RECEIVING GOD's GIFT OF CREATION

Insights from Ss. Ephrem, Basil, and John Chrysostom Culminating in Patriarch Bartholomew and Informed by Contemporary Science

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Symposium on Ecology and Creation, Pappas Patristic Institute
Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology
5 October 2017

Key ideas grounding the giftedness of the natural world

- *Sacramental Quality* – St. Ephrem the Syrian
- *Beauty* – St. Basil of Caesarea
- *Goodness* – St. John Chrysostom
- *Loving Gift* – Patriarch Bartholomew

Receiving God's gift with gratitude – a way of loving

- Valuing
- Appreciating
- Venerating
- Cooperating
- Self-Restraint

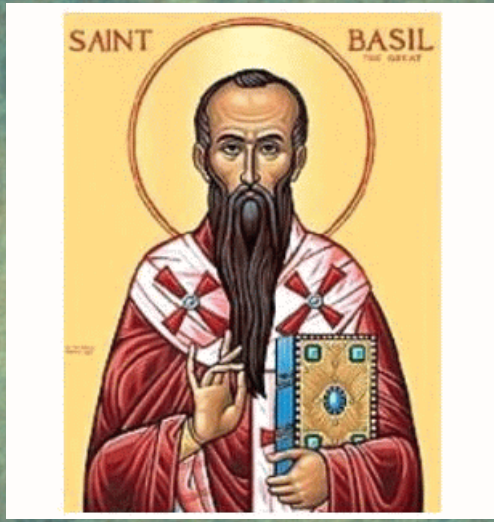
An inclusive gratitude

Key Ideas Grounding the Giftedness of God's Creation

The Sacramental Quality of God's Creation

St. Ephrem the Syrian (ca. 306-373)

The Beauty of Creation



St Basil of Caesarea (ca. 330 -379)

The Goodness of Creation

St. John Chrysostom (347-407)

God's Loving Gift

Patriarch Bartholomew

Comparative World Views

Importance of Scientifically-Informed Theological Discourse

Language – Creation vs. “Nature”

God's Loving Gift

Patriarch Bartholomew

Symposia

Aegean Sea 1995
Black Sea 1997
Danube River 1999
Adriatic Sea 2002
Baltic Sea 2003
Amazon River 2006
Arctic Ocean 2007
Mississippi River 2009
Nile River 2009

Public Prominence 1997

"To commit a crime against the natural world is a sin."

For humans to cause species to become extinct and to destroy the biological diversity of God's creation, for humans to degrade the integrity of the Earth by causing changes in its climate, stripping the Earth of its natural forests or destroying its wetlands, … for humans to contaminate the Earth's waters, its land, its air and its life with poisonous substances--these are sins.

Homilies, Statements, Declarations

World Day of Prayer for Creation – September 1

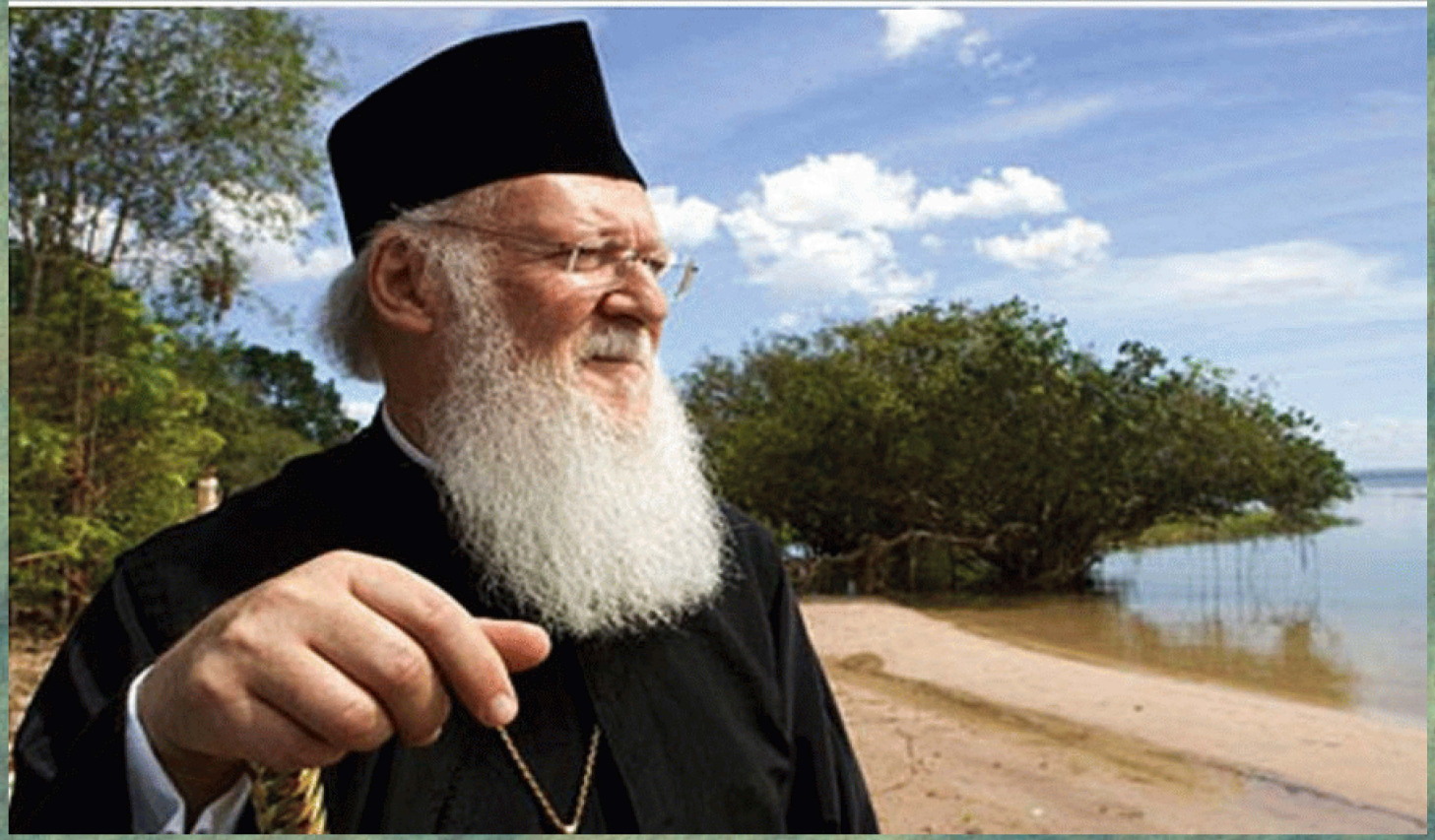
World Oceans Day – June 8

World Water Day – March 22

Climate Change

Joint Declarations

THE GREEN PATRIARCH



Theological Exhortations and Imperatives

- Earth, water, biological diversity--precious gifts of God that we are called to preserve and conserve, sustain the integrity and beauty of God's creation.
- Offer thanks to God for the noble gift of creation in word and action.
- Moral obligation to care and preservation Earth for the sake of future generations.
- Need to repent for sins of ecological degradation and
- Transform to "a way of loving"

Gratefully Receiving God's Gift of Earth Informed by Contemporary Science: *A Way of Loving*

Valuing

Appreciating

Venerating

Cooperating

Self-Restraint

Inclusive Gratitude

- Gratitude to Our Loving God
- Gratitude to Earth, Air, Land, Water, Species
- Gratitude to Other Self-restaining Humans

Conclusions

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