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**Creation Justice Ministries and National Council of Churches USA  
Celebrate Pope Francis's Call to Observe a World Day of Prayer for the  
Care of Creation**

*WASHINGTON, DC, August 11, 2015* – Creation Justice Ministries welcomes with joy Pope Francis's call for Roman Catholics to join in Christian unity with the Orthodox Church in observing September 1 as a World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. For the Orthodox community in the United States, September 1 has significance beyond its proximity to back-to-school events and Labor Day weekend. It is the beginning of the liturgical year, which brings symbolism of renewal as well as significance to the date. The Orthodox Church has observed the Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation since 1989.

Creation Justice Ministries Executive Director Shantha Ready Alonso said, "Prayer is powerful. Uniting in prayer will give us the spiritual strength we need to face the most daunting challenge humanity has known: to heal and restore God's web of creation before it is too late."

Fr. John Chryssavgis, theological advisor to patriarch Bartholomew and member of the ecumenical office of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, commented, "I don't think it is coincidental that Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew are leaders in their respective churches at this critical moment, when our response to the challenge of climate change demands shared responsibility and commitment. This gesture by the Pope is yet another manifestation of his humility, spontaneity, and priority for what truly matters in our world."

In an August 31, 2014 statement preparing Orthodox communities for the Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew said he invites "all people to continued vigilance, consciousness and mobilization of their resources in order to return to the state that reflects – if not the absolute Eucharistic and doxological condition of Adam and Eve – at least the condition inspired by God's grace and mercy."

Creation Justice Ministries urges all Catholic and Orthodox congregations to unite in prayer, and invites more Christian communions to join the ecumenical World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. Creation Justice Ministries stands ready to support faith communities with free ecumenical creation care prayer resources at [www.creationjustice.org](http://www.creationjustice.org).

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**Creation Justice Ministries** represents the creation care policies of 38 Christian communions, including Baptist conventions, mainline Protestant, Black Church, Peace Church, and Orthodox communions. [www.creationjustice.org](http://www.creationjustice.org)

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Since its founding in 1950, **the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA** has been the leading force for shared ecumenical witness among Christians in the United States. The NCC's 37 member communions -- from a wide spectrum of Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox, Evangelical, historic African American and Living Peace churches -- include 45 million persons in more than 100,000 local congregations in communities across the nation.

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