



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



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**National Philoptochos Announces Support for Greek Fire Relief Fund: A Commitment to Helping Those in Need**

**New York, NY – September 20, 2024** – The Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, Inc proudly announces its support for the Greek Fire Relief Fund, initiated by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America under the leadership of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros. This crucial initiative aims to address the devastating impacts of the summer wildfires in Greece, which have left countless families and communities in dire need. The wildfires ravaged homes, schools, churches, and natural landscapes across Attica and other regions, creating significant challenges for those affected.

National Philoptochos which immediately responded with \$50,000 is increasing its finding to completely restore the damage to two residential homes for the developmentally disabled as well as the Axion Esti Monastery, both located in Attica, Greece.

In alignment with our mission to promote charitable, philanthropic, and educational endeavors, the National Philoptochos has approved funding of \$116,000 for the restoration of the Holy Monastery of Axion Esti and the adjacent “Athanasios Martinos I & II” Protected Living Homes for individuals with autism, Downs Syndrome and other intellectual disabilities. The funds will be directed towards essential infrastructure repairs, including the replacement of generators, restoration of the water supply, electrical work, and fire protection measures to ensure that both homes and the monastery are protected in the future. This initiative underscores the core mission of Philoptochos to support both the Church and individuals in need, especially those in an institutional setting.

A delegation led by His Grace Bishop Athenagoras of Nazianzos and which included First Vice President Anita Kartalopoulos recently visited impacted sites to assess the needs firsthand. Their findings underscored the urgent requirement for firefighting equipment for the local volunteer fire department, which played a pivotal role in protecting lives and properties during the fires. The total need for this department, which will be addressed by Archdiocesan fundraising amounts to approximately €504,000 for essential equipment.

National Philoptochos President, Arlene Siavelis Kehl, stated “What a blessing it is to partner with our Archdiocese in alleviating the loss and pain caused by these devastating fires. Together, we can bring hope and healing to those affected,”

Archbishop Elpidophoros expressed gratitude for the steadfast support of Philoptochos, stating, “Wherever there is a need, our Philoptochos responds. I am grateful for the faithful and dedicated women of Philoptochos for their great and generous gift and for always answering the call to help those in need.”

The Archdiocese will oversee all projects, ensuring transparency and accountability through a full accounting of funds raised and expended, similar to the efforts following the Greek fires in 2021.

National Philoptochos encourages all our faithful, parishes, and institutions to join us in this noble effort to restore the spiritual and physical wellbeing of our communities affected by the fires. Your support can make a profound difference.

To contribute to the Greek Fire Relief Fund and help those in need, please visit [www.goarch.org/donate/greecefire](http://www.goarch.org/donate/greecefire).

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The National Ladies Philoptochos Society, the largest women's philanthropic organization in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, is dedicated to serving the needs of the less fortunate, fostering charitable, philanthropic, and educational endeavors, and embodying the principles of our faith through compassionate action. Website: [www.philoptochos.org](http://www.philoptochos.org)