

THE SEVEN-YEAR PLAN OF ACTION OF THE PATRIARCHATE OF ALEXANDRIA AND ALL AFRICA FOR THE AFRICAN CONTINENT REGARDING THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

(By His Eminence, the Metropolitan of Johannesburg and Pretoria, Seraphim Kykkotis, member of the Synodal Patriarchal Committee of the Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa)

It was with unanimous decision of the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa, following the proposal of His Beatitude the Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, Theodoros II, that a Synodical Committee for the Environment was constituted to examine the serious and urgent problem of protecting the environment from pollution and destruction and to formulate a common and mutually agreed upon stand. (1)

This paper presents the general plan of action of the Patriarchate of Alexandria for the African Continent regarding the environment. It is based on the conclusions and decisions of significant Inter-Orthodox Meetings and Seminars on the environment. (2)

The Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa ascribes to and supports the Declaration of the General Assembly of the United Nations of Johannesburg 2002, regarding the Sustainable Development of the Environment. This Resolution emphasizes, among other points, the following two: (3)

- “We reaffirm our commitment to the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and of International Law, as well as to the strengthening of multilateralism. We support the leadership role of the United Nations as the most universal and representative organisation in the world, which is best placed to promote sustainable development.” (4)
- “From the African Continent, the cradle of humankind, we solemnly pledge to the peoples of the world and the generations that will surely inherit this Earth that we are determined to ensure that our collective hope for sustainable development is realized.” (5)

1. PLAN OF ACTION OF THE PATRIARCHATE OF ALEXANDRIA FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE FIRST YEAR, 2009-2010

The Synodal Committee decided on the following general conclusions that are based on the foundational principles of the Orthodox Church and constitute its position regarding the ecological crisis:

a) The Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa shares in the sensitivity and concern of those that are anxious about the increase in pollution of the natural environment due to human factors. The Church considers this sin and calls all human beings to repent. There is a tendency to seek out a “new ethic”. For the Orthodox Church, however, the solution to the problem is to be found in the liturgical and Eucharistic life, as well as the ascetic ethos of the Orthodox Tradition.

Membership of the Orthodox Church worldwide is well over three hundred million. This is why the role of the members in the protection of the environment is significant and valuable.

b) The Patriarchate of Alexandria co-operates in all healthy initiatives that aim, and work towards, the solution of the ecological problem.

c) The Patriarchate of Alexandria, following the decisions of the Orthodox Primates in the Meeting of Heads of 1992, and after the proposal of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, sets aside the first of September of each year as a day dedicated to the Environment and its protection and marked by special prayers and services for the whole of Creation. (6)

d) The Patriarchate of Alexandria, through her own Primate, Theodoros II, calls upon the Holy Metropolitan Archdioceses and Dioceses of the Throne on the African Continent to embark on programmes of Christian Environmental Education. These programmes should include all facets of theological education, the planning of a series of lessons, the creation of material for catechetical and Sunday schools and the preparation of suitable material for use by teachers of Religion in Public schools. This material could also be used in countries in which the Church oversees primary and secondary schools. It is proposed that September 1 be considered the suitable opportunity to stress the issue of protecting God's Creation through teaching and preaching. In countries in which the Church oversees schools of tertiary education, research in areas that promote the environment should be encouraged – e.g. alternative sources of energy.

e) The Patriarchate of Alexandria, through the Alexandrian Primate, Theodoros II, calls upon the Holy Metropolitan Archdioceses and Dioceses to undertake projects or local initiatives that lead to the reconsideration of the value of all Creation. Each Metropolitan Archdiocese and Diocese is requested to undertake planning the implementation of projects on a local parish level and a wider diocesan level. Examples of these are:

- On a parish level:

- Projects of recycling of paper, glass, metals and chemical waste that can be used as fertilizer.
- Saving on energy within ecclesiastical buildings through the necessary insulation and control of light.
- Encouraging responsible use of water.
- Encouraging less-frequent use of motor vehicles.

- On a Diocesan level:

- Finding ways of producing and using alternative forms of energy (solar, wind and biological).

f) Every Metropolitan Archdiocese and every Diocese of the Patriarchate of Alexandria should examine land use, the buildings and investments within its care or influence and make sure that they are used or they function in a way that is not detrimental to the environment, but actually improve it.

g) In all ecclesiastical activities of the Patriarchate of Alexandria, in the 53 countries in which the nineteen Metropolitan Archdioceses and Dioceses function, they are called upon to organize meetings of their members to examine issues that range from theology to the sciences and that pertain to the environment in an effort to assist in exposing them to such issues of an environmental and bioethical nature. Through these meetings, the Patriarchate of Alexandria should approach all who are involved in the Sciences and Ecology and may not be members of the Church and ask them to make their knowledge and experience available.

h) The Patriarchate of Alexandria, through the Alexandrian Primate, Theodoros II, and the Synod around Him, calls upon the Holy Metropolitan Archdioceses, Dioceses and local parishes throughout the African Continent to co-operate on specific environmental issues.

i) The Patriarchate of Alexandria calls upon all in Africa to appeal to the Assemblies of the United Nations for the Environment and Development (UNEP).

This appeal should request:

(i) Following on the words of the Lord, “do unto others as you would have them do unto you” (7) no product or industrial material is to be exported and no waste be discarded if its country of origin itself would not accept it on its own domain.

(ii) According to Christian instruction regarding the use of resources, every effort should be made toward the satisfactory use of energy. This would demand a lowering of taxes on the costs of insulation material and the abolishment of subsidies on the production and use of non-renewable sources of energy that are particularly detrimental to the environment. It would also require a raising of taxes on other sources of energy like coal and petrol in order to restrict their use.

(iii) The Patriarchate is to encourage young people to undertake environmental projects and educational programmes suited to environmental concerns.

j) “Syndesmos” the Worldwide Brotherhood of Orthodox Youth should encourage Youth organizations to act in this direction and play the role of coordinator in the development and promotion of Orthodox Youth Projects all over the world.

k) The preparation of a complete proposal, the organization of the Environmental Centre of the Patriarchate on privately owned land of 200 000 sq metres belonging to the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Johannesburg and Pretoria in South Africa.

This Centre is to aim at creating sensitivity to relevant issues among the members of the Patriarchate in South Africa and the greater African society and other African lands. It is to organize Seminars, education of leaders and the co-operation with other organizations on a

local and an international level through relevant initiatives for the protection of the environment.

The building that is to host the Centre is to be constructed along ecologically-friendly lines and is to serve as an example of buildings that conserve energy and make use of renewable sources of energy like solar power.

At the same time, efforts will be made to promote and display, in a specially prepared exhibition area, ecological projects and proposals from the industrial sector, that offer sources of energy from the sun, water and wind.

The steady organization of an ecological Library and Research Centre will constitute a long-term aim, according to financial means and funding.

In its first stage, the Centre will focus on the threats facing the environment, on educating the members of society, on prevention, on enlightening and on the publication of relevant articles in the regional languages of the peoples of the African Continent.

Special attention will be given to the publication and translation and studying of well known articles that refer to the adoption of international agreements regarding sustainable development. (9)

As is well known, with the hosting of International and World-wide Meetings of the United Nations for matters regarding the protection of the environment, treaties were adopted in the hope of binding member-states to adapt their policies towards the direction of environmental protection. Such treaties should be published and should be studied by the members of society so that they can, in turn, exert pressure on their civil leaders in respecting the decisions and implementing proposals. Such examples are:

- The United Nations Treaty regarding Climate change.
 - The Treaty of Biodiversity.
 - The Treaty of the United Nations regarding countries experiencing drought.
 - The Treaty of Basel regarding the control of the movement of hazardous waste and their disposal.
 - The Protocol of Montreal for the substances that deplete the ozone layer.
- l) Informing society about the relevant bodies that function within the U.N. regarding the protection of the environment e.g.
- U.N.E.P. (United Nations Environment Programme) that supports specific projects for the protection of the environment on a local, regional and world wide level, based on specific reports.
 - U.N.D.P. that supports sustainable development.

- U.N.C.T.A.D. – the Committee for trade and development.
- The Committee for trade and environment of the Worldwide Trade Organization.
- The Worldwide Committee for the Environment and Development.
- The Report of the Committee of Sustainable Development.
- The Agreement of the Johannesburg Meeting (2002) that stresses priorities in managing
 - Water
 - Health
 - Energy
 - Agriculture
 - Protection of biodiversity
 - Managing ecosystems

m) Promoting the Kyoto Agreement (1997) that expires within the next decade and exerting pressure on the leaders of states to sign new declarations, beginning with that of Copenhagen (COP 15).

As is well known and as is stressed by Anastasios Mandelis, “the model of development we have been following has led us to an impasse. The most serious threats against humanity today are climate change, the green-house phenomenon, the upsetting of environmental balance and its consequences, the melting of the ice, the rising of sea levels, desertification, disappearance of regions, loss of biodiversity and millions of human lives, directly or indirectly through hunger.” (11)

2. DIRECTIVES OF THE PATRIARCHATE OF ALEXANDRIA WITH REGARDS TO THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT OF WHICH ARE TO BE ADOPTED BY THE FAITHFUL OF OUR CHURCH DURING THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF STRATEGIC ACTION IN 2010 – 2012.

- a) It has to be clearly spelt-out, that in order to have any results whatsoever in the reception of any practical measures, it is necessary that contemporary man change his mentality and be guided to true repentance, as it has always been understood by the Christian teaching.

- b) The Christian ascetic ideal is a radical response to today's consumerism. This ideal, which is not the sole- privilege of the monks and hermits, but is a duty for all the faithful. Simplicity and frugality open the road for the restoration of the correct relation of man with the world.
- c) In this direction of true repentance of asceticism and frugality, though chiefly for the sanctification and ecclesial embrace of man and the world with the great Mystery of Holy Eucharist at its centre, all who have some kind of pastoral responsibility over the faithful can contribute: archbishops, clergy and lay- theologians, especially confessors, catechism teachers and preachers- with their word as well as with their example.
- d) Immediate priority has to be given to preaching and catechism at all its levels. The theology of Creation, the Orthodox teachings on the concerns of man and the world have to be given emphasis in the ecclesiastical education and teaching..
- e) In the efforts of educating on ecological consciousness – with its correct meaning of coarse - the faithful themselves can contribute beyond the sermon and catechism or any other form of ecclesiastical word, and other practical measures. E.g. publications referring to the ecological problem and the Orthodox position and answer to this- supervised material that will be distributed everywhere (schools, Sunday Schools, community gatherings, homes, etc.), publishing relevant encyclicals from the Governing Church, organizing specific seminars and catechism meetings for the mentioned topic, the educating of the counterparts who will undertake the relative efforts, the use of the media for the projection of the position of the Church, etc.
- f) For every effort to have substantial results, it has to have the parish as its centre. With the initiatives of the parishes or the Holy Archdioceses, projects of collection of goods for recycling can begin (paper, glass objects, aluminum, etc.) and exemplary use can be made of recycled material which is environmentally friendly. The parish can also play a leading part in reforestations, tree planting in the cities, in the cleaning of specific places and in other activities that contribute actively to the protection of the natural environment. They can also react against ecological disasters or to those activities which contribute, in one way or another, to the polluting and destroying of the natural environment.(12)

The Patriarchate of Alexandria notices the increasing pressures on the environment world-wide. These are, among others, the rapid increase of population, urbanization, drought, climatic changes, lack of water, desertification, desolation, pollution and the loss of biodiversities.

In addition it points out the need for the advancement of environmental consciousness of the citizens by informal and conventional education. This could be achieved with the introduction of environmental ideas in the different lessons of the schooling programs, but also with the development of activities in the local communities- such as environmental

centers and programs. The participants expressed their worries for the organized link between political clashes and environmental degradation. They regard as necessary, to man and civilization, the furthering of theological study of topics that relate to earth in correlation with the ecological ethos and the proceedings in this area.

g) Publication, notification, and the encouragement of applying International declarations concerning the environment from Ecclesiastical organizations, such as the World Council of Churches, the Pan-African Council of Churches and the Council of European Churches. An example of this would be the Declaration of 1995 of the Academy of MUHLHEIM with the topic “The Protection and Respect for the Creation of God”, where amongst others the following points are emphasized:

- in correspondence to concrete measures for dialogue and cooperation on environment issues and Creation with all groups of society, especially with representatives from industry, politics, natural sciences and environmental organizations.
- Churches have an obligation to create ecologic awareness in their most typical fields of activity, in development programmes as well as in pastoral care, education, preaching and public statements.
- that the Churches make and increasing use of their national and ecumenical associations and training facilities.
- to put their weight effectively in at international organizations and negotiations for the sake of safeguarding Creation.
- in order to elaborate drafts for a wholistic and contemporary spirituality of Creation , which enables individual Christians and parishes to assume ecological responsibility in every-day life and in public.
- in order to practice with all people of good will a new life-style which is essential for the safeguarding of life support systems of this planet and for future generations. Especially as to the fear and the resistance that many people show towards a changed life-style, the Churches have to live up to a special task[13].

h) The supporting of Declarations of Conference of the European Churches at the Orthodox Academy of Crete in 1995 with the topic “Ecology and Development” and specifically the relation to the responsibilities of Churches for the protection of the Environment. These challenges could, for instance, be met:

- By raising the awareness and commitment of believers with regard to their environment responsibilities and capacity to act.
- By celebrating creation, through worship and liturgy, intercession and preaching, elements of worship should aim to link creation more clearly with daily life.
- By education and formation at all levels in the Church, including the training of believers, teachers and clergy.

- By dialogue and co-operation with other religions, non-governmental organizations, Governments, Universities in view of the extent of common interests concerning ecological responsibilities.
- By promoting everyday measures for environmental protection, the prevention of biodiversity, energy savings and systematic environmental auditing in parishes and all church-related institutions.
- By taking ecological considerations into account in all church-related activities including, for example: construction of energy and resource consumption, and production and disposal of wastes.
- By promoting together with others the national and regional implementation of international ecological standards and conventions and resisting environmentally harmful actions such as nuclear testing and use of nuclear energy[14].
- Promote, as churches, the development and implementation of educational programmes in the field of environment, in schools as well as in adult education
- Publication of small books in different dialects of Africa with the following topics:
 - Acid rain
 - The Hole in the ozone
 - Contaminating of the air
 - Natural sources
 - The extinction of the species
 - Greenhouse effect
 - Harmful sources of energy
 - The saving of energy
 - Renewed harmless sources of energy, the sun, water and air

3. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN OF ACTION OF THE PATRIARCHATE OF ALEXANDRIA AND ALL AFRICA FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT DURING THE THIRD AND FOURTH YEAR ,2013 – 2014

- a) The expansion of the work of the Patriarchate of Alexandria in the sector of environmental awakening, with communications networking, the organizing of seminars, meetings, educational programs and also the printing of educative material.
- b) The mobilizing of specialists for the implementation of environmental teaching programs, and programs for the awakening of local Churches and educational institutions and non-governmental Organizations.
- c) The contribution in the development of a scientific approach for the introduction of the environmental educating in as much as the formal teaching system, as in the rest of the training activities.
- d) The promoting of dialogue and collaborating amongst monotheistic religions in the environmental sector.

- e) The creation of networking between the different Orthodox environmental initiatives and institutions.
- f) Instating of environmental training and practical exercising at all levels of theological and pastoral regimen.
- g) Establishing Orthodox Centers, with specific action for the protection of the Environment.
- h) Uniting of Orthodox Centers that are occupied with issues of ecology.
- i) Encouragement of exchange programs for the young, with relevance to environmental training and practical exercise.
- j) Organization and functioning of the department of the Patriarchate with specific relevance to the topic ENVIRONMENT AND REFUGEES, with perspective in prevention and informing and supporting.

In the African Continent, because of poverty, civil wars, ethnic strife and the many diseases, we have the greatest number of human victims world-wide as far as refugees and political exiles go. They are forced to move from their homes with disastrous consequences for the environment. This results in the creation other social problems that intensify the problem of poverty and endanger world-wide health and security.

This department of the Patriarchate will work together with the High Commissioner of the United Nations for Refugees, with governments, International Organizations, Local Organizations and Non – Governmental Organizations, with other Religious and Ecclesiastical bodies that have common goals for co-coordinating the action for prevention, solving and supporting matters that are relative to the Environment and the Refugees.

As Professor Ekaterina Manolopoulou – Varvitsiotes stresses “the degrading and destruction of the Environment as well as underdevelopment are causes for the flow of refugees and the displaced. This causes disasters to the environment. The safe and guaranteed return of the refugees and displaced presuppose suitable environmental situations and a higher level of development at their place of origin, the degrading and destruction of the environment and underdevelopment are the creating reasons for the infringements of human rights. Such infringements lead to national violence many times, which eventually creates tensions in international – regional or on a world-wide level, while also creating refugee circulations.

The Department of the Patriarchate of Alexandria and all Africa for the Environment and Refugees, will work in co-operation with other powers, Governmental, Ecclesiastical, Religious and Non – Governmental, to work for the implementation of important measures, which will aspire to the respect and protection of the Environment, such as the following:

- The modification of the direction of different sectors, are subject to harmonize with the environmental policies. Such directions in the sectors are concerned with for example, domestic energy, agriculture, animals and forests.

- The advancement of environmentally friendly products, such as for example, recycled paper, with the corresponding effort of avoiding chemical products that are forbidden internationally.
- The promotion of environmentally friendly technology.
- The upgrading of the basis of environmental facts.
- Environmental educating to the staff of the Commissions Offices for Refugees and members of our Church in the plans, the programming, in the following and guidance of activities that refer to the Environment.
- In activities of sectors in the framework of Environmental Instructions with the organizing of different environmental measures such as,
 - the protection of the resources of water
 - in the reforestation
 - in the promoting of a variety of forms of environmental education
 - in the promoting/advancement of alternative fuels
 - in the advancement of efforts in the participation of refugees in local environmental programs
 - in the inspecting of the harvesting of burnt-wood
 - the support in every way for the efforts for attaining education for all will help to a large degree in the cultivation of Environmental consciousness for the protection of the Environment.

4. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PATRIARCHATE OF ALEXANDRIA FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT DURING THE FIFTH YEAR 2015

The permanent Co-coordinating Committee of the Orthodox Patriarchates and Autocephalous Orthodox Churches with the aim of undertaking initiatives and the coordinating of environmental energies and activities on all local level, regional and international.

- a) The Orthodox Church has to profit from the experiences and knowledge of Environmental Organizations and specifics and must aim at co-operating together with them on a local level.
- b) Besides this, the contributing, the co-operating and the influence of the Church in topics of the Protection of the natural environment and the environmental awakening, in general, will offer a lot to governmental, non – governmental and environmental Organizations and Services, provided that these make use of her wealth in spiritual sources and conviction for the furthering of promoting positive measures and energies.
- c) Specific areas in which the Church would be able to focus its interests are:
 - i) Pastoral work: Parishes, men and women monasteries, clergy and laymen, can use prayer as a means, the sermon, the teaching and sensitization. The priest is the pastor of the community. His influence can result in the motivating strength that will encourage sensitiveness and action.
 - ii) Effectiveness of the youth: the contributing of the youth consists of, firstly, their awakening and secondly their direct participation in programs in which their personal contribution will strengthen their troops.

- iii) Practical support: the willingness and potential of the Parish to be active and to serve, responding with a direct advancement of programs towards dealing with the needs, which are challenged by natural catastrophes.

This on the one hand promotes responsibility and on the other hand strengthens the feeling of the community. The contributing in such energies has positive consequences for all the members.

- d) Communication: It is necessary for the Churches to communicate between themselves on the one hand and on the other with Organizations in there area, with social Services and non – governmental Organizations. In this necessity the Diaspora of information has to also respond with the help of different aids, such as, for example, with an informative pamphlet, translated into different languages.

1. THE AIM OF THE CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE.

The introduction and organizing of the Committee with the main role being the establishment of Environmental Awakening Centers in all the localities, Archdioceses and Bishoprics and parishes in all African countries.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE.

- a) Organization of seminars.
- b) Organization of regular meetings.
- c) Translating of different publications.
- d) Issuing of informative printed material.
- e) Cooperating with local environmental Organizations.
- f) Establishment of contact and development relations with governmental and non – governmental Organizations.
- g) Informative liaisons.

3. STRUCTURE OF THE COMMITTEE.

- a) One responsible member (or more) in topics of the environment from every local Church.
- b) Orthodox clergy and laymen with environmental preparation.
- c) At least one theologian and one environmentalist (or someone who combines both qualities).
- d) One responsible youth
- e) Members of the Committee are men and women.

Basic aims of the Orthodox Secretariat for Environmental topics are the following:

- i) The complete writings of the subordinated activities for Environmental topics of the Local Orthodox Churches.
- ii) Support and strength of the subordinated activities for Environmental topics of the

- Local Orthodox Churches and the cooperation between them for the same goal.
- iii) The establishment of Orthodox Congress meetings for topics of the Environment.
 - iv) Departmental cooperation of the Orthodox Secretariat for the Environment with UNEP (Organization Department of the United Nations for the Environment) and with other States, International and Private Organizations that are occupied with the protection of the Environment.
 - v) Publishing of Orthodox printed material about topics for the Environment and the publishing of Orthodox educational manuals with Environmental topics.
 - vi) Organization and creation of information Centers for Environmental topics and the creation of a Specialized Library containing Environmental topics.

5. PLAN OF ACTION OF THE PATRIARCHATE OF ALEXANDRIA AND ALL AFRICA FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE 6th AND 7th YEAR PERIOD, 2016-2017.

Constant improvement and regular practical application and functioning of previous movements of the first Councils of the previous five years, so that the daily protection of the Environment by the broader community can sustain ways of life.

The materialization and concretization of primary initiatives concerning environmental matters.

The Overseeing Council concerning the application of previous council decisions concerning the protection of the Environment at district, regional, continental and international levels.

- The functioning of a Central Environmental Centre for the intensification of actions for the Protection of the Environment on the African continent.
- Cooperation between the Environmental Centre of the Patriarchate of Alexandria with other religions, universities, rulers and Ecumenical organizations which have similar objectives for the Protection of the Environment.
- The critique of the actions of the Patriarchate of Alexandria on the African continent and generally in the international community.
- The publication of articles which refer to ecological issues.
- Translation and publication of foreign language articles which refer to ecological issues.
- Preparation and publication of a Lexikon of Theology and Ecology.
- The promotion of the Ecological debate for the promotion of Ecological sermons of churches and religions.
- Promotion of Orthodox approaches and dialogue on Ecological themes.
- The promotion of Christian and non-Christian dialogue on Ecological issues.
- The promotion of academic studies with Ecological themes.
- Development of educational programmes relating to Ecological themes.
- The obtaining of bursaries and awards for academic development of members of the Patriarchate in order to prepare them to teach Ecological issues.
- A common stance concerning the protection of the environment as oppose to highlighting differences (religious, political, ethnic, and national) [18].
- Support for the teaching of the National Meetings of the Organizations, Religions and Conservations. [19], especially the signs which are referred to in cooperation of religious

communities of Ecological issues, that every religion should take control of a meaningful Ecological program for the next nine years and acceptance by all religions of Ecological Testament, as proposed by HRH Prince Philip, Chairman of the Higher Organization.

6. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

- a. The Organization of Seminaries and Councils and our Patriarchate in it's Metropolitan Archbishopsrics and Bishopsrics of the Throne of Alexandria in 53 countries in the African continent, in which we highlight our concerns on issues revolving around the protection of the environment and common action in cooperation with Science, Civic Society and others in topical administration and special community councils present us with the necessary reality.
- b. The promotion of the establishment of simple practical measures at schools within the areas of jurisdiction of Metropolitan Archbishopsrics and Bishopsrics of the Patriarchate as in the following systematic initial actions:

IN PARISHES

- There must be organized programmes for the recycling of paper, glass and metal and the conversion of organic waste.
- Energy saving in Church buildings, particularly in areas of lighting.
- The saving of resource of water.
- The encouragement of the lessening of personal vehicles and the use of public transport.
- The constant encouragement at Parish level of supporting the youth in their activities and programmes relating to the protection of the environment, as in supporting works on Environmental issues and educational programmes which would highlight the fragility of our environment and would relate to themes of the protection of the environment.

IN THE METROPOLITAN ARCHDIOCESES AND THE SCOUT MOVEMENT.

- We must look for opportunities to develop other means of energy as a practical measure to assist in supporting the environment.
- We must support the creation of and promotion of ethnic initiatives.
- Every Metropolis to encourage every Parish to carefully examine the use of land, buildings and what they are furnished with, in such a way as to make sure that these do not damage the environment, but rather promote it's conservation.
- The Archbishopsrics and Bishopsrics, must encourage all their parishes to organize meetings where themes to relating to theology and environmental studies should be

undertaken which could assist in our quest to improve the environment and promote moral action in bio-ethical issues.

- The Parishes of every area must work in a cooperative spirit on environmental issues with other religious and community teams and with all stake-holders residing in that area.

AT THE LEVEL OF THE PATRIARCH HIMSELF, THE HOLY SYNOD AND THE SYNODAL COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT.

There should be presentations made at the International Councils of the United Nations on themes of the Environment.

- Enlightenment and action, following the teaching of our Lord “And just as you want men to do unto you, do also into them” [20], no bio-mechanical product must come from and no waste material must be buried in any country unless the country of origin would accept this waste to be dumped on its own soil.
- In the topical and International Community the Christian teaching concerning the correct and just use of sources of energy, should be supported as far as possible for the correct use of energy, e.g. something such as this should result in sever taxation and fines concerning reusable sources of energy which are especially harmful to the environment. There should also be campaigns for higher taxes and fines for the use of fossil fuels so that we can successfully use sources of energy which are less harmful as in the case in carbon and benzene.
- We must support SYNDESMOS, the International body of Orthodox Youth, to encourage the organization of youth, working as a unified body in the carrying-out of programmes in the International Arena.

REFERENCES

[1] The History of the Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa can be traced to the first century with its first Bishop, the Apostle and Evangelist Mark. The seat of the Patriarchate is in Alexandria and the current Pope and Patriarch is His Beatitude Theodoros II. The jurisdiction of the Patriarchate extends to 53 countries on the African continent and is concerned with the pastoral care of the Orthodox faithful who reside in Africa. The Patriarchate is second in rank amongst all Orthodox patriarchates and her jurisdiction extends to the whole of Africa including the islands around Africa, such as Madagascar, Seychelles and Mauritius. The extent of her jurisdiction includes the Seat of the Archbishopric of Alexandria, 19 Metropolitan Archbishoprics and 4 Bishoprics. There are 42 Archbishops, 30 of whom serve in Africa along with 1000 clerics who are indigenous to their countries along with a wide range of other nationalities including Greeks, Arabs, Serbians, Rumanians, Russians, Bulgarians and Ukrainians in some 2000 parishes. There are three three-year

seminaries- an Ecclesiastical School in Alexandria, a clerical school (Archbishop Makarios III of Cyprus) in Nairobi, and a further Ecclesiastical School (Petros VII) in Johannesburg. There are also 5 Seminaries which cater for a one year qualification. Most of the students attending these seminaries are from the local population of the areas in which they are sited.

Apart from the usual publications, the Patriarchate of Alexandria also issues regularly, the *Pantaino*, the *Ekklesiastikos Pharos*, the Pocket Calendar, the Alexandrian Pharos and translations of liturgies in catechetical works in local languages. For example, in the Archbishopric of Johannesburg and Pretoria, the Archbishop and clerics have written well over 30 publications of between 80-250 pages on various Theological topics in the English language. There are Theologians at Doctoral level serving the Archbishopric who make regular contributions of articles in theological journals of international standing and in publications of interest to Orthodox Christians and to the wider population in general.

For the better organization of the pastoral work of the Patriarchate of Alexandria, there are a number of established church bodies functioning under the Chairmanship of His Beatitude, Theodoros II. These include the Canonical Committee, Synodical Committees for matters relating to Missionary activities, inter-Orthodox matters, inter-Christian matters and dialogue, relating to Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Old Catholics, the Pre-Chalcedonians, the World Council of Churches, the Pan-African Council of Churches, the Council of Churches of the Middle East and Islam, as well as committees concerning regulatory, economic, technical, control and public matters, Environmental issues and Bio-ethics.

Also under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate, where the Metropolitan Archbishoprics and Bishoprics exist, we find schools, orphanages, nursery schools, small clinics, old age homes and shelters for the poor. Bursaries are made available to orphans, blood drives are organized and food stuffs are handed out to the poor, limited medical care and clothing is offered to the poor and homeless. All these endeavors are dependant on human and financial resources within the Orthodox Mission of the Patriarchate.

There are 10 million Orthodox believers in Africa under the Patriarchate of Africa. (Please see the publication of His Eminence the Metropolitan Archbishop of Johannesburg and Pretoria Dr Seraphim Kykkotis, “Unity and Witness of the Orthodox Church in the modern world” , publisher Nektarios Panagopoulos, Athens, 2005, page 350).

[2] Ibid, pp 254-265.

[3] See Collection of Articles, Tsalta Gregoriou, Johannesburg – The Environment after the Conference of the United Nations for development, publication Sideri, 2003, pp. 319-323.

[4] Paragraph 31 of Proclamation of Johannesburg.

[5] Ibid, Paragraph 37.

[6] With the Public Pronouncement of the Topical Orthodox Churches in 1992. The Liturgical Life of the Orthodox Church on 1st September, which is the day the Ecclesiastical year begins, was validated as a day dedicated to the environment.

[7] Luke 6, 31.

[8] Inter-Orthodox Conference for the Protection of Nature, Apostle Barnabas, second edition, pp. 70-73, Nicosia, 1992.

[9] See further Maria Papaconstantinou-Katsigianni, The International System of the United Nations as a Uniting Political Exercise for the Development of Life, in Johannesburg – The Environment after the initiatives of the United Nations etc. pp. 117-130.

[10] This is the known Carthagena Protocol, which refers to the Safety of Life (Biosafety).

[11] See Anastasios Manteli, Energy and Bio-development, in Johannesburg – The Environment, etc. p. 181.

[12] See further, Michael Boskos, “Theological Seminary for Ecological problems in Europe and the Role of the Church in Solving these”. Apostle Barnabas, 11, 1994, pp. 477-484.

[13] Constantine Zorba, Church and Physical Environment, publication Tertios, Catherine, 1998, pp. 177-179.

[14] Ibid. pp. 181-182.

[15] See further, Gegory Tsalta, “Johannesburg – The Environment etc.” publication Sideri, Athens, 2003, in the article “Politics of the Environment in the framework of Consular Governance for Refugees” pp. 211-221.

[16] As is emphasized by Aikaterini Manolopoulou-Vatvitsioti, it is known that ignoring the issue of human rights has lead to demonstrations of ethnic violence, which in turn have lead to internal strife, taking on national proportions, with catastrophic community, political, economic and often political impacts (eg. Afghanistan and Iraq), creating in all this hundreds of thousands of refugees and others dislocated from their environment. Classical examples can be referred to from Africa, Asia and Latin America- Rwanda, Cameroon, Afghanistan, El Salvador, Sudan, Congo, Zimbabwe and Iraq, and also in Europe) (Ibid. pp. 212-213).

[17] Ibid. p. 218.

[18] See International Conference Chicago .

[19] See Constantine Zorba pp. 175-176.

[20] Luke 8, 31