

PROPOSED RESOLUTION TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

WHEREAS, the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America (“Archdiocese”) has grown from a small mission, directed chiefly to immigrants from the Near East, into a vast archdiocese of approximately 230 parishes and missions, over 350 clergy and approximately 500,000 faithful, whose ethnic diversity increasingly approximates the rich ethnic diversity of North America itself;

WHEREAS, among other things, the growth of the Archdiocese has been accompanied by an increase in the number of bishops serving in it, from a single Metropolitan to a Metropolitan and four auxiliary bishops;

WHEREAS, the Archdiocese has developed its own internal structures and institutions, which respond effectively to the particular cultural and political conditions in North America, while at the same time reflecting the Orthodox Church’s perennial norms for the well-ordered life of an autonomous local church;

WHEREAS, the granting of the status of autonomy to the Archdiocese by the Holy Synod of Antioch at this time would confirm and strengthen the Archdiocese’s capacity for effective self-governance, and thus help to ensure the stability of the Archdiocese and its continued flourishing in the future;

WHEREAS, such autonomy would safeguard the canonical principle that local matters should be handled locally, among other things allowing the selection of bishops for the Archdiocese whose life and work is known to the faithful here and who are familiar with the situation of the Church in the United States and Canada;

WHEREAS, such autonomy would allow greater flexibility to the Archdiocese as it works with other Orthodox jurisdictions towards the establishment of an administratively united Orthodox Church in North America, which would more fully embody the ecclesiology and canonical norms of Orthodoxy and advance the mission and witness of Orthodoxy on this continent;

WHEREAS, the autonomous Archdiocese would continue to maintain close ties with the Mother Church of Antioch, with its institutions and faithful, always mindful of its spiritual roots;

WHEREAS, His Beatitude, Patriarch Ignatius and His Eminence, Metropolitan Philip will be meeting to discuss this resolution;

THEREFORE, the General Assembly of this 45th Convention of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese does hereby beseech the Patriarch and the Holy Synod of Antioch to grant the Archdiocese autonomy, the details of which would be worked out, in consultation with the Patriarch.

July 28, 2001