



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

GREEK ORTHODOX LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY, Inc.

September 24, 2014

Dear Chapter Presidents and Members within the Metropolis of Chicago,

The Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in lower Manhattan was destroyed in the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001 when almost three thousand of our fellow citizens lost their lives in the annihilation of the World Trade Center. This horrific tragedy affected all Americans across this great nation. Our small Church was the only religious house that fell during this act of terrorism. Now, the Church, which will be known as the Saint Nicholas National Shrine at Ground Zero is being resurrected on hallowed ground bearing witness to the victory of Christ over evil, death and destruction. It will unite those who believe in the power of love, hope and faith.

His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America, in his letter dated May 9, 2014, asked for our beneficent “army” to unite in a special campaign of altruistic love and assist in the extraordinary resurrection of the Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shrine at Ground Zero. His Eminence appealed to each of us in each of our Chapters to prayerfully consider an offering of \$100 per Philoptochos steward to this campaign.

At the 2014 National Philoptochos Biennial Convention in Philadelphia, the over 400 Philoptochos Delegates representing their Chapters from throughout the United States overwhelmingly and resolutely supported the appeal of our beloved Archbishop and the Holy Eparchial Synod to resurrect the Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shrine at Ground Zero. A beautiful expression of joy thundered through the hall when the Philoptochos Convention Delegates stood and exclaimed in unison “Yes!”

The Philoptochos mission states that we are to “preserve and perpetuate Orthodox Christian concepts” and to “promote the Greek Orthodox Faith”. As “doers of the word,” and with love in our hearts, let us humbly offer \$100 each, or any portion thereof that you can support, in memory of those who lost their lives and those who sacrificed much, to make this vision real. I respectfully appeal to you to please set aside \$1.50 per week for 15 months to raise the suggested \$100 per member. We are mindful that you will receive many requests to support this lofty goal, thus Philoptochos is asking for this small commitment from you, our Philoptochos Sister.

With the Lord’s blessing, the goal is to rebuild, furnish and endow this new Church by 2016, the 100th anniversary of the original Parish of Saint Nicholas. The Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, the backbone of our Parishes, must play a vital role in this sacred mission! **Together let us rebuild Saint Nicholas for all future generations, and for the many millions of people who will visit every year the new World Trade Center, the National September 11 Memorial Museum and our National Shrine, the only house of worship at Ground Zero.**

Please give prayerful consideration and support this worthy cause. Let the victory of Christ over death be a visible beacon in the resurrected Saint Nicholas Church and His peace, love and hope be witnessed through this National Shrine.

With love in Christ,

Irene Arsoniadis
President, Metropolis of Chicago

Aphrodite Skeadas
National President



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We are thankful for your love and support of this initiative. Below is information that can assist you in planning a successful campaign for the Saint Nicholas National Shrine at Ground Zero Philoptochos Fundraising Initiative and in understanding the logistics process.

Who?

- Name a chapter member (could be the treasurer, board member or you as the chapter president) to be the St. Nicholas National Shrine at Ground Zero Liaison.
 - Your chapter liaison will have a National Board member assigned to her to answer any questions or to assist with the initiative.
 - Your chapter liaison will be guided by your Metropolis/Direct Archdiocesan District Treasurer throughout the process of the collection and submission of your chapter donations.
- Your Metropolis/Direct Archdiocesan District Philoptochos President will designate one of the Metropolis/DAD Board members as a Chairman of the Saint Nicholas National Shrine at Ground Zero Philoptochos Initiative. She will be available to assist throughout the Initiative.

How?

Important ways that will help you lead your Philoptochos chapter in the ‘journey’ that *advances what is just and true, noble and holy.*

- Communicate the vision of His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America for the resurrection and rebuilding of the Saint Nicholas National Shrine at Ground Zero and how Philoptochos can participate. Give each member a copy of the St. Nicholas icon card with the Archbishop’s message and a copy of the Genesis of a Resurrection booklet. Enclosed in this package, you have been given enough icon cards and booklets for the number of paid members/stewards your Philoptochos chapter had in 2013.
- Make available to all Philoptochos Stewards in your chapter the appeal letter of National Philoptochos President Aphrodite Skeadas and your Metropolis/Direct Archdiocesan District President.
- Show the emotional and informative DVD documenting the development and rebuilding of the Saint Nicholas Shrine at Ground Zero which will be forthcoming in October 2014.
- Be the first in your chapter to support the Saint Nicholas National Shrine at Ground Zero Philoptochos Initiative, and ask each chapter member to offer her donation.
- Those faithful Philoptochos Stewards who are not able to give could be sponsored by a Philoptochos sister or by their own friends and family members. Please share with each of them that her donation is about \$1.50 a week for this 15-month (i.e. 65-week) initiative from October 1, 2014 through December 31, 2015 and can be contributed quarterly as stated below.
- Funds could be raised at the chapter level through a local event such as a walkathon, bake-off, pita sale, tea, luncheon, passing of a tray, wine and cheese event or through the sale of an item (such as candy/nuts, Christmas ornament, cookbook, iPhone cover, cosmetic bag, or letter opener to name a few)
- Private donations from other resources.



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When and Where?

Individual appeal donations of each Philoptochos Steward should be deposited in your Chapter Treasury during the periods listed below. Please forward the appeal donations in the form of one Chapter Check per quarter made payable to your respective Metropolis/DAD Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society and earmarked for the St. Nicholas National Shrine at Ground Zero according to the following timeline to your Metropolis designee, Georgia Sarlas, Metropolis Treasurer at 12545 S. Richard Avenue, Palos Heights, Illinois.

Collection Period:

October - December 2014

January - March 2015

April – June 2015

July – September 2015

October – December 2015

Appeal donation forwarded on or before:

January 15, 2014

April 15, 2015

July 15, 2015

October 15, 2015

January 15, 2016

As jointly stated and affirmed by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios and our Metropolitans in the Encyclical of April 28, 2014, “This National Institution will be, by the grace of God, a monument of those who died on the fateful day of September 11, 2001, and of the spirit of sacrificial love of the first responders. It will be a perpetual Sacred Shrine to the never-ending glory of God as fulfilled in our Holy Orthodox Christian Faith.” Thank you in advance for your voluntary support and love to see this vision become a reality.