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A Contextual Pastoral Approach in Strengthening the Ecological Awareness of the People

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ABSTRACT: The ongoing ecological crisis has contributed to the emergence of human behavior that deviates from normative principles, while simultaneously shaping the lifestyles of society at large. Contextual pastoral care is understood as a form of faith accompaniment that stems from local social, cultural, and environmental conditions, not simply the uniform delivery of teachings without regard for the congregation's background. This study uses a qualitative method with a phenomenological paradigm to explore the experiences of congregational companions and the surrounding community in experiencing their daily lives and work. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document review of pastoral activities, which were then processed through data reduction, textural-structural presentation, and synthesis in accordance with phenomenological principles. In addition to acting as reflective companions, pastoral workers also play a crucial role in successfully instilling ecological principles into the lives of the congregation. This study recommends that religious institutions design more participatory, local wisdom-based, and sustainable pastoral programs as a long-term strategic step in fostering ecological awareness among the faithful.

KEYWORDS: contextual pastoral; ecological awareness; phenomenology; environmental spirituality; faith accompaniment.

INTRODUCTION

The Catholic Church, as a community of faith present in the midst of the world, feels an urgent call to respond to the ongoing ecological crisis. In the Encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis called for an "ecological conversion," a comprehensive change in the perspective, values, and behavior of believers toward the universe as their "common home." This call was later reaffirmed in the Apostolic Exhortation *Laudate Deum*, which criticized the inadequacy of the world's response to climate change and urged all faith communities to take concrete action (Alexander, 2024). Both documents affirm that caring for creation is not merely an ethical choice but an integral and indispensable requirement of faith.

Pastoral care in various places has tended to focus on personal spiritual aspects, such as faith formation, moral strengthening, and assistance with personal crises, while ecological issues are often considered outside the pastoral realm. However, upon closer examination, the teachings of faith actually contain a clear message about the human obligation to preserve and care for nature as part of the calling of a life of faith. Pastoral staff, including priests, catechists, and other pastoral ministers, serve as a bridge between the Church's official teachings on ecology and the real lives of the people at the grassroots level (Wenehenubun, 2025).

The environmental issues facing communities, particularly in Central Kalimantan, have been widely documented. The Indonesian Forum for the Environment (Walhi) Central Kalimantan noted that coal mining activities have caused deforestation across thousands of hectares of land spread across hundreds of concessions, mostly in the East Barito, South Barito, and North Barito regions. This situation has also triggered an increase in ecological disasters, such as forest fires and water pollution, which have a direct impact on the lives of residents around the area. Agricultural practices that pay little attention to environmental sustainability, such as the excessive use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers and land clearing by burning, remain commonplace in many rural communities in Kalimantan. The environmental organization PRCF Indonesia reports that the uncontrolled use of agricultural chemicals has polluted rivers and water sources, negatively impacting the ecosystem and the health of the residents who depend on them.

The main problem in fostering ecological awareness among the congregation lies in pastoral practices that tend to be general and fail to fully consider local characteristics. Yet, each community has distinct geographic conditions, cultural backgrounds, and socio-economic situations, resulting in diverse ways of interpreting and responding to environmental issues. Therefore, a contextual pastoral approach offers an alternative

that places the realities of community life as a starting point for faith reflection. Through this approach, messages of environmental concern can be conveyed in a more relevant, easily understood, deeply absorbed, and translated into concrete actions.

A contextual pastoral approach is not an attempt to diminish the substance of faith teachings, but rather an attempt to align them with the language, symbols, and lived experiences of the local community. Various studies have shown that if faith values are not effectively integrated with ecological awareness, calls to ecological conversion have the potential to remain merely discourse without producing meaningful change in the lives of the congregation (Silan, 2024). From this perspective, the teaching of respect for creation is no longer seen as an abstract concept far removed from everyday life, but rather as part of the practice of faith, manifested through simple actions, such as managing household waste responsibly, preserving water sources, and caring for trees in places of worship.

Concretely, environmental issues in East Barito Regency, where the St. Petrus Ampari Bura Station is located, demonstrate the urgency of this study. The Dayak Maanyan community inhabiting the area lives a life highly dependent on nature through dryland farming, plantations, and traditional forest product utilization. However, pressures from mining activities, less environmentally friendly agricultural practices, and a low level of collective ecological awareness mean that the relationship between the people and the natural world has not yet been fully realized in harmony. Meanwhile, the pastoral staff serving this community continue to demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment to raising awareness among the people about the importance of protecting the environment for the sustainability of life together.

Based on this description, this article aims to examine in depth the forms of contextual pastoral approaches that have been implemented in an effort to increase the ecological awareness of the congregation, identify factors that support and hinder the effectiveness of these approaches, and examine the meanings experienced by the congregation and pastoral assistants during the process. Through this study, it is hoped that an empirical picture will be obtained as well as pastoral recommendations that are contextual, concrete, and sustainable for the realization of a community of congregations that truly care for their common home, as mandated by *Laudato Si'* and *Laudate Deum*.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL BASIS

1. Contextual Pastoral Care as a Model of Faith Accompaniment

Contextual pastoral care is a care approach that focuses on the realities of people's lives as the starting point for serving the faith. This approach considers various aspects that shape people's lives, such as the cultural, social, economic, and environmental conditions in which they live. Unlike conventional pastoral practices, which tend to convey teachings uniformly without considering differences in context, contextual pastoral care seeks to present a message of faith that is appropriate to the characteristics of each community. Studies on contextual theology show that the experience of faith deepens when religious teachings are communicated through the language, symbols, and local cultural values that are familiar and lived by the community in their daily lives (Riawan Yohanes, 2021).

In its implementation, contextual pastoral care requires pastoral staff to first listen to and understand the lived experiences of the congregation before providing guidance or imparting faith teachings. The pastoral process also takes place through dialogue, involving reciprocal interaction, rather than simply one-way teaching delivery. This approach provides space for the congregation to reflect on their own lived experiences and relate them to the values of their faith, enabling them to find relevant meaning for the various issues they face, including challenges related to environmental degradation and preservation.

The role of pastoral care itself contains several main dimensions that complement each other. The educational dimension positions pastoral care as faith educators who accompany the congregation to better understand and live their faith, as emphasized in *Gravissimum Educationis*. The spiritual dimension is the heart of pastoral care, realized through the celebration of the sacraments, spiritual guidance, and accompaniment of the congregation in the struggle for faith, in line with Pope Paul VI's call in *Evangelii Nuntiandi* that evangelizers must first become individuals who live in union with God. The social dimension positions pastoral care as friends of the congregation in the realities of life, as emphasized by the Second Vatican Council that the Church shares the joys, hopes, sorrows, and anxieties of people today (GS 1), and also emphasized by Pope Benedict XVI in *Deus Caritas Est* that concrete service of love is as important as preaching and liturgy. The ecological dimension calls for pastoral workers to foster awareness that caring for creation is an inseparable part of the responsibility of faith, as Pope Francis calls in *Laudato Si'* for humanity to listen simultaneously to "the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor" (LS 14, LS 49).

In addition to these four dimensions, pastoral staff also play a role as motivators who encourage people to develop concern for others and the environment, as facilitators who create space for people to develop independently in their faith—in line with Carl Rogers' thoughts on the importance of a supportive environment for personal growth—and as life role models who present Gospel values in a real way, as emphasized in Matthew 5:16 and reinforced by Albert Bandura's social learning theory that individuals learn through observing and imitating figures who are considered important.

2. Ecological Awareness from the Perspective of Faith

Ecological awareness, in the light of faith, is not merely understood as a concern for cleanliness or technical environmental preservation efforts, but as a form of experiencing faith that reflects the harmonious relationship between humans, each other, and all of creation. The text of Genesis 2:15 emphasizes that God placed humans in the garden to cultivate and care for it—the word "cultivate" (*abad*) means to serve faithfully, while "to care" (*shamar*) means to guard with full responsibility. These two terms emphasize that humans' position before nature is not as absolute rulers, but as servants and guardians responsible for what is entrusted to them. The Apostle Paul in Romans 8:19-22 also describes all of creation as groaning while awaiting restoration, an image that emphasizes that nature is not merely a valueless object, but a living creation that also awaits restoration through the hands of faithful humans.

Church teaching consistently reinforces this understanding. Pope John Paul II in *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* asserted that true human development can never be built on the destruction of nature for short-term economic interests (SRS 26). Pope Benedict XVI in *Caritas in Veritate* broadened the horizon of ecological responsibility by calling for intergenerational solidarity, stating that present generations have no right to deplete the natural heritage that also belongs to future generations (CV 48-49). Ultimately, Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'* introduced the concept of integral ecology, a view that environmental issues cannot be separated from human, social, cultural, and economic issues, because all are

interconnected living entities (LS 16). The Catechism of the Catholic Church also affirms that humans must respect the integrity of creation, because nature has intrinsic value as a work of God that reflects His glory (CCC 56).

Within a scientific framework, Fritjof Capra defines ecological awareness as the awareness of the interconnectedness of all life within a single, unified network (*the web of life*), in which humans are an integral part of nature, not a dominant force standing above it. Ecological awareness itself is formed through three interrelated dimensions: knowledge, attitudes, and behavior, which must develop in a balanced manner to produce a unified consciousness (Kristiani et al., 2025). The values of faith and spirituality are important factors in shaping this awareness, as emphasized by the teachings of *Laudato Si'*, which emphasizes that ecological spirituality rooted in the teachings of *Laudato Si'* can lead people to a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between humans and nature (Natar, 2025). Furthermore, daily habits, exemplary leadership, and access to information also influence the formation of ecological awareness within society.

3. Integration of Local Wisdom and Ecological Spirituality

A number of study confirm The integration of local wisdom into pastoral practice plays a crucial role in building a spirituality that is intimately connected to the lives of the people. Cultural values that have long taught respect for nature can be enriched through reflection on faith, resulting in a deeper understanding of human responsibility towards creation (Komura, 2024). This approach demonstrates that contextual pastoral care and strengthening ecological awareness are not mutually exclusive but rather complementary in shaping the faith life of the people.

In the context of the Dayak Maanyan community, local wisdom is generally manifested through various traditions, customary norms, taboos, and expressions passed down through generations that contain values about the importance of maintaining a harmonious relationship between humans and nature, for example, the prohibition on cutting down trees around water sources or the tradition of thanksgiving for the harvest. When these values are interpreted from a Christian perspective, people increasingly realize that the traditions inherited from their ancestors align with the call of faith to care for God's creation. Approaches that accommodate local wisdom are generally more easily accepted by people because they are based on cultural values that are inherent in everyday life and have become part of the community's identity.

Nevertheless, the integration of local wisdom into ecological pastoral care requires a thoughtful approach through in-depth theological reflection, given that not all cultural practices align with environmental conservation principles and Church teachings. Therefore, a critical filtering process is necessary to ensure that the adopted cultural values truly support the realization of ecological responsibility while strengthening the spirit of caring for creation in accordance with the teachings of the Christian faith.

4. Challenges of Implementing Ecological Pastoralism

Although the discourse on the importance of ecologically oriented pastoral care is gaining increasing attention, its implementation in ministry practices still faces various obstacles. One major obstacle is the limited understanding of contemporary environmental issues among some pastoral staff, resulting in discussions of ecological responsibility in catechesis and liturgy often being presented in a limited manner and not yet designed as an integrated part of the ministry (Jewadut & Denar, 2024). Furthermore, the high burden of ministry that must be handled means that pastoral programs related to environmental preservation are often positioned as a supplementary agenda, rather than the primary focus of congregational ministry.

Another challenge arises from the perspective of some members of the congregation who still view environmental issues as the responsibility of the government or certain external parties, rather than as part of the faith responsibility of every believer. This view often leads to invitations to participate in environmental conservation efforts being understood merely as social appeals, rather than as a concrete manifestation of faith. Furthermore, limited resources, both in terms of funding, supporting facilities, and competent ecological support personnel, also slow down efforts to mainstream environmental issues into church life. The lack of synergy between religious institutions and external parties, such as environmental communities, academics, and local governments, also causes ecological pastoral programs to often operate separately and not optimally produce sustainable impacts. This situation emphasizes the need for a shared commitment and a more systematic pastoral strategy so that ecological concerns can be deeply and sustainably embedded in the faith life of the congregation.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses A qualitative approach with a phenomenological design was used to deeply explore the experiences of pastoral workers and congregations in experiencing and implementing ecological awareness through contextual pastoral practices. The phenomenological approach was chosen because it allows for understanding the meaning of experiences as directly experienced by participants, rather than simply describing phenomena superficially.

The research was conducted at the Saint Peter Ampari Bura Station, which is administratively located in Ampari Bura Village, Patangkep Tutui District, East Barito Regency, Central Kalimantan Province, and is included in the pastoral care area of the Diocese of Palangka Raya. This station serves a congregation that is predominantly from the Dayak Maanyan tribe, with the main livelihoods being shifting cultivation, plantations, and traditional utilization of forest products. The geographical conditions of the area, which are relatively isolated from urban centers, also contribute to the unique pattern of pastoral care, considering that pastoral staff from the parent parish can only reach this station on a limited frequency. Field data collection was carried out for approximately two weeks, namely from May 19 to 30, 2026.

The selection of informants was carried out using a purposive sampling technique, which is the selection of informants based on certain considerations who are considered to have the best understanding of the topic being studied. The research participants consisted of ten informants, including one parish priest, one catechist, one congregation leader/head of family, and seven lay members of the congregation from various age and occupational backgrounds, including housewives, farmers, community leaders, and representatives of Catholic Youth (OMK). The diversity of informants' backgrounds was intended to obtain a richer picture of how the contextual pastoral approach is experienced by various groups within the community.

Data collection was conducted through three complementary techniques: participant observation, in -depth interviews , and documentation review. Through observation, researchers participated in the daily activities of the research subjects to gain a deeper understanding of the situation and to capture aspects not always revealed in interviews, such as the interaction between pastoral staff and congregation members

and the consistency between words and actions. In-depth interviews were conducted openly but remained focused on the research focus, encompassing questions about the facts of the ecological program at the station, the informants' views on the importance of ecological awareness, their experiences implementing or participating in ecological pastoral programs, and the informants' understanding of ecological issues in their lives of faith. Documentation was conducted on pastoral work programs, records of environmental activities, and relevant Church documents, such as *Laudato Si'* and *Laudate Deum*.

Data validity was achieved through source triangulation, technical triangulation, and time triangulation, along with member checking and peer discussion, to ensure that the research findings were scientifically sound. The collected data were then analyzed through three interrelated stages: data reduction to simplify and organize field data, data presentation in the form of narrative descriptions and tables to show relationships between categories, and conclusion drawing, which was carried out in stages and continuously verified throughout the research process, following the interactive analysis model of Miles and Huberman.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Overview of the Research Context

St. Peter Ampari Bura Station is one of the stations under the auspices of St. Peter Hayaping Parish, Diocese of Palangka Raya, which was established in the early 1980s following the migration of a Catholic migrant to the area and his marriage to a local resident. Since then, several families who originally adhered to the Kaharingan Hindu faith have gradually converted to Catholicism, and now the station serves dozens of families from the Dayak Maanyan and Javanese ethnic backgrounds. The station area is located in the hills and valleys of the interior of eastern Central Kalimantan, flanked by the Barito River Basin system, which serves as a water source and traditional transportation route for residents. The area's biological richness remains high, with tropical forest vegetation and a diversity of fauna typical of Kalimantan, although pressure on its sustainability continues to increase due to mining activities and land use change.

The relatively isolated geographical conditions from the center of government contribute to a unique pattern of pastoral care, as pastoral staff from the parent parish are only able to attend regularly and on a limited basis. Nevertheless, the strong connection between the lives of the congregation and their natural surroundings makes ecological issues an integral part of their daily lives and provides a relevant context for developing a pastoral care-based approach to environmental stewardship.

2. Contextual Pastoral as a Bridge of Meaning

Research findings indicate that conveying messages about responsibility for environmental preservation becomes easier for the congregation to understand and internalize when using language, symbols, and expressions that are close to their daily life experiences. The parish priest who served as an informant explained that the role of pastoral workers is realized through teaching, accompaniment, and example, while the catechist emphasized that ecological catechesis based on *Laudato Si'* is a concrete manifestation of pastoral presence amidst environmental issues faced by the congregation. The delivery of ecological values through everyday farmer stories and simple metaphors proved more easily accepted than purely normative or doctrinal explanations.

An approach that draws on the real experiences of the congregation—the lives of farmers, the condition of polluted rivers, or the drying up of land—has proven effective in connecting universal faith teachings with concrete local realities. This approach opens up a more open dialogue between pastoral workers and the congregation, allowing them to collectively reflect on the meaning of faith in relation to the care of creation. A contextual approach also fosters a sense of ownership of the ecological values taught, as the congregation views the messages not as something new or separate from their lives, but as aligned with cultural values and perspectives that have been passed down through generations.

Furthermore, the success of a contextual pastoral approach is also greatly influenced by the relational closeness and credibility of the pastoral staff in the eyes of the congregation. A companion who is actively involved in the reality of the situation. daily life people especially regarding land, water and eye issues livelihood tend more trusted when conveying messages about ecological responsibility. This kind of relational closeness fosters mutual trust, which becomes the foundation for integrating ecological concerns into the broader understanding of the faith of the congregation.

3. Ecologically Inspired Liturgical and Catechetical Practices

In addition to the narrative approach, this study found that liturgical and catechesis practices that emphasize gratitude for creation contribute to fostering ecological awareness in the congregation in a more natural way. Several informants stated that their participation in celebrations that emphasize gratitude for the earth's bounty helped foster an awareness that nature is a gift from God that must be cared for, not simply a resource to be exploited without limit. Such experiences were felt to leave a deeper impression than simply listening to sermons or lectures about the importance of environmental protection.

Catechesis material that is directly linked to environmental issues faced by the congregation, such as river pollution and waste management, has proven more effective in raising ecological awareness than material presented in general terms without linking it to the actual conditions around the congregation. Catechists who served as informants stated that when faith teachings are contextualized with real-life issues experienced by the congregation, the response is more positive, even encouraging some congregations to take the initiative to develop independent environmental conservation activities as a continuation of the mentoring process.

Apart from through In formal liturgy and catechesis, the use of symbols related to nature in worship services also contributes to deepening the congregation's ecological awareness, for example, the use of agricultural products as part of liturgical decoration, the insertion of prayer intentions that express concern for environmental damage, and the selection of liturgical songs with the theme of gratitude for God's creation. children and generations young in activities catechesis insightful environment, such as management garden simple in the environment church and practice recycling repeat, participate forming a character of concern for nature from an early age as a provision for future generations.

4. Active Involvement of the Community through Real Action

Other findings indicate that people's ecological awareness develops more optimally when they directly participate in various environmental conservation activities, rather than just passively receiving teaching materials. Several informants shared stories of real changes

they experienced: a housewife who initially considered it normal to throw garbage into the river now began sorting organic and inorganic waste and encouraged her children to plant trees; a farmer who initially felt powerless to face environmental damage alone now initiated the construction of a living fence in his field to prevent landslides after realizing that ecological responsibility is a shared responsibility of the faith community; another housewife who reduced her use of agricultural chemicals found that her crop yields actually increased by switching to organic fertilizer.

The involvement of young people is also an important indicator in this finding. Several members of the Catholic Youth who previously paid little attention to environmental issues are now actively involved in clean-up and tree-planting activities after ecological themes were integrated into their youth activities, making ecological activities a meaningful forum for developing faith while strengthening brotherhood among the younger generation. Active participation in these various activities also fosters a sense of ownership in the pastoral programs being implemented, so that environmental preservation efforts are no longer seen as the sole responsibility of administrators or religious institutions, but rather a shared commitment of the entire congregation.

Several communities have even formed working groups specifically addressing environmental issues at the neighborhood and regional levels, tasked with developing, coordinating, and evaluating sustainable environmental conservation programs. The existence of such groups is seen as strategic because they can maintain the continuity of various ecological programs, so that nature conservation efforts are no longer incidental but become a permanent part of the pastoral agenda and are routinely implemented.

5. The Role of Pastoral Companions as Reflective Facilitators

One of the key findings of this study indicates that the success of a contextual pastoral approach is greatly influenced by the role of pastoral workers as facilitators who encourage a process of shared reflection, rather than simply conveying one-way teachings. Facilitators who successfully foster ecological awareness generally begin the mentoring process by listening to the congregation's experiences, needs, and concerns, then inviting them to reflect on these experiences in the light of their faith before jointly determining concrete steps that can be taken. This type of mentoring pattern creates a space for dialogue that allows the congregation to actively participate in understanding and internalizing the meaning of faith, unlike approaches that emphasize only the delivery of advice or instructions without involving the congregation in the reflection process.

The success of a pastoral program focused on environmental conservation is not solely determined by the quality of the activities undertaken, but rather by the consistency and sustainability of their implementation. Routine activities, even those of a modest scope, are considered more effective in shaping changes in the attitudes and habits of the congregation than large-scale programs implemented only once without follow-up. These findings emphasize that the process of developing ecological awareness requires ongoing support so that the instilled values can develop into part of the congregation's daily lives.

Several informants emphasized that facilitating the reflection process requires competencies that go beyond mere theological mastery, including the ability to listen attentively, patiently accompany communities through a gradual process of transformation, and respond sensitively to the socio-cultural conditions of each community. Because such competencies are not always sufficiently developed through formal theological education, ongoing capacity development is needed that equips pastoral workers with facilitative and dialogical skills, in addition to conventional teaching skills.

The reflective approach practiced by effective pastoral care is also seen as strengthening a sense of shared ownership among community members. Ecological initiatives become more meaningful when they emerge from shared reflection and deliberation, rather than being introduced as externally imposed directives. This kind of participatory process fosters stronger and more sustainable commitment, as people are generally more willing to maintain actions they themselves design and agree upon.

6. Structural and Contextual Challenges in Ecological Pastoralism

Despite these positive achievements, this research also identified several obstacles that weaken the effectiveness of ecological pastoral care in the field. The first obstacle relates to the gap between the ecological idealism desired by the faith and the economic pressures faced by the congregation on a daily basis. Most congregation members live as small farmers, struggling to meet their families' basic needs. Consequently, land burning and the excessive use of agricultural chemicals are still common, as they directly impact their livelihoods. Some congregation members also view environmental issues as solely the government's responsibility, making calls to change habits without concrete economic alternatives difficult to accept.

The second obstacle lies in the limited pastoral capacity to address complex and multidimensional ecological issues. Pastoral staff must serve multiple stations simultaneously, coupled with limited time and staff, present a real obstacle to consistently reaching all families. Developing an effective ecological pastoral care requires investment in capacity-building for pastoral staff, including adequate ecological theology training and the provision of contextual guidance materials.

The third obstacle relates to the lack of coordination and synergy between religious institutions and various stakeholders, such as village governments, environmental organizations, indigenous communities, and educational institutions. Environmental issues are cross-sectoral and cannot be resolved by a single party. Several informants even proposed the establishment of a station-level ecological forum involving churches, village governments, and the community in an integrated manner, to strengthen coordination and multiply the impact of various ecological pastoral efforts that have been initiated.

7. Towards a Sustainable Ecological Pastoral Model

Based on the overall findings, this study proposes a relevant and potentially further developed ecological pastoral model, namely the Inculturative-Participatory Ecological Pastoral Model. This model is integrative, combining four main, mutually supporting pillars, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Four Pillars of the Inculturative-Participatory Ecological Pastoral Model

Pillar	Main Focus	Form of Implementation
Theological	The development of local ecological theology is rooted in Laudato Si', biblical creation theology, and Dayak spiritual wisdom.	Consistent ecological homilies, contextual catechesis, ecological retreats that combine spiritual dimensions and nature experiences
Cultural	Recognition and active integration of local wisdom of Dayak Maanyan in all ecological pastoral dimensions	Involvement of traditional figures, adaptation of traditional rituals in inculturation liturgy, documentation of local ecological knowledge
Community	Empowerment of categorical groups of people as basic units of ecological movements	Ecology programs for youth groups, mothers' groups, fathers' groups, and prayer groups; coordination through the Ecology Pastoral Team
Concrete Action	Development of ecological programs that have real, measurable and sustainable impacts	Community ecological gardens, waste banks, forest and river protection advocacy, development of ecologically based alternative economies

These four pillars are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. A solid theological foundation provides profound motivation and clear direction for all pastoral efforts; respect for culture ensures relevance and acceptance at the local level; community empowerment creates capacity and program sustainability; and concrete actions deliver tangible results directly felt by the congregation. Only when these four pillars are present and functioning simultaneously can ecological pastoralism become a truly transformative force for the life of the community.

The implications of this model emphasize the importance of placing ecological pastoral care as a strategic priority, not merely a supplementary program, accompanied by strengthening the theological-ecological capacity of pastoral staff, developing a more inclusive approach to local wisdom, and building a network of cross-institutional partnerships. Thus, the growing ecological spirituality is not simply imported from abroad, but rather arises from the community's real struggles in experiencing their relationship with creation in light of faith.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that a contextual pastoral approach significantly contributes to building and strengthening the congregation's ecological awareness. This awareness-building process is more optimal when faith teachings are communicated through language, symbols, and local wisdom values relevant to the congregation's daily lives. Its effectiveness is further enhanced when this approach is supported by liturgical practices and catechesis that foster gratitude for creation and actively involve the congregation in various environmental conservation activities. Furthermore, this study confirms that pastoral staff, acting as reflective facilitators, prioritizing listening and dialogue before providing direction, play a crucial role in successfully internalizing ecological values among the congregation.

However, the implementation of ecological pastoral care still faces a number of challenges, particularly the gap between ecological idealism and the economic pressures faced by the congregation, limited pastoral capacity, and minimal coordination across institutions. These conditions emphasize that the process of ecological conversion, as called for in Laudato Si', is a gradual process that requires patience, consistency, and adequate structural support.

Ecological Pastoral Model Inculturative The participatory approach proposed in this study combines theological, cultural, community and action pillars. Concrete can serve as a reference for designing a more focused ecological pastoral system. With this approach, ecological awareness no longer stops at the level of conceptual understanding or discourse, but can develop into a life attitude reflected in the people's everyday behavior.

Therefore, it is recommended that future research involve a more diverse group of participants and expand the scope of research locations to gain a more comprehensive understanding. Furthermore, the use of more varied data collection methods could enrich future research results, including a more in-depth study of effective institutional strategies for supporting the sustainability of ecologically based pastoral programs, particularly in communities facing resource constraints.

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