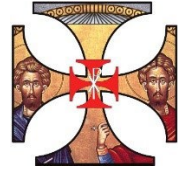


**GREEK ORTHODOX LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY, INC.**  
**METROPOLIS PRESIDENT'S REPORT**  
**2022 – 2024**



**Archdiocesan District Philoptochos**

Irene Hotzoglou, President  
July 2024

Your Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, Your Grace Bishop Athenagoras of Nazianzos, National President Arlene Siavelis Kehl, Members of the National Executive Board and Fellow National Board Members:

My tenure as President of the Archdiocesan District Board has been a blessing. The collective efforts of the Archdiocesan Philoptochos Board and our chapters, comprised of dedicated and loving women, have been instrumental in our mission. We are a united force, a sisterhood of strong and compassionate women working together to uphold the noble cause of philanthropy. Below is an update on the progress of our initiatives.

**Feed the Hungry:**

Our Feed the Hungry program continues to be very successful. On the last Tuesday of each month, a chapter volunteers time, in conjunction with their parish or another Philoptochos chapter, to distribute food, clothing, toiletries, hand-knitted hats and sweaters, new undergarments, and socks to the underserved and homeless of New York City. We have moved to another location on 35th Street and Broadway. Those served are very grateful for everything we provide, and it is truly a humbling experience for all those who volunteer.

**Social Services:**

Our unwavering commitment to aiding the impoverished is the heart of Philoptochos. We continue to assist in many cases as the need is great. In the last two years, we helped 141 individuals and families. We distributed \$69,500.00 for rent, mortgage, utilities, food, funerals, and other expenses and \$7,655 worth of gift cards. This does not include the assistance our chapters provided. We collect gift cards at our events to support our cases when needed. Every dollar and every effort count in our mission to alleviate suffering.

**District-wide Drives:**

Our district-wide drives have been embraced wholeheartedly by our chapters and have been very successful. These last two years, we offered our chapters four different drives:

1. Children's Book Drive, September 15 – November 1, 2022, 14,065 books were collected.
2. Weekend Backpack Drive, February 15 – April 1, 2023, 1,508 backpacks filled, plus an additional 8,164 food items collected.
3. Domestic Violence Drive (to support our Domestic Violence Initiative), November 1 – December 15, 2023, 6,500 items, including diapers, baby wipes, personal hygiene products, toiletries, pajamas, blankets, clothing, and \$1,875 in gift cards.

#### 4. Handbag Drive, March 18, 2024 – April 26, 2024.

We encourage our chapters to participate in these drives and distribute items to local women's shelters, safe houses, and other organizations of their choice. The overwhelming response to these drives is a testament to our collective spirit and brings the faithful together with a common goal of doing good work and helping the destitute.

#### **Saint Michael's Home:**

Construction is moving forward on the Uniondale site in Long Island, NY. This new magnificent state-of-the-art facility will be able to accommodate more residents and offer additional services and additional spaces for the enjoyment of all. Still, most importantly, it will provide higher levels of care for the ever-increasing needs of our elderly. Thank you to the Archdiocesan District Philoptochos chapters devoted to supporting this ministry. Our District board has organized a site tour for Monday, June 17, 2024, to update us about the expansion's progress.

#### **Beacons of Hope Seminarian Scholarship Fund:**

We are pleased to continue to support our seminarians in their journey to the priesthood. With the blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros, The Beacons of Hope Seminarian Scholarship Fund was created to bring financial relief to the seminarians from the Archdiocesan District who attend Holy Cross Seminary studying for the Master of Divinity after choosing to dedicate their lives to the priesthood. Beacons of Hope is so incredibly important because it will help ensure the future of our Church. These funds are distributed twice a year at the start of the Fall semester and Spring semester. Since its inception in 2021, we have aided 8 Archdiocesan District Seminarians. Three have since been ordained to the Holy Priesthood and are currently serving in parishes within our district, and this spring semester we have helped five AD District seminarians. We continue bringing awareness to our chapters and church communities about this initiative. In response, many have held fundraising events. In the Fall, we plan to start an "adopt a seminarian program" where chapters can get involved with our seminarians and get to know them by visiting them at the seminary and sending notes and care packages.

#### **Sisterhood of the Traveling Philoptochos:**

In an effort to promote unity and friendship among our Philoptochos chapters, in the fall of 2022, the Archdiocesan District Philoptochos began having a series of events where Philoptochos sisters from our district chapters gather for a bit of brainstorming, getting to know each other and sharing ideas. These events are held once or twice a month and hosted by a chapter within our district. They are free and purely social and are enjoyed by all. We started incorporating workshops at some of these events, which have been very successful and informative. Because of their success last year, we continued having them this year, fostering a sense of unity and camaraderie among our chapters.

#### **Biennial Agape Luncheon:**

The luncheon was held on April 29, 2023, to benefit Saint Michael's Home. Over 240 attended, and \$70,000 was raised for the home. We are planning the following luncheon, which will take

place on Saturday, April 26, 2025.

**District Archdiocesan Clergy-Laity and Philoptochos Assembly:**

On April 7, 2024, we attended the District Archdiocesan Clergy-Laity and Philoptochos Assembly. Sixty-six Philoptochos members attended, and of those, 44 were delegates. We conducted our business where two resolutions were and passed for the upcoming convention, including a new District commitment to support our Social Services fund.

**Lenten Retreat:**

This inspiring event was held on Saturday, April 20, 2024, and we had the pleasure of having Steve Christoforou, Director of Operations & Community Engagement of Focus USA, as the speaker. The topic was “THE MISSING PIECE” - Reclaiming the Place of Service in our Spiritual Lives.”

The Archdiocesan District Philoptochos Board continues to promote its beautiful philanthropic endeavors by working together harmoniously and diligently with love. We continuously plan workshops, social events, fundraisers, and drives for our mission. Last year, we began a Domestic Violence Initiative to raise awareness and help those affected. We encourage our chapters to participate in all our initiatives.

We are excited to announce the reinstatement of St. George Philoptochos Chapter No. 46 in NYC and the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church & National Shrine Philoptochos Chapter No. 49. Presently, we have 50 active, hardworking, amazing chapters with over 3,000 members that it is my honor to lead.

We are constantly communicating with all our Chapters to keep them informed. We have joined Constant Contact for email communication and continue to update our new website. Chapters are constantly encouraged to contact us for anything they need, and we welcome them to share their ideas and suggestions.

[www.archdiocesanphiloptochos.org](http://www.archdiocesanphiloptochos.org) \* [philoptochos@archdiocesanphiloptochos.org](mailto:philoptochos@archdiocesanphiloptochos.org)

The Archdiocesan District Philoptochos is grateful for the blessings and guidance of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros, National Philoptochos Spiritual Advisor His Grace Bishop Athenagoras, our District Chancellor V. Rev. Father Elias Villis, District Archdiocesan Philoptochos Advisor V. Rev. Archimandrite Father Chrysostomos Gilbert and, of course, our esteemed past president and current advisor Jennifer Constantin.

Together with the National Ladies Philoptochos and our sister Philoptochos Metropolises, the Archdiocesan District Philoptochos looks forward wholeheartedly to working together and continuing the beautiful works of philanthropy with love.

***“God has given us two hands, one to receive with and the other to give with.”***

In His Service,

*Irene Hotzoglou*

Irene Hotzoglou  
Archdiocesan District Philoptochos President

