

**Message of His All Holiness
The Patriarch of Constantinople and New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch
Bartholomeos I
on the occasion of the 21st World Scout Jamboree**



Beloved Children,

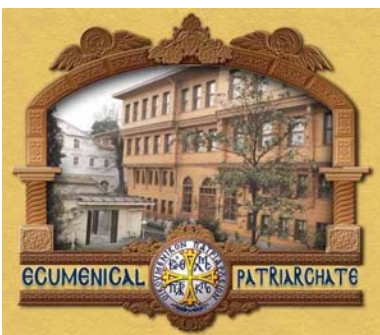
During these few days in which you are gathered together from all over the world, being united by certain common principles and ideals, my thoughts are with you as the thoughts of a father are always with his children.

It makes no difference to me that you are of different races, religions or confessions, for the Orthodox Church does not discriminate between people but, according to one of its saints, distinguishes only between those who know God and those who do not. The Church's only desire is that He may have pity on those who do not know Him, that they may understand His ways and be received into His life in order that they may be saved.



During these few days in which you are gathered together, you will surely be given the opportunity to become acquainted with a great number of people of different races and tongues and to make new friends, to share with them your experiences and dreams, your joys and sorrows. The future lies open before you, life is ready to receive you in its embrace and you, as all people of your age, have many hopes for the future.

However, in this enthusiasm for life, in this celebration of joy to which you have been called to participate, you should not forget that of all the great events for which life prepares us, there is one that is most paramount, and that is death. This is the most important event in our life, for it is at this moment of death when we shall be called (just as all those before us have followed the same inevitable road) to meet Christ in Whom we either trusted or did not trust, Whom we either loved or hated, received or rejected, confessed or betrayed, Whom we knew or did not know.



Your life is open before you, but also time pushes on and will bring you before that critical moment to which you too will be called from this life to choose, freely and without any obligation, whether you will be with Christ forever or live forever without Him. From this moment on, either you will begin to become all the more closer to Him, and your closeness will have everlasting repercussions, or you will alienate yourselves from Him and that alienation too will have everlasting repercussions.

The Orthodox Church calls all people to prepare for that great moment. The Church can not and, like God, does not wish to impose the way of life by which the Church believes you will prevail in that 'great examination'. Many of you have given and will be examined in your lives, be it in school, at sport or in your careers. But the Mother Church knows and confesses the way to success, and our success in the great examinations of life will depend on how much we have achieved likeness with God. At that terrible moment when each one of us will meet the Lord, He – as our Church teaches – will judge. His judgement will simply be His penetrating gaze which He will cast upon every one of us in order to see Himself in us. I therefore fervently pray that you will prepare your lives such that the Lord will see Himself in you and say: "Come with me into my kingdom, you who are chosen".

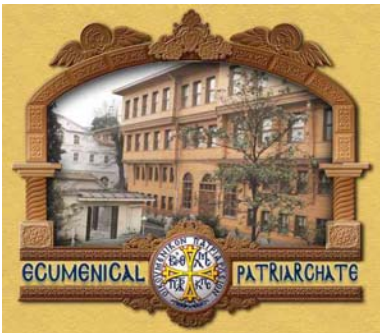


How will He see Himself in us? When we have learned in this life to love and sacrifice ourselves for our neighbour, then He will see Himself in us. For love towards God without love towards our fellow man can not exist. Our love should be such that it extends even to those who do not love us, but hate us - to those who are our enemies. Love such as this makes us like God. Let us therefore learn to give our love without asking for anything in return. That which we give to others is of eternal value and will always be ours. That which we hold back for ourselves will be lost forever, since in God's kingdom only those who have learned to give will live. Let us not hold back anything for ourselves, but let us offer our very lives, our very selves, and every sacrifice to God and neighbour, whoever he may be, so that we may all be joined together again after our departure from this temporal life.



With these thoughts I welcome you to the International Jamboree, which this year has an especially joyful character, because it is in its 100th year since the establishment of the cub scouts, and we celebrate its beginnings. I express the prayers of a father that God may bless your stay there, so that it may be fruitful and edifying, that it may be the cause of prolific struggle and spiritual resurrection, as well as physical and mental recreation and relaxation which this event will no doubt provide you with.

I congratulate the members of 'Desmos' who are so worthily representing the Orthodox scouts at this international event, and I bless the important activities which have been arranged and the wonderful opportunities which are offered to you, so that those who are taking part in this year's Jamboree may know our Orthodox Tradition and make spiritual progress.



May the Grace, Peace and Enlightenment of our Lord Jesus Christ and my fatherly and patriarchal blessing be with all of you during these days.

27th July 2007

Archbishop of Constantinople
Vartholomaeos
Fervent Intercessor to God for you all