

Patriarch John X Meets Pope Leo XIV



His Beatitude John X, Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, met with Pope Leo XIV at the Apostolic Palace in Vatican City.

During the private meeting, the two leaders discussed the situation of Christians in the Middle East in all its aspects. They also addressed the historic relationship between their two Churches, a relationship founded on mutual respect.

His Beatitude presented to His Holiness an overview of the general situation in the region, with particular emphasis on Syria and Lebanon.

Regarding the situation in Syria, His Beatitude stressed that Christians are an integral component of the Syrian social fabric and do not seek citizenship as a favor from anyone. He emphasized that the current circumstances require cooperation among all parties to strengthen the values of civil peace, coexistence, and national unity, while rejecting both minority and majority mentalities in addressing public affairs. He further underscored the principle of equal citizenship, in which all people enjoy the same rights and responsibilities.

Concerning Lebanon, His Beatitude highlighted the necessity of putting an end to the aggression targeting southern Lebanon. He stressed the importance of Lebanese unity in addressing the social challenges resulting from the ongoing escalation in the south. He also emphasized the need to support dialogue and encounter among all communities in dealing with the issues facing the Lebanese

state.

Patriarch John X also acknowledged the role of the Holy See in promoting stability in Syria, Lebanon, and throughout the Middle East.

The meeting further addressed the case of the two kidnapped Aleppo bishops, Paul Yazigi and Yohanna Ibrahim, and the need to find a solution to this unresolved issue, which has remained pending for more than a decade.

For his part, His Holiness praised the leading role of the Church of Antioch in its surroundings and its historic mission, which continues to be alive and active in the Middle East and throughout the world. He reaffirmed the Holy See's commitment to supporting all efforts aimed at the well-being of the region and its peoples. Pope Leo XIV also emphasized the historic role entrusted to the Church of Antioch in building bridges of encounter and dialogue between East and West, as well as fostering tolerance toward the Arab and Islamic worlds.

Accompanying His Beatitude on the Antiochian side were Metropolitan Ignatios Al-Houshi (France and Western and Southern Europe), Metropolitan Antonios Al-Soury (Zahle and Baalbek), Archimandrite Parthenios Al Laty, Archimandrite Meletios Chattahi, and Deacon Hilarion Beshara

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