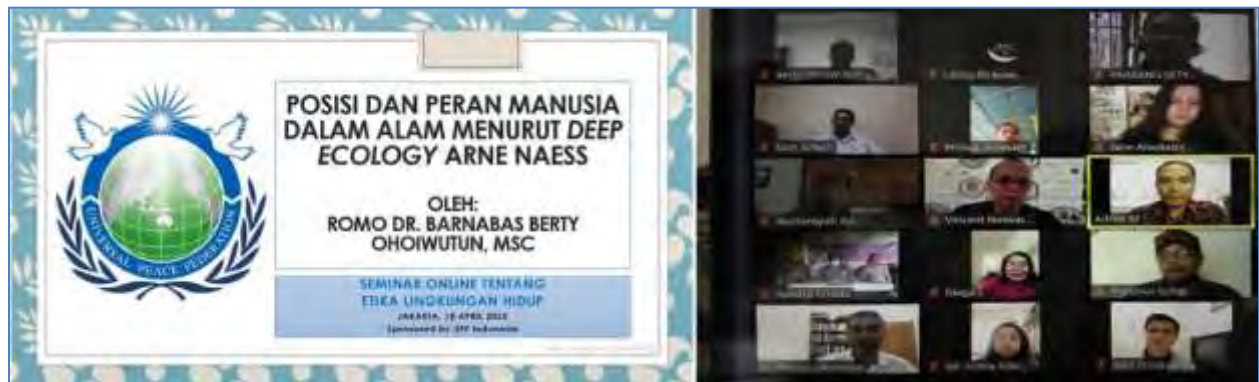


UPF Jakarta, Indonesia Holds Its First Online Seminar on Environmental Ethics

Alfred Forno
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Jakarta, Indonesia -- On the morning of Saturday, April 18, 2020, during the quarantine period against the spread of the COVID-19 virus, UPF-Indonesia held its first online seminar on environmental ethics discussing Norwegian philosopher and environmentalist Arne Naess's view of "Deep Ecology and the Role of Human in the Entire Universe." The seminar was led by Rev. Dr. Barnabas Berty Ohoiwutun, a Catholic priest from the Missionaries of Sacred Heart order who recently defended his dissertation on the same topic at the Driyarkara School of Philosophy in Jakarta.

The seminar, which was moderated by Mr. Petrus Lakonawa, a lecturer at BINUS University in Jakarta, and an Ambassador for Peace, brought together around 95 participants from all over the country, including from West Papua, Mollucas, North Celebes and North Sumatra provinces as well as from different cities of Java. The participants hailed from various backgrounds and comprised university professors and lecturers, high school teachers, university students, NGO representatives, journalists, artists and UPF members.



Rev. Ohoiwutun, who is a philosophy professor at Pineleng Major Seminary and the author of the newly published book, "The Position and Role of Humankind in the Universe According to Arne Naess: Responses to the Critiques of Al Gore" (2020), drew inspiring ethical imperatives from Arne Naess' discourse on deep ecology. He advocated a paradigm shift from the long standing anthropocentrism to the liberating ecocentric paradigm by inviting the participants to look at the intrinsic values of the environment, not only on its instrumental values for human self-interests. He also asked them to respect the integrity of all creatures by sustaining and preserving the rights of all creatures for their existence, living, growing and self-actualization. "All creatures have the rights and goals for self-realization, and it is the responsibility of us human beings who are equipped with higher faculties, rational capabilities and the freedom to take care of others and to preserve the wellness and integrity of creation," stressed Rev. Ohoiwutun as he summed up his presentation.

The seminar was enriched by ecological-themed songs performed by the Bitung Family Center Group, which is part of the UPF-Indonesia chapter of North Celebes province, and concluded with a report about past environmental projects of UPF-Indonesia and future ones the national chapter is planning, which was presented by Mr. Alfred Forno, secretary general of UPF-Indonesia.

The webinar ended with closing remarks by Prof. Dr. Payaman Simajuntak, vice president of UPF-Indonesia, who encouraged all the participants to continue raising awareness of and being responsible for the environment and carry out more concrete actions so as to respond to Arne Naess' call to make deep ecology a social movement that can address the serious ecological crisis the world currently faces.