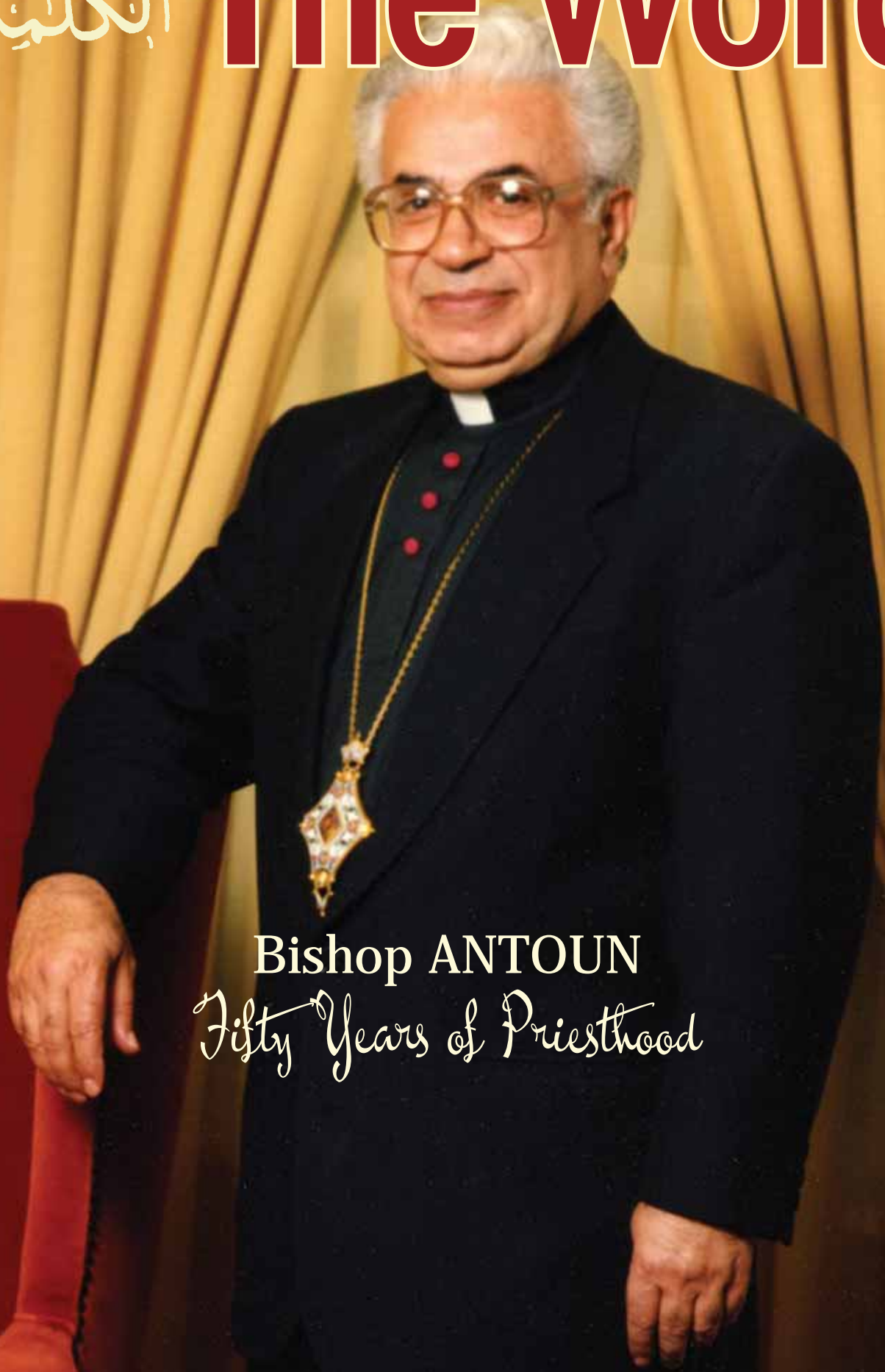


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# The Word



**Bishop ANTOUN**  
*Fifty Years of Priesthood*

mandrite John Abdalah, who fell asleep in the Lord in May of 2008.

The Cathedral of St. George in Oakland continues to share in the priesthood and ministry of Christ. For Bright Saturday the Cathedral organized and participated in a pan-Orthodox Progressive Dinner, which was sponsored by The Fellowship of St. John the Divine. It began at Holy Assumption of the Virgin Mary (Orthodox Church in America), proceeded to St. Vladimir's (Ukrainian Orthodox Church), then on to St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral, and culminated at St. George Antiochian Cathedral for Vespers, after which we enjoyed the delicious dessert provided by St. Nicholas. This successful event brought Orthodox faithful from various jurisdictions together to see one another's churches and learn of their histories, and to affirm their oneness as the Body of Christ.

Other activities at St. George have included the Antiochian Women's recent Calendar Party to benefit the new Convent of St. Thekla. Bible Studies and theological discussions/lectures continue to be held Wednesday evenings following Vespers, and new members continue to trickle into the community. We continue to thrive, by God's will, and we are thankful for our Father and Metropolitan PHILIP, our Bishop THOMAS, our Priest Fr. John Abdalah, our Deacons, those who serve and those who sing, and all the people of our Cathedral community.

Deacon James Purdie  
St. George Orthodox Cathedral,  
Oakland (Pittsburgh)

## Book Review

Review of *The Heavenly Banquet: Understanding the Divine Liturgy* by Fr. Emmanuel Hatzidakis (Orthodox Witness, ISBN # 978-0-9778970-1-8, 420 pages, \$40.00).

Every Sunday and every feastday, Orthodox Christians celebrate the Divine Liturgy which, over the past 2,000 years, has developed into the form that we use today. A solid understanding, not only of the theology, but also of the history of the Divine Liturgy, is not easily found in just one source. Treatments are either simple commentaries or more in-depth academic treatises. In his book, *The Heavenly Banquet: Understanding the Divine Liturgy*, Fr. Emmanuel Hatzidakis, a Greek Orthodox priest and president of Orthodox Witness, has given us a worthwhile study of our liturgy written for the laity.

Fr. Emmanuel looks at the Divine Liturgy line by line, petition by petition, and provides the reader with a study that is based on Scripture, the Fathers, and Orthodox scholarship. The book is well-researched and draws extensively from the 305 primary and secondary sources listed in the bibliography. The book has 1,281 footnotes! In addition to the main text, the book also contains 80 excurses that take the reader even further into some of the concepts discussed in the book.

Don't let the length of the book or the scholarship that went into it scare you away. At first glance, the book looks something like a college textbook (and it could be used as such). The reader, however, will find the language inviting and the text understandable.

This book is perfect for catechists who want an in-depth look at our liturgy or for those Orthodox who want a greater knowledge and appreciation of what has been handed down to us over the centuries. Handsomely arranged and beautifully bound, the book would be a great addition to any church or home library. The book is easily obtained from Orthodox Witness ([www.orthodoxwitness.org](http://www.orthodoxwitness.org)) at a lower price than online booksellers.

Fr. Steven C. Salaris  
All Saints of North America  
Maryland Heights, Missouri

