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His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America - Remarks Philoptochos Virtual National Board Meeting



His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros

Opening Remarks Philoptochos Virtual National Board Meeting

June 20, 2020

New York, New York

Your Grace Bishop Apostolos of Medeia,

President Maria Logus,

Beloved Sisters in Christ,

As we all come to terms with this new way of meeting, I want to thank each and every one of you for the exemplary service that Philoptochos is providing on a

national level, as well as the continuing service of all the chapters on a local level.

Your response in the midst of this pandemic has been worthy of your foremothers in the faith and the ever-memorable Patriarch Athenagoras, under whose archiepiscopal *omophorion* your ministry of love and service was founded.

You all know that our parishes and institutions are facing many challenges as we strive to reopen during this time when we see a resurgence of the coronavirus in some areas of our country. If nothing else, this reminds us that caution and prudence are the only way forward, as we try to return to a degree of the normality we knew before the pandemic.

I also want to thank you for your philanthropic efforts to assist those whose lives have been so adversely affected in a time of insecurity and anxiety. Like the COVID-19 Emergency Fund, your generous gifts have ensured that families whose lives have been severely and suddenly impacted by this pandemic are able to hold together. It truly is a beautiful thing when our philanthropic actions can imitate the gracious deeds of the Φιλάνθρωπος Θεός, whose mercy endures forever.

With these few words, then, I commend all of you and I look forward to our meeting and dialogue today, as we endeavor to serve our God and our fellow human beings in the way of love, peace, and generosity.

Thank you and may God bless us all.

[Source](#)

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June 20, 2020

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Your Grace,

Beloved Sisters in Christ,

Today we attained a new and special connection to one another – as real and human as it was virtual. Your devotion to the Church is truly an inspiration to me personally and to the whole Body of the Church.

Whether as natural mothers, adoptive mothers, godmothers, or spiritual mothers who mentor others, you have demonstrated a capacity for nurturing and nourishing the Body of Christ. For this, I bless each and every one of you.

In the Church, where the clergy is male and hierarchical in structure, we sometimes forget that the only image of the sacrifice of the Cross that our Lord ever used was that of a woman giving birth. He said:

When a woman is in labor, she has pain because her time has come. But when she has brought forth the child, she no longer remembers her distress because of her joy that a human being is born into the world. []*

So here we are, in many labors to bring about better lives for our fellow human beings. And like the Lord on the morning of the Resurrection when He put aside the pain of Golgotha, we also will put aside the difficulties of these days.

The most important thing of all is that we shall do so knowing in our hearts that we gave all that we could, stood in the breach for our fellow human beings, and made the lives of others better without asking anything in return.

May the Lord grant that we shall always be so minded, and that we may bring every day the presence of His Kingdom to our suffering world.

Amen.

[*] John 16:21.

[Source](#)