

His Grace Bishop MARK  
November 29, 2008

Greetings in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ,

I am writing this letter to your Grace, as a diocesan board member, as a lifetime parish board member and chair member of Saint George Orthodox Church of Troy, Michigan, and finally as a good friend and spiritual child of the Rev. Father Joseph Antypas.

Your Grace, few of our parish council members and myself received recently copies of correspondence between yourself and Fr. Joseph Antypas regarding our Michigan Deanery. And as a lifetime parish council member and parishioner of Saint George Church, I was shocked due to the action that was taken against in abducting him from his duties as the dean of the Southern Michigan Deanery. Also, I was shocked because such action was taken in the absence of the basic protocols in handling such serious and official matters.

I was really offended when I learned that your Grace took your action through the "Internet". In a way, I think, it is empty from any personal element. I know that we live in a modernized world and we need to adopt such technologies; however there are certain matters, your Grace, where personal face to face communications is more appropriate than emails and internet links. I believe that the ministry that we expect from your Grace is one of the matters that requires personal communication and direct leadership and not wireless messages and lifeless computerized systems.

Your Grace, your spiritual fatherhood can take place only when you give birth to that relationship in a personal, unique, deep, sincere, and loving way. And that can happen only by your direct presence in our lives where we would be able to take you as our practical example. I can not see, your Grace, how we can create this unique relationship through few emails and dead words.

Your Grace, we are all aware of the importance of your role in our diocese in building the church and ministering its folks. We love to be your children and love to be directed by your instructions. I, myself, have served our church for over 25 years with all of my efforts and resources. I feel that Saint George of Troy deserves more attention from your Grace and it's people need more personal guidance from your Grace. I think also, that the person who was the first man to recommend you to become a Bishop, Fr. Joseph Antypas, deserves more credit for the wonderful work that he has done and is still doing in our church, deanery and archdiocese.

Your Grace, if I may act as a spiritual child, then please accept my letter as a confession of a frustrated spiritual child who with the many others are asking for more attention and personal ministry from your Grace.

Yours in Christ,  
Walid Khalife

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Walid Khalife', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Cc: Metropolitan PHILIP, Rev. Fr. Joseph Antypas, Rev. Fr. George Shalhoub