

19/10/2023

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew: “We have all seen the tragic consequences of a world that rejects dialogue”



His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, on Tuesday morning, October 17, was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Theology by the Pontifical University of Salamanca, in a special ceremony held in the Great Hall of the historic RC educational institution.

Hierarchs, the Apostolic Nuncio to Spain, the Ambassadors of Greece to Spain and Portugal, diplomats, officers of the Spanish armed forces, university professors, and numerous others, as well as students, were present.

The Bishop of Ciudad Rodrigo and Salamanca, José Luis Retana, presided over the ceremony, in the presence of the Rector Santiago García-Jalón, the Academic Council, the professors, and the teaching staff, while the Patriarch's personality, work, and ministry were presented by the Professor of the Faculty of Theology Fernando Rodríguez Garrapucho. The Resolution of the Senate was read by the

Rector, who presented the relevant scroll to the Ecumenical Patriarch.

In his speech, the Ecumenical Patriarch, among other things, referred to the mission and diaconal contribution of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to Orthodoxy, as well as its initiatives to promote inter-Christian and inter-religious dialogue, with the aim of contributing to the prevalence of peace in the world.

Specifically, the Ecumenical Patriarch, speaking in English, noted, among other things, the following:

“We have all seen the tragic consequences of a world that rejects dialogue and reinforces division. Indeed, we have seen the devastating effects of antipathy and competition on human lives as well as on the planet’s resources. It was in the aftermath of the two world wars that the ecumenical movement gained momentum a century ago. People were desperate to discover new ways of relating positively and constructively to each other in order to overcome the violence and hostility, as well as the nationalism and sectarianism that had plagued churches and religions for centuries.

In recent months, we have witnessed the loss of human lives and the destruction of the natural environment due to Russia’s unjustified and unprovoked invasion of the sovereign territory of Ukraine. It was, for me personally and for the whole world, painful, tragic and abhorrent to see the Russian Federation – with the impudent support and approval of the Russian Church – annihilating human lives and eliminating natural resources that will be lost forever from our world and our children.

And now, before our eyes, we can see the devastation of the loss of countless innocent lives and infrastructure in the Middle East, where a perpetual conflict has been rekindled, because as human beings we are unwilling to cooperate and make concessions for the sake of our brothers and sisters, as well as for the protection of creation, this sacred gift of God.

In the past, together with our dear brother Pope Francis, we have tried to bring the leaders of both Israel and Palestine together and into dialogue. And just a few days ago, we issued a strong statement against the use of violence under the pretext of consolidating peace.” [Read the Ecumenical Patriarch’s speech here]

More photos: Nikos Papachristou / Ecumenical Patriarchate













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