

## 2009-K764

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Church of St. John the Baptist in Rome, New York

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 100th Anniversary of the Church of St. John the Baptist in Rome, New York; and

WHEREAS, The original Italian Catholic parish of Rome, New York, was organized at a meeting on July 26, 1909, and incorporated on August 5, 1909, under the title of St. John the Baptist Church; the first pastor assigned was Reverend Vincenzo Giorgio and services were conducted at 311 E. Dominick Street in the Ferlo Block; and

WHEREAS, In 1911, the Church of St. John the Baptist purchased property on River Street; a basement church was constructed first and the building was dedicated by Monsignor Grimes of Syracuse in November; the rest of the building was completed in 1914; and

WHEREAS, The second pastor of the Church of St. John the Baptist was Reverend Joseph Panesi, who served from 1917 until his death in 1944; under his leadership, the congregation increased greatly as the parish came to occupy a prominent place in the religious and community life in Rome, New York; and

WHEREAS, One of the earliest accomplishments attributed to Reverend Joseph Panesi was the purchase of a 3,000 pound refined bronze bell that was made in Valduggia, Italy, and dedicated and christened on October

31, 1921; and

WHEREAS, Other improvements to the Church of St. John the Baptist included a new tower designed by F.W. Kirkland of Rome, a three-manual organ that required the balcony where it was installed to be enlarged and memorial stained glass windows installed in 1926; and

WHEREAS, The Church of St. John the Baptist purchased the rectory soon after Reverend Joseph Panesi was assigned; the lot and the house next to the church were purchased in 1923, and served as the first headquarters of religious instruction for children of the parish and later became the residence of the sisters of the Order of Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate, who were brought to the area in 1935 to carry on religious education and social work; and

WHEREAS, The congregation of the Church of St. John the Baptist continued to grow and in 1926, the Bishop of the Syracuse Diocese sent Reverend Francis J. Zimmer to serve as the first assistant in the history of the parish; and

WHEREAS, In 1944, Reverend Victor F. Ciciarelli, a native of Syracuse, became the third pastor of the Church of St. John the Baptist; soon after his arrival, he made plans to free the parish of its mortgages and the last of the four mortgages was burned later that year; the following year, property at 146 Stanwix Street was purchased to be used as a convent for the Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate; and

WHEREAS, Services at the Church of St. John the Baptist became overcrowded, with worshippers being forced to stand on the outside steps; conditions were eased when the Church of Education at Mohawk and Third Street was converted into a mission church for Sunday Masses in 1948; and

WHEREAS, In 1952, the Church of St. John the Baptist purchased property from the Revere Copper and Brass Company and a new church building at 200 E. Dominick Street was dedicated on May 23, 1954; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Victor F. Ciciarelli was made an Honorary Prelate by

Pope Paul VI in February 1972, and given the title of Monsignor; in 1974, Reverend Anthony F. Tosti came to the Church of St. John the Baptist as an Assistant and was appointed Co-Pastor in 1976; and WHEREAS, In 1985, Reverend Anthony F. Tosti was named the fourth pastor of the Church of St. John the Baptist when Monsignor Victor F. Ciciarelli retired; he was replaced by Reverend Anthony LaFache in 1991; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Joseph J. Clemente became the pastor of the Church of St. John the Baptist in 1992; he was replaced by the current pastor, Reverend John F. Hogan, Jr., in 2004; and

WHEREAS, Since celebrating its 75th Jubilee in 1984, the Church of St. John the Baptist has purchased a custom Rodgers pipe organ; installed a Dover elevator and a handicapped bathroom; completed the Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini Chapel; started a youth ministry program, Life Teen; and purchased a new convent for the Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate; and WHEREAS, The Church of St. John the Baptist in Rome, New York 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 100th Anniversary of the Church of St. John the Baptist in Rome, New York, 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 St. John the Baptist in Rome, New York.