



THE ROAD TO SELF-RULE

AS CHILDREN GROW AND MATURE, THEIR parents slowly and wisely allow them to make more decisions on their own, in order to enhance their abilities and prepare them for the future. Through the various stages of their lives, the children learn important lessons in decision-making, with guidance, love, and support from their parents. But regardless of the level of decision-making granted to them, these children never lose their love, respect, and strong connection to their parents. On the contrary, the children's love and respect for their parents will grow as they come to understand the awesome responsibilities that confront them in their lives. Our Archdiocese in North America is similar in many respects to the growth and maturity of children. We have asked our mother, the Church of Antioch, for permission to make important decisions on our own, and she has granted this permission.

By the grace of God, with the unfailing leadership of Metropolitan Philip, through the hard work and diligence of the faithful people of this Archdiocese, and with the love, respect and support from the members of the Holy Synod of Antioch, this Archdiocese has been granted self-rule status. Because of this historic decision, our Metropolitan, our diocesan bishops, our clergy and our faithful are all called to a higher level of responsibility. We are called to leadership. We are called to action. We are called to do the work of the Church in North America.

The synodal resolution recognizes the self-rule of the North American Antiochian Archdiocese. Cooperation between the many Orthodox jurisdictions in North America has sometimes been difficult because of world politics or foreign agendas. We need to care first for our Orthodox people. Once our own house is in order, we can better serve those who are not yet Orthodox in North America. I pray that the other ancient patriarchates will try to understand the real situation in North America, and follow the courageous lead of the Holy Synod of Antioch to grant similar status to our sister Churches, for the good of all the Churches on the North American continent.

The synodal resolution recognizes the strong unity of this Archdiocese. This unity within our Archdiocese is the unity expressed by the faithful, upheld by our Metropolitan, affirmed by the Holy Synod of Antioch, and sealed by the Holy Spirit. God established one Church in the body of Christ. This Church has but one head, Jesus Christ; and one Spirit, the Holy Spirit of

God. With unity, as Antiochian Orthodox, we will continue to proclaim the good news to North America with consistency, clarity and love. As a united Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese, our diocesan bishops will continue to meet regularly with our Metropolitan, and as a local synod of bishops, they will make decisions, strategize and lead. They will be called upon to demonstrate fraternal love, manifesting for all the faithful the love spoken of in the Gospel of John: "By this shall all [men] know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another" (3:35). Without such love, we are not the Church. With such love, we, the faithful, will learn to bring North America to Orthodoxy.

The resolution that grants self-rule to the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America outlines the procedure for the election of the Metropolitan and the diocesan bishops. For diocesan bishops, the General Assembly of the Archdiocese shall nominate three candidates. The Patriarch of Antioch shall appoint two or three metropolitans to serve with our Metropolitan and local synod of bishops to elect diocesan bishops. The Metropolitan of North America will, of course, chair this local synod. The Metropolitan, a patriarchal delegate and the members of the local synod will enthrone and consecrate the diocesan bishops in North America. The Metropolitan Primate shall be nominated according to the constitution of the Church of Antioch and the constitution and by-laws of the Archdiocese. Three nominees for the office of Metropolitan shall be sent to the Holy Synod of

Antioch, who will elect one of them. The Metropolitan Primate shall be a member of the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate as well as of the local synod of this Archdiocese.

Bishops of the local synod have the right to appeal to the Patriarch of Antioch and the Holy Synod in matters of hierarchical discipline. They may also be called upon to attend some gatherings of

Antiochian bishops that may be called from time to time by the Patriarch. Decisions of the Holy Synod concerning matters of doctrine, liturgy, sacraments and relations with autocephalous Orthodox Churches, and ecumenical policy with regard to other Christian and non-Christian bodies will be binding on the self-ruling Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America.

The resolution maintains our Antiochian Orthodox identity, our unity with Antioch, and our unity within our Archdiocese. It allows us the freedom we need to work with our sister Orthodox jurisdictions, take care

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EDITORIAL
BY


*Very Rev. John P.
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EDITORIAL

of our local dioceses, choose the candidates from among whom our bishops will be elected, meet the needs of the local parishes and respond to our parish members. It also offers us a united Antiochian voice with which to speak to North America. This resolution of the Holy Synod of Antioch is all that I prayed for and more. This resolution reflects the vision and genius of

Metropolitan Philip and the members of the Holy Synod. May God bless Sayidna Philip and our Holy leadership to continue to serve this God-protected Archdiocese. With our Metropolitan and diocesan bishops, surrounded by competent clergy and faithful people in each of the parishes, the child will continue to grow and mature for the glory of God. 

**Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
Of North America**

RESOLUTION OF THANKSGIVING

WHEREAS, our beloved Primate, Metropolitan Philip, by the Grace of God has returned safely from his trip to Damascus where he attended the historic meeting of the Holy Synod of Antioch;

AND WHEREAS, after prayerful discussion and deliberation, the Holy Synod of Antioch, under the leadership and wisdom of our Father in Christ, His Beatitude Ignatius IV, Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, voted unanimously to grant **self-rule** to the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America;

AND WHEREAS, by their action and wisdom, the members of the Holy Synod of Antioch have affirmed the need for this Archdiocese of North America to make important decisions in the life of this Archdiocese such that it may stand as a beacon of hope now and in the future;

AND WHEREAS this Archdiocese has the mission to witness to the rich spiritual heritage and tradition that emanates from Antioch where "the Disciples were first called Christians" (Acts 11:26), which tradition transcends political and geographic boundaries and is not limited to one ethnic, cultural or demographic group, since in Christ there are no divisions neither "Jew nor Greek, Male or Female;"

AND WHEREAS under the leadership of His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatius and inspired by the Holy Spirit, the Holy Synod of Antioch voted unanimously to grant **self-rule** to the Archdiocese of North America, thereby maintaining the unity of the Church of Antioch, which unity is of the greatest importance to Antiochian Christians, whether they live in the Motherland, North America, or throughout the world, which unity has been transmitted to us by the Holy Scripture, Holy Tradition, and Holy Canons, and manifested in the Holy Eucharist;

AND WHEREAS by this action, His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatius IV has shown his great love and understanding for his spiritual children in North America;

AND WHEREAS, by this action, His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatius IV has shown his great love and respect for our beloved Primate and Father in Christ, Metropolitan Philip;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, at its duly convened meeting in Toledo, Ohio on November 1, 2003 declares its most heartfelt thanks to Almighty God and to our beloved Father in Christ, His Beatitude Ignatius IV, Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, for the blessings and love bestowed upon the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this same Board of Trustees at its same meeting in Toledo, Ohio, declares its most heartfelt appreciation to the members of the Holy Synod of Antioch under the leadership of His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatius IV, for the blessings and love bestowed upon the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America.

**MAY GOD GRANT OUR BELOVED FATHER IN CHRIST, HIS BEATITUDE
PATRIARCH IGNATIUS IV, MANY, MANY YEARS!!**

PASSED BY ACCLAMATION.

November 1, 2003

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