
Netherlands: “Green parishes”, study by Radboud University, political commitment and attention in liturgy among best practices.

“Green parishes in the Netherlands” - this is the theme of a research project, coordinated by the University of Radboud, which has mapped Catholic parishes based on their sustainability. According to a statement from the University, about 20% of the 600 parishes took part in the survey. The results show that “a significant number of Dutch Catholic parishes are developing sustainable initiatives”, which is a positive action even because “many parishes are ageing and quickly shrinking in numbers”, said theologian Elisabeth Hense, who contributed to the research. “Over one third of the parishes pay attention to sustainability issues not only on the political level”, but also with specific initiatives ranging from the installation of solar panels to parish vegetable gardens, to planting trees in cemeteries or in parish green areas to protect insects, to a conscious selection and use of materials, energy and water, for financial management and the choice of food. Almost 30% of the parishes pay attention to sustainability in the liturgy. According to Hense, “sustainability can also give new impetus to a parish, by connecting it to the neighbourhood and making it more visible”. The report was submitted to Bishop Gerard de Korte who chairs the ad-hoc working group on Laudato Si'. Now researchers will map the sustainability of Protestant communities.

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