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The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Announces Beneficiary Distribution Priorities for Greek Fire Relief Fund



The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, under the leadership of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros, announces the beneficiary distribution priorities for the Greek Fire Relief Fund. The priorities come after assessing the unmet needs of individuals and institutions that have been impacted by the fires this past summer. The fires in Attica and other parts of Greece burned homes, schools, churches, forests, power supply lines and left charred earth that soon will be subject to flooding during the winter. The Greek Fire Relief Fund was launched in August 2024 and continues to raise funds for relief (to donate visit www.goarch.org/donate/greecefires).

A delegation, led by His Grace Bishop Athenagoras of Nazianzos, Chief Secretary of the Holy Eparchial Synod, and included Elaine Allen, Treasurer of the Archdiocesan Council, and Anita Kartalopoulos, First Vice President of the National Ladies Philoptochos Society, visited impacted sites, performed due diligence reviews, spoke with those affected and obtained detailed cost estimates for identified needs.

After careful review and evaluation, the greatest needs identified include the following:

At the suggestion of His Beatitude Iernymos II, Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, there is need to assist the Holy Monastery of Axion Esti in Varnavas, Attica and the adjacent “Athanasios Martinos I & 2” Protected Living Homes for People with Intellectual Disabilities and People with Down Syndrome of the “Maria Kokkori” Foundation with restoring the infrastructure that was devastated by the fires that surrounded the Monastery and buildings housing over 50 residents. They are in dire need of the replacement of generators, reestablishment of the water supply, electrical wiring and equipment, water tanks for future fire protection, as well. As plumbing and electrical services. The cost of this equipment is estimated at $116,000.

In the area of Penteli, the volunteer firefighters played an integral role as the first line of defense in extinguishing the fires. This volunteer fire department that saved the Axion Esti Monastery and the Protected Living Homes from the fires is in need of fire fighting equipment (the fire truck and other equipment is at least 24 years old and frequently breaks down). Needs range from 400,000 Euros for a new fire truck; 60,000 Euros for a fire pickup truck; 24,000 Euros for firefighting gear for the volunteer firefighters to 20,000 Euros for Jaws of Life equipment.

In the region of Ilia, Greece, where our Ionian Village summer camp is located, the fires this past June damaged the holy altar and interior of the church of the Kimisis of the Theotokos, Apidoulas in the Metropolis of Ilia. The estimated cost to repair the interior including the electrical wiring of this church and restore the church to its former glory is approximately 50,000 Euros.

Responding to the call of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros for donations, the National Ladies Philoptochos Society has approved funding of $116,000 for the restoration of the infrastructure where the Holy Monastery of Axion Esti and “Athanasios Martinos 1 & 2” Protected Living Homes are situated.

Recognizing the continuing benevolence of Philoptochos, Archbishop Elpidophoros remarked, “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 handle project oversight directly and all funds will be paid directly to vendors and others performing the project services. As was completed for the Greek fires in 2021, a full accounting of funds raised and expended will be

produced.

His Eminence calls upon all of our faithful, our parishes and our institutions to provide support for these projects. Our goal is to restore our holy edifices damaged by the fires and assist and support the firefighters who risk their lives to protect others including those most vulnerable.

To make a donation to the Greek Fire Relief Fund, please visit www.goarch.org/donate/greecefires.

Photo: GOARCH.

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