

Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn  
109 Remsen Street  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

### **For Immediate Release**

His Beatitude Patriarch Bechara Peter Cardinal Rai, Maronite Patriarch of Antioch and all the East, will visit the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn, **June 22 -29, 2016**, before visiting the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles and presiding at the Annual Convention of the National Apostolate of Maronites (NAM) **July 5- 10, 2016**, in Francisco, California,

Patriarch Rai was elected on Tuesday, March 15, 2011, as the 77<sup>th</sup> Maronite Patriarch of Antioch and All the East. He replaces Patriarch Nasrallah Peter Cardinal Sfeir.

The son of Youssef and Taminee Rai, he was born in *Hemlaya*, Lebanon (the town of St. Rafka), on February 25, 1940. He pursued his complementary and secondary studies at the Collège Notre Dame at *Jamhour*. He took his monastic vows with the *Mariamite* Order on August 31, 1962; was ordained a priest on September 3, 1967; and was consecrated Archbishop 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. Patriarch Rai founded Notre Dame University in Louaizé, Lebanon, and was its president from 1978 -1984. From 1982 to 1986 he presided over the Court of Appeal of the Maronite Tribunal. 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 since 2009.

Patriarch Rai holds a degree in philosophy and theology and a doctorate in canon and civil law from the University of Saint John Lateran (the Rota Tribunal 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 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, Patriarchal Vicar General, His Beatitude Patriarch Bechara Rai will arrive in New York on **June 22, 2016** and will be the guest of His Excellency Bishop Gregory J. Mansour, Bishop of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn.

- **On June 23 - 24**, Patriarch Rai and the delegation will visit St. John Maron Church, Buffalo, N.Y.;
- **On June 24 - 25**, St. Anthony Church, Lawrence, Mass.;
- **On June 25**, St. Joseph Church, Waterville, Me.;
- **On June 26**, Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral, Brooklyn, N.Y.

**On June 27, 2016**, Patriarch Bechara Rai will join His Eminence Timothy Cardinal Dolan, Archbishop of New York, for an Evening Prayer Service for Peace in the Middle East, and on June 29, Patriarch Rai will Leave for Detroit and for the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles before heading to the Maronite Convention in San Francisco, Calif.

The Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn comprises 45 parishes, a Seminary, a Convent, a Monastery and Maronite faithful in 16 states located along the East Coast of the United States from Maine to Florida. It is directly under the jurisdiction of Pope Francis.



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.