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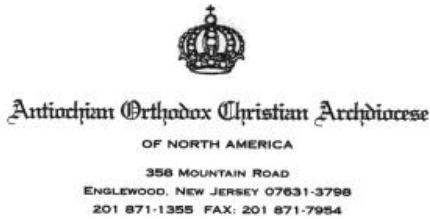
Press Reslease on Autonomy June 26, 2002

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Press Release: Holy Synod of Antioch Recognizes Its North American Archdiocese as Being Autonomous

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The Holy Synod of Antioch has blessed and recognized the autonomy of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, not "in theory," as it was wrongly reported, but in reality.

The following is the translation of the Synodal decision which was adopted unanimously on Thursday, June 13, 2002:

SYNODAL DECISION

"The Holy Synod of Antioch, at its regular meeting held at the Patriarchate in Damascus, Syria, from June 11 – June 14, 2002, and having reviewed the plea of the General Assembly of the Antiochian Archdiocese of North America, which was adopted in Los Angeles, CA, July 26, 2001, and has been submitted to His Beatitude, Patriarch Ignatius IV and the Holy Synod blesses the wish of its children in the Antiochian Archdiocese of North America, and recognizes their Archdiocese as autonomous.

This will render their witness more powerful and more effective, as they identify with the civilization of North America; and in order to express the canonical and pastoral factors of this renewed Archdiocese, which will affect the basic law of the Patriarchate, on the one hand, and the constitution of the Archdiocese on the other hand.

Therefore, the Holy Synod decided to establish a committee, composed from six to eight persons, appointed equally by His Beatitude and His Eminence, Metropolitan Philip, to propose a constitution for this autonomous Archdiocese, to be presented to the Holy Synod of Antioch, in order to acquire its final canonical status.

The first meeting of this committee will be held in the coming fall."

"...the Disciples were called Christians first in Antioch!" **ACTS 11:26**

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