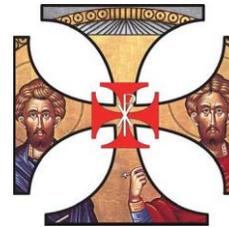


National Philoptochos Society 2016-2018 President's Report



Direct Archdiocesan District Philoptochos

Jennifer Constantin, President

Our Direct Archdiocesan District Philoptochos Chapter members are a faithfully dedicated group of volunteer women who selflessly give back to our communities and our parishes, both in our own neighborhoods and around the globe. Wherever there is need, there is Philoptochos.

“...for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2Cor.9.7b)

- REGIONAL MEETINGS and FINANCE WORKSHOPS are held several times per year and always bring together a crowd of faithful women looking to further the mission of Philoptochos, to make a difference in the lives of others and to serve God. Thank you to our host chapters of St. Nicholas Shrine Flushing, NY, St. George Hartford CT., St. Sophia Albany, NY, Annunciation Stamford, CT., St. Paul's Hempstead, NY, Holy Resurrection Brookville, NY, Assumption Danbury, CT., Cathedral Holy Trinity NYC, Archangel Michael, Port Washington, NY, SS. Constantine & Helen West Nyack, NY, and St. Barbara Orange, CT.
- COMMITMENTS - Our Archdiocesan Philoptochos chapters have enabled us to assist the three commitments from our District on an ongoing basis and include:
 - 1) St. Michael's Home in Yonkers, New York-which for 60 years has given loving, quality care to the elderly in our Archdiocesan community. St. Michael's is presently licensed as a 60-bed adult home, residents must be mobile and able to self-care. The new premises located in Uniondale, New York will be a continuum of care facility featuring four levels; independent living, assisted living, skilled nursing and a lockdown dementia unit.
 - 2) Hellenic Cultural Center in Astoria, Queens which holds our jewel St. Cosmas Chapel provides a venue to the Greek American community for activities contributing to the promotion and continuance of our cultural, ethnic and religious identity. The Center is available to organizations as well as individuals of our entire community.
 - 3) Panaghia Perivleptos Scholarship Fund supports our District Seminarians. Students residing in the Direct Archdiocesan District are granted funds in the summer prior to the start of the school year and at Christmas to assist them with college expenses on their path to the priesthood.
- SOCIAL SERVICES - the heart of our organization; over the last two years funds been distributed through the generosity of our chapters to individuals and families in need throughout our area. We assist them by paying rent and mortgage payments, utility bills, medical bills, offering grocery and store gift cards, donations of clothing, furniture, diapers and most often-burial assistance. At no time are funds paid directly to individuals.
- OUR 4th Philoptochos AGAPE LUNCHEON will benefit the St. Michael's Home expansion fund. Our Luncheon will be held on Saturday November 17th, 2018 at Crest Hollow Country Club on Long Island. To date our chapters have collectively donated over \$160,000 towards the expansion. Your prayers and participation are needed for a successful event.

- HUMAN TRAFFICKING INITIATIVE:
 - 1) Phase 1: The District purchased custom Philoptochos logo duffel bags & then distributed them to willing, participating chapters.
 - 2) Phase 2: Chapters then in turn collected new clothing, toiletries, gift cards & personal items and assembled them into the bags for collection and in turn distribution to more than 100 victims throughout New York City & Long Island. The value of each of the bags exceeded \$300.
 - 3) Phase 3: At our February 24th District Lenten Retreat at the Zoodochos Peghe Church in Bronx, New York we asked for and collected small denomination gift cards (\$10-\$25) for Distribution to 8 organizations in New York, Washington D.C. and Connecticut that aid victims, we also collected over \$1400 in donations for future distribution. All donations directly aid victims of human trafficking.
- ST. BASIL ACADEMY was the site of our Biennial Conference last year. Many chapters enjoy the grounds of this Philoptochos property for visits and retreats, we look forward to graduation and the support of nine graduates this year, one each from preschool and kindergarten, four from eight grade and three from High School. We are so proud of and pray for the St. Basil Family.
- FEED THE HUNGRY - Four years ago National President Maria Logus challenged us to do more **doing**-engaging all Philoptochos members and encouraging chapters to join in. Our chapters have lovingly embraced this initiative with the leadership of our own Georgia Vlitas. We urge our smaller chapters to get together with one or two other chapters and host a feeding later this year or into 2019. Many of our chapters have already been feeding the hungry for 10, 20 or even 35 years, we look forward to hearing at the convention that 1,000,000 meals have been served!
- CHRISTMAS CHALLENGE - Our Christmas Challenge has been hugely successful, each of our chapters was challenged to give back to their communities in one or two ways.
 - 1) Angel Trees - a way of giving back to those less fortunate by writing a gift wish of a child or an adult in need on a paper angel tag then displaying tags on a tree at fellowship hour, the entire community gets involved and the responses were exuberant and the results considerable.
 - 2) Winter Coat Drive – asking communities to donate gently worn coats to those less fortunate-onewarmcot.org was a terrific resource recommended by president Maria Logus.
- OUR 5TH ANNUAL LENTEN RETREAT was held on Feb. 24 at Zoodochos Peghe in Bronx, NY where Harvard Professor Dr. Vasileia Didgidiki-Lucero presented an educational narrative on forced migration and human trafficking in the Mediterranean. Dr. Vasileia informed us that human trafficking thrives on lack of awareness and implicit acceptance. Now that we know, there a few things we can take to fight this phenomenon. Previous Retreats have been held in Poughkeepsie, Astoria, Port Washington and Cathedral Holy Trinity.
 - 1) Become educated, learn about the phenomenon and combat false stereotypes and myths.
 - 2) Understand your slavery footprint and learn the origin of the products that you buy.
 - 3) Raise awareness among your families, friends, schools and communities.
 - 4) Embrace vulnerable, marginalized people and help them build their future as part of the community and not as outsiders.

The handout for this presentation is available along with three scenarios for chapter discussion.