

## Statute of the See of Antioch, issued by the Holy Synod on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 1983<sup>1</sup>

### General Provisions

The Statute of the “Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and all the East” adopted by the Holy Synod of Antioch at its ordinary session held at the Patriarchal Monastery of “Our Lady of Saydnaya” from June 20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1972, shall be implemented and enforced in accordance with the following provisions, in addition to the basic provisions stipulated therein.

**Article 1.** The Church of Antioch known as the “Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and all the East” comprises the dioceses and patriarchal vicariates known ecclesiastically, historically and geographically:

1- Antioch and Damascus and Dependencies	Its center: the Patriarchate – Damascus
2- Lattakia and Dependencies	Its center: Lattakia
3- Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of All North America	Its center: Englewood - New Jersey
4- Bosra, Horan and Jabal al-Arab	Its center: Swaida
5- Baghdad, Kuwait and Dependencies	Its center: Baghdad
6- Buenos Aires and All Argentina	Its center: Buenos Aires
7- Beirut and Dependencies	Its center: Beirut
8- Byblos, Batroun and Dependencies	Its center: Hadath - Brummana
9- Aleppo, Alexandretta and Dependencies	Its center: Aleppo
10- Hama and Dependencies	Its center: Hama
11- Homs and Dependencies	Its center: Homs
12- Zahleh, Baalbek and Dependencies	Its center: Zahleh
13- Tyre, Sidon and Dependencies	Its center: Marjayoun
14- Tripoli, Al-Koura and Dependencies	Its center: Tripoli
15- Akkar and Dependencies	Its center: Sheikh Taba - Akkar
16- Sao Paulo and All Brazil	Its center: Sao Paulo - Brazil
1- Patriarchate Vicariate of Australia	Its center: Sydney
2- Patriarchate Vicariate of West Europe	Its center: Paris
3- Patriarchate Vicariate of Central America	Its center: Mexico
4- Patriarchate Vicariate of Rio de Janeiro	Its center: Rio de Janeiro - Brazil
5- Patriarchate Vicariate of Chile	Its Center: Santiago – Chile

**Article 2.** Antioch is the ancient apostolic centre, and Damascus is the current Patriarchal Residence.

**Article 3.** The clericals along with seculars shall engage altogether in the life of the Church each by his Spirit-given gifts.

**Article 4.** The term “Clerical” in this Statute shall include: the Patriarch, Metropolitan, Bishop, Priest, and Deacon. The term “Secular” is to outline other members of the Church.

### Chapter One: Holy Synod

**Article 5.** The Holy Synod is the judge in matters of faith, being thus the legislative body of the Church and its supreme judicial authority.

**Article 6.** The Holy Synod shall be comprised of the Patriarch being the President and the Diocesan Metropolitans being the members.

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<sup>1</sup>The present statute is still in force nowadays.

**Article 7.** The Holy Synod shall carry out the following duties:

- Preserve the Orthodox faith and its conciliarity, as well as the ecclesiastical systems
- Strengthen fraternal ties between Orthodox churches
- Look into cults, heresies and heterodoxies, handle it and prosecute its perpetrators
- Create dioceses and patriarchate vicariates and amend its existing borders by division and integration
- Nominate and elect the Patriarch, Metropolitans, and Bishops in accordance with the provisions of this Statute
- Organize and approve an annual list of those eligible for the Episcopal rank
- Appoint the Synod committees, elaborate their action plans, appoint their respective heads and study their data
- Supervise “St. John of Damascus Institute of Theology” as well as the Priest School
- Study the situation of its dioceses and patriarchal vicariates and their financial status, development activities, and pastoral, educational, welfare work and accordingly provide further necessary guidance
- Revoke the contracts in violation to the provision of Articles 21 and 27 of the Episcopal See Statute and condemn its constituents
- Report the constant impediments and accept the resignation of the Patriarch, Metropolitan and Bishop

**Article 8.** The Holy Synod shall convene in the Patriarchal Residence or at any other place chosen by the Patriarch in two sessions: the first in the first half of October and the second around the Pentecost every year. It may also convene exceptionally if necessary following an invitation of the Patriarch or upon a written justified request submitted by three members of the Synod.

**Article 9.** The Patriarch shall convene for an ordinary session, two months in advance. The invitation letter shall include the agenda and the required documents for such meetings.

**Article 10.** The agenda of the ordinary session shall include the pending matters, unimplemented resolutions, and issues raised by the Patriarch or Metropolitans. Thus, the agenda of the extraordinary session is limited to the item for which the session has been convened.

**Article 11.** The Holy Synod shall convene following an invitation by the Patriarch and under his Chairmanship. Thus, whenever the Court is appointed to the trial of the Patriarch, the Synod shall convene following an invitation by the oldest ordained member in the Synod and under his Chairmanship.

**Article 12.** The sessions of the Synod shall be legal by a majority of its members not requiring thus another quorum.

**Article 13.** The voting shall be restricted to the members of the Synod only.

**Article 14.** The voting shall be conducted publicly and may be held secretly upon the request of the majority.

**Article 15.** The Synod shall make its decisions by the majority of the attendees.

**Article 16.** The Patriarch reserves the right to participate in the voting process, and upon equality of the votes, he shall have the casting vote.

**Article 17.** The Holy Synod shall appoint one of the Patriarchal Clerical as a Secretary keeping the minutes of the sessions. The Patriarchal Representative may serve as the Secretary of the Holy Synod.

**Article 18.** The Secretary shall record the minutes of the sessions of the Synod in the Official Register provided that each member of the Synod shall be entitled to receive a copy.

**Article 19.** The Patriarch along with the present members shall sign the minutes of the sessions.

**Article 20.** The Secretariat of the Synod shall publish a media statement upon the conclusion of each session.

**Article 21.** The Holy Synod shall appoint the following committees:

- 1) The committee of “St. John of Damascus Institute of Theology” in Balamand and its mission:
  - a. Supervise the institute and the Priest School, as well as theology students by correspondence
  - b. Provide educational and religious books and publications for children, young people and adults
  - c. Organize meeting of Priests among others
  - d. Supervise the publications related to doctrines and modern-day issues
- 2) The committee of Ecumenical Affairs and its mission:
  - a. Study topics raised by sister churches, other churches, and different religious bodies
  - b. Attend conferences and meetings required for the implementation of its mission
- 3) The committee of information and its mission is to publish the news of the church in all audio-visual and written media
- 4) The committee of liturgy and its mission is to issue liturgical texts and correct what must be corrected (ecclesiastical art, architecture, icon and music)
- 5) The committee of eligibility and its mission is to receive information about celibate clericals and draft an annual list of those eligible to be elected as Bishop to be submitted to the Holy Synod for approval

The Holy Synod reserves the right to increase or decrease the number of committees on an ad hoc basis.

**Article 22.** The term of the Synod committee shall expire three years upon its appointment, after which a new committee shall be chosen.

### **Chapter Two: Patriarch**

**Article 23.** The Patriarch is the President of the Holy Synod and the executor of its decisions, the symbol of the unity of the Church of Antioch, its bond with the Universal Church, and its representative to other Churches, religions and nations.

**Article 24.** The Patriarch shall have general jurisdiction over the Antioch, Damascus, and the Patriarchal monasteries and endowments, as well as the right to directly supervise it.

**Article 25.** The Patriarch shall enjoy the confessional rights and privileges.

**Article 26.** The Patriarch shall be empowered to:

- Correspond different churches, Metropolitans and Patriarchal Vicars of the Episcopal See of Antioch
- Sign agreements, deeds and letters in the name of the See upon its approval by the competent bodies
- Issue the certificate of election of Metropolitans and Bishops, and validate their signatures
- Award decorations in the name of the See of Antioch at the request of the Diocese Metropolitan or the Patriarchal Vicar
- Invite the Holy Synod to ordinary and extraordinary sessions, and preside over its sessions. He shall also invite to the Synod’s sessions knowledgeable and experienced clericals and seculars so as to benefit from their knowledge and experience
- Resolve all conflicts and disputes arising within the community
- Invite bishops and vicars to periodic meetings once every two years and preside over the meetings
- Invite and preside over the General Congress of Antioch

- Convene and preside over the Economic and Development Board
- Compose the Antioch delegations with the approval of the competent authorities of the Synod
- Enjoy the powers vested to him as the Metropolitan of the Diocese of Damascus
- Appoint the heads of the Patriarchal Monasteries
- Appoint one of the Metropolitans of the dioceses as a patriarchal vicar in a vacant diocese
- Appoint Patriarchal Vicars and be their reference
- Nominate three eligible clericals to be elected by the Holy Synod as a Patriarchal Vicar

**Article 27.** The Patriarch shall preserve the laws of Ecumenical and Regional Councils, and the laws and regulations of the Episcopal See of Antioch.

**Article 28.** The Patriarch shall not lend, borrow, replace, mortgage, or sell any of the Patriarchal sees' endowments' except by a decision of the Holy Synod, in accordance with the article 21 of this Statute.

**Article 29.** The Patriarch shall appoint the Presidents and Advisers of the Court of Appeal in Syria and Lebanon, and shall determine where the court sits.

**Article 30.** The Patriarch shall be placed in one of the Patriarchal Monasteries or in the hospital in case of constant impediments. The Patriarchate shall take him in charge in a manner befitting his status.

### **Chapter Three; Patriarch Election**

**Article 31.** The candidate to the See of Antioch shall be a member of the Holy Synod and of those who have served therein for at least five years.

**Article 32.** The See of Antioch shall be considered vacant in the event of death, resignation, exemption or constant impediments of the Patriarch.

**Article 33.** In the event of death, the Patriarchal Representative shall seal the Patriarch's Chamber and books, in the presence of the President of the Patriarchal Secretariat, and whoever whose available to attend of the community members and draft a report to be signed by the attendees. The Patriarchal Representative shall then mourn the Patriarch by telegram to the Metropolitans and Bishops of the Episcopal See.

**Article 34.** Twenty-four hours following the obituary and the attendance of the Metropolitans, the attendees shall meet under the chairmanship of the oldest and elect one of them as a Patriarchal Locum Tenens.

**Article 35.** The Patriarchal Locum Tenens shall mourn the Patriarch immediately upon assuming his position to the ecclesiastical and civil authorities, and announce the date of the funeral, indicating his election as a Patriarchal Locum Tenens.

**Article 36.** The body shall be laid in the Cathedral, and the funeral shall be held at the appointed time and then be buried in the Patriarchs' cemetery.

**Article 37.** The powers of the Patriarchal Locum Tenens shall be limited to conduct the election of the successor Patriarch and he shall remain in the Patriarchal Residence. He shall not be entitled to cause any modification or replacement in the situation nor in the persons, properties, endowments or patriarchal assets.

**Article 38.** Following the end of the burial ceremony, and within a period not exceeding ten days from the date the post falls vacant, the Holy Synod shall meet with at least two thirds of its members to complete the nomination and election processes under the chairmanship of the Patriarchal Locum Tenens. If two-thirds of the members fail to be present, the Patriarchal Locum Tenens shall summon the absentees. Within twenty-four hours of the date of dispatch, the Holy Synod

shall meet with the whoever who is present and each member shall nominate three of the Metropolitans who meet the conditions stipulated in Article 32 of this Statute. Thus, the results shall be publicly posted and the three winning candidates shall be those who have received a majority of votes.

**Article 39.** If the votes are equally divided between two candidates, one shall be drawn by lot.

**Article 40.** The following shall be taken into consideration during nomination:

- a. If a paper contains more than three names, the first three names shall be considered
- b. A paper with one or two shall be deemed correct
- c. If one's name is repeated in a single paper, the name shall be considered once
- d. Unreadable papers shall be cancelled
- e. Papers containing names other than candidates' names shall not be counted.

**Article 41.** The election process shall take place in the Church and shall be as follows: if a candidate wins two thirds of the votes, he shall be immediately declared Patriarch. If none of the candidates receives two-thirds of the votes, then the vote shall be repeated again and whoever receives the majority of the votes in this session shall be declared Patriarch and the results shall be recorded again in the Official Register.

**Article 42.** The conditions of Article 41 of this Statute shall be applied to the election papers.

**Article 43.** Immediately upon announcing the new Patriarch, the attendees shall celebrate the thanksgiving prayer, and then everyone shall come forward and shake hands with the new Patriarch. The result of the voting shall be publicly posted in all media.

**Article 44.** The Patriarch shall be enthroned at a date he shall specify and inform the Churches and civil authorities.

**Article 45.** The Patriarch shall preside over the Divine Liturgy on the day of his enthronement and shall be attended by the heads of the Orthodox delegations. He receives the patriarchal cross from the eldest ordained Antiochian Metropolitans and delivers a speech in which he vows to preserve the laws and regulations of the Orthodox Church, and outlines his major work in the Episcopal See of Antioch.

**Article 46.** The Patriarch shall assume his duties by giving the blessing to the people and by the message of peace sent to the heads of the Orthodox Churches.

#### **Chapter Four: Metropolitan**

**Article 47.** The Metropolitan is the pastor of the diocese, the symbol of its unity, its connecting link with the church, and its official representative to the state and has the general mandate and direct supervision of the endowments, monasteries, churches, institutions, shrines and Maqamat. He shall preside over its councils, associations, institutions and other sectarian bodies, which he establishes and manages in accordance with the provisions of the Councils' statute and the present Statute.

**Article 48.** The Metropolitan shall preside over the Spiritual First Instance Court in the diocese and shall apply the "Legal Status Law".

**Article 49.** The Metropolitan shall organize records of baptism, engagement, marriage, constraints of endowments, property, sacred utensils, manuscripts, and icons in the diocese and shall submit a copy thereof to the secretariat of the Synod. He shall also maintain the furnishings of the diocese and the assets of churches and monasteries.

**Article 50.** The Metropolitan shall take care of the diocesan Priests, ensure their living, meet them periodically, and observe their pastoral activity. He shall organize a record of the Priest's identity,

date of affiliation to the Priesthood and his ordination and scientific and moral certificates. The Priest shall also provide the Metropolitan with a list of his property obtained by means of inheritance, will or gift, and a copy of this list shall be sent to the Secretariat of the Holy Synod.

- Article 51.** The Metropolitan shall not accept in its diocese a cleric unless with a legal discharge letter.
- Article 52.** The Metropolitan shall preach and guide in his Diocese and visit his fellow parishioners whenever possible and organize the related statistical tables.
- Article 53.** The Metropolitan shall exercise his membership in the Holy Synod by attending its sessions, implementing its decisions, and applying the laws and regulations of the Episcopal See.
- Article 54.** The Metropolitan shall organize with the Diocesan council an annual financial statement of the diocese.
- Article 55.** The Metropolitan shall not belong to political parties and secret organizations.
- Article 56.** The Metropolitan shall not lend, borrow, replace, mortgage, or sell any of the Patriarchal sees' endowments' except by a decision of the Holy Synod and the written approval of the Patriarch. Any act contrary to the provisions of this Article shall be deemed null and void.
- Article 57.** The Metropolitan shall preserve the laws of Ecumenical and Regional Councils, as well as the laws and regulations of the Episcopal See of Antioch.
- Article 58.** The Metropolitan shall request the appointment of a temporary Representative to administer the parish in the event of incapacity. The Metropolitan shall be placed in one of the Patriarchal Monasteries, and the Patriarchate shall take him in charge in a manner befitting his status.

#### **Chapter Five: Metropolitan Election**

- Article 59.** The Metropolitan candidate shall:
- a. Be of the Antiochian See
  - b. Know the Arabic language and the language of the diocese to which he is a candidate
  - c. Be 33 years old and under 65 years of age
  - d. Hold a degree in theology from "St. John of Damascus Institute of Theology" or from any another Orthodox institute
  - e. Practice the Priesthood in the See for a period of five years, and be known for his praiseworthy conduct and good reputation
  - f. Be listed in the Synod list of those eligible to be elected as Metropolitan
- He shall also explain in writing the assets he holds before and after his ordination through inheritance, grant or will.
- Article 60.** The diocese shall be considered vacant in the event of death, resignation, exemption or constant impediments of the Metropolitan.
- Article 61.** In the event of death, the Representative of the deceased Metropolitan shall mourn him by telegram to the Patriarch, convene to an immediate meeting of the Diocesan council, list the content and the belongings of the Diocese in an official list, and seal the late Metropolitan's Chamber.
- Article 62.** The body shall be laid in the Cathedral.
- Article 63.** Upon receipt of the death news, one of the diocese's Metropolitans is assigned the functions of the Patriarchal Vicar, mourning the deceased Bishop to the Bishops and Metropolitans.
- Article 64.** The Patriarchal Vicar and the Diocesan Council shall make the burial arrangements.
- Article 65.** The Patriarchal Vicar shall exercise the powers abovementioned in Article 38 of this Statute .

**Article 66.**

- 1) The Patriarchal Vicar shall call the Diocese to a Conference to be convened within a period not exceeding forty days from the date of the diocese post falls vacant in order to choose six of those eligible by the Synod. The Patriarch shall immediately report the result.
- 2) The Holy Synod shall choose, nominate, and elect unless the diocese fails to hold a “Conference” or cannot meet, or due to safety reasons.

**Article 67.**

After receipt of the election result by the Patriarch, the Holy Synod shall call for the election in accordance with Articles 39, 40, 41, 42 and 43 of this Statute. Upon its completion, the Patriarch shall immediately report the result by the oldest ordained Metropolitan.

**Article 68.**

The Patriarch shall inform the Metropolitan about his election and seek his approval. If he accepted, the Patriarch shall call upon him to determine the arrangements of the ordination, and if he does not accept, the Holy Synod shall hold the election again.

**Article 69.**

The Patriarch shall hand the new Bishop after his ordination his conventional certificate and officially inform the civil authorities.

**Article 70.**

The Patriarch shall appoint two Metropolitans to accompany the new Metropolitan to his diocese.

**Article 71.**

The new Metropolitan shall preside over the Divine Liturgy on the first Sunday following his arrival to his diocese, and shall deliver a speech blessing the people, pledging to preserve the laws and regulations of the Orthodox Church and to follow Antiochian Holy Synod.

**Article 72.**

The new Metropolitan shall initiate the brotherly communication with his fellow Antiochian Metropolitans.

**Article 73.**

The Metropolitan shall reside in his diocese. However, if it is necessary to leave for more than two weeks, he shall inform the Patriarch. In the event of traveling abroad, the Patriarch’s approval is required and a local Metropolitan shall be appointed to manage the diocese throughout his absence.

### **Chapter Six: Bishop**

**Article 74.**

The Patriarch is the reference of all Bishops and they are at his disposal.

**Article 75.**

The provisions of Article 60 of this Statute shall be applied to the Bishop candidate.

**Article 76.**

The Holy Synod shall elect the Bishop from among three names provided by the Patriarch. The election shall take place in accordance with Articles 60, 68, 69 and 70 of this Statute.

**Article 77.**

The Bishop shall be entrusted with the chairmanship of the secretariat of the patriarchate, or the presidency of a patriarchal monastery, or in one of the patriarchate vicariates, or other church institutions. The Patriarchal Representative shall be thus elected to this position.

**Article 78.**

The Patriarchal Representative shall participate in the nomination and election of the Patriarch, the Metropolitan and the Bishop.

**Article 79.**

The Representative Bishop shall look after the patriarchal vicariate as the head Priest under the guidance of the Patriarch.

**Article 80.**

The provisions of this Statute applied on the Metropolitan shall be also applied on Bishop in terms of his resignation, exemption and constant impediments.

### **Chapter Seven: Priest & Deacon**

**Article 81.**

The Priest is the servant of the divine secrets and the father of his parish and of the head Priest in blessing and guiding the people.

- Article 82.** The term “Priest” in this Chapter shall include the clericals being preachers of all ranks.
- Article 83.** The Priest shall be under the Patriarch, Metropolitan, or Bishop.
- Article 84.** The Priest candidate shall:
- a. Have completed his twenty-fifth birthday and known for his praiseworthy conduct and good reputation
  - b. Have obtained the official intermediate certificate (baccalaureate)
  - c. Have a certificate of eligibility from the Priest School
- Article 85.** The duties of the Priest shall include:
- a. Presiding over traditional prayers in the Parish Church, the Divine Liturgy on Sundays, holy seasons, and all other divine services.
  - b. Teaching the parish by word and example, and guiding it to its salvation.
  - c. Looking after the orphan, the poor, the widow, the disabled, the sick, the prisoner, and the sad.
  - d. Taking care of children and young people, organizing their meetings, and ensuring their readings and spiritual activities.
- Article 86.** The Priest shall not render any spiritual service in another diocese except with the blessing of its High Priest, nor shall he render any spiritual service in any other church except with the consent of its Priest.
- Article 87.** The Priest shall provide the Metropolitan of the diocese with periodic reports regarding his pastoral, educational and administrative activities, and shall annually provide him with a budget set in cooperation with the Parish Council.
- Article 88.** The Priest shall respond to the call of the Metropolitan to attend the ecclesiastical meetings and seminars and to implement in his parish the laws and regulations of the Antiochian Church and the directives given to him.
- Article 89.** The Priest shall seek permission from the High Priest for his absence from the parish, and he shall seek his permission along that of the Patriarch in the event of traveling abroad.
- Article 90.** The Priest shall use the knowledgeable and experienced parishioners, and he shall not distinguish between male and female.
- Article 91.** In case of constant impediments, the diocese shall support the Priest.
- Article 92.** The diocese shall cease payment of the Priest’s allowances immediately upon his death and his house shall be returned if he does not own it. The diocese shall take back his belongings of sacred utensils, clerical vestments, religious books, etc.
- Article 93.** The sentenced Priest in his diocese shall not relocate to another diocese before the final sentence and obtaining the discharge letter.
- Article 94.** The Deacon shall assist the High Priest as well as the Priest in rendering the prayers and completing pastoral, educational and social work.
- Article 95.** The provisions of the preceding articles in this chapter shall apply to the Deacon.

#### **Chapter Eight: Monks**

- Article 96.** The term “Monk” shall include those who wear the “Eskima”, who undertake to fulfill the vows of obedience, chastity, and poverty in the company of the monastery monks, and who are subject to their Superior.



- Article 97.** The clerical who wishes to be a monk, shall receive the blessing of the Archdiocese Pastor to which he belongs before heading to the monastery.
- Article 98.** The monk may not own anything, and whoever has the possession of funds upon promulgation of this Statute shall bestow it to the monastery or to whoever he wishes.
- Article 99.** The monk and clerical who lives in the monastery shall be prohibited from keeping what the visitors pay, but shall bestow it to the monastery.
- Article 100.** The monk shall have no rights over his monastery, whether he is a member of monasticism or appointed by the pastor of the diocese, shall not be paid for any work, whether it was inside or outside the monastery. If he is paid, he shall bestow it to the monastery.
- Article 101.** The monasticism elects its Superior and he shall only be appointed upon approval of the Metropolitan of the diocese. If rejected, a re-election is made in exceptional cases. The Metropolitan reserves the right to appoint the Superior.
- Article 102.** The monasticism is under the Metropolitan and lives a life of prayer, fasting and manual labour, and is guided by the ascetic literature. Its members reside in the monastery and do not leave it unless necessary and with the permission of the Superior.
- Article 103.** Every monastery has an internal Statute approved by the Pastor.
- Article 104.** The monastery is a quiet place where crowded gatherings are forbidden. The pilgrims are guided in the holy seasons in a spiritual way so that their behavior is “fit and decent”.
- Article 105.** The uninhabited monasteries shall be under the Pastor directly.
- Article 106.** The Patriarchal Monastery located outside the Diocese of Damascus is a See of Antioch, where the clericals are under the local bishop.
- Article 107.** If the monastery has an income that exceeds the expenses necessary for the subsistence of its monks being determined by a budget approved by the spiritual presidency, it shall contribute with a percentage of its income to feed the diocesan fund based on an agreement between the Prior and the Pastor.

#### **Chapter Nine: Clerical Funds and Inheritance**

- Article 108.** The provisions of this Chapter shall be applied on the Patriarch, Metropolitan, Bishop, Archimandrite, Pastor and Deacon of all ranks, titles and functions, as well as on nuns and monks.
- Article 109.** The term “Funds” shall include all components of wealth being movable or immovable.
- Article 110.** The clericals’ funds to which he relates by inheritance, grant or will or any other reason for disposition shall remain his sole property and shall be transferred after his death to his rightful heirs.
- Article 111.** The funds relating to the clerical after his ordination and in his capacity, including the Church capacity shall be the property of the Church and shall be deposited for him to act within the limits of need to be returned after his death to the Church.
- Article 112.** The clerical’s funds to which he relates by inheritance, grant or will or any other reason and does not inform his Head of its possession shall be at the disposal of the Church, and shall be returned to the Church after his death, unless evidence otherwise proves.
- Article 113.** Sacred utensils, clerical vestments, crosses, crowns, and other items used during the divine services, including books and documents shall be returned to the Church after the death of the Clerical.

**Chapter Ten**  
**Transitional Provisions**

- Article 114.** This Statute shall be amended by a decision of the Holy Antioch Synod.
- Article 115.** This Statute shall be effective from its issuance date and shall repeal all foregoing provisions which infringe it.
- Article 116.** The Holy Synod adopted this Statute at its fourth ordinary session held in Damascus, on November 2<sup>nd</sup> 1982, and was published by the Patriarch.

Damascus, on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 1983.