

+Ecumenical Patriarch DIMITRIOS

Archbishop of Constantinople and New Rome

## Encyclical Letter on the Day of Creation

September 1, 1990

A YEAR HAS PASSED SINCE WE issued a message declaring September 1<sup>st</sup> ... as the day of prayers for the protection of the environment. In that message we called upon the Orthodox faithful and every man and woman of good will to consider the... seriousness of the problem generated as a result of the abuse of material creation by human beings. On this day, which for the Orthodox Church is officially the first day of the ecclesiastical year, the Orthodox faithful are invited to offer prayers to the Creator of all, thanking Him for the good of His creation and beseeching Him to protect it from every evil and destruction.

*“Acquire an ascetic ethos, bearing in mind that everything in the natural world, whether great or small, has its importance for the life of the world, and nothing is useless or contemptible.”*

The message offered last year continues to echo and to express the inquietude of our Church toward the continuing destruction of the natural environment.

For this reason we consider it expedient... to present once again today that same message, unabridged, to our faithful and to all people in order to renew our fervent appeal to all.

*“Regard yourselves as being responsible before God for every creature and treat every thing with love and care.”*

Beloved brothers and spiritual children: Use the natural environment as its stewards and not as owners. Acquire an ascetic *ethos*, bearing in mind that everything in the natural world, whether great or small, has importance for the life of the world, and nothing is useless or contemptible.

Regard yourselves as being responsible before God for every creature and treat everything with love and care. Only in this way shall we be able to prevent the threatening destruction of our planet and secure a physical environment where life for the coming generations of humankind will be healthy and happy....

