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Leap Year 2020: February 29 Marks 80th Birthday of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew



2020 is a leap year, meaning that February has 29 instead of 28 days, and millions of people this year celebrate their birthday accurately, for the first time since ...2016!

A person born on February 29 may be called a “leapling” or a “leaper,” and depending on where one lives, he or she legally celebrate his or her birthday either on February 28 or March 1.

One of these people, with the rare privilege of being born on February 29, is the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, who was born on a day like this, on February 29, 1940, on the island of Imbros, currently known as Gökçeada in western Turkey.

The Ecumenical Patriarch was born as Dimitrios Arhondonis and has been serving the Greek Orthodox Church for decades.

Bartholomew is the 270th Patriarch of Constantinople, serving as primus inter pares (first among equals) in Eastern Christianity.

Bartholomew’s character and actions have created an unparalleled prestige and

radiance, exactly what his important position requires.

November 2, 1991, was the day when he assumed the responsibility of being the head of almost 300 million Orthodox Christians worldwide, serving a role much-prestigious yet difficult because his historic diocese is currently under a predominantly-Muslim country.

Bartholomew has been a very active Patriarch, participating in dialogues with other Christian Churches, as well as other religions around the globe.

The Ecumenical Patriarch is also known as the ”Green Patriarch,” because of his constant efforts to spread the message of environmental awareness. For this reason, in 2002 he was honored with the Sophie Prize for his contribution to environmentalism and the global environmentalist movement.

He has also been honored with the Congressional Gold Medal of the United States, the highest award which may be bestowed by the Legislative Branch of the US to an individual.

Εις έτη πολλά, Παναγιώτατε!

— Source: eu.greekreporter.com