



## Play Your Part to Rebuild Saint Nicholas



Throughout the years, Philoptochos has always prided itself on fulfilling any request that His Eminence Geron Archbishop Demetrios has made of us. Inspired by His Eminence's appeal to raise funds for the reconstruction of the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shrine at the World Trade Center in New York City, and his confidence in Philoptochos to unite and take action, we immediately responded by creating a special committee, led by National Board members Jennifer Constantin, Arlene Siavelis Kehl and Anne Michals.

Philoptochos joined the entire national church to become stakeholders in this great project. As a precedent, Philoptochos was a major benefactor for the rededication of Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty in 1986.

An initiative was set in motion in September 2014, through a letter to all Philoptochos Chapter Presidents in each Metropolis, to give prayerful consideration and support to this worthy cause. The letter, from then-National Philoptochos President Aphrodite Skeadas, noted that 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".

In September 2015, National Philoptochos President Maria Logus issued another letter to all Philoptochos Chapter Presidents and Stewards, writing, "The challenge before each of us is clear. We, each of us, must honor the sacrifice and not shrink from our obligation to rebuild the Church. We, each of us, must through our participation, signal to all that our democratic foundations and deeply held religious beliefs cannot be, and will not be, destroyed. We, each of us, must choose the light of faith over the darkness of despair".

Philoptochos chapters around the country have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for the Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shrine. These funds have been raised through a variety of activities – boat cruises, concerts, sales of baked goods, candles, candy and cookbooks, luncheons, direct mail appeals, individual donations and much more.

In the words of President Logus, "Through our combined efforts, our Church will offer the country and the world a place of prayer and healing."

For information and resources, visit [www.philoptochos.org/news/saintnicholas](http://www.philoptochos.org/news/saintnicholas). To be part of the Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shrine at the World Trade Center Philoptochos Fundraising Initiative, please donate directly to your local Philoptochos Chapter or your Metropolis Philoptochos.