

MOST REVEREND  
METROPOLITAN PHILIP  
PRIMATE  
RIGHT REVEREND BISHOP ANTOUN  
AUXILIARY  
RIGHT REVEREND BISHOP JOSEPH  
AUXILIARY  
RIGHT REVEREND BISHOP BASIL  
AUXILIARY  
RIGHT REVEREND BISHOP DEMETRI  
AUXILIARY



LOS ANGELES CHANCERY  
454 S. LORRAINE BLVD.  
LOS ANGELES, CA. 90020-4730

TOLEDO CHANCERY  
2656 PEMBERTON DRIVE  
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## Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

OF NORTH AMERICA

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TO BE READ FROM THE PULPIT AND PUBLISHED IN THE CHURCH BULLETIN

October 20, 2003

Beloved Hierarchs, Clergy, Trustees, and All Faithful of this God-Protected Archdiocese:

On Saturday October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2003, by the grace of God, we returned safely from our historic trip to Damascus to attend the meeting of the Holy Synod of Antioch. On Thursday, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2003, after two days of intense discussion, the Holy Synod of Antioch voted unanimously to grant self-rule to the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America. The full text of the Resolution of the Holy Synod is attached for your review.

I wish to express my gratitude to His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatius IV and the members of the Holy Synod of Antioch for their unanimous expression of support for this Archdiocese.

I am extremely pleased and grateful to God on several fronts for the outcome of this meeting. First, that the Holy Synod of Antioch, in granting self-rule to this Archdiocese, has unanimously affirmed the need for us to move forward and to make important decisions in the life of this Archdiocese which will allow it to stand as a beacon of hope for now and for the future. Second, that the unanimity of this decision has demonstrated not only the unity of the Church of Antioch, but our ability to make decisions, guided by the Holy Spirit, which protect the best interests of the Church. Third, that our own internal deliberations and decision making, fully involving all of the clergy and laity of this Archdiocese in an orderly process which insures that the voice of the people is heard, has borne the fruit of these decisions. Finally, that our travels were blessed by God with safety, productivity, and fellowship.

I wish to express my sincerest thanks to Very Rev. Joseph Antypas, Dr. George Farha, and Mr. Fawaz El Khoury who accompanied me on this historic journey, and who were a constant source of support. I also wish to thank all of those individuals who worked so diligently in the background to help to achieve this result.

I ask that you pray for us, as we always pray for all of you and the outstanding work that you do on behalf of this Archdiocese. Together, by the Grace of God, we will continue to spread the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the North American continent.

Your Father in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip", with a flourish at the end.

Metropolitan PHILIP  
Primate

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America