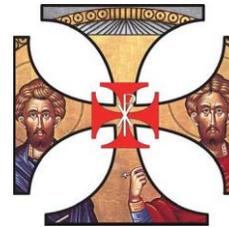


## National Philoptochos Society 2016-2018 Committee Report



### Family and Society/Interfaith

*Co-Chairs: Pat Aleck and Josephine Avaneas*  
*Liaison: Jeannie Ranglas*  
*Members: Philippa Condakes Joanne Mitchell*  
*Cindy Demeris Georgia Sarlas*  
*Pat Gogos Maria Stavropoulos*  
*Diana Jianis Crystal Thomas*  
*Joanne Kakoyiannis*

As the family is the nucleus of civilization and the basic social unit of society, it is very important that our families know the importance of what is occurring in society today and how they can integrate this information through participation in the life of the Church. Aristotle wrote that *“the family is nature’s association for mankind’s everyday life.”* The mission of the Family and Society Committee is to integrate the spiritual life of the Church with the manifestation of our Christian faith through involvement in volunteer, charitable and educational activities that encourage participation in the life of the Church.

In our Orthodox churches the laity needs our leaders of the Church to present changing social norms and values in terms of our Orthodox faith and values. The National Philoptochos Family and Society Committee goals are to encourage members to participate in the life of the Church. All families and individuals need to be integrated and educated along with all groups of the Church with programs that welcome and allow them to see the canons of the Church in terms of society’s values. All members of the Church community need to feel welcome and integrated into clerical life in addition to all Church organizations. The need is for parishioners to be engaged through dynamic and intimate learning environments.

Following are some ideas and concepts than can be implemented by chapters to help establish events that will involve all groups of the Church in social concepts through Faith:

- Establish a group of members, representative of the Philoptochos Board, Parish Council, and any other Church groups, to work directly under the Parish Priest to evaluate and present programs and lectures that deal with social concepts under our Orthodox Faith. This should meet the needs of all members, new and old, that involves them in the life of the Church.
- The National Family and Society has brainstormed and listed some ideas and topics that may be pertinent in today’s world that could encourage discussions and participation in Church life as we reach out to the outer communities that surround our Churches.
  - Interfaith Marriage
  - Bullying
  - Drugs and Alcohol
  - Anorexia & Bulimia
  - Social Media Influence
  - Excessive Video Game Influence on Youth
  - Family Dynamics

## Family and Society/Interfaith, continued

- Human Sex Trafficking
- Keeping College Age Youth involved in Church Life
- National & International Disasters
- The National Society and Family Committee needs to continue to publish articles in the Philoptochos newsletter that deal with the above topics as a starting point for chapters to develop discussions, present informational programs and use the information to write in their Church newsletters.
- Chapters need to establish Outreach Sundays that give an opportunity for all Orthodox to come together in spiritual renewal and fellowship. This gives awareness to community life in addition to promoting the philanthropy of Philoptochos.
- Assign a Philoptochos committee to pursue Outreach Programs. This committee can outline programs that include some of the following:
  - Involvement in community kitchens or outreach to feeding the poor
  - Food baskets in the church
  - Contact local hospitals or organizations to determine their needs
  - Partner with local schools in need of help
  - Sponsor local charities that provide awareness to cancer, children, battered women and prison inmates
  - Publish in the church newsletter with Philoptochos articles, births and weddings to congratulate and make all in the Church aware of these occasions
  - Workshops for married couples and older couples
  - Workshops for children and parents that include two-way conversations to promote understanding of their relationships and involvement in the Church
  - Spiritual and physical wellness
  - Financial planning

Whatever programs Philoptochos chapters develop, the primary goal is to bring women and men closer to the life of the Church. We encourage all chapters to be vigilant in their pursuit to making their chapter visible and ready to meet the needs of the Church, of the community, and of society.