

2015-J1925

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the Centennial Celebration of St. Michael's Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church of Geneva, New York to be celebrated July 2-5, 2015

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 Nation to pay tribute to those institutions and individuals who have contributed to the ethical and spiritual values of their communities; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the Centennial Celebration of St. Michael's Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church of Geneva, New York, to be celebrated on July 2-5, 2015; and

WHEREAS, The organization of St. Michael's Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church began in 1912 with the presence of and a blessing from Bishop (now Saint) Raphael Hawaweeny, and was officially incorporated under the laws of New York State in 1915; this same year, the first church building of the parish was constructed by the hands of her parishioners and consecrated for worship of the Holy Trinity in the Orthodox Faith under the omophorion of Metropolitan Archbishop Tikhon, soon to be the Patriarch of Moscow and Protomartyr of the Communist Yoke; after the Soviet government compromised the Holy Patriarchal see of Moscow, St. Michael's came under the omophorion of the Patriarch of the ancient see of Antioch, home of Sts. Peter and Paul, wherein the disciples were first called Christians (Acts 11:26), and which was the ancient spiritual home of the Syrian immigrant-founders of this parish; and

WHEREAS, In 1912, the first permanent pastor of St. Michael's Antioc-

hian Orthodox Christian Church was The Reverend Fr. Daniel A. George, who came from Syria by way of Wilkes-Barre, in anticipation of the consecration of the first church; in 1915, he formally became pastor with the civil incorporation of St. Michael's as a parish; and

WHEREAS, For 43 years, the parishioners of St. Michael's Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church worshipped at the Temple on Geneva Street, which was built next to the Geneva Fire Station, and as the city grew, its site was needed for expansion; accordingly, the city purchased the building and lot for the Fire Department, which allowed the parish to erect a more expansive and suitable space for worship; the last service in its first Temple was celebrated on November 16, 1958, under the pastoral direction of The Reverend Fr. Michael Buben; and

WHEREAS, In addition, St. Michael's Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church owned a large house located at 98 Genesee Street, on the corner of Genesee and Lafayette Streets, which was used as a rectory, classroom, and meeting space; for a year, the congregation used this house for celebration of the Divine Mysteries, until the beginning of construction of a new Temple on that parcel; and

WHEREAS, Through the kindness and generosity of the Vestry of St. Peter's Episcopal Church, St. Michael's Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church was able to conduct its services in their parish hall during construction; this arrangement continued for two years until the new church was completed; and

WHEREAS, On November 26, 1961, Metropolitan Antony Bashir, on behalf of the Patriarch of Antioch, consecrated and blessed St. Michael's Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church's new Temple, to the glory of Almighty God, the Holy Trinity, and reaffirmed the heavenly patronage of the parish by the great Archangel Michael; and

WHEREAS, From 1963 until 1995, The Very Reverend Fr. Gabriel White served as Priest and Pastor of St. Michael's Parish, making his tenure the longest of all of the clergy who have served this parish to the

present; and

WHEREAS, On October 5, 1980, Metropolitan Philip Saliba ordained the first Deacon of St. Michael's Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church, John Jabara, a man of immense character and love; he faithfully and selflessly served as deacon for 10 years; and

WHEREAS, Today, St. Michael's Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church has been under the luminous direction of Priest and Pastor, The Very Reverend Fr. Gregory-Lazarus Murphy, since 2002; sharing his ministry with his wife, Khourieh Suzanne Murphy, who serves as parish choir director, protopsaltis, diocesan director of Sacred Music, and officer of the Antiochian Women on the National Board; and

WHEREAS, At present, St. Michael's Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church stands humbly, prayerfully, meditatively, and joyfully; and

WHEREAS, St. Michael's Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church stands on the threshold of tomorrow, by God's Grace, 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 Centennial Celebration of the St. Michael's Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church of Geneva, New York to be celebrated on July 2-5, 2015; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Very Reverend Fr. Greary-Lazarus Murphy and the Parish Council of St. Michael's Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church, Geneva, New York.