



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

ΓΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΑΜΕΡΙΚΗΣ

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP
Ο ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ

July 1, 2024

To the ever gracious National President Arlene Siavelis Kehl; Convention Chair Jeannie Ranglas; Convention Co-Chairs Anita Kartalopoulos, Valine Georgeson and Cindy Kezos; esteemed officers of the Executive Board; Metropolis Presidents; and beloved members of the National Board and Standing Committees of the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society:

As you open your 2024 National Philoptochos Biennial Convention entitled “**Army of Agape: Inspiring Women, Impacting the World,**” it is with much joy that I offer you these heartfelt words of Archbishopal commendation in recognition of the tireless efforts and boundless compassion that each of you — as members of the *Army of Agape* — demonstrate in your loving philanthropic service. Your unwavering commitment to philanthropy and charity, together with your selfless support for your brothers and sisters in need, is a testament to the sacred example we Orthodox Christians are called to follow in our service and outreach to our fellow neighbors as genuine imitators of Christ.

This Convention, of course, is a celebration of your unity and love as well as an acknowledgment of the profound impact that your collective efforts as an *army of sisters* can have in the world today. It is an opportunity for you to co-inspire one another by sharing your experiences and renewing your dedication to the noble mission of Philoptochos. As friends of those in every kind of need and want, your work touches countless lives by providing more than just mere material assistance. In offering tangible manifestations of fraternal hope, solidarity and affection, you embody a true sense of Christian charity, understanding and benevolence. And this, my dear sisters, is the healing balm of kindness and compassion that you must seek to increase and share with all those around you.

As you come together over these next few days, then, I encourage you to carry forth your discussions in a spirit of mutual love and concern for the common care and wellbeing of all Christ’s poor and afflicted. We must always remember that our communal witness demonstrates the Lord’s everlasting presence and power; for He is “living and active” (Heb. 4:12) among us daily unto eternity. And so, I extend my heartfelt blessings to each of you personally and pray that this National Convention will be a source of strength, inspiration and refreshment to you all. May you return to your homes and parishes blessed with a renewed spirit of service and generosity, ever ready to continue the good works and God-pleasing deeds of your gracious hands!

With much paternal love in Christ,

† ELPIDOPHOROS
Archbishop of America