

BY: Senator THOMAS

MOURNING the death of The Very Reverend Father Yohannan Sankarathil Chor Episcopos, distinguished citizen, religious leader and devoted member of his community

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to bring full recognition and just tribute to those men and women of religious commitment who accept the responsibility of moral leadership and render the wisdom of human understanding; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is moved to mourn the death of The Very Reverend Father Yohannan Sankarathil Chor Episcopos who died on Saturday, March 20, 2021, at the age of 85; and

WHEREAS, Yohannan Sankarathil was born on March 1, 1936, in the ancient 'Sankarathil' (Sankarapuri) family of priestly tradition, Kumbazha, Pathanamthitta, Kerala, India, to Sri. Kunjummen Mathai and Aliyamma, who called him Kunjunjukutty, the youngest of four brothers; and

WHEREAS, At the young age of 12, Yohannan Sankarathil began serving at the Altar (Madbaha) with the blessings of the late H.G. Geevarghese Mar Philexinos Metropolitan (Puthenkavil KochuThirumeni), and ordained Deacon by the late H.H. Baselius Geevarghese II, the Catholicos on August 29, 1953; on August 21, 1970, he was priested by the late H.G. Daniel Mar Philexinos, Metropolitan of the Thumapamon Diocese; and

WHEREAS, On April 26, 1980, Reverend Yohannan Sankarathil was consecrated Cor-Episcopos at the home parish, St. Mary's Valiya Cathedral, Kumbazha, by the late H.H. Baselius Mar Thoma Mathews I, the Catholicos of the East; and

WHEREAS, For many years, Reverend Yohannan Sankarathil was the secretary to the late H.H. Baselius Geevarghese II, the Catholicos, Augen I, when H.H. was Metropolitan and as the Catholicos of the East, and continued with H.H. Baselius Mar Thoma Mathews I; he also served as Editor of 'Malankara Sabha' the official organ of the Malankara Orthodox Church; and

WHEREAS, Yohannan Sanikarathil came to the United States on September 12, 1970, for higher theological studies at the Union Theological Seminary, New York; immediately after graduating S.T.M. from the U.T.S.Seminary, he was appointed by H.H. Baselius Augen I, the Catholicos, the first appointment of one of our priests in the United States, on August 2, 1971, to organize parishes for the Malankara Orthodox Church in the United States, one of which was the St. Thomas Orthodox Church, New York (at present The St. Thomas Orthodox Church, Yonkers); and

WHEREAS, A well-educated man, Yohannan Sankarathil attended and

earned degrees from Pathanamthitta Catholicate H.S. B.A. (Economics), M.A. (Malayalam and Sanskrit) Kerala University; G.S.T. (Theology), Orthodox Theological College, Kottayam, Kerala; S.T.M. (Theology), Union Theological Seminary, New York; M.S. (Counseling Psychology and Family Counseling) Long Island University, New York; M.T.R. (Therapeutic Recreation), New York University, New York; M.S. (Rehabilitation Counseling), Hofstra University, New York; D.Min. (Doctor of Ministry), Canada Christian College, Toronto, Canada; A.C.P.A. Trained Chaplain (Clinical Pastoral Counseling); and Certified Drug and Alcoholism Counselor; the New York Union Theological Seminary honored him with the title 'Ecumenical Fellow'; and

WHEREAS, From 1975 until his retirement in 2000, Reverend Yohannan Sankarathil worked at the New York State Psychiatric Hospital; he then became fully engaged in church and community activities, playing a vital role in the formation and growth of the American Diocese of the Malankara Orthodox Church; served as the Diocesan Council member, the first Secretary of the Clergy Association of the American Diocese, and Secretary of the Clergy Association and Managing Committee member of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church; and

WHEREAS, In 1979, Reverend Yohannan Sankarathil served as General Convener of the reception committee that made arrangements for the five-week American visit of the Catholicos of the East; and

WHEREAS, Widely acknowledged as a learned Theologian, a prominent convention speaker and retreat father and eminent organizer, Reverend Yohannan Sankarathil is survived by his wife, Elcy Yohannan Sankarathil, and their two sons; and

WHEREAS, This distinguished man of God always gave guidance and wisdom to the many entrusted to his care and administered abundantly and unstintingly to the spiritual and corporal needs of all; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Reverend Yohannan Sankarathil Chor Episcopos leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all he served and befriended; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor the life and accomplishments of The Very Reverend Father Yohannan Sankarathil Chor Episcopos, and to express its deepest condolences to his family, colleagues and friends who mourn his passing; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of The Very Reverend Father Yohannan Sankarathil Chor Episcopos.