

## 2015-J446

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 100th Anniversary of St. Christopher's Parish

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 is justly proud to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of St. Christopher's Parish, to be celebrated with a Dinner Dance on Sunday, April 19, 2015, at Coral House, Baldwin, New York; and

WHEREAS, For the past century, the Parish of Saint Christopher has been the Catholic presence in the Village of Baldwin, New York; and

WHEREAS, The town of Baldwin, New York was established in the mid-1800s, and was made up of 1,200 residents, only a few of whom were Catholic; by 1912, the Catholic population grew to approximately 70 families who petitioned Bishop Charles McDonnell, the second Bishop of Brooklyn, for a place to attend Mass; and

WHEREAS, During this time, the Bishop established a mission church in Baldwin attached to Our Holy Redeemer; land was purchased on the corner of Merrick Road and Gale Avenue, and based on its location, was named for Saint Christopher, the patron of travelers; and

WHEREAS, On July 7, 1915, Bishop McDonnell appointed Father John McGoldrick as the first Pastor of Saint Christopher's Parish, and later the same month, a Mass was celebrated by Father John McGoldrick inaugurating the Parish of Saint Christopher; and

WHEREAS, Construction on Saint Christopher's Parish began in June of

1917, with stones taken from the old Milburn Reservoir in Rockville Centre; this first church, the Shrine Church of Saint Christopher, held its first mass on Easter Sunday, March 31, 1918, and was formally dedicated by Bishop McDonnell on April 28 of the same year; and

WHEREAS, In these early years of the parish, there came the need for Catholic education, and Father McGoldrick set out to begin Saint Christopher's School, which was completed in 1925; in addition, he established a convent for the Sisters of Saint Joseph who arrived to staff the new school; and

WHEREAS, By the time the Diocese of Rockville Centre was established by Pope Pius XII in 1957, Baldwin had outgrown the little Shrine Church of Saint Christopher; with the demolition of the old church, its designation as a shrine came to an end; and

WHEREAS, Ground was broken for the new church on December 13, 1959, and was dedicated on Sunday, April 29, 1962, by Bishop Walter Kellenberg, the first Bishop of Rockville Centre; and

WHEREAS, From the 1960s to the present day, St. Christopher's Parish has met the welcomed challenges presented by the Second Vatican Council; Msgr. Joseph Lawlor became the fifth Pastor of the parish in 1967, where he remained until 1986; he extended the church property by purchasing several homes behind the school building, thus forming its North parking lot and school playground; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, Msgr. Lawlor completed the second extension of the school and modernized its older buildings; his time as Pastor saw the birth of many new ministries as well as the expansion and development of the St. Christopher's catechetical ministry; and

WHEREAS, Father Dennis Whelan was appointed sixth pastor in 1986; during his three years with the parish, the Religious Education Program

grew, and the first Kindergarten class came through the doors in 1988; and

WHEREAS, In 1989, Msgr. John Bennett became the seventh pastor who

continued to enhance the school and religious education programs, and further the growth and development of new ministries; during this time, the church saw a much needed addition and an elevator was constructed on the northwest corner of the church; and

WHEREAS, Sister Dolores McLaughlin, CSJ retired as school principal in 2004, after serving in the position since 1980, and as a member of its faculty since 1969; Joan Hanlon, who had served as Assistant Principal, became the first lay Principal of Saint Christopher's School; and

WHEREAS, Today, Rev. Msgr. Steven R. Camp serves as Pastor of St. Christopher's Parish; under his able leadership, the parish has grown immensely; from 70 families in 1915, to more than 3,000 families today, the people of Saint Christopher's have successfully met the challenges presented by the changing times; and

WHEREAS, St. Christopher's Parish 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 St. Christopher's Parish, 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 St. Christopher's Parish, Baldwin, New York.