

*The Self-Ruled*  
**ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE**  
*of North America*



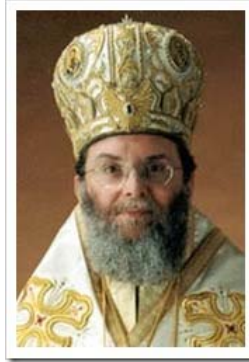
“And the disciples  
were first called  
**Christians in Antioch.**”  
+ Acts 11:26

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## About Bishop BASIL

Bishop BASIL was born in the southwestern Pennsylvania town of Monessen on November 26, 1948. He is the only son and eldest of three children born of William and Genevieve Essey. He was baptized on April 17, 1949, at St. Spyridon Greek Orthodox Church in Monessen, and raised at St. Michael Antiochian Orthodox Church in Monessen. His Grace received his primary and secondary education in the public schools of Monessen. In 1970 he received his B.A. in Psychology from California State University of Pennsylvania in California, Pennsylvania. He entered St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in Crestwood, New York, in 1970 and received his M.Div. in 1973. From 1973 until 1975 he served as pastoral assistant at St. George Church in Detroit, Michigan, and from 1975 until 1986 he served as director of the Archdiocese's Department of Youth Affairs with offices at the main chancery of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America in Englewood, New Jersey. While working in that capacity, he served as assistant pastor at St. Anthony Church in Bergenfield, New Jersey, and instructor of Contemporary Byzantine Chant at St. Vladimir's Seminary from 1980 until 1986. During 1986 and 1987 he resided at the St. John of Damascus Patriarchal Institute of Theology at the Balamand Monastery of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos in the al-Koura region of north Lebanon where he studied, taught, and did research and translations for *The Liturgikon: The Book of Divine Services for the Priest and Deacon*, which was published by the Archdiocese's Antakya Press in 1989 (reprinted in 1994).



Bishop BASIL was tonsured a reader by the late Metropolitan ANTONY (Bashir) at St. Michael Church in Monessen on October 27, 1964, and was ordained to the subdiaconate and diaconate by Metropolitan PHILIP (Saliba) at St. Ignatius of Antioch Church at the Antiochian Village in Bolivar, Pennsylvania, on September 30, 1979. On January 27, 1980, he was ordained to the priesthood by Metropolitan PHILIP at St. Anthony Church in Bergenfield, New Jersey, and on October 9, 1988, he was elevated to the dignity of archimandrite by Metropolitan PHILIP at St. George Church in Wichita, Kansas. From July 1, 1987, until his consecration to the episcopacy in 1992, he served as priest at St. George Church in Wichita, Kansas. During his pastorate the new church temple was erected, consecrated and elevated to the status of Cathedral on April 21, 1991. He received monastic tonsure to the Lesser Schema at the Patriarchal Stavropegic Monastery of St. John the Baptist in Tolleshunt Knight by Maldon, Essex, England, during the night between January 19 and 20, 2003, at the hands of the monastery's abbot, Archimandrite KYRILL.

His Grace was nominated for bishop (auxiliary to Metropolitan PHILIP) by the General Assembly of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America on July 26, 1991, and was elected to the episcopacy (with the titular see of Enfeh al-Koura in north Lebanon) by the Holy Synod of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of the Great City-of-God Antioch and all the East on November 14, 1991. He was consecrated to the episcopacy on May 31, 1992, at St. George Cathedral in Wichita, Kansas, by Metropolitan PHILIP of the Archdiocese of North America, Metropolitan ELIAS (Audi) of the Archdiocese of Beirut, Bishop ANTOUN (Khoury) titular bishop of Seleucia and auxiliary of the Archdiocese of North America, and the late Archbishop MICHAEL (Shaheen) of Toledo, Ohio, auxiliary of the Archdiocese of North America. From 1992 until 1995 he resided at the Los Angeles Chancery, and in September 1995 he took up residence at the Wichita Chancery. By a decision of the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate dated October 9, 2003, His Grace became a diocesan bishop and, since his enthronement on December 15, 2004, bears the title of Bishop of Wichita and the Diocese of Mid-America.

Bishop BASIL co-chaired the Joint OCA-Antiochian Canonization Commission which led to the glorification of Bishop RAPHAEL (Hawaweeny) of Brooklyn on May 29, 2000. His Grace oversaw the publication of the book containing St. Raphael's *Vita*, Akolouthia and Akathist (Antakya Press 2000), arranged the hymnography for St. Raphael to Byzantine melodies, and directed the Clergy Brotherhood Choir which recorded an audio CD of the hymns for the feast of St. Raphael (Antakya Press 2001). In November 2002 His Grace headed the delegation from the Archdiocese of North America which met in Geneva, Switzerland with the delegation from the Patriarchate of Antioch to reach agreement on the basic principles of Self-Rule for the Archdiocese of North America.

His Grace, The Right Reverend Bishop BASIL resides at the Chancery of the Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America located at 1559 North Woodlawn Boulevard, Wichita, Kansas 67208-2429. The Diocesan Cathedral of St. George is located at 7515 East 13th Street at Broadmoor, Wichita, Kansas 67206-1223.

[Photos of Bishop BASIL's enthronement.](#)

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