



# Philanthropy Witness



The Official Newsletter of the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society

Special Edition

2014 Convention Highlights

## *Congratulations!*



Photo Courtesy of Rania Richardson

The dynamic Philoptochos trio of Evellyn Tsiadis, Anne Michals & Martha Stefanidakis (as pictured above) served as Tri-Chairs of the National Philoptochos Biennial Meetings held in Philadelphia, PA., July 6-9, 2014. Congratulations and thanks go to them for their outstanding work in chairing a very successful and enlightening convention.

## *Kudos to the Metropolis of New Jersey Philoptochos Chapters!*

Hosting a National Philoptochos Biennial Convention is a mammoth undertaking. Countless details need to be addressed and handled.

The 2014 Convention, hosted by the Metropolis of New Jersey, was held in the city of Philadelphia. The entire Convention proved to be a tremendous success thanks in large part to the warm hospitality, graciousness and efficiency of the many Metropolis of New Jersey Philoptochos Chapters who worked together to welcome their Philoptochos sisters from all over the United States.

These tireless ladies handled the registration booths, baked koulouria and paximadia, put together hundreds of delegate notebooks and welcome bags, worked in the temporary Philoptochos office at the hotel, greeted guests warmly and sponsored a lovely "Philoptochos Philly Style" reception at the Marriott Hotel.

Congratulations and thanks are offered to these wonderful women for their hospitality and generosity of spirit. Metropolis of New Jersey Philoptochos President Anne Michals and her team did a great job!

## *Philoptochos Supports "Philabundance" in Philadelphia!*

**By: Valine Georgeson**



Photo Courtesy of Rania Richardson

Continuing a tradition that was established at earlier National Philoptochos Biennial Conventions to support philanthropic efforts in the host city, a local Philadelphia charity was selected by the Committee to be the recipient of Philoptochos philanthropy.

The charity that was selected was "Philabundance". Established in 1984, this organization was created with the simple belief

that no man, woman or child should go hungry and since 2005, is the region's largest hunger relief organization. Hunger is addressed through direct service programs and a network of 500 member agencies. While there is no quick fix to this challenge, unified dedication with its partners, donors and the public at large, Philabundance is creating innovative programs and support.

Prior to the Philadelphia meetings, each Philoptochos Chapter in the country, along with registered delegates and private individuals, was asked to donate either gift cards, Chapter checks or personal checks and either mail them or bring them to the National meetings. A large box was used to collect these donations throughout the meetings.

On Wednesday, July 9, 2014, the last day of the National Meetings, representatives from Philabundance came to make a presentation about their inspiring organization. After their talk, National Philoptochos President Aphrodite Skeadas proudly presented these speakers over \$12,000 in gift cards, checks and cash that had been donated by Philoptochos Chapters and individuals!

The Philabundance representatives were thrilled by this wonderful donation and noted that their organization could provide two meals from one dollar and that Philoptochos should feel great about providing 23,000 meals to the hungry.

Deepest thanks are extended to all the Chapters and individuals who supported this initiative. Your donation truly made a difference! Should you or your Chapter wish to make a donation, please go to <http://www.philabundance.org/> for further information.

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*Human Trafficking Presentation*  
*Rachel Lloyd, Founder and CEO of GEMS*  
**By: Kathy Siavelis and Peggy Vranas**

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Over the past several years, our National Philoptochos has been concerned with the tragic and widespread problem of Human Trafficking throughout the world, most specifically within

the United States. Human Trafficking is such a deeply pressing issue that the President of the United States has established an Advisory Council on Human Trafficking to which His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios has been appointed as a member.

Given this concern, the New Philanthropic Initiatives Committee has been researching and working diligently in order to educate all of our Chapters and members regarding this very serious issue and to provide recommendations as to what assistance we can provide to have a positive impact in the lives of these victims.



Photo Courtesy of Kathy Siavelis

As a result of this effort, Kathy Siavelis and Peggy Vranas, New Philanthropic Initiatives Committee Co-Chairs, were honored to introduce at the 2014 National Philoptochos Biennial Convention, Rachel Lloyd, a nationally recognized leader in the fight against human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation and the founder of Girls Educational and Mentoring Services (GEMS).

In a room with an attentive audience, Philoptochos delegates were moved to tears and empathy as they listened to the story of Rachel's early years. Those same faces were transformed into smiles of joy and gratitude as they heard how Rachel, with will, determination and great courage, pulled herself out of the life of poverty and prostitution, and became what she is today, helping not only herself, but also other women who have been led to a similar life.

In a heartfelt manner, Rachel spoke candidly about her struggles, which she encountered at a

young age, and how she turned them around into her passion for educating, mentoring and empowering sexually exploited girls and young women to escape this life and develop their full potential, through the pursuit of their personal, educational, and career goals.

To this end, in 1998, at just 23 years old, Rachel Lloyd established GEMS, at her kitchen table with \$30 and a borrowed computer. She was driven by the lack of services for these victims, and the incredible stigma and punishment they faced from all facets of society.

Sixteen years later, GEMS is now the largest service provider of its kind in the nation, annually providing preventive and transitional services and support to over 350 girls and young women, ages 12-24 years, who have experienced sexual exploitation and trafficking. Each year, GEMS provides preventive outreach and education to 1,500 youth, and training to over 1,300 professionals.

Rachel is well-known for her tireless dedication to “her girls” and has impacted thousands of individual lives. Through her courageous advocacy, she insured the passage of the New York State’s Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Children Act, which in 2008, became the first law in the nation to protect and not punish trafficked and exploited youth, for which other states have now followed suit.

Rachel is also the author of the critically acclaimed book, [Girls Like Us](#), and has used her unique voice to advocate for survivors at the White House, the United Nations, and before Congress.

Rachel explained that we need to make people aware of this problem in the United States. We need to assist these girls and not punish them for being victims of sexual abuse and trafficking as this was a life into which they were coerced. They need our love and support to break this cycle. We also need to educate all our young people, including boys and young men about these dangers in our society, and how we need to develop healthy relationships with one another.

For further information on GEMS, please visit their website at:

[www.gems-girls.org/get-involved](http://www.gems-girls.org/get-involved).

To understand and increase awareness on this issue and to get involved in the fight to end human trafficking, Chapters and members can refer to the following attachment of handouts distributed at the 2014 National Philoptochos Biennial Convention or you may view them online at: <http://bit.ly/1vbXhWi>

1. UNICEF- End Trafficking Fact Sheet
2. 5 Ways People Are Trafficked – Abolishing Injustice in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
3. UNICEF- End Trafficking Tool kit
4. U.S. Department of State - Diplomacy in Action - 20 Ways You Can Help Fight Human Trafficking

*Take action with your fellow  
Philoptochos sisters today!*

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*Mental Illness: Our Community’s Journey  
Understanding, Compassion & Hope*  
**By: Paulette Geanacopoulos, LMSW**  
**National Philoptochos Social Work Director**

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Photo Courtesy of Rania Richardson

One of the most interesting presentations at the 2014 National Biennial Philoptochos Convention was the panel discussion on “*Mental Illness: Our Community’s Journey to Understanding, Compassion & Hope*”.

Organized and moderated by Paulette Geanacopoulos, LMSW, Director of National’s

Department of Social Work, each panelist shared professional and personal experiences of dealing with mental illness. Their candor was deeply appreciated by over 400 delegates, observers and guests who were present.

The excellent panelists were:

- **Demetria DeLia, Ph.D, LCSW, M.A.,** Clinical Psychologist, Psychoanalyst & Clinical Social Worker who provided the program’s framework for understanding mental illness.
- **Christina Kallas, Esq.,** Practicing Attorney & Former President of the New York Women’s Bar Association who provided personal insight about the impact of mental illness on family, and
- **Rev. Protopresbyter Nicholas G. Anctil,** Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, New Rochelle, New York, President Archdiocesan Presbyters Council, who discussed the value and importance of the Church as a natural support network that can provide hope, emotional support and unconditional friendship to those facing mental illness.

Acknowledging that mental illness is a deeply complex issue that can be difficult to diagnose and even harder to treat, the panelists addressed many topics that accompany and cause mental illness, including inherited genes, temperament and trauma, isolation (both physical and emotional), stigmatization by others, feelings of abandonment, the importance of support groups to help family members understand and deal with their child’s mental illness, and the myth that mental illness has roots in demonic possession.

The panelists observed that some Greek families have often hesitated or even refused help, fearing that to do so would be shameful and disgraceful. They noted that some translate emotional conflicts into physical symptoms; thus, they deny psychological stressors and visit medical doctors in hope of a cure. Even symptoms of the severest disorders, such as

schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major depression, will be overlooked. For example, the paranoid schizophrenic patient who withdraws from society will be described as shy or introverted, and the depressed patient who can’t get out of bed will be accused of laziness.

One of the great points of emphasis was that silence or denial of mental illness by family members is a grave mistake, as early recognition and acknowledgement that a family member is exhibiting symptoms of mental illness should be viewed as a loud call to seek professional evaluation and consultation.

One of the panelists offered a touching and profound closing thought to the delegates - *“You may never know why your child is ill. You may feel guilty, but you need to hunker down and get help. And you need to understand that there is no ritual in life that allows you to publicly mourn your lost dreams for your child”*.

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*National Philoptochos*  
*Honors the Military and Veterans*  
**By: Christine Karavites**

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Photo Courtesy of Rania Richardson

The 2014 National Philoptochos Convention in Philadelphia, PA culminated with a program to honor The Brave Ones. His Eminence Metropolitan Isaiah of Denver, Military Ordinary who oversees Greek Orthodox Chaplains, opened The Brave Ones program thanking Philoptochos while reminding the delegates of

the importance to honor those in our parishes who so bravely serve their country. The delegates viewed the emotional and moving video 'The Brave Ones' that highlights close to 1000 photos of Orthodox service men and women with a background of patriotic music that was produced by Dr. George and Martha Stefanidakis.

National Philoptochos President Aphrodite Skeadas then presented sixty-five Homeward Bound Baskets donated by Philoptochos stewards and Chapters to Mr. Tim Meserve, Executive Director of the Philadelphia Veteran's Multi Service Center to support sixty-five homeless veterans and their families as they transition to permanent housing. Testimony followed by Mike Emanuel, FOX News Chief Congressional Correspondent describing his missions with his crew traveling in the dangerous war zones of Iraq and Afghanistan and how he made the conscious decision to take his faith with him. Lt. Colonel Elizabeth Konon Sweet detailed her military career as an Orthodox woman and her peacekeeping and combat support missions around the world.

The program concluded with the narration of The Brave Ones Past and Present Tribute and His Eminence Metropolitan Isaiah leading the delegates in the singing of "God Bless America".

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*2014 National Philoptochos Convention  
Distributes \$509,580*

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Photo Courtesy of Kiki Rothman

The 2014 National Philoptochos Convention convened in Philadelphia, PA July 6 – 9, 2014 with programs focused on the family. \$509,580 was distributed for programs impacting families.

**They the following include:**

**Direct Archdiocesan District** - \$5000 - Blythedale Children's Hospital Valhalla, NY Intensive feeding therapy program; \$5000 - Ronald McDonald House, NY, NY - Fall Clothing program; \$10,000 - New Alternatives for Children, Inc., NY, NY - Family medical and mental health clinics; \$10,000 - St. Michael's Home, Yonkers, NY - General operations.

**Metropolis of Chicago** - \$10,000-Children's Hospital of Wisconsin Foundation, Milwaukee, WI Community health school nurse program; \$5,000-MetroHope Recovery Ministries -Healing House, Minneapolis, MN - Child Development Program; \$5,000 - Wings of Hope, St. Louis, MO - Medical Transport Program.

**Metropolis of Boston** - \$10,000 - Hellenic Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, Canton, MA Alzheimer's Unit; \$10,000 - Metropolis of Boston Philoxenia House, Brookline, MA Kitchen and Bedroom renovations.

**Metropolis of Denver** - \$10,000 - Healing House, Inc. Kansas City, MO Energy Efficiency Improvement Project; \$5,000 - Children's Cancer Fund of New Mexico Camp Program, Albuquerque, NM; \$5,000 - Respite Care, Inc. Fort Collins, CO Short-term care for children with developmental disabilities.

**Metropolis of Atlanta** - \$15,000 - Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, GA Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA - Health Care for types of sickle cell disease including thalassemia; \$5,000 - American Vitiligo Research Foundation Retreat Program, Clearwater, FL .

**Metropolis of Detroit** - \$10,000 - North Woodward Community Foundation, Michigan Blessings in a Backpack, Troy, MI; \$5,000 - Forrest Spence Fund, Memphis, TN - Needs of critically and chronically ill children and families; \$5,000-International Rett Syndrome Foundation, Cincinnati, OH- Medical Research for treatments for Rett Syndrome.

**Metropolis of Pittsburgh** - \$3,000 - Steven G. Aya Cancer Research Fund, Westlake, Ohio Wellness Program for adolescent and young adult cancer survivors; \$5,000 Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital, The Hummingbird Program, Hershey, PA Palliative care for patients with chronic/complex life limiting conditions; \$10,000-West Virginia Medical Center, Morgantown, WVA Pediatric Unit Equipment and Furnishings; \$2,000-Akron Children's Hospital, Division of Pediatric Psychiatry and Psychology, Akron ,OH- iPads Intensive outpatient service program.

**Metropolis of San Francisco** - \$5,000-Haven of Peace, Inc. Stockton, CA Women and Children Shelter Kitchen; \$5,000-Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women and Children, Honolulu, Hawaii Pediatric oncology transportation fund; \$10,000-Helping Kids: Health Access Without Walls-dba Helping Kids Clinic, Las Vegas, NV-Space buildout for uninsured and underinsured.

**Metropolis of New Jersey** - \$2,000-Discovery Elementary School, Loudoun County Public Schools, Ashburn, VA-Early childhood special education preschool program; \$2,000-Timothy School, Berwyn, PA-Vocational Education Center Program; \$10,000-SNAP, Special Needs Athletic Programs, Inc. Morristown, NJ E-learning webinars about children with disabilities; \$6,000 -Calliope Joy Foundation, Bala Cynwyd, PA - Children's Hospital Philadelphia research on Neurological/unique form of muscular dystrophy; \$10,000-John's Hopkins Children's Center, Baltimore, MD Patient special needs fund for medication and home health equipment.

**Additional disbursements include:**

\$70,000-Saint Basil Academy; \$25,000-St. Photios Shrine; \$55,000-IOCC; \$36,000-Support a Mission Priest; \$30,000-UNICEF in honor of Sophia Altin; \$22,000- Aid to Greece and Cyprus; \$20,000 - Orthodox Christian Fellowship; \$2,500 -GEMS Program; \$2,000-Cure Search for Children's Cancer; \$35,000-Orthodox Christian Mission Center;\$7,080-Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry; \$5,000-Orthodox Christian Network in Memory of Dr. George Mekras.

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*AGAPE Awards*  
*All Generations Accomplishing*  
*Philanthropic Endeavors*

**By: Melody Simmons**

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Photo Courtesy of Dimitrios S. Panagos

The unconditional love that defines agape is a basic tenet of our work as Philoptochos members. True to that meaning, and in the spirit of the words of St. Paul who encouraged in Hebrews that we "may spur one another on toward love and good deeds," we gathered in Philadelphia July 6-9 to review and celebrate the good works and spiritual dedication of our members at the 2014 National Philoptochos Biennial Convention.

During the convention, a group of women were honored with AGAPE Awards during an energetic and loving portion of the program on July 8. Nominated from their Chapters in all Metropolises and the Direct Archdiocesan District, the award stands for All Generations Accomplishing Philanthropic Endeavors. It was established in 2008 and is given out every two years to nine women selected by a national panel based on their dedication to our cause of philanthropia "to Philoptochos members who have been tireless workers for their Chapter through their actions and even beyond the parish community, as a witness to the wonderful mission of Philoptochos." The AGAPE award in the past has honored members who have contributed time, talent and energies to their communities, to their Chapter's fund raising efforts and to their parishes.

**This year's winners are:**

### **Direct Archdiocesan District**

**Elaine Economides Joost** of St. Sophia Cathedral in Washington, DC, who has dedicated hours to helping the homeless in that city through a "hands-on" outreach with the Community Council for the Homeless at Friendship Place. That work includes meals for the homeless and a clothing giveaway.

### **Metropolis of Chicago**

**Dorothy Bezemes** of St. Basil Church in Chicago, IL, has been a Philoptochos member for more than two decades. Dorothy is "89 years young," and organized the Chapter's Yiayia's Kouzina to bring young and older members of the parish together for baking lessons. Through those efforts, many in the parish learned to make Prosforon, Greek pastries and favorite Greek dishes. The efforts have led to a bake sale, which has raised funds for families at a Ronald McDonald House.

### **Metropolis of Boston**

**Mary Anne Pappas** of Saint George Church in Springfield, MA, who is described as a 5-foot dynamo who, at age 90, has made meals for needy families, helped to organize the Chapter's "Dress for Success" drives and served as chairwoman of the Vasilopita Day celebration. Each Sunday, she organizes the parish coffee hour "and is the first to arrive and the last to leave at the end of the day."

### **Metropolis of Denver**

**Theano Peros** of Annunciation Cathedral in Denver, CO, who has been a Philoptochos member for more than 50 years. Theano "has shaped generations of women with her outstanding commitment to service and faith." Her dedication to Philoptochos began after her family was helped by our organization years ago following her husband's diagnosis with cancer. "The generosity of Philoptochos transformed her, filled her with a sense of gratitude and grace."

### **Metropolis of Atlanta**

**Artemis Sarayiotis** of Holy Trinity Church in Raleigh, NC, who helps with every Philoptochos fundraiser that the parish sponsors. She regularly organizes a holiday bake sale and cafe that

brings in about \$20,000 for Philanthropic causes and helps to compile care packages for college students. "At her core, she serves others happily and continuously through actions and prayers."

### **Metropolis of Detroit**

**Evanthia Valassiades** of Annunciation Church in Dayton, OH, who is the granddaughter and a daughter of two past Chapter Philoptochos Presidents and has been a two-term Chapter president herself. Her dedication has inspired multiple generations of Philoptochos members in the Dayton area "whether it is baklava gift boxes for the Christmas season or designing aprons for Philoptochos members with fun slogans to attract attention to our philanthropic endeavors."

### **Metropolis of Pittsburgh**

**Vasilike Pasalis** of St. Demetrios Church in Rocky River, OH, who has been a Philoptochos member for more than 80 years. She celebrates her 100th birthday this month! Her legacy includes helping to raise \$7,000 during World War II that was sent to Greece to help fund mobile first aid units for the injured. She also helped decades later to organize garden parties to help raise funds for a new church that was built in the greater Cleveland area.

### **Metropolis of San Francisco**

**Markella Magliola** of St. Anna Church in Roseville, CA, who has helped form several philanthropic efforts in the community including the Food Basket ministry that helps more than 50 families to have a full pantry at Christmas, Thanksgiving and Easter, an effort that also includes teens and new Philoptochos members. A gardener, Markella also grows "exotic flowers" in her yard and regularly uses them to decorate icons in the church on special feast days - donating the funds back to the Chapter.

### **Metropolis of New Jersey**

**Harriet Nikolaidis** of St. John the Theologian Cathedral in Tenafly, NJ, who has served as Chapter president and spearheaded fundraising efforts that have raised more than \$20,000. Harriet regularly visits the sick and "takes special time to visit with families who have lost loved ones."

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*2014 Chapter Challenges*  
*Presented at the National Philoptochos*  
*Biennial Convention in Philadelphia, PA*  
**By: Valine Georgeson**

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The Chapter Challenge projects presented to the delegates at the National Philoptochos Biennial Convention in Philadelphia, PA were an inspiring array of projects and hard work.

Two years ago in Phoenix, Arizona, nine Philoptochos Chapters, one from each Metropolis, were each given \$100 in seed money to start a meaningful, two-year Chapter project. Each chosen Chapter took this challenge seriously and their nine presentations to the delegates included a video of their efforts and results.

Listed below is a brief summary of these challenges:

**Direct Archdiocesan District**  
**Saint Sophia Church, Albany, New York**  
**Project Title - "Career Training Center"**

Joined by two neighboring Philoptochos Chapters, St. George Church in Schenectady, New York and St. Basil Church in Troy, New York, the Albany Philoptochos Chapter spearheaded this Chapter Challenge.

After much research, they selected the Career Training Center in Schenectady, which provides emergency food and shelter for the hungry and homeless and seeks to help individuals emerge from poverty by training them to have marketable skills and a healthy work ethic.

The three Philoptochos Chapters raised money to provide equipment for the Training Center, enabling it to expand its reach. This has proved so successful & rewarding that the three Chapters will continue their support.

**Metropolis of Chicago**  
**Saint Mary's Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota**  
**Project Title - "Healing House"**

Healing House is a Christ-centered long-term residential recovery program for women and

their children to find safe haven, restoration and recovery from the wounds of addiction, prostitution, poverty and prison.

St. Mary's Chapter invested over 1800 volunteer hours through 180 volunteers. In addition, they raised over \$10,000, offered front office reception services, provided on-site child care, professional empowerment classes for residents, family dinners, Bible studies, off-site family field trips and the creation of a new library for residents of all ages.

**Metropolis of Boston**  
**Annunciation Church, Cranston, Rhode Island**  
**Project Title - "Prayer Shawl Ministry"**

This Chapter crocheted over 500 shawls for their homebound and nursing home parishioners, Philoxenia House, cancer clinics, Veterans Home, neonatal babies and various hospitals in the Providence area. All shawls were blessed by Father Andrew George & the hospital chaplains. In addition, icon prayers cards were left for Greek Orthodox patients as well as non-denominational patients.

**Metropolis of Denver**  
**Transfiguration Church, Austin, Texas**  
**Project Title - Philoptochos and the Austin community present an "Evening of Music and Information" benefitting children with special needs"**

This parish community has several children with special needs and as part of their ongoing community outreach efforts, they decided to work with organizations in the Austin area that support children with special needs.

**Metropolis of Atlanta**  
**Holy Trinity Cathedral, Charlotte, NC**  
**Project Title - "TLC Blankets of Hope"**

The ladies of this Chapter made handmade lap blankets which were given to homebound parishioners as well as to residents of two other facilities in the Charlotte area. These included Charlotte Square, a residential facility for senior citizens and the young patients temporarily residing at the Charlotte area Ronald McDonald House. The finished blankets were tied with a

ribbon and presented to each recipient. Included with each blanket was a laminated icon of St. Sophia and her three daughters, Faith, Hope and Love. This particular icon was selected in honor of this Chapter's name, Agia Elpis or Saint Hope.

**Metropolis of Detroit**  
**Annunciation Church, Dayton, Ohio**  
**Project Title - "American Heroes"**

The goal of this project was to raise awareness of the needs of Veterans and active service men and women. This project involved all the Annunciation parish organizations.

These volunteers donated hours of service to their local Veterans Hospital. Blankets were made, clothing drives were organized and entertainment was offered to residents.

In addition, these hardworking volunteers raised over \$20,000 which allowed them to purchase 2 wheelchair scales, print educational brochures, and to make a donation to the Hospice family meal fund. Fifteen iPads were purchased, a golf cart to transport Veterans to an on-site garden and a Greek Night was sponsored with delicious food and Greek entertainment & church dancers.

This started out as a Philoptochos project, but truly became a project that this entire parish embraced.

**Metropolis of Pittsburgh**  
**Saint Haralambos, Canton, Ohio**  
**Project Title - "Housewarming Gifts" for homeless families transitioning to home owners.**

This Chapter worked with individuals who had just moved into permanent housing after long periods of homelessness. Realizing that these individuals would not have cleaning supplies for their new homes, these Philoptochos members filled countless numbers of large buckets with cleaning supplies, mops and brooms and enabled these individuals to start their new lives in a clean home.

**Metropolis of San Francisco**  
**Saint Sophia Cathedral, Los Angeles, California**  
**Project Title - "Operation Lace-Up"**

This Chapter wanted to get new shoes to the many thousands of California children who did

not have this luxury. They teamed up with FOCUS and working with a major American shoe company, were able to get thousands pairs of shoes donated to children in the greater Los Angeles area. Philoptochos volunteers helped to deliver and size the shoes with these children. The smiling and grateful faces of these young recipients was the great reward of this effort.

**Metropolis of New Jersey**  
**Saint Andrew Church, Randolph, New Jersey**  
**Project Title - "The Write Connection"**

The goal of this initiative was to improve the familial relationship between incarcerated parents and their children. This program sought to be a vehicle by which these individuals could establish consistent communication and strengthen the family bond. Advice was sought from a number of professionals who work with prisoners. This program was able to connect children with their incarcerated parents, thus keeping open an important lifeline.

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*Philoptochos Society Social Media*

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