



**The Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese  
OF NORTH AMERICA**

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February 26, 2009

**TO BE READ FROM THE PULPIT  
AND PUBLISHED IN THE CHURCH BULLETIN**

Esteemed Members of the Board of Trustees of the Archdiocese,  
Beloved Clergy and Parish Councils and all Faithful of our  
God-protected Archdiocese,

Greetings and blessings to all of you in the spirit of this Holy and Great Lent.

Enclosed, please find two copies of the Holy Synod decision regarding all bishops within the Holy See of Antioch. This decision was adopted by the Holy Synod of Antioch which was convened at the Patriarchate in Damascus, February 24, 2009. The Patriarch and the Holy Synod are the highest authority in our Antiochian Church. You will find enclosed the Arabic text and the English translation which is mine. Since this was a special Synod Meeting with only one item on the agenda concerning the bishops, the proposed text of this decision was sent to the members of the Holy Synod, who were not present, for their approval.

We take this opportunity to wish you the blessings and spiritual rewards of this Great Lent which was described by St. John Chrysostom as the "springtime of souls."

Your Father in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Metropolitan Philip".

Metropolitan PHILIP  
Primate  
The Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese  
of North America

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