



The Holy and Great Council PENTECOST 2016 "He CALLED ALL TO UNITY"

*His All-Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew,
on the Holy and Great Council*

With the grace of God – who has instituted and inspired the Church through the ages, who has guided and enlightened the Fathers of the Church through local and ecumenical councils – we will convene the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church in Crete this June.



His All-Holiness Bartholomew, Ecumenical Patriarch. Photo: Nikolaos Manginas

All of the Primate of the fourteen Autocephalous Orthodox Churches, together with delegations of hierarchs and advisors, will assemble in order to demonstrate and declare the unity of the Body of Christ, as well as to pronounce and proclaim a message of hope and love to a world that longs for the joy and life of the Gospel of Christ.

The foremost goal of this Pan-Orthodox Council is to profess that the Orthodox Church is the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church united in the holy sacraments, the sacred canons, and the ecumenical councils.

We recognize that the world expects a vibrant voice on many pressing challenges, but we considered it necessary also to address some pastoral issues within our Church. The fact that Orthodoxy will express its conciliarity on a global level after so many centuries constitutes a very decisive step.

We fervently ask the plenitude of the Church – clergy and laity, men and women, old and young – to pray for this unique and historical event. We especially ask that you implore God to strengthen and inspire the leaders of the Church to manifest their unity in a world afflicted by conflict and division.

**May God bless the Holy and Great Council.
And may His abundant grace be with all of you.**

About His All-Holiness

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

Is the first Ecumenical Patriarch to...

- Assemble all Orthodox primates in the world since 1872 (1992)
- Receive U.S. Congressional Gold Medal (1997)
- Convene a Great Council since the 9th century (2016)

Is known...

- As the convener of the world's Orthodox Churches
- As the "First among Equals" among all Orthodox Bishops
- As the "Green Patriarch" for his environmental initiatives
- For promoting dialogue and peace among all religions
- For his pastoral visits all over the globe
- For his love of walking and hiking
- As a charming and personable leader

Speaks:

Greek, Turkish, Italian, French, German, English

"The purpose of the Holy and Great Council is to demonstrate and declare the unity of the Church, as well as to pronounce and proclaim a message of hope and love to a world that longs for the joy and life of the Gospel of Christ."



February 29, 1940

Born on the island of Imvros (Turkey)

1957

Completed primary and secondary education at Imvros and Istanbul

1961

Completed Halki Theological School



1963

Completed military service as Reserve Officer in Turkey

1966

Completed doctoral studies at the Pontifical Oriental Institute

1967

Post-doctoral studies at Ecumenical Institute of Bossey

1968

Post-doctoral studies in Munich

1968-1972

Assistant Dean of Halki Theological School

1972-1990

Director of the Private Patriarchal Office under Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios

August 13, 1961

Ordained deacon, receiving the name Bartholomew

October 19, 1969

Ordained priest

December 25, 1973

Elected bishop (Metropolitan of Philadelphia)

January 14, 1990

Elevated to senior Metropolitan of Chalcedon

October 22, 1991

Elected Ecumenical Patriarch

November 2, 1991

Enthroned as 270th Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch

1992

Convenes 1st ever Assembly of Orthodox Primates in Istanbul

1995

Begins a series of eight international ecological symposia



1998

Presides over the 1000th anniversary of Xenofontos Monastery on Mt. Athos

2000

1st international Clergy-Laity Conference in Istanbul

2000

1st World Youth Conference in Istanbul (2nd held in 2006)

2004

Requests and personally accompanies the Return of the Relics of Sts. Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom from Rome, a gift from Pope John Paul II



2008

Presides over 1020th anniversary of Christianization of Kievan Rus in Ukraine

2008

Named by Time Magazine among the 100 Most Influential People in the World

2013

First Ecumenical Patriarch in history to attend the installation of a Pope of Rome.

2014

Apostolic Pilgrimage with Pope Francis in Jerusalem



2015

Convenes Synaxis of all the Hierarchs of the Ecumenical Patriarchate



2016

Convenes the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church

CNS graphic courtesy of USCCB Communications



Official channels of communications

The Holy and Great Council will be held June 16-27 in Crete. For the first time in 1200 years, the primates of the 14 autocephalous (internally self-governed) Orthodox Churches, along with more than 300 bishops, priests, monastics, and laity, will meet to pray and discuss issues of common concern. Stay informed of daily updates and connected to the Council by visiting www.orthodoxcouncil.org and by using the communications channels of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Website: www.orthodoxcouncil.org • **Facebook:** [@ecumenicalpatriarchate](https://www.facebook.com/ecumenicalpatriarchate)

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