

ANTIOCH

A Brief History of The Patriarchate of Antioch

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ANTIOCH, known as “Antakya” in the various tongues of the Middle East, is today only a small town in the Hatay province of southern Turkey. Situated on the banks of the Orontes River not far from the Mediterranean coast, Antioch’s population is now predominantly Muslim. The general welfare of the people is closely linked to the general welfare of their simple crops of olives and tobacco.

As might be guessed, modern Antioch is not exactly a booming vacation spot. It is instead the sort of place one likes to pass through merely to get somewhere else. There is little in the town’s outward appearance to suggest to the passing wayfarer that it was once the splendor of the East. Yet, surprisingly, Antioch was once just that a long time ago.

While most of the ancient city is now buried under about thirty-three feet of earth, relics of the city’s fabled past can still be found by those willing to look. One everywhere stumbles across ancient ruins in Antioch, such as a fabulous Greek theater, sections of Trajan's aqueduct, a hippodrome, parts of the early city walls, an ancient bridge over the Orontes, and the fortress on Mount Silipius. There are also ancient artifacts from Antioch in the Hatay Archaeological Museum.

Yet the true glory of Antioch is not to be found in the ruins of its past or in artifacts locked away in museum displays. Antioch’s glory lies not dead and buried in the past; it still lives to be found by those guided by divine revelation. For the glory of Antioch is not worldly, but spiritual—it is the Church of Antioch, the Church where the followers of Christ were first called “Christians” (Acts 11:26).

The Birth of the City

Antioch's story begins with Seleucus "Nicator" ("Victor," or "Conqueror"), an officer in Alexander the Great's army who seized control of the Syrian territories upon Alexander's death in 323. Seleucus reared two capitols for his empire that would become more populous than any then known in mainland Greece: Seleucia (just south of modern Baghdad) on the Tigris River and Antioch in northwest Syria. Antioch was dedicated in 300 B.C. and named after Seleucus' father, Antiochus, one of Alexander's most distinguished generals. Seleucus strategically located the city between the Orontes River and the northwestern slopes of Mount Silipius, some fourteen miles from the Syrian coast and 250 miles north of Jerusalem. The location ensured the control of the land routes between Europe and Asia, making Antioch the ideal western capitol of the Seleucid Empire. Later Seleucid emperors made Antioch their permanent residence, and under Antiochus IV the city became the wealthiest in his domain, controlling as it did three major trade routes.

The city originally occupied no more than a single square mile, and its walls were never extended to include more than two square miles—and this only to encompass more public facilities and monuments. Seleucus originally divided the city into two sections: one for his Greek veterans and the other for native Syrians. Antioch was renowned for its park-like appearance, being everywhere graced with flower gardens, landscaped boulevards, and enchanting parks. The city was especially known for a beautiful grove of laurels and cypresses set amidst fountains and streams in the suburb of Daphne, some four or five miles west of the city.

Daphne also boasted a magnificent temple to Apollo, and was famous for its extravagant religious festival held each August. The deuterocanonical book of 2 Maccabees records that the Jewish high priest Onias III, fearing for his life, withdrew "to a place of sanctuary at Daphne near Antioch" (2 Macc. 4:33), referring to either the temple to Apollo or Artemis. (Onias was nevertheless murdered in 172 B.C. after several years exiled in Antioch.) Other major temples in Antioch included ones to Ares, the god of war, and Dionysius, the youngest of the twelve great Olympians and the god of wine and revelry. Many of these temples were

equipped with large kitchens and dining halls, since animal sacrifices were normally consumed afterwards at public banquets.

Antioch had many exquisite temples, theaters, gymnasiums (which were more like our public schools than our “gymnasiums”), and a stadium for sporting events, all of which were adorned with the finest artwork. Statuary was ubiquitous throughout the city. A student of the famous sculptor Lysippus of Sicyon (4th cent. B.C.), Eutychides, created the city’s famous statue of *Tyche* (“Fortune”), a capricious force in which the future of Antioch supposedly lay. The robed goddess sits on a rock (symbolizing Mount Silipius), crowned with a turreted diadem (the city’s walls and gates), with young people resting at her feet (the Orontes). Antiochus IV, who came to the throne in 175 B.C., went on to make the city the artistic hub of the Greek empire.

However, Antiochus IV also introduced into the city one its ugliest institutions. Having lived for fourteen years in Rome, he began gladiatorial competitions in Antioch. The citizens were at first repulsed by the brutality, but were eventually seduced by the lavish pomp with which Antiochus surrounded the events. In time, the public became immune to carnage as “entertainment.” All the same, Antiochians remained more partial to horse racing in the hippodrome.

Pompey captured Antioch in 64 B.C., making Syria a Roman province and declaring Antioch a free city. Antioch continued as a major metropolis in the East—in fact, the third largest city in the Roman Empire—and became the residence and provincial capital of the Roman proconsuls of Syria, who were sent by the senate. Rome considered Antioch the ideal staging area for military operations against the neighboring Persian Empire in the East. In fact, the Syrian province became so important to the Roman Empire as a buffer to Persia that it was eventually placed under the direct control of the Roman Emperor himself, who directed it through a legate. During the first century, a massive statue of the “god” Tiberius Caesar dominated the main thoroughfare in Antioch, a constant reminder to the inhabitants of who was ultimately in charge.

Antioch naturally achieved a highly favored position in the administrative system of the Roman Empire, from which it reaped many

benefits. Julius Caesar himself graced the city with numerous public buildings, temples, baths, aqueducts, and theaters, including a new amphitheater. As the capital of Rome's vast Prefecture of the East, its oversight included the regions of Syria, Palestine, Arabia, Mesopotamia, Phoenicia, Pontus Asia Minor, and Thrace. Emperor Diocletian reorganized the Empire in 295, and made Antioch the center of his Diocese of the East, which also embraced the island of Cyprus.

Antioch also retained its cultural leadership under Rome, and became the intellectual center of the entire East. This cultural and intellectual dynamism was at least partly fostered by the diverse make up of Antioch's people. The city's population, believed during the first century A.D. to be half a million, was a mix of different races and religions. There were of course numerous Macedonians and Greeks; but the city was also home to many native Syrians and Phoenicians, as well as Jews, Romans, and multitudes from remote parts of Asia. Many of these different peoples had flocked to Antioch when Seleucus I had given the right of citizenship to any who would populate his new capitol. Nevertheless, Antioch always remained a thoroughly Hellenistic city.

One of the most significant minority groups in Antioch was its Jewish community. The Jewish historian Josephus records that the Seleucid emperors encouraged Jews to emigrate to the city by offering full citizenship (*Antiquities of the Jews*, 12:119), and the Jewish population skyrocketed after 200 B.C. following the incorporation of Judaea into the Seleucid Empire. Scholars estimate that from twenty to forty-five thousand Jews made Antioch their home at this time, making the Jewish community in Antioch the largest in Syria. They were located primarily in the southwestern section of the city, and were legally recognized as a self-governing *politeuma*. It is in this Jewish community that the Antiochian church came into existence.

The Early Antiochian Church

The first mention of Antioch in the New Testament occurs with the selection of the Church's first seven deacons in Acts 6. Nicholas, one of the deacons, was from Antioch (Acts 6:5). He was a Gentile convert to Judaism and possibly the first Christian from the city. Nicholas is blamed by Irenaeus of Lyons in the second century for founding the heresy of "the Nicolaitians" (Rev. 2:6; 3:15), which he claims taught sexual promiscuity and the eating of meat offered to idols (*Against Heresies*, 1:26:3).

Christianity in Antioch has its roots in both the Jewish and Hellenistic worlds. The church in Antioch was founded by Jewish Christians fleeing the persecution that followed the martyrdom of St. Stephen, one of the original seven deacons (Acts 11:19). These Jewish-Christian refugees preached the Gospel to the Jews of Antioch, but some Cypriots and Cyrenians were also converted, and these in turn evangelized a number of Greeks. Thus the church of Antioch, a mixture of Hellenized Jews and Gentiles, was born within a decade of the resurrection of Christ.

Like many large, cosmopolitan cities where people of different cultures and faiths interact, Antioch was a hotbed of religious syncretism. The apostles in Jerusalem, witnessing the rapid growth of the new Christian community in Antioch, decided to send Barnabas there to oversee things and ensure the Gospel wasn't compromised in Antioch's syncretistic atmosphere. Barnabas was a Jew of Cypriot origin, and probably a Hellenist. Under his sure guidance, the Christian community in Antioch developed into a powerful church. However, Barnabas' very success proved to be a problem, for the church became too large for him to manage alone. He therefore sent to nearby Tarsus for the apostle Paul, who had been converted several years previously in Damascus. Together, Barnabas and Paul organized in Antioch a mixed Jewish-Gentile church that soon rivaled Jerusalem in size and importance. (Antioch is the second most frequently mentioned city in the Book of Acts after Jerusalem.)

But Paul and Barnabas didn't run the Antiochian church alone. Acts 13:1 lists three other "prophets and teachers" exercising leadership in the community: Lucius, a Jew from Cyrene in North Africa; Simeon "who

was called Niger” (“Niger” being a Latin name meaning “black”), presumably a black African and possibly none other than Simeon of Cyrene who carried Jesus’ cross (see Lk. 23:26; Luke himself, though, doesn’t explicitly equate the two); and a certain Manaen, whom Luke says grew up with the tetrarch Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great.

There were many competing cults and mystery religions in Antioch to tempt the new Christian convert. The most popular foreign god at the start of the first century A.D. was the Egyptian goddess Isis. Nevertheless, the Antiochian Christians were committed to their new Faith. The young church collected and sent alms to help relieve the church in Jerusalem from an anticipated famine (Acts 11:27-30). Antioch was also the birthplace of organized foreign missions (Acts 13:1-3). St. Luke himself hailed from Antioch, and it is quite possibly there that he wrote his Gospel and Acts of the Apostles.

The most famous biblical reference to Antioch states that it was in this city the followers of Christ were first called “Christians” (Acts 11:26). The label “Christians” likely comes from the Latin *Christiani*, meaning “Partisans of Christ.” The name originated among the Gentile pagan population, for no Jew, not even a Hellenized one, would have acknowledged the followers of Jesus of Nazareth as followers of “Christ.” Jews never referred to Jesus as “Christ” (“Messiah” in Hebrew) or his disciples as followers of the Messiah, instead calling them “Nazarenes” (see Acts 24:5). The Church at the time simply described its members as adherents of “the Way.”

It seems no coincidence that the followers of Christ were first called “Christians” at Antioch. The label “Christian” was a contemptuous nickname, possibly inspired by the presence at Antioch of an organized brigade of chanting devotees of the emperor known as the *Augustiani*. This group did nothing but encourage the public adulation of the emperor, and their enthusiasm for paying ludicrous homage to Nero resulted in their being satirized as imperial cheer-leaders. The comparison speaks volumes for the enthusiasm of the early Church in Antioch in promoting Christ to anyone who would listen.

The Antiochian Church is primarily responsible for opening its

membership to Gentiles without them first needing to be initiated as Jews. Its policy of accepting male Gentile converts without circumcision resulted in the first major internal conflict of the Church. The resolution of this conflict at the Council of Jerusalem (see Acts 15) determined the direction of the Antiochian mission to the Gentiles, and confirmed the dynamic nature of its outreach.

Peter and Paul are traditionally credited with heading the Christian church at Antioch. While Paul was busy on his missionary journeys, though, it was primarily Peter who administered the affairs of Antioch. He remained in this capacity for seven years, probably from A.D. 39-46, before removing to Rome after consecrating Evodius as bishop of the city. Evodius was followed by a number of other outstanding bishops of Antioch in the second century, beginning with the celebrated Ignatius, martyred around the year 107. His later successor, Theophilus, bishop of Antioch in the last half of the second century, was one of the Church's great apologists, and the first known Christian to use the word "Trinity" for the three divine Persons.

One of the outstanding bishops of Antioch during the third century was Babylas, imprisoned and martyred in 250 during the great persecution of Emperor Decius. Noted for his courage, Babylas is perhaps best remembered for his confrontation with Emperor Philip the Arabian (244-249), who had come to power after the murder of Emperor Gordian III (238-244), who was but a child. Philip is said to have been sympathetic to Christianity, and perhaps feeling pangs of guilt over the murder of Gordian, desired to pray at the church in Antioch during the Easter vigil. Babylas adamantly refused Philip entrance before he had done proper penance for his crimes.

However, not all the early Antiochian bishops were a credit to the Church. The local synod of bishops, though, was quick in dealing with these. Such was the case with Paul of Samosata. In the mid-third century, the Arabian desert state of Palmyra, ruled by a chieftain named Odenath and his wife Zenobia, led the Roman East in revolt. In 260, they managed to impose a certain Paul, native of Samosata, on the church of Antioch. Paul was naturally on friendly terms with his benefactors, both theologically and politically. As bishop he espoused the heresies of

Monarchiansim and Adoptionism, thus denying Christ's full divinity. Paul was condemned by no less than three local synods between 264 and 269, with bishops from Syria, Palestine, Arabia, Cilicia, Cappadocia, Pontus, and Lycaonia all taking part. The first synod held in 264 deposed Paul, convicting him of heresy, ostentatiousness, and arrogance, and then elected one Domnus in his place. Under the protection of Queen Zenobia of Palmyra, however, Paul was able to maintain himself in office for some time. He was finally expelled in 272 by a decree of Emperor Aurelian (270-275).

By the time Paul of Samosata became bishop, Antioch was widely regarded as the first bishop of all Asia. Because of Antioch's prestige throughout the Church, local synods like the one in 268 condemning Paul of Samosata had ecumenical repercussions. Antioch convened ten local synods in the last half of the third century, all of them closely watched by the rest of the Church. Unfortunately, because Paul of Samosata had used the term *homoousios* ("co-essential") in propagating his heresy, the bishops of the Antiochian synod of 268 rashly condemned the term as heretical. This was to have tragic consequences for the Church in the next century, when many bishops would reject the Nicene Creed for no other reason than it used the word *homoousios* to say Christ is "one in essence" with the Father. Though the bishops assembled in Antioch in 268 clearly meant to condemn the term only in the heretical sense given it by Paul of Samosata, the prestige of Antioch was such that the word became nearly irredeemable. Only in the late fourth century was it made clear that the term *homoousios* as such hadn't been condemned by Antioch, only its heretical usage.

The pagans of Antioch, though, were not themselves over-awed with their city's prestigious church, and made a rather clever attempt at the beginning of the fourth century to rid themselves of the city's entire Christian population. After the death of Emperor Galerius in 311, Emperor Maximinus toured his eastern realm and was met in Antioch with a delegation of prominent citizens who requested that he rescind Galerius' edict of toleration for the Christians (forced on him by Emperor Constantine the Great in the West). Among these prominent citizens was one Theotecnus, curator of Antioch and an apostate from

the Christian Faith. Maximinus agreed to lift the edict, and Theotecnus began a local persecution of the Christians of Antioch. He then took the next step of preparing to erect a statue to Zeus Philios—ironically, the god of friendship and goodwill! Zeus Philios was the tutelary god of Antioch, and had his own temple in the city.

According to the *Ecclesiastical History* of Eusebius of Pamphilus (9:2-4), the statue was dedicated with various pagan rites and ceremonies, during which Theotecnus pretended to utter an oracle from the god commanding that the Christians be evicted from the city *en masse*. Word was sent to Emperor Maximinus, who was known to detest Christians and who, in any event, was not one to contradict the gods. The Christians were expelled from Antioch. The success of this ruse emboldened pagan magistrates in cities throughout the East to erect similar statues and receive identical oracles.

For his part, the resourceful Theotecnus was rewarded by the emperor with the office of chief magistrate of Galatia. Justice nevertheless caught up with Theotecnus. After the defeat of Maximinus at the hands of Licinius in 313, Licinius had the scheming Theotecnus executed after being duly tortured. Eusebius ends his account of the incident with an appropriate citation from Psalm 146:3, “Put not your trust in princes” (*Ecclesiastical History*, 9:11:5-8).

Antioch and the Ecumenical Councils

Emperor Constantine the Great openly embraced the Christian Faith after his defeat of Licinius in 324, and, that same year, initiated the construction of Constantinople as the new capitol of the empire. At that time, the Arian heresy (the teaching that Christ is a created being) was beginning to rend the unity of the Church, and Constantine turned to Bishop Hosius of Cordoba to mediate a reconciliation between the Orthodox and the Arians. In the spring of 325 Hosius was in Antioch to preside over a council to determine between rival Orthodox and Arian claimants to the episcopal throne. The council convened on Easter in 325, attended by fifty-nine bishops of the Middle East. The Orthodox Bishop Eustathius of Beroea was chosen to become bishop of Antioch, and the bishops of Caesarea, Laodicea, and Neronias were condemned as being pro-Arian. However, the synod deferred sanction of the three to a “great and holy council” of the whole Church that it recommended should meet at Ancyra in Asia Minor. Thus the idea of an ecumenical council originated in Antioch.

Constantine agreed to sponsor such a council to decide the Arian issue, but changed the location to Nicaea in Bithynia (the modern town of Iznik, southeast of Istanbul in Turkey). The First Ecumenical Council was convened by the emperor that same year, 325. Some 80 bishops from Antiochian territory were in attendance. Moreover, according to Theodoret of Cyrrhus, Bishop Eustathius of Antioch even presided over the council (see Theodoret’s Letter 151, “To the Monks of Euphratensian, the Osrhoene, Syria, Phoenicia, and Cilicia”). Theodoret in his *Ecclesiastical History* also asserts that Eustathius occupied the seat of honor at the right hand of Emperor Constantine, and gave the panegyric address to the emperor (see 1:7); however, this is all contradicted by the historian Sozomen in his *Ecclesiastical History* (see 1:19). Either way, the Council of Nicaea issued a landmark creed declaring the Father and the Son to be one in essence, and also promulgated Canon 6 sanctioning the traditional primacy of the bishop of Antioch over all the other bishops of the civil Diocese of the East.

Most of the local Antiochian synods held during the fourth century dealt with the ongoing Arian controversy. The council of 330 deposed

the Orthodox Eustathius of Antioch, and for a long time thereafter the Arians controlled the city. The council of 340 deposed that great defender of Nicene orthodoxy, Athanasius of Alexandria, and a certain Gregory from Cappadocia was consecrated in his stead. The deposition of Athanasius was ratified by another synod in August the following year (341), and consisted of 97 prelates with Emperor Constantius, who succeeded his father Constantine in 337, also present. The synod of 341 was timed to coincide with the dedication of Antioch's great "Golden Church," commenced by Constantine before his death.

Eusebius of Caesarea described Antioch's Golden Church in his *Life of Constantine* as a structure of "unparalleled size and beauty. The entire building was encompassed by an enclosure of great extent, within which the church itself rose to a vast elevation, being of an octagonal form, and surrounded on all sides by many chambers, courts, and upper and lower apartments; the whole was richly adorned with a profusion of gold, brass, and other materials of the most costly kind" (3:50). However, Julian "the Apostate" closed the church when he made Antioch his capitol after becoming emperor in 360. In retaliation, Christians burned down the historic temple to Apollo in nearby Daphne.

The Arian Emperor Constantius appointed the Arian Leontius to the throne of Antioch in 348. Though Leontius endeavored to keep his Arianism low-profile, the fact that he would only ordain Arians to the clergy eventually gave him away. Eventually two devoted Antiochian laymen, Flavianus and Diodorus, rallied the Orthodox and began gathering them into cemeteries at night to sing hymns at the tombs of the martyrs. It was during these all-night worship services that antiphonal singing was introduced to the Church. Flavianus would later become bishop of Antioch, and Diodorus bishop of Tarsus.

Leontius was succeeded in 357 by Eudoxius, an out-and-out Arian. When Eudoxius of Antioch was translated to Constantinople in 360, Antioch fragmented into Orthodox and Arian parties. A certain Euzoius, a friend of Arius from an early age, was made bishop of Antioch on the orders of Emperor Constantius in 361. During the reign of the Arian Emperor Valens (364-378), the Orthodox clergy were expelled from the city and Arianism reigned supreme. Many Orthodox who refused

communion with Euzoius were executed by Valens by being drowned in the Orontes River.

Orthodoxy returned to Antioch when Emperor Gratian's Edict of Toleration of 379 allowed Patriarch Meletius to resume the Antiochian throne; Orthodox Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire the following year with the accession of Emperor Theodosius the Great in 380. Paganism and Arianism became technically illegal, though pragmatism demanded their nominal toleration. The Second Ecumenical Council at Constantinople in 381, attended by an Antiochian delegation of 65 bishops, reaffirmed Nicene Orthodoxy and amplified the Nicene Creed to profess the full divinity of the Holy Spirit. The Council also removed territory from the jurisdiction of Antioch to create a separate jurisdiction for the Church of Constantinople, which was then in Canon 3 declared second in honor in the universal Church only to Old Rome.

Thus all of Asia Minor, with the exception of Cilicia, passed to the church of the new imperial capitol. Ironically, the first president of the Council was none other than Meletius, the bishop of Antioch! Meletius, however, died during the proceedings and Gregory the Theologian, then bishop of Constantinople, succeeded Meletius as president of the Council. Political wrangling then led Gregory to resign both his presidency of the Council and his episcopacy. The Council then elected an elderly but pious civil official who was at the time only a catechumen, Nectarius, as bishop of Constantinople. Nectarius was quickly baptized and then immediately consecrated bishop while still in his baptismal robes. It was he who saw to the drafting of the Council's canons that created Constantinople's jurisdiction and primacy in the Church. The above mentioned Flavianus was then chosen by the Council as Meletius' successor in Antioch.

Antioch's role in the theological debates of the seven great Ecumenical Councils was determined by the so-called Antiochian School of Theology. This was not so much an educational institution as we think of "schools" today, but more of a local theological tradition. Antioch, along with its rival Alexandria in Egypt, was an intellectual center of the Roman Empire; this rivalry carried over into the Church' ecclesiastical life, with both Antioch and Alexandria having theological

Schools vying for supreme influence. Though the Antiochian School is usually considered to have come into existence in the late third century, its roots actually lie in the rich Syrian spirituality that blossomed soon after the apostolic era, and which found beautiful expression in hymnology, poetry, and ascetic literature.

One of the founders of the Antiochian School was a converted Sophist named Malchion, who gained prominence as an opponent of Paul of Samosata. The biblical scholar Lucian, who moved to Antioch around the same time (between 260-265), also contributed to the birth of the Antiochian School. The founders of a more extreme Antiochian theology were Diodorus of Tarsus and his pupil Theodore of Mopsuestia in the fourth century. In reality, there were two traditions in the School of Antioch, one extreme (represented by Diodorus of Tarsus) and the other in the mainstream of Orthodoxy (Malchion and John Chrysostom).

The School of Antioch had a tradition of scriptural exegesis distinct from that of the allegorical approach of Alexandria. Antiochians preferred what might be called a more literal and historical approach to Scripture. Behind this was an underlying philosophical disagreement: Antiochian thought tended to be more empirical, while Alexandrian thought was more mystical in its outlook. As a result of its more empirical approach, the Antiochian School avoided the allegorical flights of fancy characteristic of Alexandria. Yet, on the down side, some in Antioch had difficulty reconciling Christ's divinity with his humanity. In opposing Appolinarius who rejected the existence of the human "mind" in Christ, the Antiochian School focused on His full human nature. The Alexandrians, however, laid greater emphasis upon Christ's divinity.

Extremes in Antiochian exegesis therefore could compromise the unity of the divinity and humanity in Christ to such an extent that Christ seemed to be two persons, one human and one divine, loosely joined together. This tendency sparked a crisis in the Church when Nestorius, a pupil of Theodore of Mopsuestia, became Patriarch of Constantinople in 428. Born of Persian parents, Nestorius had been a monk and then a priest at Antioch. He was the radical product of the extreme branch of the Antiochian School, and when he was called upon as Patriarch of Constantinople to pronounce upon the suitability of calling Mary

Theotokos (“God-bearer”), he demurred. Instead, he declared Mary was better called *Christotokos*, or “Christ-bearer,” as he felt that *Theotokos* confused the divine and human natures of Christ. Nestorius’ theology placed Christ’s two natures alongside each other with little more than a moral union between the two. It wasn’t a big step for Nestorius’ followers to begin asserting that Christ was two separate persons joined in an adoptionist manner.

Cyril of Alexandria, representing Antioch’s rival School, led the opposition to Nestorius, and succeeded in having him deposed at the Third Ecumenical Council at Ephesus in 431. The Antiochian delegation of 34 bishops at Ephesus was led by John, then bishop of Antioch, who unfortunately arrived late at the Council. The emperor first exiled Nestorius to his monastery in Antioch, and later to the Great Oasis in Egypt, where he died in 451. The Council created a temporary schism between Antioch and Alexandria lasting almost ten years. The Council also shrunk the jurisdiction of Antioch even further, recognizing the island of Cyprus as autocephalous (self-governing).

Nestorius’ followers in Antioch broke with the Church to form their own Nestorian church outside the borders of the Roman Empire in Persia. A Nestorian “Patriarch of the East” set up shop at Seleucia-Ctesiphon on the Tigris River, which lasted until 775 when it was moved to Baghdad. Thus was created the first breach in Antiochian unity. Antioch had suffered a great blow.

Alexandria was riding triumphant after the Council of Ephesus—in fact, too triumphantly. It was now the turn for the excesses of the Alexandrian School to be curtailed. Cyril of Alexandria, reacting to Nestorius, had emphasized the real union of divinity and humanity in Christ. Some of Cyril’s followers took this emphasis to extremes. A monk in Constantinople named Eutyches began preaching that Christ’s humanity and divinity had actually blended together in the womb of the Virgin. According to Eutyches, Christ was God and man merged into a single, composite nature, a heresy that came to be known as Monophysitism (“one-nature”).

Eutyches was promptly condemned in a local synod in the imperial capitol; but the controversy he engendered resulted in another council at

Ephesus in 449 led by Cyril's successor at Alexandria, Dioscoros. The council rehabilitated Eutyches and condemned his opponents. The proceedings at Ephesus were so heavy-handed, and the results so biased in favor of the extremes of Alexandrian theology, that Emperor Marcian was forced to convene another council at Chalcedon in 451, the Fourth Ecumenical Council.

Chalcedon achieved an admirable balance between Antiochian and Alexandrian theology. Against Nestorius, the Chalcedonian definition asserted that Christ was born of the "Virgin Mary, the Theotokos." Against Eutyches, the one Person (Gr. *hypostasis*) of Christ was acknowledged

in two natures, without confusion, without change, without separation; the distinction of the natures being in no way abolished by the union, but rather the characteristic property of each nature being preserved, and concurring into one Person and one subsistence, not as if Christ were parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son and only-begotten God.

The Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon also carved out a separate jurisdiction for the church of Jerusalem, which had since its destruction in A.D. 70 been a rather small church within Antioch's far-flung jurisdiction, canonically dependent on nearby Caesarea. Jerusalem from then on ruled a territory encompassing modern Israel, Palestine, and Jordan.

It is therefore at the Council of Chalcedon in 451 that the geographical boundaries for Antioch were finally set. They encompassed twelve Roman provinces and the Christians of the Persian Empire, corresponding to present-day Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, the Arabian peninsula, southeastern Turkey, Iran, and India. The Council also recognized the bishops of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem as "patriarchs," and their area of jurisdictional influence as "patriarchates." The title of "patriarch," or "chief father," had been used informally since the fourth century, and possibly even as early as the third. But after the Council of Chalcedon, the bishops of Antioch

would always be known as patriarchs. The Patriarch of Constantinople, as patriarch of the imperial capitol, became known as the “Ecumenical Patriarch” in the sixth century.

Chalcedon was perhaps the best attended of the Ecumenical Councils, and included a fair variety of bishops, with even two refugee Africans and a Persian gracing the proceedings. The Antiochian delegation consisted of 113 bishops. In all, 450 hierarchs subscribed to the Chalcedonian definition. Yet partisans of Alexandrian theology, who took Cyril of Alexandria’s teachings in a fundamentalist manner, would have none of it. Alexandrian theology held the terms “person” (Gr. *hypostasis*) and “nature” (Gr. *ousia*) to be synonymous, the distinction between the two being a product of Antiochian/Cappadocian genius. In the end, the controversy was basically over terminology, leading the Alexandrians to see any suggestion of duality in Christ as a relapse into Nestorianism. As a result, most of the Egyptian church would in the end reject the Council and form what has come to be known as the Coptic church. Armenia, which wasn’t represented at the Council, would also reject the definition.

In the Antiochian Patriarchate, a sizeable number of Syriac-speaking Christians similarly rejected Chalcedon, and in the sixth century formed a separate hierarchy, headed by an Antiochian “patriarch” (Severus of Antioch being the first), through the clandestine consecrations of Jacob Baradaeus. Thus a separate non-Chalcedonian Antiochian church was formed that the Orthodox derisively called “Jacobite” after its founder. The non-Chalcedonians of Antioch in turn labeled the Orthodox as “Melkites” (Syriac for, “Royalists”) because Chalcedon was the official teaching of the Imperial government.

Sundry efforts were made to reconcile the Chalcedonian Orthodox and the non-Chalcedonians, efforts ranging from the persuasive to the coercive. The most important attempt at reconciliation involved a new term developed by a Palestinian monk, Leontius of Byzantium. Leontius argued that since Christ’s dual natures subsisted in the divine Person (*hypostasis*) of the Word, as taught by Chalcedon, then Christ’s humanity drew its concrete manifestation by being *enhypostatized* (literally, “en-personed”) in the divine Word. The term “enhypostasis”

allowed the Orthodox to distinguish Christ's humanity and divinity without seeming to obliterate Christ's unity.

Taking advantage of this theological development, Emperor Justinian I (527-565) took the opportunity to convene a Fifth Ecumenical Council at Constantinople in 553, attended by around 165 bishops, including six to nine from Africa. The majority of the bishops, though, were from the Antiochian patriarchate.

To assuage the non-Chalcedonians, the Council reaffirmed Cyril of Alexandria's Twelve Anathemas against Nestorius, and declared that it is God the Word who is the subject of all attribution in the incarnate Christ. Moreover, the Council also debated the orthodoxy of some of the Antiochian School's most prominent exegetes: Diodorus of Tarsus (*d. ca.* 394), Theodore of Mopsuestia (350-428), Theodoret of Cyrrhus (393-458), and Ibas of Edessa (*d.* 457). The first three had long been under a cloud of suspicion because of their links with Nestorius, and Diodorus was even posthumously condemned by an Antiochian synod in 499. In an effort to further clarify Chalcedon's union of Antiochian and Alexandrian theology, the Council decided to condemn certain writings (the so-called "Three Chapters") of Theodore Mopsuestia, Theodoret of Cyrrhus, and Ibas of Edessa, further reaffirming the Church's rejection of Nestorianism.

At the same time, it also condemned Origenism, an extreme form of the teachings of Alexandria's most famous theologian, Origen (185-254). Thus the Council clearly condemned the radical extremes of both Antioch and Alexandria. It also further clarified Christ's human and divine natures in the unity of his one divine Person, per Leontius of Byzantium. While the Council failed to placate the foes of Chalcedon, it was an important step in the Antiochian-Alexandrian theological synthesis: it emphasized that Chalcedon could only be correctly understood in a Cyrillian sense.

In the seventh century, yet another attempt to reconcile the dissenting non-Chalcedonians was proposed by Sergius, Patriarch of Constantinople. He advanced the idea that there existed but a single will in the God-man Christ, a teaching called Monothelism. Yet the Orthodox, led by Patriarch Sophronius of Jerusalem (born in Damascus)

and a monk known as Maximus the Confessor, were compelled to point out that if Christ had both a human and a divine nature, then he must also have both a human and divine will. Maximus the Confessor (originally from the Antiochian Patriarchate, if one Syriac source is to be believed) stressed that volition is not an attribute of the person, but of nature. The trinitarian God does not have three “wills,” one for each Person, but one divine will. Similarly, in Christ there are two wills, one human and one divine, with the human will in perfect accord with the divine. Although there are, according to Maximus the Confessor, two natural wills in Christ, there is only one “gnomic will.”

Monothelism was therefore condemned at the Sixth Ecumenical Council held at Constantinople in 680. Antioch was represented at this Council by Patriarch Macarius, who declared to the assembled bishops that he “would rather be torn to pieces than accept two wills in Christ.” Macarius was put on trial during the eleventh and twelfth sessions of the Council, and his writings were found to be heretical. He was deposed and a Sicilian named Theophanes was consecrated Patriarch of Antioch by the Council at its fourteenth session.

Yet the consequences of Monothelism resulted in another tragedy for Antioch. Some adherents of Monothelism, later taking the name “Maronites” from the fourth-century Syrian solitary known as Maron, deserted Northern Syria and established themselves in the mountains of Lebanon and formed yet another separate hierarchy, the head of which assumed the title “Patriarch of Antioch and all the East.” During the Crusades, the Maronites entered into communion with the Roman Catholic church. With at this point one Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch and many dissident ones, the patriarchal throne was beginning to resemble more of a couch.

The last great heresy dealt with at an ecumenical council, that of Iconoclasm condemned at the seventh and final ecumenical council held at Nicaea in 787, offers a happy contrast in that it did not result in another breach in the unity of the Antiochian church. Moreover, Antiochian theology even set forth the logical refutation of the heresy. In fact, it was a son of the Antiochian Church who first rushed to the defense of icons: a Damascene monk at the monastery of St. Sabas near

Bethlehem born Yuhanna Mansur, better known as John of Damascus.

John justified the veneration of icons on the basis of Christ's Incarnation. In the Old Testament, he argued, images of God were forbidden because the invisible deity couldn't be circumscribed by an image of anything visible. However, in the Incarnation, God and Man have become one in the second Person of the Trinity, and thus visible. Consequently, God can now be portrayed in the icon of Christ, and appropriate reverence may be rendered the icon. If Christ cannot be portrayed in this manner, then he either lacks a human nature (the heresy of Docetism) or his humanity has been swallowed into his divinity (Monophysitism). To deny the veneration of icons on the basis that God may not be depicted is to deny the Incarnation, and hence the entire basis of our salvation. John also emphasized that the honor given to icons passes to its prototype, a teaching reaching back in the Antiochian tradition at least to Basil the Great (see, for example, Basil's *On the Holy Spirit*, 45). Thus honor given to the icon of Christ is honor given to Christ himself.

The subsequent Orthodox defense of icons took its point of departure from John of Damascus and his insistence that the Christ of history and the Christ of faith are one and the same. Theodore the Studite, John's successor as the champion of icons, pointed out that since Christ's two natures are joined in a perfect union, then the one portrayed in the icon of Christ is the incarnate God. Icons do not portray a generic "nature," but nature enhypostatized in a person. That which is portrayed in the icon is the second Person of the Trinity, for Christ did not assume a human hypostasis, as Nestorianism asserted. The icon of Christ therefore doesn't merely depict Christ's "human nature," but the Person of Christ who took flesh and dwelt among us, combining divinity and humanity in a perfect union. As the Person of Christ possesses the attributes of an individual human being, including a physical appearance that was seen by many, Christ can be portrayed in an icon without violating the Old Testament prohibition on images of God. Thus Antioch's traditional emphasis on Christ's full humanity became the basis for the veneration of icons in the Church.

The Antiochene School persisted with Theodore Abou-Qourra, a

pupil of John of Damascus, and with all the Syriac and Arabic theologians who developed their theology in a new cultural context. Furthermore, Antiochian biblical scholarship prevailed in Constantinople, and hence left its permanent stamp upon the entire exegetical tradition of the Orthodox Church. This occurred directly through the homiletical writings of John Chrysostom, and indirectly through the theological works of the Cappadocian Fathers.

Another aspect of the Antiochian church that came into its own during this period was monasticism. Antiochian monasticism actually predates Egyptian monasticism, and as a whole also tends to be less seclusive. Antiochian monks labored as missionaries among pagans; they also ran ministries to assist the poor and the needy. A lay order came into existence in the third century called the “Sons and Daughters of the Covenant” that lasted well into the medieval period, and which assisted clergy in their charitable activities in towns and villages, including running a women’s hospital in the city of Edessa.

Starting in the fourth century, actual monasteries began to be built. These were usually only modest rectangular structures two stories in height, but they quickly soon became centers of educational, literary, and artistic activity. Antiochian monastics such as Symeon Stylites, John Moschos, Dorotheos of Gaza, and John Barsanuphius have contributed greatly to the Church’s tradition of asceticism. Even monks from separated Antiochian communities, like Isaac of Nineveh (Nestorian) and Jacob of Serug (non-Chalcedonian), have composed works of such spiritual depth as to transcend confessional divisions.

In the area of worship, the Antiochian liturgy as expressed the Clementine Liturgy as well as in the Liturgies of St. Basil the Great and St. John Chrysostom became universal in Orthodoxy. Antioch also proved to be the most creative and fertile in the field of Christian literature in the early Church, especially of liturgical poetry and texts on spirituality. Antiochian liturgical poetry, such as that produced by Romanos the Melodist of Homs and Ephrem the Syrian of Nisibis, helped shape Orthodox hymnology. Antioch has produced a vast number of poets, writers, and theologians of genius and great spiritual insight. In fact, Antioch continues to enrich the Church with gifted Arab and Syrian

hierarchs and theologians.

Nevertheless, Antioch lost much of its size and importance as a result of heresy and schism. Never again would it attain the status it had before the great Christological controversies beginning in the fifth century. It is a sad irony that Jesus' followers in Antioch, who were so enthusiastic about Christ that they earned the nickname "Christians," became scandalously divided over who and what Christ really was. Yet, at least in part due to its intellectual creativity, Antioch bequeathed to Orthodoxy a rich heritage in which answers to difficult theological questions could be found.

Antioch's travails were not limited to theological controversy. It also suffered from frequent natural calamities, especially earthquakes. Socrates Scholasticus recounts in his *Ecclesiastical History* (2:10) that Antioch was destroyed by an earthquake around 337. Emperor Constantius, son of Constantine the Great, rebuilt much of the city, making a number of improvements in the process. Antioch was again destroyed by earthquakes in A.D. 526 (killing Patriarch Euphrasius) and 528 (killing as many as 5,000 people), constraining Emperor Justin slowly to rebuild the entire city.

Antioch, being wealthy and strategically valuable, also suffered from the depredations of invasion. Twice it was captured and sacked by the Persians, in A.D. 260 and again in 540. On the latter occasion it was almost completely destroyed, but was rebuilt by the Emperor Justinian I on a far more lavish scale and renamed Theopolis, the "City of God."

Antioch from 638 to 1098

Though Antioch had recently been rebuilt following its sack by the Persians in 540, and was now as glorious as ever, socially the Antiochian Patriarchate was seriously weakened by religious division. In 608, in an act of almost unbelievable folly, Emperor Phocas launched an all-out persecution of the Jews that included forced baptisms. The Jews of Antioch rose up in open revolt and commenced massacring the Christians of the city. Even Patriarch Anastasius met a horrible death at their hands. Thousands, both Jew and Christian, fled the city to Persian controlled territory. Moreover, the city suffered frequent riots from the non-Chalcedonians, one even occurring the same year as the Jewish revolt. The region seemed to be disintegrating into chaos.

The situation in the East was such that, within a year of the accession of Emperor Heraclius, the Persians under Shah Khosru II (reigned 591-628) were emboldened to attack. Led by the illustrious general Shahr-Baraz (the “Royal Boar”), the Persian army first took Antioch and Damascus in 613, and finally Jerusalem in 614, carrying off such priceless Christian relics as the True Cross and the Holy Lance back to the Persian capitol. Only with unprecedented help from the Church, which sold chalices and other objects of precious metal to raise money, was Heraclius able to raise a sufficiently strong army to recover both the lost territory and the holy relics from the Persians in 628. Nevertheless, the incident was a wake up call.

The Christians of the Eastern Empire were dangerously fragmented among the Orthodox and various factions opposing one or more of the Ecumenical Councils. All of Egypt and much of Syria were in open opposition to the imperial government in Constantinople. Many dissident Christians, resentful of the government’s attempts to impose Orthodoxy on them, would have welcomed any invader that would deliver them from imperial control. And another such invader soon appeared from the Arabian deserts.

Upon the death in 632 of Mohammed, the founder and prophet of the religion of Islam, the Arab tribes bordering the Roman and Persian empires, many of whom were Christian, came under the domination of a fledgling Islamic kingdom. After subduing all of Arabia, Caliph Omar,

the “ruler of the faithful,” turned his sights on the rich prizes of Persia and Rome. The armies of Islam, led by the Caliph and under the able command of Khalid ibn al-Walid and Amr ibn al-As, first took Damascus in 635, and then the Persian capitol of Ctesiphon in 636. Following the disastrous defeat of Emperor Heraclius’ army at Yarmuk in 636, Antioch and Jerusalem fell in 638, and finally Alexandria in 642 (all of Egypt finally succumbed in 646). The Islamic tide even washed up to the gates of Constantinople itself, but was stopped after a lengthy siege of the city lasting from 674-678.

The immediate effect of the Islamic conquest was to freeze forever Christian divisions. Dissident Christian groups like the non-Chalcedonians generally preferred Muslim rule to that of the Orthodox emperor in Constantinople, who was always trying to impose Chalcedon on them. To them, their situation had improved. The Orthodox, however, were believed by their new Muslim overlords—no doubt correctly—to have ultimate loyalties to the Christian Empire of Constantinople. The Muslims consequently favored the dissident churches, encouraging their separation from Orthodoxy, while keeping a tight reign on the Orthodox.

The active ecclesiastical life enjoyed for over half a millennium in Antioch became all but extinct as Christians became a *dhimmi* (“protected”) people under Islam. The relationship between the Church and Islam was based upon an agreement originally reached between Caliph Omar and Patriarch Sophronius of Jerusalem in 638. Christians were allowed to continue the practice of their faith, but not in public. In other words, Christianity was to remain within the four walls of church buildings—and Christians were only allowed to repair existing churches (when granted permission), not build new ones.

The life of Christians under Islamic rule is a dreary tale only reluctantly told. Many prominent churches already in existence were confiscated and converted into mosques. Bells were not allowed to be rung to call the faithful to liturgy, and by no means was the Church allowed to engage in missionary activity. Indeed, it was a capitol crime to convert a Muslim to the Christian Faith.

Christians became second-class citizens. They paid heavy taxes, such as the poll tax (the *jizya*), and large amounts of money were frequently

extorted as “ransom” to keep women and children out of slavery. Christians were not trusted to serve in the military, and were also forced to wear distinctive dress. Christian men were forbidden to marry Muslim women, but Muslim men were allowed to marry Christian women on the understanding that the children were to be brought up Muslim.

While Christians were essentially tolerated in Muslim society, incidents of persecution and forced conversions were not unknown. More often, however, Christians were encouraged to convert to Islam through unremitting social and economical pressure. The temptation was to throw off one’s second-class status and get on with “making it” in the world. Nevertheless, the percentage of Christians who abjured their Faith was relatively small, and when the Crusaders entered Syria and Palestine in the eleventh century they found Christians still in the majority.

In fact, many Christians managed to rise to high levels in Islamic society despite their Christian Faith. While Islam may have officially regarded Christians as second-class citizens, the reality was that the new Arab conquerors knew nothing of administering a far-flung empire, and so were forced to turn to Christians to help run things. John of Damascus, for example, was a high court official in the Umayyid Caliphate before becoming a monk. Christians in Egypt filled important bureaucratic posts all the way up to its colonization by France in the nineteenth century, a fact that often fueled Muslim resentment in Egypt against Christians.

Antioch’s fortunes changed with the accession of Emperor Nicephorus II Phocas in Constantinople in 963. Nicephorus was a natural soldier who saw it as his calling from God to recover what he considered “Christian land” from Islamic domination. He consequently in 964 began a campaign to do just that. He first took Tarsus in Cilicia, and then set sail and snatched Cyprus. There was little reaction from the crumbling Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad. After the capitulation of the Muslim garrison in Aleppo, Nicephorus’ commander Michael Bourtzes took Antioch. In 969 Nicephorus marched into the city, once again under Christian control after a lapse of 332 years.

While Antioch may once again have been in Christian hands, its

position on the edge of the Islamic world was tenuous. Fatamid power in Egypt was growing at this time, and shortly after Nicephorus took Antioch, Fatamid troops had poured out of Egypt and into Palestine and Syria. In 971 they attacked Antioch itself, but failed to take it. In 994 the Fatamid Caliph Aziz sent his commander Manjutekin to capture both Aleppo and Antioch. Michael Bourtzes, who was then governor of Antioch, met the Fatamid army on the banks of the Orontes and was soundly beaten. The Fatamid commander next put Aleppo under siege. Both cities were only saved when Emperor Basil II (reigned 976-1025) rushed from Constantinople with 40,000 men and forced Manjutekin to retire to Damascus. Despite the menacing posture of the Fatamids, they would never succeed in taking Antioch from the empire. Nevertheless, Antioch was destined to fall soon.

The declining Abbasid Caliphate was being propped up by Turkish nomads known as the Seljuks, new and fanatical converts to Islam. In 1055 they succeeded in founding the Great Seljuk Sultanate, an empire centered in Baghdad that included what is today Iran, Iraq, and Syria, and which managed to contain the Fatamids in Egypt. In 1071, the Seljuks captured Emperor Romanos IV Diogenes at a battle outside an Armenian town west of Lake Van known as Manzikert. The defeat at Manzikert opened the way for the Turkish occupation of all of Syria and Anatolia. As a direct result, Antioch was reconquered for Islam by the Seljuks in 1084.

The Great Schism and the Crusades

In 1054 occurred the great clash between Rome and Constantinople that has come to be known as the Great Schism, when the Roman Catholic West and the Orthodox East are frequently said to have formally separated. The specific incident claimed to be the catalyst of this tragic break is when, during the Saturday afternoon of July 15, papal legate Cardinal Humbert and his entourage marched into the cathedral of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople and slapped a bull upon the altar excommunicating Patriarch Michael Cerularius. However, no one at the time really believed this incident represented a final break between Orthodoxy and the West.

During the ensuing controversy, Patriarch Michael Cerularius wrote to his fellow Eastern patriarchs eliciting their support. Michael naturally wrote to Patriarch Peter III of Antioch, and offered a list of grievances including: papal pretensions to supremacy within the Church, the Latin doctrine of the dual procession of the Holy Spirit from both the Father and the Son, and the resulting inclusion of the Latin phrase *filioque* (“and the Son”) into the Nicene Creed, as well as a number of Latin liturgical usages, particularly the consecration of unleavened bread (*azymes* in Greek) in the Eucharist. Michael concluded, “Ought these who abandon themselves to illegal, prohibited, and detestable practices remain within the ranks of the just and Orthodox?”

Patriarch Peter of Antioch, though, failed to be scandalized at the charges. Peter was an Antiochian by birth, well-educated, and naturally tolerant owing to the fact that Antioch was a religiously pluralistic city. He was not a Greek, but an Arab (or at least an Arabic-speaking Syrian) who wrote to the Antiochians immediately after his appointment by the emperor urging them to thank God for giving them a patriarch of their own flesh and blood. (However, he was not the first such Arab patriarch; Agapios II, for example, had also been an Arab, reigning from 978-996.)

While Peter agreed that the Western church harbored a number of theological and liturgical irregularities, he didn’t feel they were of such a magnitude as to warrant the ultimate sanction of excommunication. As Patriarch of Antioch, he knew only too well the cost of schism. He thus counseled patience and economy toward the West in the hope that forbearance would in time bring Rome back into the full embrace of Orthodoxy.

Peter was not a nominalist indifferent to the Western innovations reported to him. In particular he viewed the *filioque* interpolation into the Creed as an “evil, and even the worst of evils.” Yet, rather than excommunicating the Western church, he wrote to Michael that the Orthodox “should rather be thankful to God that these our brothers of the West, barbarians as they are, still believe in the Holy Trinity.” Peter believed the wisest course was to build on what East and West still held in common.

The West developed a different approach to reconciliation: the

Crusades. Emperor Alexius Comnenus in 1095 sent legates to Pope Urban II appealing for troops to help him beat back the Turkish flood into Anatolia following the defeat at Manzikert. Urban saw here an opportunity not only to earn the good will of Eastern Christendom, but also to further papal prestige by exercising practical leadership to the benefit of Eastern Christians. Urban therefore not only decided to honor Alexius' petition, but to do it one better: he would send entire armies to the East to wage a holy war against the infidel Turks.

Urban wasted no time. That same year in November at a Synod in Clermont, Urban preached to the leaders of the West that they should gather their forces, sew white crosses on their clothes, and march East to liberate Christian lands from Asia Minor all the way to Jerusalem itself. He ended his sermon with the triumphant, "*Deus lo volt!*" ("God wills it.") The call was enthusiastically received, and thus was born the First Crusade.

The next year, two days before Christmas in 1096, unruly Western armies appeared outside the gates of Constantinople, much to the alarm of Emperor Alexius. The main force was composed primarily of Frankish troops led by, among others, Robert of Normandy, Raymond of Toulouse, and Bohemond of Tarentum in Sicily. Alexius needed some way of controlling these forces, and, having some knowledge of Western feudal custom, managed to secure an oath from the various leaders obliging them to return to the Empire Antioch and other territories in Asia Minor recently acquired by the Turks; in return, the Crusaders could have Jerusalem and all other conquests made in long-held Muslim lands. Upon agreement to these terms, the Crusaders could expect imperial assistance from Alexius.

After agreeing to these terms, the Crusaders were sent on their way by Alexius, taking the cities of Nicaea and Dorylaeum following a spectacular defeat of the Turkish army. After the Crusaders secured central Anatolia, Baldwin of Flanders then took his troops into Armenia and established a Frankish kingdom of Edessa, while the remaining Crusading forces made their way toward Antioch. Hearing of the Crusaders' advance, Yaghi-Siyan, the Turkish governor of Antioch, was worried the Christian majority in the city (Syrian, Greek, and Armenian)

would prove disloyal, and so expelled the leading Christians and imprisoned the patriarch, John IV Oxites. Then followed a grueling seven-month siege of the city.

Taking Antioch was not as easy as the Crusaders' earlier conquests. They suffered from famine, demoralization, and frequent desertions. The Christians of the city fared little better, being the object of intense hostility by the Turks. To taunt the besiegers, the Turks would every now and then take the imprisoned Patriarch John Oxites, put him in a cage, and dangle him over the city walls.

Finally, an Armenian convert to Islam named Firouz—who had risen to a high position in Yaghi-Siyan's administration (and who was said to be angry at being fined for hoarding food and at catching his wife in bed with a Turkish colleague)—conspired with Bohemond to sell out the city to the Crusaders. On June 2, Firouz allowed Bohemond's forces over the western wall of the city while the rest of the Crusaders launched a general attack. With help from some of the Christians of Antioch, Bohemond's men opened the Gate of St. George and the great Gate of the Bridge, and the waiting Crusader army rushed into the city. What followed was a typical medieval massacre in which many of the city's Christians participated. By nightfall of the next day, not a Turk was left in Antioch, and the homes of the city's wealthier citizens, both Muslim and Christian, had been thoroughly pillaged.

However, no sooner had the Crusaders taken Antioch than they found themselves under siege as the city was surrounded by the emir of Mosul, Kerbogha, who had arrived belatedly for Antioch's defense on June 5. Trapped in the city without provisions, the Crusaders could not hold out long. Thus, the Crusaders flew open the gates of the city early on Monday, June 28, and attacked the emir's camp. The emir was routed and quickly retreated. Antioch would belong to the Franks for the next 171 years.

The representative of Pope Urban, Adhemar of Le Puy, died in Antioch during a typhoid epidemic in July. This was truly a great loss. Adhemar was greatly respected and exerted a salutary influence over the Crusade's leaders, sharing Pope Urban's policy of rapprochement with Constantinople and Orthodoxy. His first action in Antioch had been to

re-instate the city's rightful patriarch, John Oxites; he also tried to ensure the Crusaders handed Antioch back to Emperor Alexius, as they had promised. Now with Adhemar gone, the Crusade was guided only by the personal ambitions of its powerful leaders.

After recovering from their ordeal, the Crusaders decided the city would be given to Bohemond, much to the misgivings of Raymond of Toulouse, who felt the Crusaders should honor their agreement with the emperor. In any event, the remainder of the army left to take Jerusalem, which fell in July of 1099 after a five week siege. Pope Urban died that same month, never hearing of the ultimate success of his Crusade.

Bohemond, left in Antioch, set to work building his new principality, ever anxious that Emperor Alexius might march from Constantinople and claim the city. One of Bohemond's first acts was to expel the Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch, John Oxites, who Bohemond assumed would be sympathetic to the emperor and his rights to the city. John's place was given to a Latin prelate, Bernard of Valence, thus formally sealing the schism between Antioch and Rome. John retired to Constantinople, where he settled in a monastery at Oxia. Having been forced to resign his office, he spent his remaining days writing angry denunciations of Latin outrages, while his exiled clergy elected a new Orthodox patriarch.

The Latin patriarchs soon began replacing Orthodox bishops with Latin ones throughout that part of the patriarchate under their control. The Orthodox population of Antioch, though, didn't take much notice of these proceedings. The Latin patriarchs of the city wisely left Orthodox priests undisturbed, not attempting to impose Latin usages. Orthodox monasteries for the most part retained their freedom (though some were taken over by Latin monks), and communion between Antioch and Constantinople was maintained. Though the church of Antioch was subject to the canonical authority of the newly imposed Latin hierarchy, life for the most part continued as normal—very unlike the situation in newly conquered Jerusalem, whose church endured ruthless latinization by its Latin hierarchy. The Orthodox, nevertheless, continued a parallel line of Orthodox patriarchs of Antioch that resided in the imperial capitol.

For the most part, the emperors in Constantinople were satisfied having Antioch as a buffer state between themselves and the growing Turkish Empire. On two occasions, however, the emperor felt compelled to capture the city. Emperor John II Comnenus in 1137 marched on Antioch and forced Raymond of Poitiers, then ruler of the city, to make a humiliating submission. Raymond became a vassal and the imperial standard was hoisted over the city's citadel. However, John didn't demand the reinstatement of the Orthodox patriarch; and in March the next year, Pope Innocent III forbade any member of his church to remain in the service of John's army should he take any action against the Latin ecclesiastical authorities of Antioch.

Several years later, in 1156, Manuel Comnenus took the city again. He certainly had sufficient provocation: Reynald of Châtillon, Prince of Antioch, had brutally pillaged Cyprus for three weeks, taken the emperor's nephew hostage, and held him with several other prominent citizens for ransom. Reynald compounded the outrage by sending the demand for ransom with twelve captured Greek priests whose noses had been cut off. The infuriated Manuel marched down to Antioch with the entire imperial army. Reynald panicked and made an abject submission on Manuel's arrival, groveling with his face in the ground before the emperor's throne. Reynald agreed to have the city's citadel garrisoned by imperial troops and to provide contingents for Manuel's army. Also, the Orthodox Athanasius II Manases had to be installed as the rightful patriarch of the city. Consequently, an Orthodox patriarch resided in the city for the first time since the end of the eleventh century. Sadly, an earthquake rocked Antioch five years later and killed Athanasius along with many of his clergy, burying him in the rubble of his church while celebrating the Divine Liturgy.

There was, however, one other Orthodox patriarch that managed to be elected under Crusader control of Antioch. Following the sack of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade, there was a period from 1204 to 1208 when the imperial throne went vacant, and the Orthodox line of Antiochian patriarchs residing in Constantinople was interrupted. The Norman Prince of Antioch at the time, Bohemond IV, was in a heated struggle for the city with a rival claimant, Raymond-Roupen, who was

supported by his maternal great uncle, Leo of Armenia. The Latin patriarch of Antioch, Peter, and even Pope Innocent III, found themselves caught up in the rivalry. Bohemond needed the support of the Orthodox majority in Antioch to keep power, and consequently allowed the citizens of Antioch in 1206 to elect Patriarch Symeon II ibn Abi Saiba. This infuriated Pope Innocent III, who in frustration sent off an angry letter to the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem on 4 March 1208.

The sign of the imminent demise of Crusader-rule in Antioch came when the Egyptian Mameluks emerged to prominence in 1250, having just overthrown the Ayyubid dynasty. Early in 1268, the Mameluk sultan of Egypt, Baibars, led his troops north through Syria and arrived before the walls of the city on May 14. Prince Bohemond VI of Antioch was at the time away at Tripoli (of which he was Count), and Antioch was left to be defended by its Constable, Simon Mansel. The garrison was woefully inadequate to man the full expanse of the city's walls, and so Mansel recklessly decided to send troops out to drive back Baibars' army. This was duly captured, and Antioch was left with even fewer men for its defense.

Nevertheless, the city managed to beat back the first assault on its defenses the next day. It did not survive the next assault. On 18 May 1268, the Mameluks launched a general attack on all sections of the walls and forced a breach, after which Muslims flooded the city. The deliberate and systematic massacre that followed proved shocking even by the brutal standards of the day. The sultan's emirs ordered all the gates of the city shut and guarded while troops swept through each street, killing any they found. Government and Church officials were especially sought out and killed.

Having no way to escape, thousands of the city's citizens fled to the citadel; these were then captured to serve as slaves. There was not a soldier in the sultan's army that did not acquire a slave that day. In fact, so many slaves were created that it actually depressed the market: the price of a boy dropped to twelve dirhems and that of a girl to five.

With Antioch fallen, Christianity declined in northern Syria. The city itself would never recover from the devastation. As a commercial center it had lost importance since trade had been re-routed and now came

through Mongol-held territory. The Mameluks considered Antioch a frontier fortress, and so left it unpopulated and its houses in ruins. When Bertrandon de la Broquière visited Antioch in 1432, there were only about 300 inhabited houses, occupied mostly by Turks.

The Latin patriarch left shortly after the fall of the city. (The Roman church nevertheless stubbornly maintained titular “Patriarchs of Antioch” until the Second Vatican Council dissolved the office in 1963.) The Orthodox claimant was invited back to Antioch, but there was no longer much of a church to oversee. A large earthquake in 1324 finally forced the patriarchs to abandon the city and resettle in Damascus, where a Christian community had flourished since apostolic times. There they installed themselves in the ancient Cathedral of St. Mary on the Street Called Straight, where the apostle Paul had been baptized (see Acts 9:10-19).

Under Ottoman Rule

The enmity that existed between the Orthodox and the West culminated in the Fourth Crusade that captured Constantinople in 1204, and which resulted in the most horrendous depredations committed on the inhabitants of the imperial city. True to form, the Crusaders set up a Latin ecclesiastical hierarchy, including the obligatory Latin patriarch, and began latinizing the Church life of the city. The Orthodox emperors regrouped and maintained a rump state from the city of Nicaea. Constantinople was eventually retaken in 1261, but the empire would never regain its former strength or vitality.

Not only was the empire of Constantinople in a terminal condition, so were the Seljuk and Mameluk empires. A new line of Turks, founded by bey Osman (*d.* 1326) and subsequently known as the Ottomans, had established a kingdom in Asia Minor that was quickly expanding at the expense of the former powers. Constantinople finally succumbed to them when Sultan Mohammed II “the Conqueror” marched into the city on 29 May 1453. In 1517 all of Syria, including Antioch, was taken by Sultan Selim I (1512-20) for the Ottomans. Eventually, most of Eastern Europe, and all of the Middle East and North Africa, passed under their control. The entire Orthodox world, with the exception of Poland-

Lithuania and Russia, was dominated by the Ottoman Turks.

The restrictions on the Christians of the new Ottoman Empire were largely the same as those of previous Islamic empires. There were restrictions on the acquisition of land by Christians, which strictures had more or less been in place since the seventh century. Also, while Christians were allowed to settle most of their legal issues involving other Christians in ecclesiastical courts run by the Church, a Christian involved in a legal battle with a Muslim would not likely receive justice. For one thing, Islamic courts did not recognize the validity oaths sworn by Christians. Testimony given by a Christian against a Muslim was consequently considered invalid, meaning a Muslim with a grievance against a Christian had only to level an accusation of “blasphemy against Islam” (an offense punishable by death) against the Christian to wreak terrible vengeance. Faced with execution and unable to deny the Muslim’s accusation, the Christian’s only legal option was either to convert to Islam or accept martyrdom for the Christian Faith.

There were of course any number of other injustices faced by Christians, ranging from minor indignities to serious offenses against human rights. If a Turkish official desired a Christian girl, for example, the girl’s family would find it extremely difficult to save her from his harem. By far the most odious Ottoman practice, though, was the taking of young Christian boys, forcibly converting them to Islam, and then enrolling them in the elite corps of Turkish troops known as the Janissaries. These crack troops were instrumental in capturing the great imperial city of Constantinople for Sultan Mohammed II, and later became so powerful as to threaten the sultanate itself.

The change to Ottoman rule for the Orthodox of the Middle East was subtle at first, since most had long endured Muslim rule. All the same, the change was significant. While Christians were definitely second-class citizens in the new empire, outwardly the power of the Church was actually enhanced. The sultans made Constantinople their capitol, and the Ecumenical Patriarch of the city became the civil leader of the “Roman Nation,” or the *Rum Millet*, “Roman” being a synonym for “Christian” in the East. In essence, the Patriarch of Constantinople became the “ethnarch” (or “governor”) of the Christian populace in the

Ottoman Empire, with local bishops acting as magistrates. While in theory the patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem lost none of their traditional rights or autonomy, in reality they could only negotiate with the sultan through the Ecumenical Patriarch. Even worse, when a vacancy occurred in a patriarchal see, the Ecumenical Patriarch was regularly allowed by the sultan to submit a possible successor, who would invariably be a Greek.

Moreover, the patriarchs of these three sees existed in relative poverty. The Patriarch of Jerusalem, though smallest, was the best off because of pilgrims who visited the holy sites and endowments received from foreign Orthodox rulers. The Patriarch of Alexandria was helped somewhat by an influx of Greek merchants who settled in the city following the Ottoman conquest. The Patriarch of Antioch, residing in Damascus, was the worst off. Normally a Greek imposed from Constantinople, the patriarch was financially dependant on Syrian merchants who often resented him. In the end, all three patriarchs had every incentive to be perpetually absent from their sees in Constantinople, enlarging their fortunes and political influence through their brother, the Ecumenical Patriarch.

With this much worldly power, it was inevitable the office of Ecumenical Patriarch became a prize coveted by the greedy and the ambitious. The Turks quickly learned to sell the patriarchate to the highest bidder, and it was in their interest to change the patriarch as often as possible. According to one report, out of 102 Ecumenical Patriarchs who held office from the beginning of the Ottoman occupation to the end of World War I, the sultans drove the patriarch from his throne about 105 times. The same patriarch could be driven from office on four or five different occasions. Patriarch Cyril Lukaris, for example, was patriarch from 1612, 1623-1630, 1630-1634, 1634-1635, 1637-1638—alternating his throne with Patriarchs Timothy II, Cyril I, Anthimos II, Isaak, Cyril III, Athanasius III, and Neophytos III! The troops of Sultan Murad finally murdered Cyril Lukaris in 1638. Patriarch Dionysius IV held the office from 1671-1673, 1676-1679, 1683-1684, 1686-1687, and 1693-1694. Patriarch Paisios II suffered a similar fate, sitting on the Ecumenical throne from 1726-1733, 1740-

1743, 1744-1748, and 1751-1754.

It was therefore not unusual to have several ex-patriarchs in exile at any one time watching for a chance to return to the office. Nor was deposition the only occupational hazard of the Ecumenical Patriarchs under the Ottomans. Six patriarchs suffered violent deaths, ranging from hanging and poisoning to drowning. Only 21 patriarchs are said to have died in office of natural causes.

The Antiochian Patriarchate was also in a pathetic state. While the patriarchs of Alexandria and Jerusalem developed a comfortable *modus vivendi* with the Greek hierarchy at Constantinople, the patriarchs of Antioch, financially strapped and governing a largely non-Greek Christian population, chose to become more independent. Roman Catholic missionaries had been active in the patriarchate since the Crusades, and with the rise of western European power in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Antiochian Patriarchs began looking West for support. One sure way of gaining European support was through the Roman church. In 1631, Patriarch Ignatius II informally submitted to Rome, and Macarius III (1647-1672) found it convenient to do the same—even going so far as to toast the Pope as his Holy Father at a banquet at the French Consulate in Damascus! Patriarch Athanasius III is also believed to have sent his secret submission to Rome around 1687, but quickly retracted it when his mentor in Jerusalem, the anti-Latin Patriarch Dositheus, signaled his disapproval. Continuing the recently established tradition, Patriarch Cyril V similarly sent his homage to the church on the Tiber.

Many of the rank-and-file in the Antiochian Patriarchate shared these Roman sympathies. The reason is not hard to fathom. Roman Catholic missionaries provided basic services the Orthodox Patriarchate lacked, such as schools and medical facilities. Moreover, the politically powerful European states had influence with the Sublime Porte in Constantinople. These were powerful inducements to go Catholic.

The natural result of these Catholic leanings was a split in the Antiochian Patriarchate. When in 1724 a new patriarch needed to be elected, pro-Roman hierarchs speedily elected one of their own, Seraphim Tanas, who had been educated in Rome. He was installed as

Patriarch Cyril VI. The patriarchate of Constantinople balked, and supported the anti-Roman hierarchs of the Antiochian Patriarchate, who elected a young Cypriot named Sylvester. Though opposed to union with Rome, Sylvester had in his favor that he had been a deacon and protosyncellos of the pro-Roman Patriarch Athanasius III, who before dying indicated to the bishops of the patriarchate that he desired the then 28-year-old Sylvester to be his successor.

Hence two rival patriarchs vied with each other for the next thirty years, with neither holding the Patriarchal Palace in Damascus uncontested. However, the Orthodox claimant held one advantage that proved decisive: Patriarch Sylvester was younger. The pro-Roman Cyril VI died, and Sylvester entered Damascus and took possession of the patriarchate in 1733.

The pro-Roman faction would have nothing of Patriarch Sylvester, however, and so left the fold to form a separate “uniate” Greek Catholic church, calling itself the “Melkite” church. This church inevitably became latinized in its theological and canonical outlook; nevertheless, Rome encouraged it to retain its Eastern liturgical usages, and Melkites went on to enjoy considerable material, social, and cultural advantages. They were even able to elect Arab patriarchs, a benefit that caused many Orthodox under Greek control to envy—and to convert. The stature of the Melkite church increased further when it was recognized as a separate *millet* within the Ottoman Empire in 1839.

The nineteenth century also added the threat of proselytization from various well-funded Protestant organizations. Their efforts were mainly focused in Lebanon, where the large numbers of native Christians made ecclesiastical poaching more easy. Again, the lure was the offer of jobs, food, education, and medical services for one’s family—all at the cost of a nominal conversion. And as the lot of Orthodox Christians grew more grim as the century wore on, many “rice-bowl” Protestants were made. A small Arab Evangelical church came into existence in 1848, though their numbers never came close to rivaling the uniate Melkite church.

The Antiochian Patriarchate at this point was composed of Christians belonging to various local races. However, the patriarchate was geographically, ethnically, linguistically, and intellectually Syro-Arabic.

Since the people were primarily Arabic-speaking, village churches normally used an Arabic translation of the Divine Liturgy. The laity generally resented the Greek hierarchy imposed upon them, and if they didn't drift off into Catholicism, Protestantism, or Islam, tended to be listless in their support of the Orthodox Church. Still, the patriarchs of Antioch were more sensitive to their Arabic flock than their colleagues in Jerusalem, and there even existed Arabs in the ranks of the Antiochian upper clergy. There might have been even more Arab hierarchs were it not for the interference of the Greek "Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulcher" in Jerusalem interfering in Antiochian affairs. Patriarch Sylvester himself wisely attended to the Arabs of his church, no doubt not wanting to lose any more members to the newly formed Melkite church.

Anti-Greek feeling was unwittingly exacerbated by the Ecumenical Patriarchate itself. The Greek hierarchy of Constantinople had passed into the control of a powerful group of Greek merchants and traders known as the Phanariots, who used the Ecumenical Patriarchate to advance exclusively Greek interests within the Ottoman government. It didn't take long for every Greek bishop in the Ottoman Empire to be drawn into the Phanariots' political machinations.

Because of the continual political intriguing, as well as the ever more blatant buying and selling of ecclesiastical offices, the moral authority of the Greek hierarchs of Antioch grew ever dimmer. Church leaders inevitably became identified with Greek nationalistic interests, and were seen as Greek "ethnarchs" rather than Church hierarchs. Many became convinced the Antiochian hierarchy was sacrificing the interests of the people of the Antiochian Patriarchate on the altar of Greek nationalism; thus, in reaction to Greek nationalism, Arabs began seeking to arabize the Antiochian hierarchy.

The decline of the Ottoman Empire that began in the sixteenth century accentuated the problems within the patriarchate. The degeneration in the ability and honesty both of the sultans and of their ruling class resulted in corruption, nepotism, inefficiency, and misrule throughout the realm. Orthodox subjects, though, were somewhat protected from the worst results of the decay by their millet.

Nevertheless, as the fabric of society slowly unraveled, Christians found themselves the object of hostility, and many Orthodox “new martyrs” were made during this long period.

The Ottoman Empire experienced its first major defeat by Europeans in the Battle of Lepanto (1571), when its fleet was destroyed by a Christian coalition. During the eighteenth century, a series of wars with Russia and Austria accelerated the decline and loss of territory. Greece and much of the Balkans won their independence in the early nineteenth century. At the same time large sections of the provinces remaining under Ottoman control came to be governed by magnates whose accountability to the sultans was at best nominal.

Reform efforts helped stave off immediate Ottoman collapse. The scope of government was extended and centralized as reforms were made in every facet of Ottoman society, including the army. Even the millets were compelled to make changes, including greater democratization and lay participation in their governance.

But the Ottoman Empire needed more than “reform.” The nineteenth century saw nationalist revolts in the Balkans and eastern Anatolia, the French occupation of Algeria and Tunisia, the British seizure of Egypt, and the Italian invasion of Libya. By this time the Ottoman Empire was widely known by the sardonic title “The Sick Man of Europe,” and the main concern in political circles was how to dispose of Ottoman territories without upsetting the European balance of power.

Throughout all this, Antioch remained under Turkish rule, which became increasingly despotic. Anti-Christian feelings became ominously prevalent, and erupted in a horrible massacre in 1860. Some 12,000 Maronites were killed in their stronghold of Lebanon, which was followed by further massacres in the towns of Rashayya and Hasbayya in the Anti-Lebanon mountains. The violence continued and ultimately spread to Damascus, where on July 9, 1860, the Muslim population rose up and slaughtered the Orthodox community in the historic Christian quarter of the city. Over the course of several days, 10,000 Orthodox Christians were killed, including a priest by the name of Father Joseph Muhana al-Haddad, renowned as a seminary teacher and humble pastor. On the second day of the massacre, Fr. Joseph was captured by an irate

mob who recognized him as a respected Christian leader. He managed to take his communion kit from his shirt and partake of the Eucharist before he was hacked to death with hatchets, and his badly mutilated body left like scrap meat in the street. The Holy Synod of Antioch canonized him as a martyr of the Church on 8 October 1993, and he is today commemorated on July 10 along with the other martyrs of the 1860 massacres.

Understandably, Christians began emigrating on a large scale after 1860, seeking new lives in places like Europe and America. While this de-Christianization of the Middle East is lamentable, it was just as well. Conditions only deteriorated further as the Ottoman Empire imploded. Between 1890-1897 thousands of Christians in Armenia were either exterminated or deported in “death marches.” During the First World War, Christians of all persuasions fell victim to murder or mass deportation—or worse. In the mountains of Lebanon, an estimated 100,000 people (mostly Maronite, but including many Orthodox and Melkites) died of starvation and disease. The last few sultans initiated massacres in the ancient dioceses of Cilicia and Isauria, driving out all but a small number of Christians. The martyrdoms only stopped when the Treaty of Sevres turned most of Anatolia over to the French in 1920.

Antioch in the 20th Century

When World War I erupted in 1914, the Ottoman Empire had long been partitioned into spheres of influence by European powers. The Ottomans made the unwise choice of entering the War on the German/Austrian-Hungarian side, and at the war’s conclusion their empire was formally dissolved. The Triple Entente (Britain, France, and Russia) divided the spoils of the former empire among themselves. In 1922, however, the Turks defeated the foreign armies occupying Anatolia. They then won what has been called “the greatest diplomatic victory in history” with the recognition of the Republic of Turkey in the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne.

The beginning of the twentieth century saw the See of Antioch still ranking third in honor among the fifteen self-governing Orthodox Churches. Between 1724 and 1899, the patriarchs and bishops were Greek prelates appointed largely by the Phanar in Constantinople. The

influence of the Phanar decreased during the nineteenth century, however, in direct proportion to the waning power of the sultans. Finally, in 1898, the Greek Patriarch Spyridon was deposed by the Arab majority of the Holy Synod in Damascus. The Metropolitan of Latakia, an Arabic-speaking Syrian, was then elected and installed the next year as Patriarch Meletios II Dumani, signaling the re-assertion of full Antiochian autonomy. The Ecumenical Patriarch and other Greek prelates in the Orthodox Church, though, refused to recognize Meletios.

The election of an Arab patriarch was achieved in no small measure through Russian assistance. The Czars, being the only truly powerful leaders of a free Orthodox nation, perceived themselves as the protector of Orthodox Christians under Turkish rule. Seeing the success of Western proselytism in the Antiochian Patriarchate, and especially alarmed at the massacres of 1860, the Czars began rendering both political and material aid to the Christians of the Middle East. Of particular importance, they established a network of primary and secondary schools that emphasized the study of Arabic. These schools instilled a new self-confidence among Arabic-speaking Christians, and a new determination to control their own destiny.

Patriarch Meletios died in 1906, and another Arab patriarch was elected, Gregorios IV Haddad, that same year. The Ecumenical Patriarch eventually decided that it would be in its best interest to accept the new line of Arab patriarchs in Antioch, and so recognized Patriarch Gregorios in 1909. However, Gregorios' death in 1928 precipitated a crisis in the election of a successor, a crisis complicated by the politics of the French Mandate in Syria creating a separate nation of Lebanon.

In 1920, France received Syria and Lebanon through a mandate by the League of Nations, while the historic dioceses of Cilicia, Edessa (modern Urfa) and Mardin were granted to Turkey in 1923 by the Treaty of Lausanne. Orthodox Christians in Damascus and its environs during this period opposed both the French occupation and the creation of a separate Lebanese state. The Orthodox of Beirut were more sympathetic to the French and their desire for a separate Lebanon. Also, being a much larger Orthodox community than that in Damascus, the Orthodox of Beirut wanted a larger role in the selection of the patriarch. In 1928,

when a successor to Patriarch Gregorios needed to be elected, the rivalry between the two factions escalated until, in 1931, two Arab patriarchs were elected: Arsenios (championed by Beirut, and favored by the French) and Alexander III Tahhan (the favorite of Damascus and Arab nationalists). The death of Arsenios in January 1933, however, left Alexander the recognized patriarch. The Vichy French forces were driven out of Syria and Lebanon by the British during World War II, and an independent Syria and Lebanon were proclaimed on 31 December 1944.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 ended czarist assistance to the impoverished Antiochian Patriarchate; but contacts between the Russian and Antiochian churches continued, and goodwill persisted for the Russians throughout the Antiochian Patriarchate. Still, many Antiochian bishops distrusted the officially atheistic Soviet government, and tended to be more pro-Western in their outlook. Others, mostly anti-Greek nationalists educated in Russia, were nevertheless unswerving in their Russian loyalties and were more suspicious of the West, which historically had been the source of much mischief in the patriarchate. A split resulted within the hierarchy that largely played out in the election of patriarchs, each party fighting to elect its own candidate.

The conflict became especially intense with the election of Patriarch Alexander III in 1931. Alexander's reign as patriarch polarized the patriarchate, and his death in 1958 resulted in an open battle for the next patriarch. Ultimately, a compromise candidate was elected to avert schism: the educated but elderly Theodosius VI Abu-Rijayla. Patriarch Theodosius brought stability to the patriarchate and achieved a major victory in 1966 with the election of new strong leaders to the vacant sees. Among these leaders were Ignatius Hazim, titular bishop of Palmyra, and Archimandrite Philip Saliba.

Bishop Ignatius attended the American University of Beirut and then the renowned St. Sergius Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris (established by the Russian diaspora following the 1917 Revolution). He was a co-founder of the Orthodox Youth Movement in 1942, which blossomed in Lebanon and Syria following World War II. The Movement sought a renewal of Orthodoxy among Arabic youth by

encouraging liturgical and spiritual renewal, Bible reading, greater familiarity with the writings of the Church Fathers, and general discussion of the issues affecting young people.

Further in-fighting in 1969 between the two parties in the hierarchy saw the emerge even stronger, which allowed a strong candidate to be elected to the see of Antioch in 1971, Patriarch Elias IV Mu'awwad. Patriarch Elias established a firmness in the Holy Synod, largely ending the factional in-fighting. He is perhaps best remembered for proclaiming to the faithful in his travels abroad, "Antioch is you! You are Antioch!" Unfortunately, the patriarch died suddenly in 1979 at only 65 years of age.

A successor to Patriarch Elias was urgently needed. Civil war had erupted in Lebanon in 1975. It was a turbulent time for the patriarchate, so the Holy Synod spent only two weeks electing the gifted Metropolitan of Latakia. On 2 July 1979, Metropolitan Ignatius became the 170th in a line of patriarchs extending back to the apostle Peter.

Under the dynamic leadership Patriarch Ignatius IV, Antioch has experienced phenomenal growth and prosperity. His many reforms have fostered a renewal of monastic life in the patriarchate. Numerous new monasteries have been built, and many old ones have been refurbished and reopened. There are today approximately twenty monasteries in Syria and Lebanon, perhaps the most famous being the sixth-century Convent of Saydnayya outside Damascus. The convent houses a celebrated miracle-working icon of the Theotokos, and is a pilgrimage site for thousands. There is also the monastery and the shrine dedicated to St. Thekla (a convert of the apostle Paul) in the village of Ma'alula. The Christian population of Ma'alula still speak western Aramaic, the same language spoken by Christ and the apostles.

Also, numerous new churches have been built to serve the Faithful. In the city of Antioch itself, the Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul has been beautifully restored; this and several smaller churches outside the city serve a Christian community of five to six thousand. Patriarch Ignatius has actively sought to instruct his flock through talks, media-interviews, and his writings. Among the latter, he has published two volumes of homilies, a catechism, and numerous other books and articles. The

patriarch's father was a school teacher, and he has himself strongly promoted education throughout his home town Mehardeh, near Hama. Without doubt his proudest achievement has been the establishment of Balamand University in Lebanon, and its creation is a remarkable story.

Balamand (meaning "Beautiful Hill"), located near Tripoli, was the site of an ancient Orthodox monastery taken over by the Catholic Cistercian Order during the Crusades. The property reverted to the Orthodox in 1289 when the Crusaders were forced out of the region, and was rebuilt in 1603. An Ottoman fiat in 1833 authorized the establishment of a school on the property, and instruction began for all educational levels, ranging from elementary to university studies. However, the instruction was offered in Arabic, which threatened the ruling Greek hierarchy, and so the school was forced to close in 1840.

The school re-opened after the election in 1899 of Patriarch Meletios II, and in 1962 Patriarch Theodosius VI assigned Bishop Ignatius, then of Latakia, to administer it. What Bishop Ignatius found was a school in dire need of repair and whose finances were in such disarray that there weren't even sufficient funds to feed the students. Bishop Ignatius scrambled to generate income to keep the school operating, including renting out the monastery's lands to local farmers. He then successfully petitioned the Archeology Department of the Lebanese government to restore the monastery to its twelfth-century state, and in 1964 convinced Metropolitan Antony Bashir of the Antiochian Archdiocese of North America to lend financial support to the construction a theological institute at Balamand. As a result of Metropolitan's Philip support, Antony Bashir's successor, the opening of the St. John of Damascus School of Theology took place in 1970. The school continued to operate through the Lebanese civil war, though its administration and students were compelled to relocate in 1996 and 1997 to Thessaloniki in Greece.

Bishop Ignatius continued being directly involved with his new creation, even after his elevation to patriarch. Balamand became a full-fledged university in 1988, and today located next to the seminary are seven different departments (including a publications department) and two research centers. Among its many facilities is a science and technology building housing a variety of specialized laboratories, an

amphitheater, a large gymnasium, and a central library that can accommodate up to 300 students at a time. Balamand University is the only one of its kind in the whole Middle East, and is open to all students of all religious persuasions.

Patriarch Ignatius has also been instrumental in involving the Antiochian church in ecumenical dialogue. As Metropolitan of Latakia, he helped found (and is presently co-president of) the Council of Middle Eastern Churches, and became as well a permanent member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches. Closer to home, he has as patriarch worked for reconciliation between the Orthodox and the separated churches of Antioch. His efforts have been particularly fruitful with the non-Chalcedonian Syrian Orthodox Church.

Antioch in America

As a result of hardships like the 1860 massacres, the widespread famine at the beginning of the twentieth century, and the Lebanese civil war, thousands of Antiochian Christians have emigrated abroad to set down new roots. This has resulted in the unprecedented creation of Antiochian jurisdictions beyond its historic boundaries. While the majority of Antioch's five million Christians continue to live in the twelve historic dioceses of the patriarchate, the church now has an Exarch in Europe, and Metropolitans in Mexico, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Australia, and North America (the United States and Canada). The Orthodox of North and South America together count over two million members.

The story of the vibrant North American Archdiocese is especially edifying. In the late nineteenth century, the spiritual needs of Syrian immigrants in North America were first met through the "Syro-Arabian Mission" of the Russian Orthodox Church (present in North America since 1794). In 1895, a "Syrian Orthodox Charitable Society" was organized in New York City. The Society eventually decided the Syrian community needed Arabic-speaking clergy; but instead of looking to the Middle East for an Arabic priest, the president of the Society wrote to a young Arab priest in Russia inviting him to come to New York and organize the first Arabic-speaking parish on the continent. The priest's name was Raphael Hawaweeny, a young Damascene archimandrite

serving as Professor of Arabic language and literature at the Orthodox Theological Academy in Kazan, Russia.

Fr. Raphael was born to Michael and Miriam Hawaweeny of Damascus on 8 November 1860. While living in Damascus, the couple had witnessed the martyrdom of many of their neighbors during the July 1860 massacres, including the death of their parish priest, Father Joseph Muhana al-Haddad. Michael Hawaweeny subsequently fled with his pregnant wife to Beirut, and it was there that Raphael was born. Raphael went on to study in Damascus, the Halki Theological School in the Prince's Islands (run by the Ecumenical Patriarchate), and then at the Kiev Theological Academy. He was ordained in 1889, and was appointed to serve as the Rector of the Antiochian Patriarchal Embassy in Moscow. Several years later he took the post at the Kazan Theological Academy.

Fr. Raphael accepted the Charitable Society's invitation to come to New York. He then went to the imperial capital of St. Petersburg to meet with Bishop Nicholas Ziorov, responsible for the Russian Diocese of the Aleutian Islands and North America, and who was in Russia to recruit new missionaries. After being canonically received into the Russian Orthodox Church by Bishop Nicholas, Father Hawaweeny arrived in the United States on November 14, 1895.

Upon his arrival in New York, Fr. Raphael established a parish in lower Manhattan, at the center of the Syrian immigrant community. By 1902 the parish purchased a large church building in Brooklyn. The church was renovated and then consecrated as St. Nicholas Cathedral on October 27, 1902, by Archbishop Tikhon (Bishop Nicholas' successor) to serve the Syrian community. St. Nicholas Cathedral later relocated to 355 State Street, Brooklyn, and is today considered the "mother parish" of the archdiocese.

Fr. Raphael was elevated to Archimandrite several months after his arrival in New York and given the official title "Leader of the Syrian Orthodox Spiritual Mission in North America." He then set out on a five month tour of more than 30 cities, traveling along the railroad lines to San Francisco on the West Coast. Over the following years, he roamed throughout the United States, Canada, and even deep into Mexico,

visiting his scattered flock and organizing them into parish communities. He would eventually be credited with directly establishing over 30 parishes consisting of 25,000 faithful. Even Melkite and Maronite Catholics accepted him as the unofficial pastor of their respective communities in North America. His reputation grew to such an extent that Fr. Raphael was twice elected to an episcopal see back in the Antiochian Patriarchate, but refused the honor on both occasions on the grounds that his flock in the New World needed him more.

Archbishop Tikhon also decided that Fr. Raphael ought to be a bishop, and so elected Fr. Raphael to serve as his vicar-bishop over the Syro-Arabian Mission. Fr. Raphael was therefore consecrated as “Bishop of Brooklyn” by Bishops Tikhon and Innocent (Pustynsky) at St. Nicholas Cathedral on March 13, 1904. Bishop Raphael thus became the first Orthodox bishop to be consecrated in North America. The Maronite community in New York, though, protested his elevation and instigated a riot in the streets of Brooklyn, which, ironically, led to Bishop Raphael’s arrest. He was of course later exonerated.

He started *al-Kalimat* (The Word) magazine in 1905 to educate his flock and to keep his far-flung parishes informed of happenings in the diocese. He also published many liturgical books in Arabic; however, Bishop Raphael also saw the need to introduce English into his archdiocese. Many second and third generation Orthodox Christians were leaving the Church because they could no longer understand Arabic; thus Bishop Raphael began insisting Sunday School instruction, the Liturgy, and other Church services be conducted in English. He also assisted Isabel Hapgood (an Episcopalian) prepare her ground-breaking English *Service Book* of Orthodox services. In all, Bishop Raphael authored or translated fourteen books.

The election of Patriarch Meletios II in 1899 eventually brought official Antiochian recognition of Bishop Raphael’s mission. The Holy Synod of Antioch repeatedly tried to entice him back to the Patriarchate by offering him such prestigious archdioceses as Beirut, Aleppo, Tyre and Sidon, and others. These Bishop Raphael routinely turned down, instead choosing to remain loyal to his flock in North America and to the Russian Orthodox church under whose jurisdiction he served.

Nevertheless, Patriarch Meletios' recognition led Bishop Raphael to see himself as a representative of Antioch even while faithfully operating within Russian jurisdiction.

The new Antiochian community in the New World established for a short period of time close ties with the American Episcopal church, which rendered financial and moral assistance without seeking to make Orthodox converts to Protestantism. Bishop Raphael was regularly requested to speak at Episcopalian diocesan and General Conventions. Continuing evidence of this friendly association with the Episcopalians lies in the English translations of Orthodox prayer books still in use by the archdiocese, which mirror the majestic but archaic prose of the 1662 version of the Book of Common Prayer.

Bishop Raphael had been so devoted to his people that he unfortunately neglected his own health, and he developed serious rheumatism and—eventually—heart disease. He became increasingly bed-ridden as his health failed him. Sadly, Bishop Raphael died prematurely on February 27, 1915, at the still young age of fifty-four. It is said that so many mourners came to pay their final respects that his body lay in state for a week. His reputation had been such in the New York community that the city gave special permission for his remains to be buried under the altar at St. Nicholas Cathedral in Brooklyn. His remains were twice transferred, and now rest at Holy Resurrection Cemetery at the Antiochian Village near Ligonier, Pennsylvania. Bishop Raphael was canonized a saint on 29 May 2000 by American bishops representing different Orthodox jurisdictions.

Not long after Bishop Raphael's death, the 1917 Revolution in Russia brought financial and administrative chaos to the Orthodox churches of North America, destroying the unity they had enjoyed under its patronage. Ethnic divisions and ecclesiastical factions resulted in the anomalous (and thoroughly uncanonical) situation of overlapping jurisdictions, usually based on ethnic or national affiliations. Deprived of Bishop Raphael's unifying presence, the small Syro-Arabian Mission fell victim to this divisiveness, and it would take sixty years—until June, 1975—for total jurisdictional and administrative unity to be restored to the Antiochian Orthodox of North America. However, the archdiocese

was blessed by a number of worthy hierarchs, such as Metropolitan Antony Bashir, who preserved Bishop Raphael's legacy.

The archdiocese is today composed of seven regions—some of which are run by three auxiliary bishops—headed by Metropolitan Philip Saliba. Metropolitan Philip persuaded the 1969 annual archdiocesan convention to drop the name “Syrian” from the official title of the archdiocese, believing it ought to stress its Antiochian heritage rather than a particular ethnic attachment. This proved to be a wise decision that would help further the archdiocese's future growth: from sixty parishes to over 225! As a pioneer of Orthodoxy in the North America, Philip Saliba has contributed tremendously in strengthening Orthodoxy in the Western culture.

A large factor in the archdiocese's ultimate growth was its pioneering use of English, unusual in the ethnic Orthodox churches of America where English is still often a second language. The Antiochian Archdiocese published the first English choir books in the 1920s, followed in 1938 by Fr. Seraphim Nassar's comprehensive, *The Divine Prayers and Services of the Catholic Orthodox Church of Christ*, still the most complete volume in English. The archdiocese furthered its commitment to propagating Orthodoxy in English by creating a publishing department in 1940, which has produced numerous titles in English on religious education, sacred music, and liturgical services. Today, the archdiocese conducts nearly all of its affairs, including liturgical services, in English.

Thousands of people of various ethnic and racial backgrounds have “come home” to the Orthodox Church in the parishes of the Antiochian Archdiocese, joining those of Middle Eastern descent to make the Antiochian Archdiocese of North America a vibrant witness for Orthodoxy. Entire parishes were received by Metropolitan Philip, including in 1987 the two-thousand members of the Evangelical Orthodox Church, ex-Evangelical Protestants seeking roots in the historic Christian Church. By the end of the twentieth century, the Antiochian Archdiocese has grown to over half a million members, nearly half (40%) of whom are non-Arab Americans. The “Antiochian Village” was established by Metropolitan Philip to serve the fastest

growing Archdiocese in North America. Whereas past generations of Antiochians labored to bring Orthodoxy to America, the present generation has clearly labored to bring America to Orthodoxy.

PRESENT ANTIOCH

The current Jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Antioch extends over Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Kuwait, Arabic Gulf, Southern Turkey, Iran, Arabian Peninsula, North and South America, Central America, Australia, New Zealand and Western and Middle Europe. Although the city of Antioch is the ancient Apostolic See, the official residence of the Patriarch has been situated in the city of Damascus, Syria since the fourteenth century. The Patriarchate of Antioch is composed now of 23 Archdioceses of which 6 in Syria, 6 in Lebanon, 3 in Turkey, 1 in Arabia, 5 in North and South America, 1 in Australia and New Zealand and 1 In Western and Middle Europe. The Holy Synod of Antioch is the ultimate authority in matters of faith, legislation and administration. Patriarch Ignatius IV, is the president and the executor of the decisions of the Holy Synod and the overseer of the Church properties and endowments in Antioch, Damascus and the Patriarchal monasteries. The twenty Metropolitans who make up the Holy Synod are: Elias of Tripoli and Al-Koura (12/20/1962), Philip of North America (8/5/1966), Spyridon of Helioupolis (9/26/1996), Constantine of Baghdad and Kuwait (10/7/1969), George of Byblos and Botryos (10/2/1970), John of Laodicia (10/21/1979), Elias of Beirut (2/5/1980), Paul of Arkadia (1/21/1983), Elia of Epiphaneia (7/27/1984), Elia of Tyre and Sidon (7/27/1984), Antonio of Mexico and Central America (6/12/1966), Sergios of Chile (10/8/1996), Cyril of Argentina (10/8/1997), Damaskinos of Sao Paulo (10/1/1997), Sabba of Bosra (5/6/1999), Paul of Australia and New Zealand (10/5/1999), George of Emessa (10/5/1999), Paul of Berrhoea and Alexandretta (10/20/2000) and Gabriel of Western and Middle Europe (8/5/1996).

There are also a number of auxiliary bishops who are appointed either to the directionship of the Patriarchal offices, or to the abbacy of a

Patriarchal Monastery, or to a Vicariate, or to assist a Metropolitan as an auxiliary bishop. The Patriarchal bishops are:

Patriarchal Vicar, Ghatas of Kara (11/24/1999). Patriarchal assistants: Moses of Daraya (1/24/1995) the Arch-secretary of the Eparchy of Damascus, Luke of Sydnaya (9/15/1999), Athanasius of Yabrou (11/15/79), Stepehn of Hina (2/6/1980), Elias of Aphamea (9/6/1966) Abbot of Saint Elias Monastery in Shouia Lebanon-- --- Niphon of Al-Sakhba (Philippoupolis) (10/26/1988) --Patriarchal vicar of the Antiochian Metochian in Moscow-- and Demteri of Sergiopolis (3/10/2000) -- Vicar in the Vicariate of Rio De Jenero.

The Diocesan Bishops in the Archdiocese of North America are: Antoun of Miami and the Southwest (11/4/1982), Joseph of Los Angeles and the West (5/8/1991), Basil of Wichita and the Diocese of Mid-America (11/4/1993) and THOMAS Bishop of Pittsburgh and the East, December 5th, 2004, MARK Bishop of Toledo and The Midwest December 5th, 2004, and ALEXANDER Bishop of Ottawa and Upstate New York December 5th, 2004.

The Diocesan Bishops in the Archdiocese of Arcadia are John Bishop of John of Hosn (1/24/1995), and Basil of Tartous (1/24/1995).

From his residence patriarch Ignatius IV administers his see in Damascus assisted by the above-mentioned Patriarchal vicars and staff. His vicariates are administered by patriarchal vicars who are directly responsible to him. Over the last twenty years Patriarch Ignatius has been active in visiting and corresponding with various Orthodox Churches and proactive in opening dialogues with the non-Chalcedonian Orthodox Churches as well as with the non-Orthodox Churches quantitatively and qualitatively. His monumental achievement was the establishment of the Balamand University. He had founded the nucleus of the University when he was still a bishop and a dean of the ecclesiastical school in 1962. With a pledge from late Metropolitan Antonions Bashir, Metropolitan of the Antiochian Archdiocese in North

America, He founded Saint John of Damascus school of theology. The will of Metropolitan Antonios, however, was executed by his successor Metropolitan Philip Saliba. The institute opened its doors in 1970. The first class graduated in 1974. Since its opening the theological school of Balamand has educated a large number of dynamic bishops, priests and deacons who are pastoring the Antiochian flocks throughout the world.

With generous donations of many prominent individuals and Churches, especially the Archdiocese of North America, the university was founded in 1988 by his beatitude Ignatius IV to include many faculties such as Fine Arts, Art and Social Sciences, Engineering Business and Management, Health Sciences and Medical School. As a private, non-profit institution of higher learning the university performs its mission through teaching, research, and service to the community. The Church of Antioch, in harmony with its historical experience, is committed to promoting rigorous cooperation and dialogue between Eastern Christians and Muslims through education, symposia and studies sponsored by the University.

Theological studies in Antioch are not confined to the walls of Balamand University, but its extends to many other Archdioceses in Lebanon and Syria, as well as to the Archdioceses of the Americas, especially to Archdiocese of North America where the Antiochian House of Studies provides a forum for all the theological and pastoral education activities of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America. The Antiochian House of studies in North America aims at practical and theological issues within the theological training received by Seminarians, and providing face-to-face training for recent and soon-to-be ordained. The Doctor of Ministry Program (D. Min) aims at those who have acquired a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree and have served at least three years following graduation from seminary. The St. Stephen's Course in Orthodox Theology - a distance education-based program- aims at introducing, practicing and future church workers to the richness of Orthodox theology.

In order to foster continuing training for their clergy a number of Metropolitans are holding regular Clergy Symposia and conferences for them providing a forum for both theory and praxis in the ministry of the priesthood.

In both Lebanon and Syria there is a large number of infant schools, elementary, Junior High and high schools which have educated throughout the twentieth centuries thousands of Orthodox students as well as non-Orthodox students.

The majority of the Antiochian Archdioceses throughout the world are witnessing now a spiritual revival. This is due to the dynamic leadership of the Metropolitans and clergy who are protecting the Orthodox faith, caring for their clergy and laity, securing for them spiritual and material needs and meeting with them regularly to supervise their pastoral activities. Their ministry and today's culture are closely knit, so that the Patriarchate has an international role, although it is part of the Arab world. The role of the Metropolitans of the Arab Countries, who are deeply rooted in their Arabic culture, is characterized by their ingenious leadership among the Arab people whether Christian or non-Christian, while the Metropolitans of the Americas, Australia and Europe are worshipping, preaching and teaching in the language of their respective countries. The parish priests are teaching their spiritual children in their own cultural and linguistic backgrounds: The priests of the Arab countries serve and preach their flocks in Arabic spirit and language, but their missionary activities are limited to the cradle Orthodox, because they are constrained from converting the Muslims. The Antiochian priests in the West celebrate the Liturgy and teach their parishes in diverse national languages and cultures, caring for children and youth, organizing their gatherings, providing for spiritual upbringing and preaching to the non-Orthodox and thus gaining many converts.

Consequently, a great number of churches are becoming regularly crowded by worshippers who participate in the Divine Liturgy and receive frequently the Holy Communion. In this process of revitalization

and growth the spiritual activities are manifested in most of the parishes. Even though there are still parishes which are ceremonials with a great number of nominal Orthodox Christians, the pastoral activities in many parishes are centered around Christian education, social work, outreach programs as well as social and cultural activities. In the last ten years we have seen an increase in the number of qualified priests and deacons whose pastoral care has played a vital role in the success of their parishes. The overwhelming majority of the parishes have parish councils which are the representatives of the church in administrating its properties and affairs and in creating standing committees as they deem to accomplish the purpose of the local Church.

The numbers of Churches, Priests and Deacons are as follows:

Archdiocese	Churches	Priests & Deacons
See of Damascus	30 + 6 Chapels	30
Berrhoea & Alexandretta (Allepo)	12	13
Bosra	16	5
Emessa (Homs)	16	13
Epiphaneia (Hama)	12	22
Laodicia (Lattaquia):	28	30
Beirut	11	21
Byblos and botryos (Mount Lebanon)	110	65
Helioupolis (Zahle)	25	15
Tripoli and Al-Khoura	58 + 12 chapels	45
Tyre and Sidon	35	8
Arkadia	60	46
Bghdad & Kuwait		
Sao Paulo	19	20
North America	250	460
México & Central America	7	12
Buenos Aires	15	15

Chilie	12	14
Australia & New Zealand	13	15
Western & Middle Europe	23	23

The clergy are tending their flocks in the above-mentioned parishes through creating a spiritual support system for their congregations, especially for the younger generation. They are seeking to reinforce the parental example and teaching of strong moral values, which are vital for children's success and salvation in today's world. Their Endeavour is to establish and develop personal relationships, which in turn help to strengthen the community life of their Churches. Through different organizations such as youth, young adults, Ladies Societies the people are able to learn and experience more of the Holy Orthodox Faith and how to apply it in their everyday life. Thus it has become a system by which these Churches can minister to entire families and include nearly every age group, providing Christian education from pre-school to young adults.

As the clergy relate to sacramental function and leadership the focus is on the cultural tendencies of their respective countries. Through a strategy of Parish growth and outreach the Antiochian Churches in West were able to prepare and communicate materials on the Orthodox Christian faith in English, Spanish, Portuguese, German and French for both Orthodox and non-Orthodox people. The Antiochian Churches in North America are showing the way how to help all Christians learn more about the history, teachings and practice of the Church and spread the Spirit of Orthodox Christianity to all Americans. The growth and development of the Antiochian Archdiocese in Metropolitan Philip Saliba era helped a great number of Evangelical protestant Churches to show the greatest interest in Orthodoxy. In 1987 he blessed the entry of 140 former evangelical Protestant ministers into the Church. This historical event has spurred a renewed drive to bring America to

Orthodoxy. Under his leadership many programs of research and study were carried out by Saint Athanasius Academy to prepare materials, like the Orthodox Study Bible, to set forth the Orthodox Christian faith to Americans. This movement has opened the door in Western Europe, central and South America and Australia to a flow of converts to join the Orthodox Church and to reinforce the Mission work. In 1988 a Department of Missions and Evangelism was established in North America in order to build new missions throughout United States and Canada and to cultivate relationships with pastors and communities which desire to become Orthodox .

The spiritual sense of Eastern Monasticism is experiencing a great regeneration in both Syria and Lebanon. The development of monasticism is manifested in rekindling the spiritual life in many historical monasteries which have been deserted for a long time. There is a feeling among the new generation that the true Orthodox Christian must ground his life and conduct in Christ, something which is hard to achieve in the world. The existing monasteries many of which are becoming a beacon of spirituality are the following:

In Syria: Our Lady of Saydnaya Convent, Saidnaya, Cherubim Convent, Saint Geroge Saidnaya, Saint Thekla Convent, Maaloula, Saint George, Houmeira, Syria, Saint George Mouharde, Saint George Kfarbou, The holy virgin Slonpneh, Moukamarieh, Our Lady (Dormition) Convent, Baniass St. Eliane Monastery, Homs, Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Kferam and St. Elias Alreih.

In Lebanon: St. Catherine Convent, Zahrat El-Ihssan, Ashrafieh and the Entrance of the Theotokos Convent, Ashrafieh, St. George Monastery, Deir El-Harf; Archangel Mikhael Monastery, Baskinta; St. John the Baptist Convent, Douma. St. John the Baptist Monastery, Douma, Our Lady of Kaftoon Convent, Kaftoon, Our Lady of Hamatoura Monastery, Kousba, Our Lady of Light (El-Nourieh) Convent, Hamat. St. Jacob the Persian Convent, Dedde, St. Dimitrios Monastery, Kousba, Our Lady of Fervent Intercession Monastery, Bedebba El-Horsh, Our Lady of En-

Natour Convent, Enfeh, Holy Prohet Elias Monastery, Kefrkahel, Our Lady of Bkefteen Monastery, Our Lady of Balamand, North Lebanon, St. Elias Monastery, Shoueir, Lebanon, Sts. Peter & Paul Monastery, Bezbina, Prohet Elias, Jebrayel, Sts Sergius & Bakhos, Bino, St Doumet, Rimah, St. Mama Monastery, Monastery of St. John the Baptist – Jdaidat.

The exciting development has been the setting up of the monasteries in Western Europe and the Americas at the hands of recent converts such as, St John the Baptist Monastery Monasterio Ortodoxo Lavra Mambre, Guatemala, and the Holy Resurrection Monastery in southern France which has a monastic community of eighteen nuns.

The Archdiocese of Beirut through a 300 bed general hospital (St. George Hospital founded in 1878) seven schools a nursing home for the elderly and three dispensaries cares to the social and educational welfare of the Lebanese population regardless of religious racial and ethnic belonging. Throughout all the Antiochian Archdioceses there are benevolent medical institutes, benevolent brotherhoods, Charitable Organization, male and female orphanages and Senior citizen homes.

In North America the Antiochian Village Heritage and Learning Center is a unique conference and retreat center located in the scenic Laurel Highlands of Western Pennsylvania. The Center offers 100 guest rooms, each with two double beds, 10 class and meeting rooms, banquet facilities with seating for 320, an auditorium seating 400. In addition to Ss. Peter and Paul Chapel there is the Heritage Library and the museum which has many ancient icons, artifacts, and stories of the Antiochian heritage and fathers of the Antiochian church.

The Antiochian Archdioceses publish different prayer books, spiritual and theological books, Websites, magazines and bulletins, such as "Al Nashra" "The Word Magazine" "Al-Karma," "Raiati," "A-Rua" and the "voice of Orthodoxy" that are distributed to all families. They are meant to be a link between the pastor and the church members. "An Nour" is a

visionary magazine published by the youth movement in Lebanon. The hymns of the Church have been set down in Western musical notation and translated into English, Spanish and Portuguese.

With a spirit of Christian leadership, awareness and commitment the Antiochian Churches have become pastoral, educational and missionary Centers and hubs of the Orthodoxy around the world.

Antioch and the Third Millennium

The headquarters of the Antiochian Patriarchate continues to reside in Damascus on the Street Called Straight, a location harking back to Christianity's apostolic roots (see Acts 9:11). But Antioch is not merely backward looking. Rather, it is looking into the future as it seeks to disseminate its priceless spiritual message to the world. It is at present the largest single Christian body in the Middle East, and it is conscious of its mandate to spread the Faith and bring new members into the Body of Christ. In many ways, it is better poised to do this today than at any other time in its history.

As the Antiochian church enters the third millennium, it is intentionally drawing upon its apostolic roots and the best of its long heritage to accomplish its mission from the Lord. It is rediscovering its tradition of charity (Acts 11:27-30), missionary outreach (Acts 13:1-3), and that evangelistic zeal in preaching Christ that inspired outsiders to tag the original Antiochian believers as "Christians." Antioch has historically benefited from its openness to people of various cultural backgrounds, including Jews, Greeks, Syrians, Arabs, Armenians, Russians, and French. The Antiochian church's present global outreach continues this tradition of openness to the world as it draws converts from every conceivable culture and walk of life. These new members will certainly enrich the patriarchate as it continues to go forth to "make disciples of all the nations" (Matt. 28:19). As one Antiochian priest living in the West has described it, Antiochian Orthodoxy is proving to be a bridge between the Orient and the Occident.

The church is also committed to achieving reconciliation with those

Antiochian Christian communities that the vicissitudes of history have separated from her fold. Happily, the fifth-century division with the non-Chalcedonian Syrian church is all but a thing of the past. Talks with the Greek Catholic Melkite church are on-going, and will hopefully someday result in the end of the 1724 schism, and the improvement of relations with the church of Rome.

The Antiochian Patriarchate has traditionally placed a high emphasis on active lay participation, which it believes is the cornerstone of a growing and active church. The importance of the laity in the life of the Church was perhaps best exemplified during the twentieth century by the Orthodox Youth Movement. Antioch is seeking new ways to further enhance lay participation for the present century.

Though the city of Antioch is but a phantom of its former glory, its proud heritage in the Antiochian church has a brilliant future ahead. The church of Antioch will be, as it has been in the past, Christ's witness to the world, the pearl of Orthodoxy, and the splendor of the East.

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