

2015-J993

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring Father Mark Connell upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the 2015 Caritas Award by Catholic Charities Community Services of Orange County

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to take note of and publicly acknowledge individuals who have distinguished themselves through their exemplary careers, accomplishments, and purposeful lives of service to their community; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Father Mark Connell upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the 2015 Caritas Award by Catholic Charities Community Services of Orange County at its 9th Annual Celebration of Charity to be held on Thursday, March 26, 2015, at Anthony's Pier 9, New Windsor, New York; and

WHEREAS, Father Mark Connell, Executive Director of San Miguel Academy, in Newburgh, New York, serves as an extraordinary example of one who demonstrates a deep respect for the dignity of every individual by serving the basic needs of the most vulnerable in our midst, and by significantly contributing to the building of a compassionate and just society; and

WHEREAS, Born and raised in Poughkeepsie, New York, Mark Connell graduated from Cathedral College before earning a Master of Divinity degree, a Master of Arts degree in Theology, and a Doctor of Theology degree from Drew University; and

WHEREAS, Instilled with a strong desire to help others, Father Mark Connell began his servitude as a Priest of the Archdioceses of New York in 1986; for over two years, he was assigned as Parochial Vicar at Holy Family Church in New Rochelle, New York; and

WHEREAS, Father Mark Connell accepted a faculty position at John F. Kennedy High School in Somers, New York, from Cardinal John O'Connor; concurrently, he became a weekend Assistant at both the Church of St. John and St. Mary in Chappaqua, New York, where he would serve for 27 years; and

WHEREAS, In 1998, Father Mark Connell undertook the esteemed positions of both Chaplain and Director of Campus Ministry at Mount Saint Mary College in Newburgh, New York; he was also employed as an Adjunct Professor in Philosophy and Theology, specializing in the Jewish/Catholic dialogue; and

WHEREAS, Six year later, education equality became a passion of Father Mark Connell; he was moved to assist the children of Newburgh with a meaningful educational option, and proudly assisted in opening the San Miguel Academy in 2006; and

WHEREAS, Today, this illustrious Academy is pioneering new strategies for low income urban learners while at the same time creating school options for under privileged boys; 95 percent of the school's graduates go on to attend private high schools and boarding schools throughout the United States; more than 130 families have benefited from a San Miguel education with more families being added each year; and

WHEREAS, Currently, Father Mark Connell serves as both the Executive Director of San Miguel Academy and as part-time Assistant to the Military Chaplain at West Point; and

WHEREAS, Rare indeed is the occurrence of such a compassionate blending of strength, intellect and commitment as that demonstrated by Father Mark Connell over a lifetime of sacrifice and dedication to others; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that those who enhance the well-being and vitality of their community and have shown a

long and sustained commitment to excellence certainly have earned our recognition and applause; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to

honor Father Mark Connell upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the 2015 Caritas Award by Catholic Charities Community Services of Orange County; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Father Mark Connell.