



Faith Leaders from the Archdiocese of Chicago and the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago to Observe the Third Annual Solemn Vespers for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation

Evening prayer service will take place on Thursday, August 31 at 7 p.m.

Chicago, IL (August 24, 2017) – Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church and SS. Peter and Paul Greek Orthodox Church, both in Glenview, will commemorate the third annual Solemn Vespers for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation on Thursday, August 31 at 7 p.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church, 1775 Grove Street.

Bishop Francis J. Kane, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Chicago, will preside at the evening prayer. His Grace Bishop Demetrios of Mokissos, Chancellor of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago, and the Very Rev. Thomas A. Baima, Vicar for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the Archdiocese, will also be in attendance. Bob Langert, editor-at-large for GreenBiz Group and former vice president of sustainability at McDonald's, will be the featured speaker at a reception following the service.

In 1989, the late Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I of Constantinople designated September 1 as a day of prayer for "the protection of the environment" for Orthodox Christians, a tradition that has been continued by his successor, His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople. Sharing concern for creation with Patriarch Bartholomew, in 2015, Pope Francis instituted September 1 as the "World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation" for Catholics.

"Thankfulness for God's creation—of our world and ourselves—is a central element of ancient Christian worship, and our proper stewardship of the environment is not only practically necessary, but spiritually important," said Bishop Demetrios of Mokissos. "That this event underscores one more shared belief is also something for which we can be grateful in the continuing Dialogue of Love between our Churches."

By joining together in prayer for the Care for our Common Home, Catholic and Greek Orthodox Christians in Chicago are heeding the calls of Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to protect creation, especially through prayer, education and action. The teachings of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and of Pope Francis's encyclical "Laudato si'," petition individuals and communities to care for our common [earthly] home, thus respecting the dignity of every human being, especially the poor, marginalized, and future generations.

"For years Christians have affectionately called the Ecumenical Patriarch 'the Green Patriarch' because of his tireless preaching on the dignity of creation," said Fr. Thomas Baima. "Bringing our sister churches together to offer prayers for the care of our common home has been a priority for Cardinal Blase Cupich, Archbishop of Chicago, and the Late Metropolitan Iakovos of Chicago. The close partnership we enjoy in Chicago allows us to join together around these issues of common concern."

The Solemn Vespers prayer service is not limited to Catholics and Orthodox Christians, but open to all in Chicagoland who are concerned about the environment.



About the Archdiocese of Chicago

The Archdiocese of Chicago, the third largest in the United States, serves more than 2.2 million Catholics in 344 parishes in Cook and Lake Counties, a geographic area of 1,411 square miles. The Archdiocese, pastored by Cardinal Blase J. Cupich, has more than 15,000 employees in its systems and ministries, including Catholic Charities, the region's largest nonprofit social service agency. The Archdiocese also has one of the country's largest seminaries. The Archdiocese's 214 elementary and secondary schools comprise one of the largest U.S. private school systems and have garnered more U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon Awards than any system of any type.

About the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago

The Metropolis of Chicago itself traces its explicit roots to 1923, when Rt. Rev. Philaretos Johannides became the city's first Greek Orthodox bishop. This Episcopal ministry has culminated in the singular dedication of Chicago's Metropolitan Iakovos of Blessed Memory, who has tirelessly ministered in the nation's "Second City" for twenty-four years. A studied and accomplished liturgist, Athens-born Metropolitan Iakovos has made a profound imprint upon the character of the Midwest's Greek Orthodox communities.

The majority of Metropolis parishes are concentrated in the Chicago metropolitan area, where immigrants arrived as early as the 19th century. The Metropolis of Chicago consists of thirty-four parishes in Illinois, with another twenty-four parishes in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, northern Indiana, and eastern and central Missouri. The general offices of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago are located in Chicago, Illinois.

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