

DECLARATION

We, the undersigned clergy of the Assyrian Church of the East, do declare under oath that the annexed document entitled *Towards Full-Communion*, and dated November 9, 2003 was given and sent to us via e-mail by Ashur Bawai Soro, formerly bishop of the Assyrian Church of the East, Diocese of Western California.

This document was the outcome of week-long discussions which the former bishop and the Rev. George Toma, pastor of St. Andrew's Parish of the Assyrian Church of the East (Greater Chicago parish) had with us in Romo during the first week of November 2003. The discussions concerned the possibilities of forming a coalition—termed *Group* or *G* in the annexed document, in which we would work together under two phases. The first phase (entitled *Phase A*) would last from 2 to 10 years which "...shall establish new guidelines as standards for priestly teaching, church administration, liturgical practice and moral conduct to be adopted by bishops and priests members in *G* and ultimately by all the Church of the East."

In the course of these discussions it became apparent that the ultimate goal of this document and of Ashur Bawai Soro was to drive the Assyrian Church of the East towards 're-establishing' full-communication with the Catholic Church "...so that the vision of full-communication with the Catholic Church and of ecclesial unity with the Chaldean Catholic Church is accepted by the faithful and ultimately realized by the Patriarch and the Holy Synod of the Assyrian church of the East." In the event that the reform called for by this document did not transpire within the period of 2 to 10 years, then immediately phase B of the plan would commence, namely the "...reestablishment of full-communication with the Catholic Church, within the context of ecclesiastical unity with the Chaldean Catholic Church..." This would mean that the 'Group,' after having consulted other clergy and lay faithful would then "...officially declare their full communion with the Catholic Church. Such a declaration however shall also take place after consultation and collaboration with the Chaldean Patriarchate and agreement of the Catholic Church." The afore-mentioned *Phase B* would also entail the unification of the "...cultural identity of its Assyrochaldean (Chalduassyrian) people."

In fact, Ashur Bawai Soro has had discussions with us in regards establishing union with the Catholic Church in past years as well. Most notably, in December of 2001 and January of 2002 he hold a conference call with Rev's. Patros Patros, William Toma, David Royel and Paul Benjamin concerning this issue. He mentioned that he had consulted two other priests in California with regard to this issue as well.

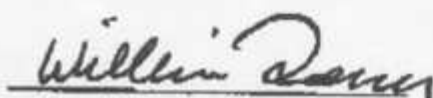
Although we agreed that there were certain facets of our Holy Church that needed reform for the sake of the faithful, we expressed our unwillingness to broak with the Church and effect a schism. He felt and explicitly expressed the fact that he believed that the only way to 'reform' the Church was by leaving it. We have now come to realize and see more clearly that his ideas were also politically motivated.

The reason for not having come out earlier about this document and informing the hierarchy was because we felt that over a short period of time the former bishop had abandoned his ideas about leaving the Church and joining the Catholic Church after seeing that he was not able to muster up enough support from Assyrian clergymen. We did not want to create unnecessary arguments and strife in the Church since we believed that the former bishop would not go along with the plan. In such a scenario, if he had in fact abandoned his ideas, we would have created unnecessary division and arguments by publicizing the document. Furthermore, he had expressly asked us to keep the document a secret. This we did with a good will and the intention of not causing strife in the Church.

We further declare that all that is stated above is true and genuine.

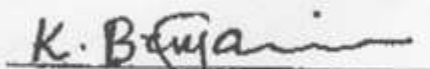
Rome, 23 January 2006:-


Rev. Patros Y. Patros


Rev. William Toma


Rev. David Royel (Los Angeles, Ca)


Rev. Semaan J. Daoud


Rev. Paul Benjamin