

BIOGRAPHY
OF
THE NEW PATRIARCH

(Translated from Arabic by Najib Nasr)

2011

Who Is The New Patriarch Beshara Al-Rahi?

Beshara Youssef Al-Rahi, the son of Thaminah Al-Rahi, was born in Himlaya, Al-Matn (Lebanon), on 25 February, 1940.

Ceremonial Vows: At the Maronite Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary on 31 July, 1962.

Priestly Ordination: On 3 September, 1967.

Episcopal Ordination: Consecrated Patriarchal Vicar General in Bkerke on 12 July, 1986.

Education:

1957-1962: Preparatory and secondary education at the Jesuit Fathers' "Collège Notre Dame de Jamhour";

1962-1975: Philosophy and Theology (Bachelor's Degree) and Ecclesial and Civil Law (Doctorate) Advocate of the Sacred Roman Rota (3 years) in Rome (The Saint John Lateran University – Tribunal of the Sacred Roman Rota).

Activities and Functions at the Maronite Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary:

He initiated his activities there as the Deputy Superior of the Saint Anthony the Great Monastery in Rome and the head of the Arabic Section of Vatican Radio where he later built solid relations with decision makers at the Apostolic See.

1975-1981: Occupied the post of Principal of Our Lady of Louaize School;

1978-1984: Founded and presided over Al-Louaize Higher Education Center – Our Lady of Louaize University;

1977-1982: Served as a Judge at the Unified Maronite Tribunal of First Instance;

1982-1986: Was President of the Patriarchal Appellate Tribunal; and,

1984-1986: Served as Principal of Saint Rita School in Dbaye and as parish priest of As-Sou'oud (The Ascension) Parish and of the Saint George Parish, both in Dbaye.

Activities and Functions in the Episcopate:

1986-1990: Patriarchal Vicar General at Bkerke;

1990: Bishop of the Eparchy of Jbeil, after its detachment from the Patriarchal Eparchy and making it a separate eparchy;

1986-1992: Director of the Maronite Spiritual Tribunals;

1986-1991: Director of the Caritas – Lebanon League;

1992-1995: Appointed by Pope John Paul II as Coordinator for the Special Assembly for Lebanon of the Roman Synod of Bishops;

1988-2000: Appointed by the Apostolic See as President of the Coordination Committee for Social, Pastoral and Developmental Activities in the Church of Lebanon;

1988-1994: Appointed by Pope John Paul II as a member of the Pontifical Council *COR UNUM* (one heart) for Human and Christian Development;

Since 1992: Elected by the Synod of Bishops of the Maronite Church to membership of the Legislative Committee and the Synodal Tribunal;

Since 1995: Appointed by Pope John Paul II as a member of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (PCM);

Since 1997: Elected by the Synod of Catholic Patriarchs and Bishops in Lebanon (APECL) as President of the Episcopal Committee for Family Affairs in Lebanon;

Since 1999: Appointed by Pope John Paul II member of the Pontifical Council for the Family;

1999-2001: Appointed by Cardinal Silvestrini, Prefect of Congregation for The Oriental Churches, as member of the Scientific Committee of the Symposium on the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches (19-23 November, 2001);

Since 2003: Elected by the Synod of Bishops of the Maronite Church as Secretary of the Synod;

Since 2004: Elected by the Synod of Bishops of the Maronite Church as General Moderator for the Administration of Justice in the Tribunals of the Maronite Church and the President of the Synodal Tribunal for the Judicial Cases of Bishops and Eparchies;

2009: Elected by the Synod of Catholic Patriarchs and Bishops in Lebanon (APECL) as President of the Episcopal Committee for Catholic Media in Lebanon;

2009: Launched the Charter of Political Action in the Light of Ecclesial Teachings and the Specificity of Lebanon; and,

2010: Appointed by Pope Benedict XVI as member of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications.

Teaching:

1978-1987: Professor of Law and Lecturer at the Saint Joseph University (Beirut);

1992-2000: Professor of Law and Lecturer at the Faculty of Law (Kaslik);

Since 2001: Professor of Theology and the Sacrament of Marriage and Lecturer at the Pontifical College (Kaslik);

Since 2001: Professor of Law and Lecturer at the Sagesse University in Beirut;

Medals 1994: National Medal of Merit of the Order of Commodore from the President of the Republic of Italy; and,

Medals 2007: National Medal of the Cedars of the Order of Commodore from the President of the Republic of Lebanon.

Pastoral Letters:

I Am with You a Priest and for You a Bishop, celebration of the installation of Bishop Beshara Al-Rahi in the Eparchy of Jbeil; Sunday, 8 July, 1990;

The Eparchy's Administrative, Social and Pastoral Organizations, The Civilization of Love Series #1, 1990;

Introduction to the Preparation of the Special Assembly for the Synod of Bishops on Lebanon, The Civilization of Love Series #3, 1991;

Renewal and Witnessing through the guidance of the Pastoral Synod on Lebanon, The Civilization of Love Series #4, 1992;

Endowments of the Parishes, Endowment and its Purpose – the Bylaws – Role of the Laity, The Civilization of Love Series #5, 1994;

Hope, Renewal and Witnessing, Entry into the Journey of the Synod of Bishops on Lebanon, The Civilization of Love Series #6, 1995;

Applying the Particular Law of the Maronite Church in the Eparchy of Jbeil, The Civilization of Love Series #7, 1996;

Subjects for the Preparation for Marriage in the Maronite Eparchy of Jbeil, The Civilization of Love Series #8, 1998;

The Eparchial Synod, Jesus is the Springhead of Renewal and Communion in the Church, The Civilization of Love Series #9, 1999;
The Holy Year of the Great Jubilee and Preparations for the Gaining of Indulgences, The Civilization of Love Series #10, 2000;
The Service of Charity in the Endowments, the Parishes and the Eparchy, Administrative and Pastoral Directives, The Civilization of Love Series #11, 2006;
God is Love, the Encyclical of Pope Benedict XVI, Lenten Sermons, The Civilization of Love Series #12, 2006;
The Priest's, the Parish's and the Pastoral Endeavor Guide, The Civilization of Love Series #13, 2007; and,
The Bishop's, the Curia's and the Structures' Guide, The Civilization of Love Series #14, 2008.

Published Compositions:

- Christian Upbringing Series, Vol. 1, 2005-2006 (Our Lady of Louaize University Publications);
- Christian Upbringing Series, Vol. 2, 2006-2007 (Our Lady of Louaize University Publications);
- Christian Upbringing Series, Vol. 3, 2007-2008 (Our Lady of Louaize University Publications);
- Christian Upbringing Series, Vol. 4, 2008-2009 (Our Lady of Louaize University Publications);
- Marriage, a Judicial Education and Exhortation, 2007 (Sagesse University Publications).

Medals:

1994: National Medal of Merit of the Order of Commodore from the President of the Republic of Italy; and,

2007: National Medal of the Cedars of the Order of Commodore from the President of the Republic of Lebanon.

Some of His Attributes:

- His ceiling is his Maronite Church;
- He was distinctive throughout his monastic avowal, priesthood and the episcopate with a solid doctrine, with regard to which, he is unyielding and uncompromising;
- He is a good listener and an able dialogist and quite a knowledgeable Media person;
- He is endowed with courage;
- He is of vast horizons and culture, especially the Eastern Christian culture and the Maronite heritage;
- He balances between relations and field endeavors;
- He leans toward interacting with the common lay person and the broadening of the ecclesial base, rather more than interacting with the leadership;
- His relationship with the laity is very refined; for, it springs forth from his ecclesial doctrine he embraces; and,
- He leans toward institutional development and accompanying the times, but, under ecclesiastical supervision.