

Ecumenical Patriarch opens Academic Symposium on 1700th Anniversary of First Ecumenical Council



In a heartfelt address delivered in English yesterday, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew officially opened the Academic Symposium marking the 1700th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea (325 AD), a foundational event for Christianity and global Church history.

Speaking from the Phanar, the Patriarch emphasised the Council's lasting theological and ecclesial significance and its enduring relevance in the contemporary world. He also made poignant reference to the late Pope Francis, expressing his sorrow that their joint plan to commemorate this milestone together in Nicaea, Bithynia next month would no longer be realised.

“Pope Francis and I had expressed our desire to meet next month in Nicaea to jointly honour this historic anniversary and underline our shared commitment to deeper collaboration for a more credible Christian witness in today’s world,” said Patriarch Bartholomew.

Reflecting on the recent passing of Pope Francis, the Patriarch added: “We now fervently pray that our beloved brother is celebrating the resurrection of the dead in the eternal embrace and kingdom of God. He will be greatly missed. May God grant rest to his good soul.”

The Academic Symposium, organised under the auspices of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and led by the Archdeacon of the Ecumenical Throne, Dr. John Chryssavgis, has gathered leading scholars and theologians from around the world. These participants are presenting research and reflections not only on the Council of Nicaea itself, but also on its broader impact on Christian doctrine, unity, and ecclesial life across the centuries.

The Symposium’s concluding session will take place on Saturday in the city of Nicaea (modern-day Iznik), the original site of the Council convened by Emperor Constantine the Great in 325 AD.

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