

# MESSAGE OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH ON THE REPOSE OF POPE FRANCIS

Ανάρτηση 22/04/2025



“In an atmosphere of great Paschal joy, this morning, Monday of Renewal Week, came the sorrowful news of the repose of Pope Francis, a precious brother in Christ, with whom from the very moment of his ascent to the papal throne, we had a fraternal friendship and collaboration for the good of our Churches, for their further rapprochement, and for the good of humanity.

Throughout these twelve years of his Papacy, he stood as a faithful friend, a fellow pilgrim and supporter of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, a genuine friend of Orthodoxy, a true friend of the least of the Lord’s brethren, on whose behalf he often spoke, acted, and even washed their feet in an example of true humility and brotherly love.

We shall always remember him.

When in 2014, just one year after his election and inauguration, upon my proposal and initiative, we went to Jerusalem and prayed on our knees side by side before the Lord’s Tomb, and had meetings and discussions during those two or three days we spent together in the Holy Land; I said to him: ‘Your Holiness, in a few years we shall mark the 1700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the convocation of the First Ecumenical Council in Nicaea of Bithynia. It would be a wonderful and symbolic act for us to go together, to celebrate this historic anniversary, and to speak about the further path of our sister Churches toward the common Chalice.’

He showed enthusiasm and said: ‘It is a tremendous thought, a tremendous idea and proposal. If we are well, God willing, let us make this pilgrimage to Nicaea. If not—if the Lord does not permit it—then our successors.’

Indeed, he very much wished to come within the current year to celebrate this historic anniversary jointly, and he stated this many times in the media and to representatives of the Ecumenical Patriarchate who visited him from time to time in Rome.

As we say, it was not meant to be that he should come in person. If I myself am well, of course the Ecumenical Patriarchate will do something in this regard. It will not let this historic anniversary pass unnoticed. As for the Catholic Church, it will depend on the person, views, and intentions of the elected Pope—whether he will wish and when he will want to come with us to Nicaea (Iznik) and underline the importance of this great anniversary, a most significant event in the history of Christianity.

Today, as we gather at the Ecumenical Patriarchate with all the holy Hierarchs of the All Venerable Ecumenical Throne (that is, those serving in Türkiye) to exchange the fraternal greeting of the Risen Christ, we commemorate the beloved figure of the recently reposed Pope Francis and we all pray, ‘with one mouth and one heart,’ for the repose of his soul in the land of the living and in the tents of the righteous. We pray that the Lord of life and death will reward him for his many labours for the Church and humanity and will raise upon the Throne of Saint Peter a worthy successor, one who will embrace and adopt the visions of Pope Francis and continue his valuable work for all humanity—especially for Christendom, and even more particularly for the rapprochement of our sister Churches, with the ultimate goal of their full encounter in the common Chalice.

May your memory be eternal, brother Pope Francis.”