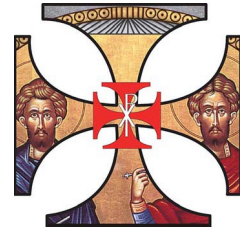


National Philoptochos Society 2014-2016 Committee Report



Spiritual Enrichment

Chair: Irene Steffas

Liaison: Evangeline Mekras Scurtis

Members: Josephine Avaneas Helen Malachias
Agatha Felactu Katherine Siavelis
Dora Hart

Good Works, Stewardship & Prayer

The works and projects of Philoptochos have the potential to spiritually enrich everyone. Consider every project as having three elements: 1) the actual objective or goal; 2) an opportunity for stewardship; and 3) the need for prayer. With planning and the right perspective, participating in Philoptochos projects can spiritually enrich those who receive the fruits of your labor and those who participate in Philoptochos projects.

It is very easy to become consumed by *tangible projects*. Have we made enough kourambethes? Was the bake sale a success? Have we written the check for the National commitment? When the focus is on tangible outcomes, it is easy to be distracted by an aching back, exhaustion and fatigue.

Tangible outcomes only provide limited and temporary benefits. Shifting the focus from the tangible project to an opportunity for *stewardship* takes the project to a higher level. It is not simply the preparation of meals, but responding to God's requests. Stewardship is not about individuals: stewardship is fulfilling the words of Jesus Christ, to love one another. In thanksgiving of the blessings God has given, stewardship is the opportunity to give back. By considering the works of Philoptochos as an opportunity for stewardship, Philoptochos projects have greater purpose.

The third and most important component of Philoptochos projects is *prayer*. Prayers are needed for those who will receive the meals. However, prayers are also appropriate and needed for those who prepared the meals and for those who provided the ingredients to make the meals. How often is prayer forgotten? By including prayer in the works of Philoptochos, each person is giving to God 100% of themselves. When these three elements are applied together, through the grace of God, members of Philoptochos and those touched by their works will receive Spiritual Enrichment.

Tools of the 21st Century

I-Pads, Tablets, Smart phones, i-Phones and computers are replacing prayer books, hymnals and books. To keep up with the 21st century, Chapters may ask their members to develop a list of resources: websites, Apps, music and even YouTube videos. With the approval of the parish priest, these resources can be shared. This is also an opportunity to involve new and younger members of Philoptochos. Using the 21st century's resources is another way to have provided Spiritual Enrichment.

Making Spiritual Enrichment a Priority

When planning a Chapter's annual calendar, include events that provide spiritual enrichment. Examples include: hosting spiritual retreats; inviting guest lecturers to speak on spiritual topics; sponsoring a Paraklesi; and sharing the treasures and beauty of the Orthodox Church. Listen for the will of God.