Eco-Solidarity: Ecclesiology *en Conjunto* in the Anthropocene Epoch

Andrew R. H. Thompson*

Since 2000, when it was proposed by the Nobel-prize winning chemist Paul Crutzen, the notion of the Anthropocene epoch has seemed to many to be an apt description of the startling ecological context in which we live. The concept of the Anthropocene suggests that since the end of the eighteenth century our world has entered a new age in which human agency, rather than geological power, is the defining force behind global change.

For some, the Anthropocene straightforwardly describes a moral crisis: that humankind has become the defining ecological force is wrong in itself. For others, myself included, while the fact of the Anthropocene is certainly troubling, it is more appropriately seen as a question or challenge: How does it change our morality? How ought we act in this new context, under these unprecedented conditions? And what does it mean to be the church under such conditions? How does the recognition of humanity's ubiquitous impact and widespread agency affect what it means to be Christ's body in the world?

One of the key moral challenges of this new epoch is scale. In what Stephen Gardiner describes as a "perfect moral storm," climate change, the paradigmatic issue of the Anthropocene, scatters agency and impact, cause and effect, across continents and generations.[1] The global scale of climate change and its intergenerational character confound our moral sensibilities and highlight our limitations: if we are bad at addressing the needs of our neighbors, we are far worse at addressing those of unseen millions, and virtually incapable even of adequately

* Andrew R. H. Thompson is Assistant Professor of Theological Ethics at the School of Theology at the University of the South (Sewanee). He also directs the Alternative Clergy Training (ACTS) program and the Sewanee Ministry Collaborative. He served as an Episcopal missionary in El Salvador in 2007–2008, and has worked with other Latino/Hispanic ministries since then. His research and teaching focus on environmental ethics and ecotheology.

[1] Stephen M. Gardiner, "A Perfect Moral Storm: Climate Change, Intergenerational Ethics, and the Problem of Moral Corruption," in *Climate Ethics: Essential Readings*, ed. Stephen M. Gardiner and others (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 87–98.

conceiving the needs of future generations of neighbors. Or, seen another (more damning) way, if we are often quick to ignore the effects of our actions and inactions, we are even more likely to do so when they are spatially and temporally dispersed. What is true of climate change is true of the Anthropocene epoch more broadly: when human agency becomes the pervasive and defining driver of ecological change, our ability to think clearly about, and—more importantly—take responsibility for the effects of our actions is seriously undermined.

In this context, what is needed most is the ability to perceive more clearly the ecological effects of our actions on others around the world, to share somehow in the environmental burdens for which we bear responsibility. In short, what is needed is some form of ecological solidarity.

Appeals by environmental theologians and philosophers to a sense of shared fate and common purpose—whether identified as solidarity or not—are commonplace. I note just two influential examples, both from Latin American writers. In *Laudato Si*, his 2015 encyclical on the environment, Pope Francis writes, "In the present condition of global society, where injustices abound and growing numbers of people are deprived of basic human rights and considered expendable, the principle of the common good immediately becomes, logically and inevitably, a summons to solidarity and a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters."[2] He also urges intergenerational solidarity, and laments the present inability to give moral consideration to "the poor of the future [and] today's poor." Along similar lines, liberation theologian Leonardo Boff urges, "We all must seek a paradigm that will enable Gaia to live and all beings in creation, especially human beings, to exist in solidarity."[3] Some ecologists, too, have tried to specify and quantify a notion of ecological solidarity.[4]

In what follows I will further develop this notion of ecological solidarity (henceforth eco-solidarity) as a feature of ecclesiology in the Anthropocene in conversation with the insights of Latinx theology. I begin by describing some basic characteristics of eco-solidarity as I

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[2] Pope Francis, *Praise Be to You—Laudato Si'*, new edition (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2015), para. 158.

[3] Leonardo Boff, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor* (Maryknoll NY: Orbis Books, 1997), 113.

[4] John D. Thompson and others, "Ecological Solidarity as a Conceptual Tool for Rethinking Ecological and Social Interdependence in Conservation Policy for Protected Areas and Their Surrounding Landscape," *Biodiversity in Face of Human Activities/La Biodiversite Face Aux Activites Humaines* 334, no. 5 (May 1, 2011): 412–19, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.crvi.2011.02.001.

am using it here. I then turn to my reasons for believing Latinx theology may be an especially apposite resource for thinking about eco-solidarity, and to corresponding themes from Latinx theology that help flesh out the basic idea of eco-solidarity I have described. I will next consider Altagracia Pérez-Bullard's notion of practical theology and Willis Jenkins's prophetic pragmatism to show why eco-solidarity is appropriate as an ecclesiological mandate. I will conclude with some examples that I believe illustrate eco-solidarity.

I have two main purposes in making this argument. The first is to suggest a particular avenue for further engagement between Latinx theology and environmental theology. In 2014, Nestor Medina noted that "to my knowledge no US Latina/o has attempted to address systematically some of the theological implications of the present environmental crisis we are experiencing."[5] Since he wrote that, of course, more consideration has been given to ecological issues from the perspective of Latinx theology, and I will cite some examples in what follows. However, as far as I can tell, the confluence of these two streams of theology remains underexplored. Thus the present essay first of all represents an attempt to "ecotheologize *Latinamente*"—or, better, to ecotheologize *con Latinos/as*.

My second purpose in this essay is pedagogical. As a seminary professor writing an essay first presented at a seminary conference, my interest is in how we can teach a concept of eco-solidarity in a way that may shape future ministers. Thus the main example in my conclusion will be from a seminary course. In bringing together Latinx theology with environmental ethics, my proposal represents an attempt to reflect on how we might teach Latinx theology in other parts of the curriculum besides a dedicated Latinx theology course.

With these purposes in mind, I begin by offering an initial clarification as to what I mean by eco-solidarity. What I have in mind with eco-solidarity is a lived relationship of shared suffering and shared purpose with other human beings considered as ecological beings. This is broadly in keeping with the description of solidarity by Roman Catholic ethicist Meghan J. Clark as characterized by "mutuality, reciprocity, equality, vulnerability, and participation."[6] I want to note a few specific features of my definition. First, similar to Francis and Boff, my use of eco-solidarity is at least weakly anthropocentric:

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[5] Nestor Medina, *Mestizaje: Remapping Race, Culture, and Faith in Latina/o Catholicism* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009).

[6] Nichole Flores, "'Our Sister, Mother Earth': Solidarity and Familial Ecology in Laudato Si'," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 46, no. 3 (September 2018): 463–78.

it begins with solidarity with other human beings, rather than other species, all life, or the earth itself. This is not to deny claims of ecological community or compassion for other species. But to extend the meaning of solidarity to other species or to "the earth" itself seems to stretch that term beyond practical definition; that is, the particular implications of solidarity I will describe are difficult to apply to non-human species.[7] Thus the priority given to humans is only a practical concession—it in no way entails any inherent priority of value.

Extending solidarity equally to more-than-human species also seems to me unnecessary, because my understanding of eco-solidarity considers human beings as ecological beings; this is why I use the term *eco-solidarity* rather than simply solidarity. Human beings are fundamentally and inescapably part of ecological communities; being in relationship with other persons means being in relationship with those communities, and being aware of the connections within and among those communities that mediate our relationships with one another. Suffering with others means suffering with the environment we share with them. Because we affect one another through these ecological networks, our relationships with others are ecological relationships.

Ethicist Willis Jenkins helps clarify what eco-solidarity means in this respect. Jenkins, who frames Christian ethics as a project of solidarity with those who suffer, suggests that attention to environmental justice can lead to new moral anthropologies. Recognizing the profundity of human beings' ecological dependence—that we are fundamentally ecological beings—entails that justice be understood to include the fullness of this ecological personhood.[8] In other words, he argues, we need not try to extend considerations of justice to other species, "as if honorary human individuals"; rather, "justice incorporates the social and ecological memberships that sustain a person." I suggest that the same can be said of solidarity: because we are ecological beings, in the Anthropocene epoch, all solidarity must

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[7] Daniel Scheid gives the fullest articulation of "earth solidarity" specifically. While he argues against "ethical anthropocentrism," what he has in mind is what is often called "strong" anthropocentrism. His argument prioritizes humanity in ways similar to mine, and cautions against a misanthropic naturalism (my phrase) that would concede no uniqueness to humankind. Daniel P. Scheid, *The Cosmic Common Good: Religious Grounds for Ecological Ethics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 91–100.

[8] Willis Jenkins, *The Future of Ethics: Sustainability, Social Justice, and Religious Creativity* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013), 221.

be eco-solidarity. Paradoxically, Jenkins suggests, the most effective way of securing humans' ecological personhood may be extending the metaphor of personhood to earth, as Gaia or "Pachamama," insisting that earth and its species have their own integrity and value beyond any relation to human beings. That is, although it focuses moral categories like justice and solidarity on the needs of humans as ecological persons, an anthropocentric approach may nevertheless strengthen those claims of ecological personhood by occasionally poetically describing the earth and its systems with images of personhood. Thus my anthropocentric eco-solidarity can nonetheless echo Pope Francis's concern for "our sister earth" as part of the human family.[9]

Finally, and relatedly, eco-solidarity is a lived relationship. It is not simply a feeling of compassion or companionship; it is enacted and practiced. It is particularly in this aspect of eco-solidarity that I believe insights from Latinx theology are most helpful, and it is to these insights that I will turn in a moment. Before I do so, however, I want to offer three reasons why I think Latinx theology is particularly appropriate to this context.

To begin with, solidarity as a theological conception has been most fully developed and emphasized by Latin American liberation theology. Boff's application of solidarity to the earth has already been noted, but virtually all liberation theologians attend to this theme. It is not surprising, then, that Latinx theology has taken up this theme to varying degrees. Ada María Isasi-Díaz is one scholar who has developed the theme of solidarity explicitly;[10] but even where the term is not used, the related themes of community and relationality have been prominent in Latinx theology. With respect to eco-solidarity in particular, Nichole Flores traces the theme of solidarity in *Laudato Si* and considers its connection to Latinx familial bonds.[11] Nancy Pineda-Madrid argues for an anthropology of *criaturas de dios* that expresses solidarity through a play on the colloquial use of the word *criaturas* to refer to children as well as animals.[12] The prominence of

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[9] Francis, *Praise Be to You—Laudato Si'*, para. 53.

[10] Ada María Isasi-Díaz, *Mujerista Theology: A Theology for the Twenty-First Century* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), 86–104; Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz, *En La Lucha/In the Struggle: Elaborating a Mujerista Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 41–43.

[11] Flores, "Our Sister, Mother Earth," 10.

[12] Nancy Pineda-Madrid, "¡Somos Criaturas de Dios!—Seeing and Beholding the Garden of God," in *Planetary Solidarity: Global Women's Voices on Christian Doc-*

solidarity and related themes in Latinx theology makes it an obvious resource for thinking about ecological solidarity.

There is, though, a second, more urgent reason to turn to Latinx theology here: this theology is concerned throughout with lived experience, especially the lived experience of those who suffer. And while the most dramatic devastation of climate change and the other crises of the Anthropocene will be beyond the borders of the United States, within the US many Latinx communities will be among the most vulnerable, along with other communities of color and marginalized communities. The devastation of Puerto Rico by Hurricanes Irma and Maria, and government's subsequent failure, even today, to respond adequately to it, are only the most prominent recent example of disproportionate—indeed unjust—suffering of Latinx communities from climate change. On a more mundane level, construction and agricultural workers and laborers are likely to suffer directly from higher temperatures and changed rainfall patterns, and impoverished families will be hardest hit by food scarcity, to name just two examples that will disproportionately affect Latinx communities. Puerto Rico aside, three of the states with the highest Latinx populations—California, Texas, and Florida—are among the parts of the US that are already feeling the brunt of climate change most forcefully through droughts, flooding, and extreme heat. Beyond climate change, as the landmark United Church of Christ report on environmental racism showed in 1987 and again in 2007, communities of color are disproportionately affected by environmental harms generally, even after controlling for the effects of poverty.[13]

The final reason for turning to Latinx theology is the fruitful concept of borderlands, articulated influentially by Gloria Anzaldúa and addressed by subsequent Latinx thinkers.[14] I suggest that the Anthropocene epoch is best characterized as precisely the kind of borderland that Anzaldúa describes: a "vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary . . . in a constant state

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trine and Climate Justice, ed. Grace Ji-Sun Kim and Hilda P. Koster (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2017), 311–24.

[13] United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice, *Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States* (United Church of Christ, 1987); United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries and others, *Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty: 1987–2007* (Cleveland: United Church of Christ, 2007).

[14] Gloria Anzaldúa, Norma Cantú, and Aída Hurtado, *Borderlands /La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, 4th ed. (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 2012); Medina, *Mestizaje*.

of transition." More than anything else, the Anthropocene is a period in which the most unnatural boundary of all, that between humans and nature, is challenged and renegotiated. It is an encounter of human beings with the more-than-human world, in which our understanding not only of that world, but of ourselves as something other than that world, is thrown into confusion. A theology that arises from borderland encounters is therefore most apt.

If I have shown that Latinx theology is appropriate to the question of ecclesiology in the Anthropocene, it remains to consider the insights this theology suggests for my concept of eco-solidarity. I have already suggested some characteristics of the concept, at least in my use of it. I now turn to three particular themes in Latinx theology to further specify eco-solidarity. These three themes roughly correspond to the three reasons given above for the turn to Latinx theology; in a sense, they represent the more practical implications of the emphases on solidarity, concrete experience, and borderlands. Solidarity correlates to the notion of theology *en conjunto*; experience to an emphasis on *lo cotidiano*; and borderlands to *mestizaje*. Each of these themes has significance for eco-solidarity.

The aforementioned focus on solidarity in Latin American liberation theology is reflected in Latinx theology as *teología en conjunto*, which Rubén Rosario-Rodriguez describes as "an inclusive, discursive method of doing theology . . . a theology that truly belongs to, and is validated by, the faith community."[15] In practice, this notion entails theological reflection done in ecumenical, interdisciplinary dialogue with diverse, concrete communities.[16] In the context of environmental theology, this method is absolutely appropriate, inviting reflection not only from theologians and ecologists, but from diverse perspectives within those fields: practitioners and theorists, teachers and students, various denominations and subfields, and a broad range of classes and ethnicities. As the discussion of the Anthropocene above made clear, this new epoch forces us to think past these distinctions, since environmental crises are no respecters of such boundaries.

Related to this turn to diverse perspectives is the notion of *lo cotidiano*, a turn to the lived, daily experience of communities, particularly

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[15] Rubén Rosario-Rodriguez, "Sources and En Conjunto Methodologies of Latino/a Theologizing," in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Latino/a Theology*, ed. Orlando O. Espín (Malden, MA: Wiley, 2015), 56.

[16] María Teresa Dávila, "Latino/a Ethics," in Espín, *Wiley Blackwell Companion to Latino/a Theology*, 250.

of those who are marginalized and suffering. M.T. Dávila situates this focus in "direct action and living with . . . marginalized communities . . . , common worship, advocacy, and educational projects."[17] The emphasis, according to Carmen Nanko-Fernández, is on "nuestros barrios y nuestras casas, en comunidades y familias, in the particular and the local, from the underside, peripheries, and grassroots."[18] In the context of eco-solidarity, this commitment to *lo cotidiano* suggests a turn from grand ecological crises and large-scale policy solutions to the Anthropocene as lived reality: to flooded homes and lost livelihoods, food scarcity and unsafe work environments. And it suggests a commitment to shared struggle against these realities.

Finally, above I described the Anthropocene as a borderland: a place of encounter and transition where the boundaries among human beings and between humans and their world are shown to be illusory constructions. Related to this icon of borderlands is the notion of *mestizaje* central to much Latinx theology. A theology born out of the experience of hybridity and pluralism surely has a great deal to contribute to thinking theologically about an age in which humans are forced to see themselves as ecological beings, constituted by relationships with the more-than-human world. We are, we finally realize, *una mezcla* of human and nonhuman, we are individuals in communities, and we are, indeed, communities ourselves. Theologies that resist dualisms, standing defiantly in the "spaces between the different worlds," in Anzaldúa's words, are the theologies we need in the Anthropocene.[19]

This usefulness notwithstanding, critics have pointed out that *mestizaje* emerges out of a violent, colonialist history, and therefore that naive mobilization of the idea as a stand-in for something like bland inclusiveness—especially by white scholars like myself—perpetuates the *exclusion* of indigenous groups and persons of African descent.[20] Thus Jorge Aquino suggests that discussions of *mestizaje* be directed specifically toward a critique of capitalism that challenges facile ideas of inclusiveness and instead takes aim at capitalism's construction of race and class.[21] So reconstructed, this critical conception of *mestizaje* becomes even more urgent to the discussion of the

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[17] Dávila, "Latino/a Ethics," 254.

[18] Carmen Nanko-Fernandez, "Lo Cotidiano as Locus Theologicus," in Espín, *Wiley Blackwell Companion to Latino/a Theology*, 16.

[19] Cited in Medina, *Mestizaje*, 73.

[20] Medina, *Mestizaje*; Jorge A. Aquino, "Mestizaje," in Espín, *Wiley Blackwell Companion to Latino/a Theology*, 283–311.

[21] Aquino, "Mestizaje," 305.

Anthropocene. In the present context, this conception requires that eco-solidarity involve a clear and conscientious critique of and struggle against the systems of economic and social power that create and perpetuate ecologically mediated ideologies of class and race.

I hasten to note here that my intention is in no way to co-opt the notion of *mestizaje*—nor, for that matter, *en conjunto* or *lo cotidiano*—in order to apply it universally (and therefore meaninglessly) to all human beings; rather I believe specifically Latinx experiences and expressions of *mestizaje*, as well as the other themes, can be uniquely instructive in navigating the ecological borderlands in which we find ourselves. Taken together, *teología en conjunto*, *lo cotidiano*, and *mestizaje* suggest that eco-solidarity entails interdisciplinary, boundary-crossing practices that engage in a shared work and purpose with the lived daily reality of those who suffer from environmental harms. Moreover, in accord with the reconstructed notion of *mestizaje* just noted, this eco-solidarity must go beyond sentimental inclusivity to question and critique the social, political, and economic constructions that perpetuate dualisms and divisions. I now wish to justify my claim that eco-solidarity is an appropriate ecclesiological mandate for the Anthropocene.

Altagracia Pérez-Bullard compellingly describes practical theology as attending to "God's action in the world through the body of Christ that is the church, the people of God."[22] She argues that the lives and actions of communities and community organizations can be a source of epistemological insights for the theology and ministry of the church. Understanding and collaborating with God's action in the world requires interpreting the transforming work of communities in light of salvation history, and drawing on biblical stories and images to support and sustain that work, as the *comunidades de base* did in an earlier time.[23] Practices of eco-solidarity can be part of this repertoire of praxis and interpretation.

Applying a similar line of practical reasoning to the current ecological crisis, Willis Jenkins has argued that this new epoch requires moral and theological adaptability; it requires creative theological thinking that arises from concrete engagement with seemingly insoluble problems.[24] "Where reform projects meet new problems in

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[22] Altagracia Pérez, "Latina/o Practical Theology: Reflections on Faith-Based Organizing as a Religious Practice," in Espín, *Wiley Blackwell Companion to Latino/a Theology*, 440.

[23] Pérez, "Latina/o Practical Theology," 445.

[24] Jenkins, *The Future of Ethics*, 83.

ways that sustain or open possibilities of faithful response to God, they present the object of a Christian social ethic: a venture of response that interprets the events of the world in terms of how God is acting through them." Jenkins's method here, which he calls "prophetic pragmatism," represents a theological version of environmental pragmatism, an approach to ecological ethics that eschews moral abstractions and begins from the concrete actions of communities. Yet Jenkins points out that environmental pragmatism risks reinscribing the assumptions and prejudices of its dominant context unless it deliberately incorporates countercultural religious imaginations—like those of Latinx theology. Eco-solidarity informed by Latinx theology can arise from the lived experiences of diverse communities (the pragmatist approach) while challenging the presuppositions of dominant discourses in a way traditional pragmatism is often unable to do.[25]

This, I believe, supports my claim that ecclesiology in the Anthropocene epoch requires eco-solidarity: being the body of Christ in an age of planetary disruptions requires theologizing from concrete practices that enact and cultivate embodied solidarity with others around the world, especially those whose voices and suffering often go unheeded.[26] The Anthropocene forces upon us the recognition of our shared planetary fate by painfully reminding us of the costs of our illusory divisions and supposed independence; eco-solidarity allows the church to re-present a single ecological body that shares pain across such divides.

In the remainder of this essay, I will offer examples that I think illustrate practices of eco-solidarity. The first is a travel seminar course that brought together seminarians from the United States and Cuba to consider theology and sustainability in the two countries. The central text for the course was *Laudato Si*. Both groups read it in their respective languages, and thorough discussions on its themes (conducted in both languages and facilitated by two bilingual instructors) were complemented by visits to a variety of agricultural community development projects in Cuba. Focusing discussion around *Laudato Si*—which is, of course, deeply theological as well as broadly accessible—brought out a number of interesting contrasts and similarities in the students' perspectives and those of their respective cultures.

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[25] Cf. Pérez, "Latina/o Practical Theology"; Benjamin Valentin, *Mapping Public Theology: Beyond Culture, Identity, and Difference* (Harrisburg, PA: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2002).

[26] Jenkins, *The Future of Ethics*, 312.

Students from the US were naturally very responsive to Francis's criticisms of capitalism and consumerism; at the same time, shifting trends in Cuba's political economy and relationship with the US had heightened the Cuban students' wariness of capitalism as well. Much has been made of Cuba's sustainable agricultural practices, which were a focus of this course. Yet the Cuban students were quick to point out that the spiritual disconnect that Francis points to as underlying the syndrome of environmental crises in our age was equally present there as in the US. Meanwhile, the site visits in Cuba provided an opportunity to celebrate and reflect on the creativity of churches and communities there, engaging in the kind of practical theology Pérez-Bullard and Jenkins describe.

Other potential practices might be more sacramental. In the aftermath of Hurricanes Irma and Maria, 152 days after the Episcopal diocesan offices lost power, contractors from the mainland came to restore electricity on Ash Wednesday. They then waited until the conclusion of the Ash Wednesday observance and asked the bishop to impose ashes on them. The aptness of this symbol of shared human sinfulness and finitude in the face of ecological disaster is profound. Practices of eco-solidarity might follow a similar model to this ad hoc rite. They might draw on the ecological resonances of sacraments and other rites to express what it means to be the body of Christ across barriers in an ecologically broken world.

Along these lines, ethicist Sarah E. Fredericks has argued for a sacrament or ritual of confession of climate guilt.[27] The theological language of sin is uniquely suited to the Anthropocene, wherein agency is universally shared and unavoidable, yet culpable and demanding of response. In the context of climate injustice, where many of those least responsible face the most severe impacts, a ritual enactment of confession and reconciliation may be a concrete way of enacting planetary eco-solidarity.

These practices reflect some of the aspects of eco-solidarity I have described more clearly than others. The Cuba travel seminar most directly engaged the daily reality of Cubans, and also most directly addressed the divisive political-economic structures of capitalism as suggested by Aquino above. At the same time, by their nature sacraments are meant symbolically to engage lived daily reality, and

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[27] Sarah Fredericks, "Climate Shame, Restorative Justice, Religious Ritual" (conference paper delivered at American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Atlanta, November 21, 2015).

even, on some accounts, to represent a direct challenge to capitalism and a liberal political ideology.[28] These practices must, of course, be accompanied by concrete steps toward more environmentally sustainable behaviors; indeed, my hope is precisely that these practices may cultivate the necessary environmental virtues to support such steps.

Neither these examples nor my description of eco-solidarity as a whole should be taken to suggest that it is a mandate for an imagined white church toward Latinx communities or others, like some misguided conception of outreach; rather, it is an attitude of the whole church, comprising various ethnicities, identities, and countries, toward one another, and outward toward the world, both human and more-than-human. In the Puerto Rico example, the relevant agents were the Puerto Rican diocese, expressing solidarity in the midst of their challenges. As the example of the confession of climate guilt suggests, it will be necessary at times to be clear about varying degrees of responsibility and suffering, about who is a victim and who a victimizer. But it will not simply be the case that Latinx communities and other minorities are always purely victim and white communities purely victimizer. In any case, the goal is shared work toward a shared purpose, a "cosmic common good."[29]

As a final note, last year's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report described the likely effects of a 1.5 degree increase in average global temperature versus a 2 degree increase, and the rapidly diminishing likelihood of meeting that lower threshold. In light of this, it is clear that responding to climate change and ecological crises is an urgent problem for the church. What is often missed, however, is that the effects of climate change are already being felt by the most vulnerable. The question of how we *will* respond to climate change is already being answered by how we *are* (or are not) responding to it: whether we are feeding hungry farmers, providing shelter for climate refugees, and helping hurricane victims rebuild. It is my belief that advocacy and action toward mitigating climate change by reducing emissions will arise naturally from such direct involvement with those most affected. In this respect, the findings of IPCC report demonstrate that practices of eco-solidarity like those I have described are even more urgent for the church in the Anthropocene.

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[28] William T. Cavanaugh, *Theopolitical Imagination: Christian Practices of Space and Time* (New York: T&T Clark, 2003).

[29] Scheid, *The Cosmic Common Good*.