



**GREEK ORTHODOX LADIES PHILOPTCHOS SOCIETY, INC.**  
GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE <sup>OF</sup> AMERICA



September 2, 2021

To the Members of the National Philoptochos Board, Metropolis Philoptochos Boards, Chapter Boards and Philoptochos Stewards,

We enter the new Ecclesiastical Year beginning September 1 as one mighty team united in our faithful mission, guided always by agape and prayer. Our noble Sisterhood continues to offer compassionate service in the name of our Lord and Savior to those who have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters, and extreme social, economic, and ecological hardships.

His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has established the beginning of the Ecclesiastical Year as a day of deep prayer for protecting our precious environment. During the last month, horrifying wildfires ravaged throughout Greece. Natural resources, and forests in Evia, the Peloponnese Peninsula and other parts of the country were devastated. The damage to the environment is immeasurable. Many lost their homes, livestock, and livelihood. As an immediate response to the call by His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America to support our brethren, National Philoptochos Society donated \$40,000 to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America for the Greece Fires Relief Fund.

This is not the first time that Philoptochos has responded to the human and physical devastation caused by wildfires in Greece. Our ongoing support to provide aid to the people of Greece and Cyprus enabled Philoptochos to take this swift and compassionate action. This was however just a first step as we initiate this appeal to aid our brethren in Greece.

The road to recovery and healing will be long for fire victims in Greece. The devastating fires will likely be followed by flooding and further devastation during the fall and winter. Our help is urgently needed. National Philoptochos asks that you turn your immediate attention in the month of September to this appeal. Please initiate plans for this important request swiftly. You may wish to have a special collection tray for the National Philoptochos Society 2021 Greece Fires Relief.

Please make best efforts to send your contributions, big or small, earmarked for the “2021 Greece Fires Relief Fund” to the National Philoptochos Society by Thursday, September 30, 2021. Collections may be forwarded to the National Philoptochos Society at 126 East 37th Street, New York, NY 10016 or make donations online at [www.philoptochos.org/donation](http://www.philoptochos.org/donation) and select “Aid to Greece & Cyprus” from the “direct my gift to” drop down menu.

Thank you for your reflection and participation. We stand in solidarity and pray for all whose lives have been affected by the devastating fires in Greece.

In His Service,

Arlene Siavelis Kehl  
National Philoptochos President

Aphrodite Skeadas  
Aid to Greece & Cyprus, Chair

Despina Sarantopoulou  
Aid to Greece & Cyprus, Co-Chair