

Bartholomeos I, Ecumenical Patriarch

27th International Ecumenical Conference on Orthodox Spirituality

CALLED TO LIFE IN CHRIST

In the Church, in the world, in the present time

Monastery of Bose, 4-6 September 2019?

in collaboration with the Orthodox Churches

GREETING By His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew

It is our pleasure to greet the participants of the 27th International Ecumenical Conference on Orthodox Spirituality organized by the Monastery of Bose in collaboration with local Orthodox Churches, which will take place from September 4-6, 2019, and have the theme: "Called to life in Christ: In the Church, in the world, in the present time." As we have been informed by the organizers, the aim of the Conference is to rediscover the depth and strength of the call to Christian life in the Church, in the world and in history, by listening to Orthodox spiritual tradition, and by exploring the Orthodox theology of monastic vocation and life, as well as of marriage and family, the special charisma and service of women in the life of the Church, the meaning of a communal life, the presence and love of beauty (Philokalia), and Christian hope at different stages of life, especially in the face of illness, suffering and death.

The theme of "Life in Christ" is, indeed, one of central importance in Orthodox Spirituality. As Saint Nicholas Cabasilas, a well-known citizen of 14th century Thessaloniki, as well as of the Queen of Cities — who united his political and social engagement with a deep mystical contemplation on the mystery of Christ — has admirably exposed in a treatise with the same title, a life in Christ is initiated and sustained by the sacraments of the Church, which manifest the Church Herself and unite us with the Mystical Body of Christ.

This treatise, according to Fr. Georges Florovsky, properly summarizes the doctrine of the Eastern Church on the sacraments. Since spirituality means life in the Holy Spirit, which is granted to us by Christ in the Holy Sacraments, a genuine experience of spirituality is therefore lived within the Church. For this reason, we always ought to be in communion with the Church and work for the unity of Christians everywhere, being continually nourished by the unbroken unity of the Body of Christ.

We once again thank the Monastic Community of Bose for its tireless efforts in promoting the rich treasures of Orthodox spirituality and for its contributions toward the cultivation of an ecumenical spirit. Wishing all of you — the participants of the 27th International Ecumenical Conference on Orthodox Spirituality — fruitful deliberations and thoughtful insights, we reiterate our unconditional paternal love and bestow upon you our Patriarchal blessings.

Bartolomeo
Archbishop of Constantinople and Ecumenical Patriarch
Fonar, 31 august 2019