

Morning Meditation in the Workshop on THE ROLE OF CHURCHES IN ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE

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The Climate change is mainly caused by the human being who is not committed to the protection of the environment. Men are the first to destroy and disturb the wellbeing of the whole creation; he is the first promoter of Tsunami and water and air's pollution. He throws away toxic waste everywhere and causes trouble to the whole creation. He forgets the God's command on the protection of the creation. God, in Genesis 2, 15, took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.

In Rwanda, our ancestors had a good way of protecting the creation. For example to protect the little insect, enable to hide or to defend themselves, they use to told to children that if they kill those vulnerable insects, their Mums will definitely be pregnant and give birth to those insects. So it was forbidden to kill either to mock because they were afraid for the consequences to Mums 'procreation.

I remember also the slogan from my childhood well known by all Rwandese saying that ' if you cut one tree, please plant two'. My fellow Rwandans are aware that it is their duties to protect the creation of God if not they will have serious problems. They know well that animals or trees once annoyed can take revenge to human beings and cause several troubles to their lives. So it is our duties to take care of the whole creation as a command from Almighty God.

In the Jews tradition, they are some animals forbidden to eat. Some theologian interpretations say that one of the reasons of that was mainly the protection of their animals. According to Leviticus 11, they may not eat those who do not chew and do not have cloven hooves; so it was unclean to eat camel, rock hyrax, hare, swine...The Lord said: 'their flesh you shall not eat and their carcasses you shall not touch. They are unclean to you'. It was also abominable to eat all in the seas or rivers that do not have fins and scales. It was abominable to eat some birds like eagle, vulture, buzzard, heron....It was unclean to eat all flying insects....The protection of the environment was a sensitive issue in the culture of Israelites ancestors.

However, this does not mean that all Rwandans, Africans and peoples living in this world are sensitive to the protection of creation. Many are deliberately destroying trees, killing animals for selling them as product, emptying a big number of national parks and drying rivers for their own fantasy or interest. They have to be aware that the whole creation is sufferings like men suffer and is waiting to be delivered as Paul said in Romans 8,18-23: '*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.*'

For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together and until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body'.

Regarding the suffering of the creation, this experience made by Chinese could speak to us louder; two plots of rice land with the same ingredients of fertilizer but in one plot they put music and every day the rice was enjoying a quiet sound of songs. The second without music produced less harvest than the first that enjoy music. This experience has helped many farmers. If you wish to have more milk from your cows, let them enjoy music and you will see how much the milk would tremendously increase. So animals and plants are very sensitive, they can enjoy, suffer, feel injustice and sometimes can take revenge. Please remember that it is our responsibility to protect and care God's creation and be promoters of good stewardship in our churches, regions and countries. As Christians we might advocate for the whole creation. Let commit ourselves to protect our environment by acting for climate change and stopping global warming in collaboration with our respective Governments.

Let Conclude this morning meditation with the exhortation of the Patriarch of Antioch: ' My brothers, I call you to love the whole creation in its wholeness and in its every elements, love everything of the creation and take care of trees, animals, plants,.. When you cherish everything of the creation you will understand the divine mystery in every element of it. Once understood this mystery, your understanding will go deeper every day and you will love the whole world with universal love' (Ignace IV , Patriarche D'Antioche, sauver la creation, Paris 1989, p44).

May the Lord bless you all.

Amen.