

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 160th Anniversary of the Church of Saint Mary, Manhasset, New York, to be celebrated on June 7, 2014

WHEREAS, Religious institutions, and the many spiritual, social and educational benefits they confer, play a vital role in the development of the moral fabric of a responsible citizenry; and

WHEREAS, It is the tradition of this State and this Nation to pay tribute to those institutions and individuals who have contributed to the ethical and spiritual values of their communities; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body takes pleasure in commemorating the 160th Anniversary of the Church of Saint Mary, Manhasset, New York, to be celebrated at a gala held on Saturday, June 7, 2014, at North Hills Country Club in Manhasset, New York; and

WHEREAS, The Church of Saint Mary is a sprawling, prosperous parish whose history spans the years from the dedication of the first church building, to the dedication of the present church building; and

WHEREAS, On July 29, 1853, Reverend John J. McMahon, pastor of St. Michael's Church in Flushing, New York, wrote to Bishop John Hughes asking permission to establish a mission church at Manhasset for the few German and Irish Catholic farmers in the area; soon after, Reverend James O'Beirne, the new pastor at St. Michael's continued to promote the mission Church of Saint Mary's at Manhasset; and

WHEREAS, Reverend James O'Beirne built a new church at Flushing, and as soon as the new church was ready for occupancy, he had the old church moved to Manhasset; and

WHEREAS, Despite its new, hand-me-down church building, Saint Mary's remained a mission church of Flushing until May 1863 when its first resident pastor, Father James A. Strain, arrived from Ireland; and

WHEREAS, In November of 1875, Saint Mary's was incorporated as Saint Mary's R.C. Church at Manhasset in Queens County, and it still remains this old legal title; in June 1871, it became the mission church of Saint Mary's, Roslyn, and remained in that status until 1901; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the years, Saint Mary's has been appointed numerous pastors, and in March 1912, Reverend William K. Dwyer became the pastor of the newly released church and the growth and blossoming of Saint Mary's Manhasset began; he built the rectory and occupied it by 1916, after which he started building the new church, and is responsible for its Spanish mission style architecture; and

WHEREAS, On October 17, 1917, Saint Mary's opened for service, which also served for meetings and socials; eighty-five years later, the present pastor, Monsignor John McCann, has overseen the renovation of the same area; and

WHEREAS, In May of 1925, the Saint Mary's parochial school began, laid its cornerstone in September of that year, and opened for classes one year later; and

WHEREAS, The land that was bought for the parochial school also had a farm house, which served as the first home for the nuns, Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, who were the first teachers in the elementary school; many years later, after the convent was built, this house served as the first residence for the Marist Brothers who taught at the boys' high school; and

WHEREAS, The Church of Saint Mary underwent many improvements by fundraising campaigns, and finally in 1950, the high school was completed; in 1952, permission was granted to expand the church, double its size, expand the convent, and improve the Brothers' house; and

WHEREAS, The Church of Saint Mary stands on the threshold of tomorrow, prepared to meet the challenges of the coming decades while retaining that spiritual resolve which characterizes its past; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to take note of enduring religious institutions and to bring such institutions to the attention of the people of this Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 160th Anniversary of the Church of Saint Mary of Manhasset, New York, to be celebrated on June 7, 2014, fully confident that this commemoration reflects the belief in those values which enhance the dignity and purpose of life; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Church of Saint Mary, Manhasset, New York.