



Remarks of His Eminence Metropolitan Joseph
on the Occasion of the Dinner which was held
at the Archdiocese Headquarters in Honor of
His Excellency Antoine Chedid, Ambassador of
Lebanon to the United States, on the Occasion
of His Retirement
January 8th, 2016

Your Excellency Ambassador Chedid, Mrs. Chedid, Distinguished Ambassadors, Your Eminences, Your Graces, Reverend Fathers, Sheikh Merhi, and Honored Guests:

It gives me great pleasure this evening to host this wonderful dinner to honor a man who has dedicated his life to the pursuit of peace and stability for his native country of Lebanon. His Excellency Ambassador Antoine Chedid has

truly pursued a career which has been filled with accomplishments that have earned him the respect of his countrymen, fellow diplomats, and all who have had the occasion to work with him. He has served as the Ambassador of Lebanon to the United States for the past eight and a half years. Prior to that, he served as the Ambassador of Lebanon to Greece from 1998 until 2000, and as Consul General in Los Angeles, California from 1984 to 1986, and in New York and the Eastern States from 1991 to 1998.

Yesterday I spoke with His Beatitude Patriarch John X by phone. He expressed his great joy for this gathering which recognizes the exemplary service of Ambassador Chedid. He asked that his love and respect be conveyed to Ambassador Chedid, and sends his congratulations for this well deserved honor.

Antoine is well respected and loved by all of us, and was a good friend of my predecessor, the late Metropolitan Philip of blessed memory. Although his title is Ambassador, he is much more than that – he is a friend to everyone. In many ways, his ministry is like our ministry. He has been welcomed to this Archdiocese headquarters many times, and we will welcome him here always, and hope that he considers this another home. We share the same family roots from Zahle and we know that Zahle produces good fruit. Antoine is a shining example of this good fruit.

We host this dinner to say farewell to Antoine, his wife Nicole and their children Georges, Rhea, and Anthony, and we will certainly miss him and his family. His departure leaves a vacuum and truly he has large shoes which will need to be filled by his successor.

Recently, the U.S. – Arab Chamber named Antoine as “2015 Ambassador of the Year” at a luncheon that was held at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Georgetown, and we congratulate him on this award. More than 100 business and government leaders participated in the luncheon and awards ceremony. In bestowing this award, David Hamond, the president of the U.S.-Arab Chamber noted, “Lebanon has faced more than its fair share of challenges over the years, but Tony has met these challenges with grace, dignity, and skill.” The Honorable John Kerry, U.S. Secretary of State, sent a letter of congratulations in which he said, “You and your family should be proud of all that you have accomplished during your exemplary service in Washington, and in the course of a broader career in the Foreign Ministry, dedicated to

fostering strong relations with the United States.”

On behalf of this entire Archdiocese, the hierarchs, clergy, and faithful, and in recognition of your tireless and courageous service in pursuit of peace and stability, I bestow on Your Excellency Ambassador Antoine Chedid the highest honor which is awarded by this Archdiocese, the Order of St. Raphael. We congratulate you, your wife Nicole and your children on a job very well done. May God bless you all as you embark on the next phase of your lives. May God bless America and Lebanon.