



RESOLUTION OF THE HOLY SYNOD

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
OCTOBER 20, 2003 — ENGLEWOOD, NEW JERSEY

HOLY SYNOD OF ANTIOCH GRANTS SELF-RULE TO THE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA

ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2003, 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 authorized English translation of the Synodal Resolution is included below. Resolution of the Holy Synod Regarding the Status of the Antiochian Archdiocese in North America

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. Recognition of Auxiliary Bishops as Diocesan Bishops and Local Synod

Upon adoption of this resolution, the Auxiliary Bishops of the Archdiocese shall become Diocesan Bishops and bear their given titles. The Diocesan Bishops will constitute under the Metropolitan the Local Synod of the Archdiocese, which will be its governing authority. The Local Synod shall determine the number of dioceses and their boundaries.

4. Procedure of election of Diocesan Bishops

A — The General Assembly of the Archdiocese will 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 two or three Metropolitan to participate on behalf of the Holy Synod together with the Local 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 Local 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.

5. Procedure of election of the Metropolitan Primate

The Metropolitan Primate shall be nominated according to the Constitution of the Church of Antioch and the Constitution and Bylaws of the Archdiocese. The three nominees for the office of Metropolitan Primate shall be submitted to the Holy Synod of Antioch to elect one of them. The Metropolitan shall be a member of the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate as well as of the Local Synod of the Archdiocese.

6. Right of appeal and Synaxis

In all matters of hierarchical discipline, Bishops of the Local Synod have the right to appeal to the Patriarch of Antioch and the Holy Synod. The Archdiocesan Bishops, after consultation with the Metropolitan, shall attend the gatherings or synaxis of the Antiochian Bishops which may be called from time to time by the Patriarch of Antioch.

7. 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.

8. Amendment and translation

The Patriarchate of Antioch and the Archdiocese shall each amend its Constitution in accordance with the 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.

Handwritten signatures and text in Arabic and English, including 'Ignatius IV' and 'Metropolitan'.

Editor's note:

We give thanks to God, that He has worked through Patriarch IGNATIUS and the Holy Synod of Antioch to answer the prayers of the Antiochian Archdiocese of North America for autonomy. This autonomy is all that we had prayed and hoped for. May God grant our holy leadership many years and bless the autonomous Antiochian Orthodox Church in North America.