



ASIA/IRAQ - Death of the Chaldean Patriarch emeritus Emmanuel III Delly.

Baghdad (Agenzia Fides) - Cardinal Emmanuel III Delly, Patriarch emeritus of Babylon of the Chaldeans died in a hospital in San Diego (California). He was 87 years old. The news was given by sources of the Chaldean Church. "Cardinal Delly", says to Fides the current Chaldean Patriarch, Raphael Louis Sako I, "served the Chaldean Church for more than 60 years with dedication, first as a priest and then as Bishop and as Patriarch. He suffered moments of difficulty: the revolution in 1958; the wars in the last decades; the persecution of Christians followed by the invasion of the U.S.A.. In all this time he remained loyal to his country and to his people, he did not abandon his flock, he remained with his faithful, praying, helping, encouraging them".

In the coming days a solemn requiem mass for Cardinal Delly will also be celebrated in the St. Joseph Chaldean Cathedral in Baghdad. The funeral will most likely take place in the United States. The majority of the Patriarch emeritus' relatives moved to the U.S.A., and many of them live in Detroit.

Patriarch emeritus Delly was born in Telkaif, Archeparchy of Mosul of the Chaldeans on September 27, 1927. He graduated in theology at the Pontifical Urbaniana University and canon law at the Pontifical Lateran University. He was ordained a priest on December 21, 1952 by Cardinal Pietro Fumasoni Biondi in Rome, at the Pontifical Urban College of Propaganda Fide, he returned to Baghdad as secretary of the Patriarch on December 30, 1960. He was elected to the titular Church of Paleopoli of Asia on December 7, 1962 and appointed Auxiliary of Patriarch Paul II Cheikho, receiving episcopal ordination on April 19, 1963. Since that year, as Bishop, he became a member of the Second Vatican Council. In October 2002 he resigned as Auxiliary Bishop for age limit, but a year later, on December 3, 2003, he was elected by the Chaldean Bishops as the Patriarch of Babylon, while Iraq was going through a terrible time in history, after the U.S.-led military intervention led to the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime. During his patriarchal ministry, in August 2004, there were bloody attacks against churches in Baghdad and Mosul. (GV) (Agenzia Fides 09/04/2014)