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Greek Orthodox Patriarchate Of Antioch

And All The East




Patriarchal Foundations	Patriarchal Monasteries	Patriarchal Churches	Holy Synod	Historical Overview
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The Decision of the Holy Synod Regarding the Status of the Antiochian Archdiocese of North America. Damascus, 7-10 October 2003

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On Tuesday 7th of October 2003, and under the guidance and leadership of His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatius IV, the thirty six Holy Synod meeting took place at the Patriarchate in Damascus with the presence of:

H. E. Elias Kurban, Metropolitan of Tripoli and Koura H. E. Philip Saliba, Metropolitan of New York and all North America H.E. Spyridon Khoury, Metropolitan of Zahleh and Baalbeck H.E. Constantine Papastephanou, Metropolitan of Baghdad and Kuwait H.E. George Khodr, Metropolitan of mount of Lebanon H.E. Yohanna Mansour, Metropolitan of Latakia H.E. Elias Audi, Metropolitan of Beirut H.E. Boulos Bandali, Metropolitan of Akkar H.E. Illya Saliba, Metropolitan of Hama H.E. Elias Kfuri, Metropolitan of Tyr, Sidon and Marja'youn H.E. Antonio Shedrawi, Metropolitan of Mexico H.E. Kirillos Dumat, Metropolitan of Argentina H.E. Damaskinos Mansour, Metropolitan of San Paulo and Brazil H.E. Saba Esber, Metropolitan of Bosra and Hauran H.E. Boulos Saliba, Metropolitan of Australia H.E. Georges Abu Zakhem, Metropolitan of Homs H.E. Boulos Yazigi, Metropolitan of Aleppo and Iskandarun And H.G. Elias Najm, Bishop of Aphamia H.G. Yohanna Yazigi, Bishop of al-Husn H.G. Mousa Al Khoury, Bishop of Daraya, Patriarcal assistant H.G. Basilius Nasour, Bishop of Tartus and Safita, H.G. Louka Khoury, Bishop of Saydnaya , Patriarcal Assistant H.G. Ghattas Hazim, Bishop of Qara, Patriarcal Vicar H.G. Dimitri Hosni, Bishop of Rio de Janeiro H.G. Niphon Saikaly, Bishop of Shahba, Representative of the Patriarchate in Moscow Fr. George Dimas, Secretary of the Holy Synod H.E. Gabriel Saliby, Metropolitan of Europe and H.E. Sergios Abed Metropolitan of Chile were absent for health reasons. The following members of the Committee on the status of the Antiochain Archdiocese in North America were also present: Maître Albert Laham Dr. Tarek Mitri Father Joseph Antypas Dr. George Farha Mr. Fawaz Khoury, of the delegation accompanying H.E. Metropolitan Philip, attended the meeting. After the opening prayer, H.B. the Patriarch expressed his wishes for a constructive session and affirmed the unity of the Synod in one heart and one spirit. Such commitment to unity has always been essential in the life of the Synod, as it invokes the grace of God the Father, the Love of Christ and the Communion of the Holy Spirit. After approving the agenda and the minutes of the previous session, the Holy Synod discussed the status of the Archdiocese in North America. The following resolution was adopted: Resolution of the Holy Synod Regarding the Status of the Antiochian Archdiocese in North America Self rule and Jurisdiction The Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America is and shall remain self ruled within its present jurisdiction (The United States of America and Canada) and shall constitute one unified ecclesiastical Antiochian entity. Governance The Archdiocese is governed by the Holy Scripture, the Sacred Tradition, the Holy Canons, the Constitution of the Church of Antioch and this Synodical resolution and by its Constitution and Bylaws. Recognition of Auxiliary Bishops as Diocesan Bishops and Eparchial Synod Upon adoption of this resolution, the present Auxiliary Bishops of the Archdiocese, Bishop Antoun, Bishop Joseph, Bishop Basil, and Bishop Demetri shall become Bishops of four Dioceses of the Archdiocese and bear their titles. The Diocesan Bishops will constitute under the Metropolitan the Eparchial Synod of the Archdiocese which will be its governing authority. The Eparchial Synod shall determine the number of

dioceses and their boundaries. Procedure of election of Diocesan Bishops A- The General Assembly of the Archdiocese shall nominate three candidates for a Diocesan Bishop. When Diocesan Assemblies shall be constituted, the nominations shall then be made, by the said assemblies. B- The Patriarch of Antioch, shall delegate three Metropolitans to participate on behalf of the Holy Synod together with the Eparchial Synod in the election of the Diocesan Bishops. The Metropolitan shall preside over the electoral assembly. C- The consecration and enthronement of the Bishops shall be accomplished in North America, by the Metropolitan, the Patriarchal Delegate and the members of the Eparchial Synod. D- In case of insufficient number of qualified nominees from the Archdiocesan clergy, the Archdiocese shall nominate from the list of nominations kept in the Patriarchal records. Procedure of election of the Metropolitan Primate The Metropolitan Primate shall be nominated pursuant to the Constitution of the Church of Antioch and to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Archdiocese. Three names of nominees for the Metropolitan Primate shall be submitted to the Holy Synod of Antioch for election by it, of one of the three names. The Metropolitan shall be a member of the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate as well as of the Eparchial Synod of the Archdiocese. Right of appeal and Synaxis Bishops of the Eparchial Synod have the right of appeal of its decisions to the Patriarch of Antioch who shall be the final judge along with the Holy Synod of Antioch. The Bishops of the Archdiocese shall attend the gatherings or synaxis of Antiochian Bishops which may be called by the Patriarch of Antioch. Decisions of the Holy Synod of Antioch The decisions of the Holy Synod of Antioch shall be binding on the Archdiocese on matters of doctrine, liturgy, sacraments, relations with autocephalous Orthodox Churches and ecumenical policy with regard to other Christian and non-Christian bodies. Amendment and translation The Patriarchate of Antioch and the Archdiocese shall each amend its constitution in accordance with above. The Archdiocese shall submit its amended constitution to the Holy Synod of Antioch for approval. The Arabic text of this resolution and its English translation shall have equal force and validity. Damascus, October 10, 2003

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