15/10/2021

Metropolis of San Francisco Fall Spiritual Conference Celebrates Ministry In Action



The Fall Spiritual Conference presented by the Ladies Philoptochos Society of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco was held virtually on Saturday, September 18, 2021. Under the leadership of Metropolis Philoptochos President Jeannie Ranglas, over 130 Philoptochos members from throughout the Metropolis joined on the Zoom for a three-hour gathering that included ministry reports, elections and special presentations.

In his opening remarks, His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos shared, “We have often heard the ministry of Philoptochos referred to as an ‘army of women’, but you are more than that – you are an inspiring force of nature that does not just talk about your work, but you do your work – with faith, hope, and love in Jesus Christ. We may be geographically separated, but we are connected by our faith and by the Gospel.”

The first presentation of the day was offered by Lea Christo, MSW, LICSW, BCPA, who spoke on “Making Sense of Stress for Improved Well-Being”. During her presentation, Lea emphasized that not all stress is bad, and that many times stress is unavoidable. This is why it is important to stay connected with support groups

like Philoptochos. And while many people struggle with a strong internal critic, it is important to be gentle with oneself and that self-care is imperative.

In her President's Report, Jeannie Ranglas spoke about her commitment to Philoptochos which has been a journey of love for 43 years, and one that she has passed down to her daughter, and looks forward to sharing this ministry with her granddaughter. As Jeannie continued to reflect on the work of Philoptochos, she emphasized that this is not about who is doing the work, but rather recognizing that the Lord is using the members of Philoptochos as His instrument.

Amy Kalogeropoulos, Director of the National Philoptochos Office, spoke about the importance of technology, and how it has been especially beneficial during COVID. The National staff are now working from the office, and are ready to assist chapters in their continued work for this transformative ministry. She is excited to serve in this capacity, having previously served in the Development Office for National Philoptochos, and has personally being a long time Philoptochos member from Massachusetts.

Several Metropolis Philoptochos ministry reports were presented which included: Kids 'n' Cancer/Camp Agape which has been providing programs and support for children with cancer and their families for over 35 years; the Bishop Anthony Philoptochos Student Aid Endowment Fund which has offered over $1.5 million in the past decade alone in financial assistance to the seminarians and students from the Metropolis of San Francisco attending Hellenic College Holy Cross; the Philoptochos Lodge at Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center which serves as a beacon of hospitality for Ranch visitors; Women's Wellness and Awareness and the inspiring presentations on physical, emotional and spiritual wellness; Social Services which provides confidential assistance to people in need; and most recently the Young Adult League Conference for which the Metropolis Philoptochos sponsored the Rise Against Hunger Diakonia Service Project.

There were also National Philoptochos initiatives that were presented including: Operation Classroom, Feed the Hungry, and Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shrine at the World Trade Center.

Elections were held for the Metropolis of San Francisco Philoptochos Board for the 2022 – 2024 Board. Congratulations to those elected and appointed Board Members: Judie Christopoulos, Kathy Connell, Stacia Counelis, Vickie Demos, Mari Lou Diamond, Agatha Felactu, Kathy Gabriel, Vicki Holloway, Cynthia Kezos, Genie Kontos, Maria Kypreos, Mary Lofton, Alexandra Mouzas, Mary Peros, Christine Psefteas, Jeannie Ranglas, Susan Valle, Elaine Wright, Lisa Xanthos, and Chrissie

Zeppos. Honorary members include: Presvytera Evelyn Adams, Patricia Aleck, Sophie Mastor, Rose Sogotis, along with Honorary Past President Valerie Roumeliotes.

As the Fall Spiritual Conference came to a close, President Jeannie Ranglas thanked everyone for their enthusiastic participation and encouraged people to share the important information from this gathering with their chapter members. His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos conveyed his joy for this opportunity to be with the members of the Metropolis Philoptochos, commended their good works, and encouraged everyone to reach out and bring more people into this ministry and bring God’s love to those in need.

For more information on the Metropolis of San Francisco Philoptochos, please visit: www.sfphiloptochos.org.

goarch.org