

A Commission to Oversee Creation of New Mother Cabrini Statue

I. I. (October 25, 2019)



Governor Andrew M. Cuomo appointed 19 members to a new commission that will oversee the creation of a statue honoring Mother Cabrini. The members will include Angelo Vivolo of the Columbus Heritage Coalition and Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio of the Brooklyn Diocese. The Governor announced the State will commit up to \$750,000 for the project and will issue a request for proposals for the design of the new statue.

"Mother Cabrini was a great New Yorker and a great Italian-American immigrant who did untold good for the people of this state, and there is no doubt she is deserving of a statue in her honor," **Governor Cuomo said.** "With the help of this new commission, we are going to get this done to help ensure Mother Cabrini's legacy of service to her community and those who are less fortunate is remembered for generations to come."

The commission will provide recommendations to the Governor pertaining to the design, location and installation of the new memorial. The State's requests for proposals will seek ideas for the overall design and the statue's exact location. The commission will initiate broad outreach to the art community as soon as possible, including contacting art institutions and organizations as well as direct artist outreach. Once the design proposals are reviewed by the commission, the commission will select the finalists and present those to Governor Cuomo, who will make the final selection.



Angelo Vivolo, President, Columbus Heritage Coalition, said, "Mother Cabrini's selfless work changed the lives of children, immigrants and countless others. Governor Cuomo's support will help us memorialize her generous legacy, and I am eager to work with the Governor and the rest of the commission to bring together a statue that will honor a true public servant."

The Most Reverend Nicholas DiMarzio, Bishop of Brooklyn, said, "I am grateful for Governor Andrew Cuomo's steadfast commitment to seeing Mother Cabrini honored with a statue recognizing her life's work here in New York City. I accept the responsibility the Governor has charged me with to lead this commission. I look forward to creating a lasting tribute to the Patron Saint of Immigrants so that her legacy will live on forever."

Mother Cabrini was an Italian-American who founded many organizations to help the needy. She was the youngest of 13 children, born in Lombardy in 1850, and before migrating to the United States, she took vows and founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, an order that served and schooled orphans.

Mother Cabrini arrived to the United States in 1889 on a mission to help Italian migrants. While in New York, she taught at St. Joachim's parish, the Church of Our Lady of Pompeii, and the Transfiguration Catholic Church - all in Manhattan - as well as St. Rita of Cascia in The Bronx and the Church of St. Stephen in Brooklyn. Over the course of 35 years, Mother Cabrini founded dozens of institutions that would serve the less fortunate, including educational organizations and programs to support other fellow Italian-Americans who arrived as immigrants. Among those were the Columbus Hospital, which was eventually renamed the Cabrini Medical Center and was housed in Manhattan for many years before closing in 2008.

Mother Cabrini was originally buried in West Park and is now interred at the St. Frances Cabrini Shrine in Manhattan, which she founded. In 1946, nearly 30 years after her death, Mother Cabrini became the first naturalized U.S. citizen to be canonized. She is recognized as the patron saint of immigrants. Several academic institutions, religious buildings and hospitals across New York are named after her.

The commission comprised of 19 members appointed by the Governor includes:

- Maria Bartiromo, Journalist
- Frank Bisignano, CEO and Chairman, First Data
- Office of General Services Commissioner RoAnn Destito
- Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio, Diocese of Brooklyn
- Bishop Orlando Findlayter
- Philip Foglia, Italian American Legal Defense and Higher Education Fund
- Mario Gabelli, CEO, Gabelli Asset Management and Member of the Board of Directors, American-Italian Cancer Foundation and the Foundation for Italian Art & Culture
- John Leo Heyer II, Diocese of Brooklyn Italian Apostolate
- Maureen Sherry Klinsky, Author
- Gary LaBarbera, President, Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York
- Joe Plumeri, Former Chairman, CEO of Willis Group Holdings
- Erminia Rivera, Member, Maimonides Medical Center Board of Trustees
- Joseph Sciame, Chair, Conference of Presidents of Major Italian American Organizations; Vice President for Community Relations, St. John's University
- Carlo Scissura, Chairman of the Federation of Italian-American Organizations and President & CEO of the New York Building Congress
- Mary Ann Tighe, Chief Executive Officer of the New York Tri-State Region of CBRE
- Veronica Tsang, Executive Vice President and Chief Retail Administrator, Cathay Bank
- George Tsunis, Chair, Battery Park City Authority
- John Viola, former President, National Italian American Foundation
- Angelo Vivolo, President, Columbus Heritage Coalition



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