

2011-K356

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring Father Michael J. McGivney as founder of the Knights of Columbus, March 29, 1882

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and pay tribute to those individuals of high purpose and worthy accomplishment whose endeavors have faithfully served the welfare of the citizens of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Father Michael J. McGivney as founder of the Knights of Columbus, March 29, 1882; and

WHEREAS, The Knights of Columbus is the world's largest Catholic service organization; it provides members and their families with volunteer opportunities in service to the Catholic Church, the community, families, and young people; and

WHEREAS, The fraternal organization has over 89,000 members and numerous councils across the State of New York, providing needed support and assistance to families and groups throughout the community; and

WHEREAS, Father Michael McGivney was born in Waterbury, Connecticut, on August 12, 1852; his parents, Patrick and Mary (Lynch) McGivney, arrived during the great 19th Century wave of Irish immigration; and

WHEREAS, Father Michael McGivney went to the small district schools of Waterbury's working-class neighborhoods; after the Civil War, he left school at the age of 13 to go to work at a factory until the age of 16;

and

WHEREAS, With the priesthood clearly in mind, Father Michael McGivney traveled with his Waterbury pastor to Quebec, Canada; while there, he registered at the French-run College of St. Hyacinthe; two academic years followed at Our Lady of Angels Seminary, attached to Niagara

University in Niagara Falls, New York; he attended seminary classes at the Jesuit-run St. Mary's College in Montreal; and

WHEREAS, After four years of study, Father Michael McGivney was ordained on December 22, 1877, in Baltimore's historic Cathedral of the Assumption; he began his priestly ministry on Christmas Day of that year, as curate at St. Mary's Church in New Haven; and

WHEREAS, In 1881, in an era when parish clubs and fraternal societies had wide popular appeal, Father Michael McGivney began to explore with various laymen the idea of a Catholic, fraternal benefit society as a way to strengthen religious faith and, at the same time, provide for the financial needs of families overwhelmed by illness or death of the breadwinner; and

WHEREAS, Father Michael McGivney had suggested Sons of Columbus as a name for the Order; the word "knights" replaced "sons" because key members of the organizing group who were Irish-born Civil War veterans felt it would help to apply a noble ritual in support of the emerging cause of Catholic civil liberty; and

WHEREAS, On March 29, 1882, the Connecticut legislature granted a charter to the Knights of Columbus, formally establishing it as a legal corporation; and

WHEREAS, The Order's principles in 1882 were "Unity" and "Charity"; the concepts of "Fraternity" and "Patriotism" were added later; from the beginning, each of these ideals played a major role in ceremonials; and

WHEREAS, Organizations of singular distinction such as the Knights of Columbus provide a model for enhancing the quality of life in the community and, as such, merit the grateful praise of the community of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body that when individuals of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of the great State of New York; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Father Michael J. McGivney as founder of the Knights of Columbus, March 29, 1882; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Knights of Columbus, St. Mary's-Maris Stella Council No. 2228, Lynbrook, New York.