March 9, 2025

To the Very Rev. and Rev. Clergy,
Distinguished Members of the Metropolis Council, Beloved Archons of the Order of St. Andrew,
Esteemed Members of the Parish Councils and Philoptochos Sisterhood,
Dedicated Members of the Parish Organizations, and
Devoted Orthodox Faithful of the
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey

My beloved in the Lord,

"But since you excel in everything — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you — see that you also excel in this grace of giving."
2 Corinthians 8:7

I hope and pray this email finds you well as we embark on our spiritual journey through Holy and Great Lent, a period devoted to prayer, reflection, spiritual growth and charity.

Every year our sacred Metropolis of New Jersey has the wonderful tradition that that on the first Sunday of Holy and Great Lent, the Sunday of Orthodoxy, the parishes in our sacred Metropolis are asked to pass a special collection tray to benefit the philanthropic Social Services Program of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey Philoptochos Society.

Please know that this Social Service program is truly instrumental for our Metropolis Philoptochos to continue to offer much needed assistance and support to less fortunate families and individuals, who are facing hardships and great difficulties in their lives. Therefore, I request that all of you follow the words of St. Paul and "excel in the grace of giving" by offering as much as you are able to, in order to assist with this most important ministry of our Church. Your most generous donations will greatly aid our Metropolis Philoptochos to fulfill its sacred philanthropic mission.

Praying that we experience the love and blessings of our Lord so that we may share this same love with our neighbors and all people as we commence Holy and Great Lent, I remain

With Paternal Love and Blessings

† **APOSTOLOS**
Metropolitan of New Jersey