



- [Dioceses](#)
- [Organizations](#)
- [Departments](#)
- [Parishes](#)

[Home](#) » [Orthodox Church News / Pressroom](#) » [Archived News & Press Releases](#) » [2004 - News & Press Releases](#)  
 » [Letters of Correspondence Between His Eminence and Fr. George Dimas, Secretary to the Holy Synod Of Antioch](#)

### Fr. Dimas Letter

This letter has a response to it from His Eminence Metropolitan Philip Saliba. [Please click here to read it.](#)

#### ANTIOCHIAN SELF-RULE RESOLUTION

Published by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of

Antioch & all the East, April 26, 2004

Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch & all the East

Beirut, April 26 2004

Christ is risen\_ Indeed He is risen.

After the October 2003 resolution of the Holy Antiochian Synod, granting "self-rule" to the Antiochian Archdiocese of North America, as a sign of good will in response to the request of the Archdiocese to be given the ecclesial status of "autonomy", a large wave of appreciation welcoming the resolution expressed an apparent understanding of the significance of this decision.

Unfortunately, many articles published afterwards, by laity officials and some clergy of the Archdiocese revealed a deep misunderstanding of the spirit of this resolution. The February 2004 editions of "The Word" and "Again" magazines published an altered text of the resolution and a list of autonomous churches including the name of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese being one of them.

In the "Word" magazine, a letter from H.E. Metropolitan Philip concerning self-rule is published on page 5 of the February edition. This letter refers to the "full text of the resolution of the Holy

Synod", published in the November 2003 edition of "The Word" on page 4.

In fact, when comparing the official English version of the resolution issued by the Holy Synod to the published text, there are discrepancies, in more than one place of this "authorized English translation".

1. "Eparchial Synod" and "Local Synod":

The official English version of the Synodal Resolution speaks of an "Eparchial Synod" while the "authorized translation" published in "The Word" calls it "Local Synod". (Paragraphs: 3, 4, 5 and 6). This last term, creates ambiguity, since it is used for Churches not for Archdioceses.

2. Election of Bishops:

### SEARCH

Search this site:

The article four of the official English version of the Synodal Resolution states: "The Patriarch of Antioch shall delegate three Metropolitans". While the so called authorized translation published in "The Word" mentions: "The Patriarch of Antioch shall delegate two or three Metropolitans", as if the published text aimed to minimize the "weight" of the Patriarchal presence in the election process.

3. Right of appeal:

The article six of the official English version of the Synodal Resolution states: "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". While, the published resolution contained an additional condition, it mentions: "In all matters of hierarchal discipline, Bishops of the Local Synod have the right of appeal" \_

This added condition, limits to the disciplinary matters, the right of Bishops to appeal. In fact, the Bishops, according to the Synod Resolution, have the right to appeal any decision taken by the Eparchial Synod to the Patriarch who shall be the final judge along with the Holy Synod of Antioch.

Strange enough, this additional condition was not even discussed in the Synod meetings. The Holy Synod adopted literally the text of the paragraph presented by H.E. Metropolitan Philip as it was voted by the convention of July 2003.

4. Synaxis attendance:

This same article six of the official English version of the Synodal Resolution states: "The Bishops of the Archdiocese shall attend the gatherings or synaxis of Antiochian Bishops which may be called by the Patriarch of Antioch". Here again a new condition of Bishops' attendance is inserted. The published text mentions: "The Archdiocesan Bishops, after consultation with the Metropolitan, shall attend the synaxis" \_

Printing the copy of all the Synod fathers' signatures, at the bottom of this modified text, gave the reader the false impression of reading the official Synodal Resolution.

The "Word" editor's note at the bottom of page 4 speaks about "Autonomy" while obviously this term is not used at all in the official English version of the Synodal Resolution. The Holy Synod used the term "Self-Ruled Archdiocese", because the word "Autonomy" is also used for "Autonomous Churches". This "mistake" was made in the Editors note, when it says: May God grant our holy leadership many years and bless the autonomous Antiochian Orthodox Church in North America".

The discussions of the Holy Synod as well as the Synodal Resolution emphasized on the unity of the Antiochian Church and stressed on the fact that the North American Archdiocese is and shall remain an Antiochian Archdiocese, excluding the use of the term "Autonomous Church".

For the good sake of the Christ's flock, and to avoid any misleading interpretations, the secretary of the Holy Synod asked the publication of a note explaining these differences in the next issue of "The Word" and "again" magazines as normally it is the case. This was not done. It is for the "The Word" and "again" magazines to give an explanation of what happened, if they have one. However, they chose to ignore the matter.

The secretary of the Holy Synod finds now that it is of his own obligation, towards the North American Antiochians and the Orthodox American sister churches, to publish the facts and to highlight the full reality.

It would be most unfortunate if the North American Antiochians go to the July convention of the Archdiocese without having been exposed to the truth that was not shared with them by the organs of their Archdiocese.

The Holy Synod and His Beatitude the Patriarch Ignatius IV reaffirms, as they have always done, the strong relationship with the Metropolitan, bishops, clergy and laity of the North American Archdiocese, where we know that the love of the Church of Antioch runs very deep.

Father George Dimas

Secretary of the Holy Synod of Antioch

[Fr. Dimas Letter in PDF Format](#) 

---

[-< Letter to Fr. George Dimas 5-3-04 from His Eminence Metropolitan Philip Salibaup Local Synod Inaugural Mtg ->](#)  
[Printer-friendly version](#)

[. Links](#)   [. Contact Us](#)   [. Site FAQ](#)   [. User Login](#)

The contents of this webpage are copyright 2000-2008 Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America [[Terms of Use](#)]