

2021-K558

Assembly Resolution No. 558

BY: M. of A. Rivera JD

COMMEMORATING the 125th Anniversary of the
Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph of Hamburg, New
York

WHEREAS, The character and richness of religious and community life in this noble Empire State is nourished and fulfilled through the faithful concern and selfless devotion of those who would commit their energies and purpose to the ministry of others; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to bring full recognition and just tribute to those individuals who distinguish themselves and the ministry through their unremitting commitment and preeminence of service; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 125th Anniversary of the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph of Hamburg, New York; and

WHEREAS, Agnes Victoria Hilbert was educated in a private academy in Cieszyn, the territory of Austrian Poland, by the Sisters of Charity of St. Charles Borromeo; she was received into the Charity Sisters' Congregation in 1883, and given the name of Sister Mary Colette; and

WHEREAS, In 1889, Sister Colette and four Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo were sent to educate the children of St. Stanislaus Parish in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; eight years later, Sister Colette was transferred to Trenton, New Jersey, and was asked to end her affiliation with her Congregation in Europe and establish a new Congregation of Sisters in the United States; and

WHEREAS, With the assistance of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual, Pope Leo XIII granted Sister Colette permission to establish a new Congregation of Sisters with the mission of service to God's people through education and charitable works; and

WHEREAS, On September 8, 1897, Sister Colette and four American novices adopted the Rule of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis as their way of life in God's service; and

WHEREAS, In 1928, after having been granted permission and a blessing for the new venture by Pope Leo XIII, Sister Colette became the first General Minister of the newly-established Congregation of the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph (FSSJ); due the congregation's rapid growth, the Sisters moved from Buffalo to the convent in Hamburg, New York; and

WHEREAS, Recognized as the Foundress of the new Congregation, Sister Colette was lovingly called Mother Colette, and became the principal of Corpus Christi School; her vast educational background and teaching experience on two continents contributed to an enriched curriculum, and her compassion for the less fortunate, "In All Things - Charity," became the Sisters philosophy; and

WHEREAS, Throughout its distinguished 125-year history, the Sisters opened and staffed countless schools and served in various educational positions in Alabama, Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Virginia, Georgia, North Carolina, and Washington, D.C; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, FSSJ's Immaculata Academy, a high school for girls, and Hilbert College, named after Mother Colette Hilbert, were built on the convent grounds; Sisters also ministered in health care facilities throughout Michigan, New York and Wisconsin, as well as Vietnam and Brazil; and

WHEREAS, In the early 2000s, the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph recognized their calling to create a legacy of a new home - one that

would be constructed in the Spirit of St. Francis's love of creation and one that would allow them to open their home, spirituality and our hope for the future to others; subsequently, in 2010, the new Immaculate Conception Convent was built on South Park Avenue in Hamburg; and

WHEREAS, The Sisters' vision of opening and sharing their home became a reality when Catholic Health purchased Immaculate Conception Convent in 2018; and

WHEREAS, Today, Immaculate Conception Convent, now St. Francis Park, has become an independent living facility for seniors from all walks of life where there is a special feeling of community, safety, kindness and hope; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when individuals and organizations of such noble aims and accomplishments is brought to our attention, it is appropriate to publicly and jubilantly proclaim and commend them for the edification of others; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 125th Anniversary of the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph of Hamburg, New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph, Hamburg, New York.