

**Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon
of Los Angeles
1021 S. 10th Street
St. Louis, MO 63104
314-231-1021**

For Immediate Release

His Beatitude Patriarch Bechara Peter Cardinal Rai, Maronite Patriarch of Antioch and all the East, will visit the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles, **June 29 –July 10, 2016**, presiding at the Annual Convention of the National Apostolate of Maronites (NAM) **July 5- 10, 2016**, in San Francisco, California.

Patriarch Rai was elected on March 15, 2011 as the 77th Maronite Patriarch of Antioch and All the East. He succeeded Patriarch Nasrallah Peter Cardinal Sfeir. He was elevated to the College of Cardinals on November 24, 2012 by Pope Benedict XVI.

The son of Youssef and Taminee, Patriarch Rai, was born on February 25, 1940 in *Hemlaya*, Lebanon (the town of a Maronite Lebanese saint, Saint Rafka). He pursued his elementary and secondary studies at the Collège Notre Dame at *Jamhour*. He took his monastic vows with the Maronite Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary on August 31, 1962; he was ordained a priest on September 3, 1967; and was ordained a bishop on July 12, 1986.

From 1986 to 1990 he served as a Patriarchal Vicar at *Bkerke*, Lebanon, and in 1990 he was appointed Archbishop of *Jbeil*, Lebanon. Cardinal Rai founded Notre Dame University in Louaizé, Lebanon, and was its president from 1978 to 1984. From 1982 to 1986 he presided over the Court of Appeal of the Maronite Tribunal in Lebanon. His Holiness Pope John Paul II named him as the Coordinator of the Synod for Lebanon (1990-1995). He chaired the Episcopal Commission for the Affairs of the Family (1997) and that of Communications in 2009.

Patriarch Bechara Cardinal Rai holds a degree in philosophy and theology and a doctorate in canon and civil law from the University of Saint John Lateran in Rome. He taught Canon Law and theology at St. Joseph University in Beirut (USJ) and at Holy Spirit University in *Kaslik* (USEK) and at the Sagesse University.

Patriarch Bechara Cardinal Rai is the first Maronite Patriarch to come from a religious order in more than 200 years. He chose “Communion and Love” as his motto.

Accompanied by His Excellency Archbishop Paul N. Sayah, Patriarch Vicar General, His Beatitude, Patriarch Bechara Cardinal Rai will arrive in Detroit, MI, on **June 29, 2016** and will be the guest of His Excellency Bishop A. Elias Zaidan, Bishop of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles.

- **On June 29,** Patriarch Rai will visit St. Maron Maronite Church in Detroit, MI.;
- **On June 30,** Patriarch Rai will visit St. Ignatius of Antioch Maronite Church in Dayton, OH;
- **On July 1,** Patriarch Rai will visit St. Anthony of Padua Maronite Church in Cincinnati, OH and attend and present at the “*One Church of Mercy*” Conference at Annunciation Roman Catholic Church in Cincinnati, OH and
- **On July 2-4,** Patriarch Rai will visit St. John Maron Parish in Orange, CA and Our Lady of Mt. Lebanon Cathedral in Los Angeles, CA
- **On July 5-10,** Patriarch Rai will attend and preside at the Maronite Clergy Conference and Annual Convention of the National Apostolate of Maronites in San Francisco, CA

The Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles comprises 42 parishes and missions, a National Shrine/Basilica, a Convent, a Monastery and Maronite faithful in 34 states located in the Mid-West, South and West of the United States.



Christian - Muslim_Summit at the Maronite Patriarchate - Bkerke_3,31,2015.
Catholic and Orthodox Patriarchs with the other entire Churches representative in the East,
and the Sunnite, Shiite, Alawite Mufti and Sheikh Druze.



Patriarch Rai receives the Catholic and Orthodox Patriarchs with the other entire Churches representative in the East, at the Maronite Patriarchate summer residence – *Diman*, on 8,1,2014.



Maronite Patriarch Bechara Rai celebrated Holy Thursday with a Mass at the Roumieh Prison in presence of the Prisoners, 3, 24, 2016.



Patriarch Rai visits the Christian Refugees in Irbil, Iraq, with Cardinal Scola and Patriarch Sako, 6, 19, 2015.