



THE GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

ARCHIEPISCOPAL ENCYCLICAL

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Inaugural National Philoptochos Sunday

November 15, 2020

Δανείζει Θεῷ ὁ ἐλεῶν πτωχόν, κατὰ δὲ τὸ δόγμα αὐτοῦ ἀνταποδώσει αὐτῷ. (Παροιμιῶν 19:17)

You lend to God when you show mercy to the poor; He will repay you according to His reward. (Proverbs 19:17)

To the Most Reverend Hierarchs, the Reverend Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, the Presidents and Members of the Parish Councils of the Greek Orthodox Communities, the Distinguished Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Day, Afternoon, and Church Schools, the Philoptochos Sisterhoods, the Youth, the Hellenic Organizations, and the entire Greek Orthodox Family in America,

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On this Sunday of the Good Samaritan, we are inaugurating National Philoptochos Sunday, in recognition of their decades of good works on behalf of the Church and the entire human family. The Greek Orthodox Church in America is truly unthinkable without the Philoptochos. Every Parish is supported, nourished, and enriched by its Ladies Philoptochos Society. They are, for all of us, a sisterhood of Martha and Mary, dedicated servants of the Church and the wider community, and living icons of reflection on the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ.

They are called “Friends of the Poor” for a reason. The charitable and eleemosynary deeds of the Philoptochos sustain all manner of life in our communities, both near and far. They provide us all an opportunity to do well in our lives by doing good. We should generously support their philanthropy in every way possible.



In setting aside this particular Sunday, that of the “Good Samaritan,” we are recognizing the compassion and generosity that Philoptochos provides every day in the life of the Church. We thank them for their labors of love for all people, and for the example they set in our Parishes from coast to coast. May they all hear the words of the Lord as were voiced by the Samaritan we call “Good”: “Εγὼ ἐν τῷ ἐπανερχεσθαί Με ἀποδώσω σοι. When I come again, I will repay you.” (Luke 10:35).

With paternal love in our Lord Jesus Christ,

Ὁ Ἀμερικανὸς Ἐπιτοποφῶρος

† ELPIDOPHOROS
Archbishop of America