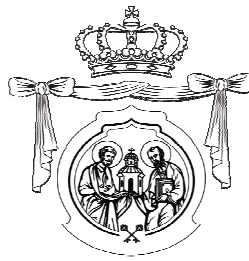


His Eminence  
The Most Reverend  
Metropolitan JOSEPH



Archbishop of New York and  
Metropolitan of  
All North America

**ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE  
OF NORTH AMERICA**

*“The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever.” Is 40:8*

October 2, 2017

Dear Brother Hierarchs, Reverend Clergy, Esteemed members of the Archdiocese Board of Trustees, and Christ-loving Faithful,

Blessing and greetings to you in the Name of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus!

With profound sadness, yet hope in the Resurrection, I announce the passing into eternal life of my beloved brother, Bishop ANTOUN. Words cannot begin to describe our debt of gratitude to His Grace nor our sense of loss at his falling asleep.

As our senior, and for many years our only, auxiliary bishop, he traveled the width and breadth of our God-protected Archdiocese. He was sincerely loved by all – young and old – and he will be greatly missed. All of us who were blessed to witness his retirement banquet this past July in Miami were greatly moved by the effort he made to be with *his people* one last time. Now we are comforted and assured that he will eternally pray for *his people* at the throne of God.

All churches in the Archdiocese are directed to hold Trisagion Prayers of Mercy this Sunday in memory of Bishop ANTOUN and all are asked to pray for His Grace in their public and private prayers throughout the next forty days. We are diligently working on the arrangements for the funeral and burial and will post them once they are final.

As I continue to attend the meetings of the Holy Synod this week at the Holy Patriarchal Monastery of Saint Elias Shwayya, Lebanon, be assured of my paternal love and prayers as we mourn the passing of His Grace.

Your Father In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Metropolitan Joseph". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a long horizontal stroke.

**+JOSEPH**

Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of all North America

*“The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch” (Acts 11: 26)*

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