



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

ARCHEPISCOPAL ENCYCLICAL

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**Archepiscopal Encyclical for National Philoptochos Sunday**

November 12, 2023

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

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

Beloved sisters and brothers in Christ,

Today is National Philoptochos Sunday, always on the day that we read the parable of the “Good Samaritan” in our churches across the country. This most famous of parables is an answer to the question: “And who is my neighbor?” – a question that our Philoptochos Societies have been responding to for generations.

Especially, as regards the philanthropic ministries and initiatives of our Venerable Ecumenical Patriarchate, our Philoptochos Societies across the country manifest the love of neighbor as one’s own self (Luke 10:27). They give generously and without hesitation, and I pray that all who hear or read this Encyclical will do the same. Philoptochos understands that the love that is shown to others, is a love of one’s own life. They have never forgotten the charities of the Mother Church of Constantinople, and they never will.



Let us follow their good example, in answering the young man’s question to our Lord Jesus Christ: “And who is my neighbor?” Philoptochos has shown us the way, even as the “Good Samaritan” teaches every generation of Christians what the essence of true love really is. May we all be inspired to stop for a moment on our busy pathways of life, and regard even those across the ocean as our neighbors. Let us offer them the healing love that will ultimately cure the world of all her ills, and thus fulfill the greatest commandments of all: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself” (Luke 10:27).

With paternal love in Christ,

† ELPIDOPHOROS  
Archbishop of America

Note: To be read in every parish of the Archdiocese on Sunday, November 12, 2023.