

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



Metropolis of Chicago Philoptochos Society

Marilyn Tzakis, President

May 22, 2023

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

XRISTOS ANESTI!

Since the 2022 National Philoptochos Convention, the Metropolis of Chicago Philoptochos and its chapters have been busy. On September 24, 2022, we held our annual fundraiser at the Empress Banquets in Addison, IL. The theme was "Our Future: Faith, Philanthropy and Youth". Cochairs, Marilyn Jemas and Joanne Stavrakas involved and honored all ages through the Kids for Dignity project. Over 20 chapters participated in raising funds or items for the organization, Digs for Dignity, which helps people move into new housing as they transition from homelessness. They supply whatever is needed for the home, from dishware to appliances to furniture. The beneficiaries were Hellenic College/ Holy Cross, The St. Iakovos Retreat Center, and Metropolis Philanthropic Endeavors. Welcome remarks were made by His Excellency, Emanuel Koubarakis, Ambassador and Consul General of Greece Chicago and our National Philoptochos President, Arlene Siavelis Kehl. The main speakers were George Cantonis, President of Hellenic College/Holy Cross and Arun Modayil, Director of Operations at the Retreat Center. Both speakers emphasized Philoptochos continued assistance and love to their institutions. Over 300 guests attended from all 6 states of the Metropolis. We also included the theme of 90 years of Philoptochos, keeping the mission going.

In October, we had our President's meeting at the St. Iakovos Retreat Center. His Eminence attended and thanked us for all we do to help the less fortunate. He asked that we support the Metropolis through the Friends of the Metropolis program. Many participants had not been to the Retreat Center and had a tour on a wagon of the area. The staff, led by Arun Modayil, was most thankful and accommodating. Arun spoke of the role of women in the Church that are always the most supportive of their time and love.

We celebrated our Patron Saints, Cosmas and Damianos at St. Demetrios Elmhurst on October 31st and November 1st. The Metropolis Philoptochos had an Artoklasia for our current Board and honored our Past Presidents that have fallen asleep on the name day.

November 13, National Philoptochos Sunday was celebrated by many chapters in the Metropolis through various presentations explaining our mission.

In December, the Metropolis Philoptochos Board participated in His Eminence's Christmas Celebration at the Carlyle in Lombard, IL. Over 500 guests gathered to wish His Eminence Merry Christmas!

On January 15, 2023, the Metropolis-wide Vasilopita was celebrated at St. Spyridon Greek Orthodox Church in Palos Heights, IL. The Philoptochos President, Georgia Xeros, her co-chairs, Toula Georgiopoulos and Helen Sotiropoulos, along with the members of Philoptochos and the Parish hosted a most outstanding event! Over 500 people attended to celebrate the New Year. Father George Lamberis was the Master of Ceremonies.

In February, we held a most comprehensive and inspiring Presidents Meeting at SS. Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Church in Merrillville, IN. Membership and Elections were our key discussion points. The membership committee, chaired by Pat Gerbanas, 2nd Vice President along with Kathy Korbakes and Maria Macris presented a detailed plan to help increase membership. Participants were divided into groups and much discussion and valuable information was exchanged. There is a challenge for each chapter to increase their membership. The most successful will be announced at our upcoming Clergy-Laity Conference in October. Past Metropolis Presidents, Pam Argyris and Joanne Stavrakas presented the Election Process for the upcoming chapter elections. Many questions were answered.

In March, the annual Quilt-A-Thon, was again not in person, however, the chapter of SS. Peter and Paul, their President Julie Mantis and chairman Tru Bazianos continued the blanket making via pick up kits.

In April, we held the Metropolis Philoptochos Lenten Retreat at St. Athanasios Greek Orthodox Church in Aurora, IL. The event was organized by our Retreat Master, His Grace Bishop Timothy of Hexamilion, our Chancellor and Spiritual Advisor, along with co-chairs, Vonnie Karafotias and Katherine Siavelis. The theme, "Seeking Peace and Love in an Anxious and Confusing World", was a spiritual awakening for many as our speakers brought out key points of family, children, and effects of this most confusing time. The speakers were Father Panagioti Boznos, Prostamanos of St. Athanasios Greek Orthodox Church and Father Andrew Georganas, Prostamanos of St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, Chicago. Philoptochos President, Samantha Dulles along with her board and members hosted the day's event. Over 200 guests attended.

Bright Friday brought all the Metropolis to the St. Iakovos Retreat Center in Kansasville, WI. The Metropolis Philoptochos Board participated and assisted the St. Iakovos Retreat Board with the celebration.

We are in the midst of the largest and only fundraiser of the Metropolis Philoptochos, our September Luncheon. The luncheon will be held on September 23, 2023, at the Concord Banquets in Kildeer, IL. Our chairladies, Mary Baryo, Pat Gerbanas and Kathy Katrakis have planned an exciting and meaningful event. This year's theme, *With Good Works, Love Flourishes.* The international best-selling author and Emmy Award winning producer, Yvette Manassis Corporon will be the guest speaker. The beneficiaries will be the St. Iakovos Retreat Center, IOCC and the Metropolis Philoptochos Philanthropic Endeavors.

Our Metropolis Clergy- Laity Conference will be held on October 11-13, 2023, at the Meridian Banquets in Arlington Heights, IL. The host parishes are the Ascension of Our Lord, Lincolnshire IL, and St Nectarios, Palatine, IL.

We thank His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael and His Grace Bishop Timothy of Hexamilion was their continued support and spiritual guidance.

In His Service

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Marilyn Tzakis', written in black ink.

Marilyn Tzakis, President