



# GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

GREEK ORTHODOX LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY, Inc.

November 23, 2010

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

As the United States recently honored our active service men and women and veterans on Veterans Day, and as we approach Thanksgiving and the Christmas season, it is important that we demonstrate our gratitude to them who are far from home serving our country.

### Consider:

- *The young person away from home for the first time facing the realities and dangers of war.*
- *The service man or woman who has completed a two or three year tour in places such as Iraq or Afghanistan away from their family and not knowing how their loved ones are managing without them.*
- *The wounded soldier facing life altering surgeries and long periods of rehabilitation.*
- *The returning veteran suffering from post-traumatic stress syndrome.*
- *The veteran returning from a tour of service who must adjust to all aspects of civilian life.*

***All of these service men and women have received a calling to serve their country selflessly.*** Now we, the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, must respond to a ***“call to action”*** and support our troops and veterans.

The New Philanthropic Initiatives Committee has researched various organizations that provide assistance to those in the service and their families here in the United States and abroad. We encourage Philoptochos Chapters to embrace one or more of these projects and exhibit support for our US troops and veterans.

Several websites that will assist you and your Philoptochos Chapter in this effort include:

The Fisher House Foundation ([www.fisherhouse.org](http://www.fisherhouse.org)) is a unique private-public partnership that supports America's military who are hospitalized as a result of illness, disease or injury. The Fisher House Foundation has provided “comfort homes” to more than 11,000 families and has made available nearly three million days of lodging to family members since the program originated in 1990. These homes are built on the grounds of major military and VA medical centers and enable family members to stay in a home close to their loved ones at a most stressful time during hospitalization.

Support Our Troops ([www.supportourtroops.org](http://www.supportourtroops.org)) offers a nationwide platform for individuals, businesses and non-profits to find constructive ways to assist, such as sending care packages and improving medical aid for our troops.

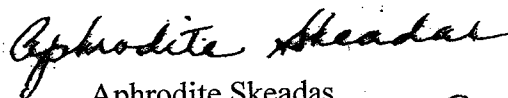
As recommended previously in 2009 by the New Initiatives Committee, Operation USO Care Package ([www.usocare.org](http://www.usocare.org)) offers individuals opportunity to make a donation in \$25 increments. Ready-made care packages will be forwarded to the troops with a personalized message from the sender. Through this organization many Philoptochos Chapters, including Saint Helen Women's Philoptochos Society of Saints Constantine and Helen Church in Palos Hills, Illinois, have supported our troops.

[www.AnySoldier.com](http://www.AnySoldier.com) is a wonderful website through which you can obtain the name and address of a service member who will distribute care packages directly to the troops with whom he or she is serving. The website has a wealth of information, including links for *Where to Send, What to Send* and *How to Send*.

Finally, as suggested to us by Father Milton D. Gianulis, CAPT, CHC, USN, free meals are offered on holidays to service men and women on active duty, their dependants, and retirees. We suggest that chapters or individuals near military bases contact their local USO to see how they may volunteer in assisting with these meals and festivities.

These men and women serve our country 365 days of the year and therefore we need to keep them in our thoughts and prayers not on just one day of the year, but year round. Above all, we must pray for our troops as they continue to serve and protect us.

With love in Christ,



Aphrodite Skeadas  
President



Katherine Siavelis



Peggy Vranas

New Philanthropic Initiatives Co-Chairs