12/11/2021

Archiepiscopal Encyclical for National Philoptochos Sunday



Unto the Most Reverend and Right Reverend Hierarchs, Pious Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, Presidents and Members of Parish Councils, Honorable Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Members of Leadership 100, the Day and Afternoon Schools, Philoptochos Societies, the Youth, Greek Orthodox Organizations, and the entirety of the Christ-named Plenitude of the Holy Archdiocese of America.

And who is my neighbor? (Luke 10:29)

My Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

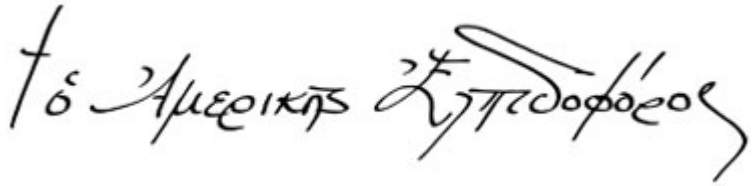
On this National Philoptochos Sunday, we rejoice with gratitude and appreciation for the many labors and ministries of our Philoptochos Societies Nationwide. Their constant and consistent philanthropy answers the question of that lawyer who prodded our Lord Jesus Christ about who was deserving of the recognition of their humanity and the love that fulfills the Second and Great Commandment: “You shall love your neighbor as you love yourself” (Leviticus 19:18). For decades, the Philoptochos has answered the question “And who is my neighbor?” with a resounding: “Everyone!”

Thus, it is most appropriate that the Sunday on which we read the Parable of the

Good Samaritan is the day on which we should remember our good sisters in Christ. Their service to the Church and to humanity transcends the categories that keep us separate from one another on the basis of any defining characteristic. For the Philoptochos, it is enough to be human, and to be in need, for their compassion and mercy to flow.

The Philoptochos provides us all with examples of courage and generosity in action. They shine a light into our souls, so that we can discover for ourselves how much love of neighbor is within our hearts. Let us support these sisters in the Lord in every way we can, and through their ministry of love, extend our own love to every neighbor, both known and unknown, for we are one human family, under one God Who reigns supreme above all.

With paternal love in our Lord Jesus Christ,



† ELPIDOPHOROS

Archbishop of America

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