

Message from Irinej, patriarch of Serbia

Bose, 5 - 8 September 2012

XX International Ecumenical Conference

We are profoundly hurt by the divisions in witnessing the Christian truth before the modern world

XX International Ecumenical Conference on Orthodox spirituality

MAN-CUSTODIAN OF CREATION

Bose, Wednesday 5 - Saturday 8 September 2012

in collaboration with the Orthodox Churches

31 August 2012

To The Venerable Fr. Enzo Bianchi, Prior of the Monastic Community of Bose, Italy.

Most Venerable Abbot Enzo,

We have received with joy Your kind invitation that a representative of Our Holy Church, this year also, takes part in the 20th International Ecumenical Conference on Orthodox Spirituality in Your monastery in Bose, with the theme *Man - Custodian of Creation*. We appreciate Your sincere commitment to our common Christian witness before the Churches and peoples in Europe and throughout the world, especially these days when in Your monastery, for the twentieth time, a great number of Orthodox, Roman-Catholic and Protestant theologians and other experts come together in order to reflect upon this very important contemporary issue.

The theme refers to a fundamental revival of contemporary thought about the meaning of life in the frame of new living conditions of the modern civilization, on which depends our overall future, especially the efforts of the very mission of the Church and of our common, most needed, united Christian witnessing in the modern world.

We as Christians, taught by the Holy Tradition and by the experience of the Holy Church Fathers, link always the mentioned theme with the need of repentance because when man fell off due to his sin, he lost his identity. Because of his tendency toward transgression, man became weak and cannot find in himself strength to go back to his Creator. Man accepts God's love and becomes a being of communication, a being as communion, improving, with all the Saints, his God-likeness. So man becomes the custodian of the creation which is created by the will of God for the only reason - to become one in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1, 22-23; 4,15). The human being is called to protect the work of God's hands because the deeds of God protect him. The creation needs for its existence God, as it cannot exist by itself. Man is searching for eternity and he is determined to care for the conjunction of unity and differences. Love disables divisions, while the Spirit assembles all.

We are profoundly hurt by the divisions in witnessing the Christian truth before the modern world which is yearning for spiritual direction and the meaning of the mystery of life. We are firmly convinced that the chosen theme for the 20th International Conference in Your monastery is for the good, benefit and joy of all Christians. With these sentiments We would like to greet You cordially, conveying to You, to Your monastic brotherhood and to all the participants of the conference Our prayerful wishes for the grace of God and success in the forthcoming days of demanded, responsible but sublime sessions and inter-Christian prayerful assembly.

+ Irinej

Archbishop of Pec

Metropolitan of Belgrade-Karlovci and

Serbian Patriarch