



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

GREEK ORTHODOX LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY, Inc.

February 5, 2009

Dear National Board Members, Chapter Presidents and Members of the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society,

The dedicated and devoted members of our beloved Philoptochos Society have through the years demonstrated their commitment to continually expand their philanthropic endeavors to meet new challenges, enabling us to embrace and to offer assistance to those most in need. Our philanthropic mission has no boundaries. Our good works are unlimited.


At the National Philoptochos Biennial Convention held in Washington, DC this past summer, the delegates overwhelmingly endorsed holding a nationwide AIDS/HIV Walkathon under the sponsorship of the National Philoptochos Society. With compassion and love, the Walkathon will serve to unite and bond our families, our parishes and our communities in a common cause, *"I was sick and you took care of me"* (Matthew 24:36).

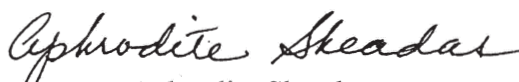
It is important to focus on the fact that AIDS/HIV is a worldwide virus. The virus threatens everyone, everywhere. In Ethiopia, a predominantly Orthodox country, HIV/AIDS has reached alarming epidemic levels. A child contracts the AIDS/HIV virus every 10 minutes, through no fault of their own! To date, there are over 1,800,000 AIDS orphans living in Ethiopia. The National Philoptochos Society is partnering with IOCC and with the help of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, will serve to aid these orphans. It is important to note that IOCC solicits matching funds through the United States Government and various US agencies.


In the United States, sadly, there is inadequate funding for those less fortunate, underprivileged and impoverished who are afflicted with the AIDS/HIV virus. Private funding is sorely needed in this area. Funds distributed to the National AIDS Fund will also be matched and will be directed for utilization through their 400 service organizations and their existing programs.

Let us respond positively to this challenge with the same Christian love and commitment that Philoptochos has shown over the years. The caring for children in Ethiopia and the indigent without adequate means to combat this virus in our own country, indeed affords us the opportunity to be true members of the "Body of Christ", where "Orthodoxia" is lived in practice, "Orthopraxia".

With love in Christ,


Elaine Cladis
AIDS Committee Co-Chair


Aphrodite Skeadas
President


Barbara Latsonas
AIDS Committee Co-Chair