

## National Philoptochos Society 2016-2018 Committee Report



### Autism

*Chair: Marian Catechis*  
*Liaison: Jeannie Ranglas*  
*Members: Frances Levas*  
*Katherine Siavelis*  
*Joanne Stavrakas*  
*Barbara Vittas*

The Autism Committee shall serve as a forum for promoting education to the Greek Orthodox community to heighten autism and autism spectrum awareness. The funds raised by the individual chapters provide assistance to those within the autism spectrum.

The past two years the chapters have contributed over \$90,000 to the Autism fund. In 2016 Philoptochos provided funds to the following programs:

\$7,800 – Autism Clinic and Training Center, University of Illinois at Chicago  
\$10,000 – Autism Program in Cyprus  
\$10,000 – Developmental Connections, Ashburn, Virginia

In 2017 Philoptochos gave funds to the following:

\$15,000 – Syndesmos Agia Atoma Me Aftismo, Cyprus  
\$29,812 – Assistance to individuals within the autism spectrum

Presvytera Toni Mihalopoulos, St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, Chicago, presented a program, “Pick Up Your Cross”, to the National Philoptochos Board. It is a program designed to teach special needs individuals, including those within the autism spectrum, about the Orthodox Church. Lessons have been developed for clergy and laity who work with these individuals. Other parishes provide special teaching liturgies for individuals within the autism spectrum and those with other disabilities.

The committee thanks the Philoptochos chapters throughout the United States for their continued support of the autism commitment.

Respectfully submitted,

Marian Catechis, Chair  
Autism Committee