



## The Holy See

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***LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS  
TO HIS BEATITUDE GREGORY III LAHAM,  
Patriarch of Antioch for Melkite Greek Catholics***

*To His Beatitude Gregory iii Laham  
Patriarch of Antioch for Melkite Greek Catholics  
and to all the Bishops of this Church*

Beatitude and Venerable Brothers in Christ,

In my solicitude for all the Churches, I address you, grateful for your service to the People of God and aware of your responsibility as Pastors.

Following the meeting of the Synod of Bishops last February, His Beatitude, at the hearing I granted him, spontaneously presented his resignation from the patriarchal office to me, asking me to decide on the most appropriate time to accept it. On careful prayer and reflection, I consider it opportune and necessary for the good of the Melkite Greek Church to accept his resignation today.

In thanking His Beatitude, a zealous servant of the People of God, for his years of generous service to his Church and for keeping the attention of the international community focused on the dramatic situation in Syria, I invoke upon all of you the intercession of the Holy Mother of God and willingly impart my Apostolic Blessing to our dear Melkite Greek Church as a sign of grace and encouragement for the future of communion and witness to the Gospel.

*From the Vatican, 6 May 2017*

**Francis**

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