

Decision Number ex. 14-1/2022, Date: 17 October 2022

As the Holy Antiochian Synod has officially received the Retirement Letter of His Eminence JOSEPH (Zehlaoui), Metropolitan of the Antiochian Archdiocese of New York and All North America, submitted by him on September 17, 2022; and as the Synod has taken note of the developments occurring in the Archdiocese during the period prior to the announcement of the resignation, and has been informed of the procedures following His Eminence's decision to retire, in terms of appointing a Temporary Committee to conduct the process of transition of administration and for the management of the Archdiocese during the period between the date of retirement and the date of the convening of the Holy Synod; and after discussion and deliberation,

The Holy Synod of Antioch has decided to:

First: Consider the retirement submitted by His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH (Zehlaoui) effective from the date of its submission on September 17, 2022, and thank him for the years he spent serving the Antiochian Archdiocese of North America;

Second: Consider the Metropolitan See of the Antiochian Archdiocese of North America vacant from the date of the issuance of this resolution, with all the effects of this vacancy as provided in the Antiochian rules and regulations;

Third: Consider the retired Metropolitan JOSEPH (Zehlaoui), Former Metropolitan of the Antiochian Archdiocese of North America, and no longer a member of the Holy Synod of Antioch;

Fourth: Request from Metropolitan JOSEPH (Zehlaoui), in accordance with the practiced ecclesiastical procedures upon a bishop's retirement, absolutely not to perform or participate in any clerical ordination, and to determine, in coordination with the Patriarchal Vicar upon his appointment, and with the Metropolitan of the Archdiocese upon his election, the parish church in which he will permanently celebrate the Divine Liturgy; and to request from him absolutely not to perform any liturgical, sacramental, or sanctification service, within the Archdiocese of North America, and in any other Archdiocese, except by obtaining the necessary permission from the Metropolitan of the Archdiocese, in accordance with the known ecclesiastical procedures; provided that he mentions in the divine services the name of the Patriarch of Antioch followed by the name of the Metropolitan of the Archdiocese. Also, it generally applies to the retired arch-pastor whatever applies to arch-pastors in terms of their travel or service in another church and in terms of foreign relations;

Fifth: Offer prayers for the good health and long life of Metropolitan JOSEPH (Zehlaoui), asking God to embrace him in His grace and mercy.