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Bishop Nicholas Samra

Announcement & Biography



The Rt. Rev. Exarch Joseph Haggar, Administrator pro tempore of the Eparchy of Newton, on June 15, 2011 announced the following:

His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI has given assent to the canonical election by the Holy Synod of the Melkite Catholic Church of the Most Rev. Archbishop Cyril Salim Bustros as Metropolitan of Beirut and Jbeil, Lebanon, and, at the proposal of the Holy Synod of the Melkite Catholic Church, has named the Most Rev. Bishop Nicholas James Samra as Eparch of Newton.

Biography of Bishop Samra

Bishop Samra, who is widely recognized for his many accomplishments, has just attained another "First." Bishop Nicholas will be the first American-born Eparch of the Melkite Church in the United States. While Bishop Nicholas is well known and loved by the flock of the American eparchy, the following Wikipedia biography sketches out some of his history.

Nicholas Samra (born August 15, 1944) is the former auxiliary bishop and protosyncellus of the Melkite Catholic Eparchy of Newton in the United States. He has written extensively on the subject of ecumenism and the Eastern Catholic Churches. On Wednesday, June 15, 2011, he was appointed Bishop, or Eparch, of the Eparchy (Eastern Rite Diocese) of Newton by the Holy Father, His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI, replacing His Excellency, the Most Reverend Archbishop Cyril Salim Bustros.

Samra was born in Paterson, New Jersey to George H. Samra and Elizabeth Balady

Samra. His grandparents and his father were immigrants to the United States from Aleppo, Syria. He was ordained a priest for the Eparchy of Newton on May 10, 1970 and served as a pastor in Melkite parishes in Los Angeles, Chicago and New Jersey. Bishop Samra has a B.A. from St. Anselm's College, in Manchester, New Hampshire, and a B.D. from St. John's Seminary in Brighton, Massachusetts.

On April 21, 1989 Samra was appointed Auxiliary Bishop and Protosyncellus of the Eparchy of Newton, and Titular Bishop of Gerasa, by the Holy Father, His Holiness Blessed Pope John Paul II. He was consecrated and installed on July 6 of that year by Archbishop Joseph Tawil as Auxiliary Bishop and Protosyncellus of the Eparchy of Newton and Titular Bishop of Gerasa. Samra served as Auxiliary Bishop and Protosyncellus until his retirement on January 11, 2005.

An active speaker and author, Samra has written extensively on the subject of ecumenism, Christian leadership and stewardship. He has also published a multi-volume history of the Melkite Church and a book on the legacy of Archbishop Joseph Tawil. He is the past president of the Eastern Catholic Association of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

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