



**EPARCHY OF SAINT MARON OF BROOKLYN
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP**

**109 Remsen Street
Brooklyn, New York 11201-4212**
Tel: (718) 237-9913 Fax: (718) 243-0444
chancerystmaron@verizon.net www.stmaron.org

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Dear Brother Bishops,

We just received the sad news that our founding bishop, who served us for over 30 years, Archbishop Francis M. Zayek, passed away on the Feast of the Holy Cross, September 14, 2010, in Lebanon.

Archbishop Zayek was born October 18, 1920, the son of Mansour and Mariam (Khoury) Zayek in Manzanillo, Cuba. In 1931, the entire family immigrated to Lebanon.

After seminary studies in Lebanon and in Rome, he was ordained a priest on March 17, 1946 in Rome. After completing a doctorate in canon law in Rome, he was appointed to serve the Maronite community in Cairo where he also worked in the Apostolic Nunciature. He later returned to Rome and served as the Promoter of Justice at the Roman Rota.

On May 31, 1962, Pope John XXIII appointed him bishop to serve the Maronites in Brazil, and he was consecrated on August 5, 1962 in Dimane, Lebanon, by Patriarch Paul Peter Cardinal Meouchi.

Archbishop Zayek was one of the last surviving bishops, who as a bishop, attended all of the sessions of the Second Vatican Council.

On January 10, 1966, Pope Paul VI established the Maronite Apostolic Exarchate in the United States and appointed Bishop Zayek as the first Exarch. He was installed on June 11, 1966 in Detroit, MI, where he would establish his See.

Pope Paul VI raised the Exarchate to the rank of Diocese (Eparchy) on November 20, 1971, and he appointed Bishop Zayek as the first bishop of the Eparchy of Saint Maron, for all Maronites of the United States. He was installed as such on June 4, 1972. The See was moved to Brooklyn, New York, in 1977.

In recognition of his pioneering work in the United States, he was given the personal title of *Archbishop* by Pope John Paul II on December 10, 1982. Upon reaching the canonical age, Archbishop Zayek retired in 1996.

Archbishop Zayek was predeceased by two brothers and three sisters. He is survived by his brother, Elias, in Brazil, and his sister, Lydia, in Lebanon, and several nieces and nephews.

A Forty Day Divine Liturgy is scheduled for Wednesday, October 27, 2010, at Our Lady of Lebanon Cathedral, 109 Remsen Street, Brooklyn, NY, at 7:00 p.m. A Meal of Mercy will follow in the Cathedral hall. You are most welcome to join the clergy, religious and laity of the Maronite Church to honor this truly great Churchman and to pray for the repose of his soul. Please call my office if you are able to attend.

The Maronite Church in the United States is deeply indebted to the archbishop for his zealous efforts in establishing the strong, vibrant Maronite community we have today. May Archbishop Zayek share in the glory of the Cross which we celebrate this day!

Bishop Robert Shaheen and I extend our profound condolences to the family and many friends of Archbishop Zayek, and to all who loved him and in any way made his work a truly graced effort to the glory of God. May he rest in peace.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ *Gregory*

+ Gregory John Mansour
Bishop of the Eparchy of
Saint Maron of Brooklyn