sup>67</sup> Cf. L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 167

of the Spirit, who values differences”.<sup>68</sup> From what Boff asserts about the Spirit as valuing differences, we can say that it is this particular characteristic that human beings forget when they set out to plunder the earth and its natural resources. They are unable to respect the differences in the nature around them and value it as sacred since it is the abode of the Spirit. In a strictly spiritual sense we can speak of the Spirit as the creator of complexities when we realize the charisms in the individuals. In connection with this Boff asserts: “In the human community the Spirit grants the diversity of talents and is present in the community through many charisms”.<sup>69</sup> This idea is brought home by St. Paul in his letter to the Corinthians 12:7-11.

#### **2.1.4 The Spirit as the Indwelling Presence of God in the Universe**

In his treatment of the topic on the cosmic Spirit Moltmann interprets the biblical creation narrative in relation to the Holy Spirit. For him Gen 1:2 is “intended to point out that the divine Spirit is the creative power and the presence of God in his creation”.<sup>70</sup> “The whole creation is a fabric woven by the Spirit, and is therefore a reality to which the Spirit gives form”.<sup>71</sup> Relating the Holy Spirit to the doctrine of incarnation, Boff speaks of the Spirit as “pitching its tent among us” and as “setting its dwelling” in the universe.<sup>72</sup> In this connection Boff states that “to say the Spirit pitches its tent and dwells in creation means recognizing that it is present to the utmost with its unique personality not in a temporary fashion, as in the life of a prophet or an inspired charismatic, but in a continual and permanent way”.<sup>73</sup> Boff connects this idea with the big bang and says: “the Spirit has taken on the universe and made it its dwelling place since the initial zero point. The profession of faith in “the Spirit and giver of life” presupposes that the

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<sup>68</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 167

<sup>69</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 167

<sup>70</sup> J. MOLTSMANN, *God in Creation*, 99

<sup>71</sup> J. MOLTSMANN, *God in Creation*, 99

<sup>72</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 168

<sup>73</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 168

Spirit has communicated itself personally to the universe".<sup>74</sup> "It has surrendered itself unreservedly and has thoroughly gone out of itself and into its creation. Because the Spirit is within, it can emerge in a variety of ways in accordance with the various stages of the cosmogenic process".<sup>75</sup>

Stressing the presence of the Spirit in the universe, Boff further notes the way in which its presence can be known. He says: "the Spirit's presence is made known through the vitality of all things: everything is shot through with the reality of life, starting with the most elementary energies and particles. It is proclaimed by the differences in beings and expressions of complexity, of subjectivity, of interiority, and the capacity of communion of each being, especially the more complex".<sup>76</sup> In this regard, Moltmann too offers us further insights when he speaks of the ways in which the Cosmic Spirit operates in the universe. For him "the Spirit is the principle of creativity on all levels of matter and life. He creates new possibilities, and in these anticipates the new designs and 'blueprints' for material and living organisms. In this sense the Spirit is the principle of evolution".<sup>77</sup> Again he says: "the Spirit is the holistic principle. At every evolutionary stage he creates interactions, harmony in these interactions, mutual perichoreses, and therefore a life of co-operation and community. The Spirit of God is the common Spirit of creation".<sup>78</sup> "This means that in an equally primal sense the Spirit is the principle of individuation, the principle which differentiates particular 'working sketches' of matter and life on their various levels".<sup>79</sup> Connecting to the issue of environmental crisis, Elisabeth Johnson

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<sup>74</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 168

<sup>75</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 168

<sup>76</sup> L. BOFF, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, 168-169

<sup>77</sup> J. MOLTSMANN, *God in Creation*, 100

<sup>78</sup> J. MOLTSMANN, *God in Creation*, 100

<sup>79</sup> J. MOLTSMANN, *God in Creation*, 100

speaks of the Spirit as “God who actually arrives in every moment, God drawing near and passing by in vivifying power in the midst of historical struggle”.<sup>80</sup>

## **2.2 The Creator Spirit and the Ecological Restoration**

So far my attempt in this paper has been to prove the prominence of the Creator Spirit as the Power and Energy of God who creates and sustains life on earth in a state of harmony and how this harmony is disturbed through the human exploitation of the environment and its various causes and consequences. From now on the paper takes a new direction to portray the Spirit as the principle of ecological re-creation, environmental restoration and vivification, and to see how the Spirit can bring back the universe from the state of discord and chaos to a state of integrity and harmony.

### **2.2.1 Spirit as the Principle of Communion among all Living Things**

Earlier on in the paper we have seen how the Holy Spirit is the Creator Spirit, the Breath that gives life to all the living things. In the words of J. Moltmann,

all things are called into being out of God’s living breath, and that breath holds them together in a community of creation which furthers life. If they cut themselves off from that community, they destroy themselves. The Spirit of life means especially the connections and cohesions of everything created. All things are mutually dependent; they live with each other and for each other, and often enough symbiotically within each other. Life is community, and community is the communication of life.<sup>81</sup>

It is exactly this indwelling of the same Spirit in all the living creatures that have to be brought to humanity’s attention to safeguard the integrity of creation. Today more than ever there is a need to rediscover the role of the Spirit as the principle of unity among all creatures. It can be so only when the human spirit shall be sensible to the Spirit of creation that permeates the entire

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<sup>80</sup> E. A. JOHNSON, *Women, Earth and Creator Spirit*, 42

<sup>81</sup> J. MOLTSMANN, *The Source of Life*, 24

community of living beings. It necessitates a sensibility from the part of human beings to discover the sacredness of all living beings as they too are enlivened by the Breath of the same Spirit who gives life to us. “When we say that the Creator Spirit pervades the world, we mean that we see each individual as part of the whole, and everything limited as a representative of what is infinite. All created things are individuations of the community of creation and manifestations of the divine Spirit”.<sup>82</sup> “When we say that the creation’s Creator Spirit indwells both every individual creature and the community of creation, we mean that the presence of the infinite in the finite imbues every finite thing, and the community of all finite beings, with self transcendence”.<sup>83</sup>

### **2.2.2 The Holy Spirit as the Healer of Ecological Wounds**

At the heart of the Christian ecological movement is the concept of wounded earth. As we have seen above, the integrity and equilibrium of the earth has been wounded and a state of imbalance has emerged. At this juncture the only healer of such wounds is to be identified in the Spirit as the one who indwells the hearts of human beings and the heart of the whole earth. The principle that can bring about a change in us and in the world around is the principle of conversion which can take place only if we are docile to the Spirit’s gift of love to us. St. Paul in his Letter to the Romans writes that “the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the holy Spirit that has been given to us” (Cf. Rom. 5:5). Conversion here would primarily mean an ecological conversion. This conversion requires that we respond to the love of God active in us. It requires a new openness and docility to the Spirit. It is to begin anew in the Spirit. It is also about being docile to the fruits of the Spirit as enlisted by St. Paul in his Letter to the Galatians: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-

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<sup>82</sup> J. MOLTMANN, *God in Creation*, 100-101

<sup>83</sup> J. MOLTMANN, *God in Creation*, 101

control” (Gal. 5:22). Thinking from this point of view ecological conversion would mean being in love with the created world, finding joy in the communion that exists among creatures, living in peace and harmony with nature and treating nature with kindness and gentleness, and exercising self control to overcome the natural inclination to exploit it.

It would be unjust to leave uncited some of the moving reflections of Elisabeth Johnson regarding the relationship between Spirit and creation, especially linked to the Spirit’s characteristics. She says:

the Spirit is life that gives life. She is radiant energy that like wind, fire and water awakens and enlivens all things. Each of these symbols has a numinous quality that evokes better than abstract words the presence of the Creator spirit in the world, moving over the void, breathing into the chaos, pouring out, informing, quickening, warming, setting free, blessing, dancing in mutual immanence with the world.<sup>84</sup>

Adopting some ideas from Hildegard, Johnson speaks of the vivifying movement of the Spirit when she says:

the Spirit is the life of the life of all creatures; the way in which everything is penetrated with connectedness and relatedness; a burning fire who sparks, ignites, inflames, kindles hearts; a guide in the fog, a balm for wounds; a shining serenity; an overflowing fountain that spreads to all sides. The Spirit is life, movement, colour, radiance, restorative stillness in the din. She pours the juice of contrition into hardened hearts. Her power makes dry twigs and withered souls green again with the juice of life. She purifies, absolves, strengthens, heals, gathers the perplexed, seeks the lost, she plays music in the soul, being herself the melody of praise and joy. She awakens mighty hope, blowing everywhere the winds of renewal in creation.<sup>85</sup>

### **2.2.3 The Spirit as the New Beginner**

Strictly connected to the foregoing point is the understanding of the Spirit as the New Beginner. In the Bible the Spirit is associated with all the new beginnings: from the beginning of creation to the Pentecost and the time of the Church the Spirit has been the guiding principle. The Spirit is

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<sup>84</sup>E. A. JOHNSON, *Women, Earth and Creator Spirit*, 50

<sup>85</sup>E. A. JOHNSON, *Women, Earth and Creator Spirit*, 51

the initiator of fresh developments and the Leader of new movements. From great saints in the Church to great leaders of the world, beginnings and renewals have always been under the guidance of the Spirit. In a state of chaos as we experience today in the case of environment, “the solution is to live under the influence of the Spirit and to collaborate with the Spirit to renew the earth, to regenerate society, to create fresh thinking and to rebuild our value systems”.<sup>86</sup> It is in fact through the reversal of values from human-centredness to earth and Spirit-centredness that the ecological damage can be repaired and the process of restoring the integrity of creation can be set in motion. Moreover we should let the Spirit hover over our internal deserts, barrenness, sterility and fruitlessness. Then under the influence of the Spirit “we shall be new and fecund, we shall be beautiful, we shall be capable of bringing redemption to each other and to the world”.<sup>87</sup> We should let the Spirit launch its ecological mission in the world to heal the wounds that we have inflicted on creation. Moreover we should let ourselves be moulded by the fire of the Sanctifying Spirit and let ourselves to be embraced by the Spirit's love to be renewed and transformed to restore the peace of the entire creation.

#### **2.2.4 Spirit as the Principle of Sanctification**

Since the beginning of the Church, the Holy Spirit has been considered as the fire that sanctifies, renders holy whatever is unholy. “The word sanctification first of all designates an act that proceeds from the ‘holy’ God. God chooses something for himself and makes it his own possession”.<sup>88</sup> In connection to the crisis we are dealing with, what needs real sanctification is the human heart. The elements of self-gratification and the urge to dominate; the will to subdue and exploit; the tendency to establish our authority and autonomy at the expense of the other are

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<sup>86</sup>S. RAYAN, *Come Holy Spirit*, 13

<sup>87</sup>S. RAYAN, *Come Holy Spirit*, 14

<sup>88</sup>J. MOLTSMANN, *The Source of Life*, 45

all elements that need the intervention of the Holy Spirit. The human spirit has to be sacrificed in the furnace of the divine Spirit that it may be purified and molded into a spirit that is sensitive and respectful to people and creatures around; that the inner eyes may look beyond the horizon of the self and recognize itself as part of a wider world and learn to keep its proper place in the universe of God's creatures.

Connecting ecology and the divine activity of sanctification Moltmann offers us some valuable reflections. For him "the first thing that God sanctifies is always his living space, his environment. We might say that sanctification is *divine ecology*".<sup>89</sup> Going further he makes a connection between sanctification and humanity when he says: "men and women are not just passive objects of God's sanctification. They are also, on their side, the *determining subjects of sanctification*. We 'sanctify' something when we encounter it with reverence and view it as unfringeable, because in it we sense and revere God's nearness".<sup>90</sup> As sanctified subjects it is in fact this indwelling nearness of God that we have to rediscover and cherish. Then our outlook towards creation changes and in it we perceive the sacred sense that we lost for a long while and we really begin to encounter creation with reverence and respect.

### **2.2.5 The Holy Spirit as the Re-creator of the Eschatological Times/ The Ecology of God's Spirit**

St. Paul in his Letter to the Romans speaks of creation as being subject to futility and as eagerly waiting for the revealing of the sons of God (Cf. Romans 8:19-23). Commenting on this text of the Romans, Edwards notes that "The Spirit can be understood not only as the companion of creation in its travail but also as the midwife to the birth of new creation. It is always the life-

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<sup>89</sup> J.MOLTSMANN , *The Source of Life*, 46

<sup>90</sup> J.MOLTSMANN , *The Source of Life*, 47

giving Spirit of God who enables the new to be born. In this sense the Spirit is not only midwife but also the one who empowers the process from within".<sup>91</sup> From this statement it becomes clear that the Spirit not only creates and accompanies creation as the presence of God in it but also acts as the guiding principle in its journey towards divine life. The Spirit is also identified as the one who enables the new to be born. In other words the Spirit is the New Creator.

Moltmann gives us an insight into what this New Creation will be like when he says,

The new creation does not abolish bodiliness. It renews it for eternal livingness. People lose their 'hearts of stone' and acquire 'hearts of flesh' when God puts His Spirit of life into their innermost selves (Ezek. 11:19; 36:27). Shalom will bring human beings and animals into a new shared life, as Isaiah 11 prophesies. When 'the Spirit is poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, and the fruitful field is deemed a forest, then justice will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness abide in the fruitful field' (Isa. 32:15f). This can be called the ecology of God's Spirit.<sup>92</sup>

As Moltmann suggests the new creation entails a reigning of peace and justice in the entire creation.<sup>93</sup>

## Conclusion

Any problem that has a spiritual root primarily needs a spiritual solution. And it is so very true in the case of ecological crisis whose root cause, we identified, lies in the spiritual realm of human beings. In this chapter we tried to propose a pneumatological solution to the environmental crisis. This has been done by understanding the role of the Spirit in Creation, where we dealt primarily with the Old Testament understanding of the spirit as the Breath of God. We also tried to link the Spirit to God's indwelling in creation. In the second part of this chapter the focus has been to

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<sup>91</sup> D. EDWARDS, *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*, 44

<sup>92</sup> J. MOLTMANN, *The Source of Life*, 24

<sup>93</sup> With regard to the restoration of peace and justice in creation Benedict XVI's Message for the World Day of Peace 2010 provides some useful insights.

propose the rediscovery of the Spirit as the true solution to the problem of ecological deterioration.

## General Conclusion

Come, Thou Holy Spirit come!

And from thy celestial home

Shed a ray of light divine!

O most blessed Light divine,

Shine within these hearts of thine,

And our inmost beings fill.

This is the sequence of the Mass for the feast of Pentecost, and it explains very well the need for the Holy Spirit to come and shed his light into our hearts to enable us “to see the true shape of things, the thrust of events, the meaning of life, and the depths of reality”.<sup>94</sup> Living in a world of ecological crisis and awareness we need this light of the Spirit to lead us to see the interconnectedness of things in the world and to appreciate the beauty and harmony of the cosmos. This paper has been an attempt to analyze the causes of ecological crisis and to rediscover the role of the Spirit as the Principle of creation and as the guiding force behind the created world in its journey towards New Creation.

In the first chapter I have tried to give a description of some of the basic terms like ecology and ecosystem which helped us to understand that all life in the universe exists in relation to others and that there is a sort of communion among creatures. The ecological crisis has been understood as a rupture of this communion, and among the most important causes of the crisis, we have analyzed mainly the theological, and anthropological ones.

In the second chapter I primarily dealt with the role of the Holy Spirit in creation. I have tried to do justice to this topic by exploring what the Judeo-Christian scriptures speak about the creator

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<sup>94</sup> S. RAYAN. *Come Holy Spirit*, 131

Spirit, and the main thrust of the biblical understanding of the Spirit is that it is the giver of life. Connecting these aspects to the problem of ecology I have tried to propose the rediscovery of the Spirit as a solution to the whole issue.

The Holy Spirit is life giving life, universal mover and the root of all creation, refiner of all things from their dross, brings forgiveness of guilt and oil for our wounds, is radiance of life, most worthy of worship, wakening and reawakening both earth and heaven. In a state of ecological disintegration it is this role of the Spirit as the one who creates, gives life, sustains and transforms, that we have to rediscover. The Spirit is the principal element that can transform the spirit of humanity to respect life in the universe. As stated elsewhere in this paper, a spiritual crisis needs a spiritual solution. And the development of ecology of the Holy Spirit is the proper solution to the crisis.

In this work I tried to do justice to the theme under consideration, although much has been left unsaid due to the limited nature of the work and the lack of material on the connection between the Holy Spirit and the environmental crisis.

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