

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 76

BY SENATOR PEACOCK AND REPRESENTATIVE CARMODY

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To commend Saint Joseph Catholic Church of Shreveport, Louisiana, on the occasion of its seventieth anniversary and to celebrate the faith and sacrifice of its founders.

WHEREAS, it is with great respect of purpose that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend the good works, spiritual guidance, and educational scholarship provided by St. Joseph Catholic Church to the community it serves; and

WHEREAS, St. Joseph has been blessed to be led by exceptional members of the priesthood; today, the present leadership lies in the capable hands of its pastor, the Reverend Matthew T. Long; parochial vicars, the Reverend Fidel Mondragon and the Reverend Biju Kuriakose; and priest in residence, the Reverend Thomas John; and

WHEREAS, Fr. Long is aided by three skilled assistants, Deacon Bruce Pistorius, permanent deacon; Deacon Freeman Ligon, outreach coordinator; and Deacon Bill Roche, director of faith formation; and

WHEREAS, the church calendar for 2019 abounds with special events and service opportunities that incorporate socials, picnics, rededication ceremonies, memorials, observances, and fundraising activities; and

WHEREAS, St. Joseph Parish holds a special place in the lives of the congregation; the sacred seeds of love and redemption have been sown in the hearts of all who pass through its doorway; priests and laity minister to the liturgical needs of the congregates from baptism, first communion, penance and reconciliation, confirmation, the Eucharist, and marriage, until anointing of the sick, requiem, and rite of Christian burial; and

WHEREAS, from very modest beginnings, St. Joseph was established on February 25, 1949, with a Mass performed by the Most Reverend Charles P. Greco, Bishop of Alexandria, in a temporary setting in the Broadmoor Theater; and

WHEREAS, this humble church body began with little more than the strength and tenacity of its parishioners, but it quickly grew in number; and

WHEREAS, the first pastor, Father J. B. Gremillion, held the first Mass in the new church building fifteen months later on Palm Sunday, April 2, 1950; and

WHEREAS, the church continued to grow exponentially and quickly focused on religious education; the cornerstone for a new school was laid on May 31, 1951; the St. Joseph School was staffed by the Sisters of the Divine Providence and was readied for enrollment of students in the fall term; and

WHEREAS, today, St. Joseph Catholic School instructs over four hundred students in elementary and middle school from pre-kindergarten to eighth grade; and

WHEREAS, the heart of St. Joseph Catholic Church is found in those individuals who set about to organize activities that reinforce a sense of devotion and provide for the less fortunate; service ministries incorporate participation in Mary's Workers, Altar Society, Men's Group, Altar Servers, Men's Fellowship, Knights of Columbus, Bible Study, Music Ministry, the St. Joseph Guild, Vacation Bible School, and St. Vincent de Paul Society; and

WHEREAS, there are other outreach ministries that offer counseling for youth, married couples, and single adults and also provide assistance to those with special needs such as bereavement, visitation, prayer and rosary groups, substance rehabilitation, and family crisis; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, St. Joseph underwent an extensive \$3.5 million renovation, adding stained glass windows and rededicating key sacred elements within the sanctuary; and

WHEREAS, the Adoration Chapel at St. Joseph offers a peaceful place for reflection at any time to anyone who wishes to experience God's grace through prayer and meditation in the presence of the Eucharist; and

WHEREAS, throughout the history of St. Joseph Catholic Church numerous pastors have graced the pulpit to become the conduit of God's love and direction; and

WHEREAS, in the beginning, other associates who served with Fr. Gremillion were Rev. Joseph P. Scherer, Rev. Cornelius O'Brien, and Rev. Eugene Bleakley; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Msgr. Marvin Bordelon was named pastor in July 1958 and his associates were Fr. Richard Lombard, Fr. Cornelius O'Brien, Rev. Edmund J. Moore, Rev. Msgr. Walter Walsh; and

WHEREAS, Rev. William F. Allen was appointed pastor from June 1967 until September 1969; he served with associates Rev. George Faler, Rev. Edward Deasy, Rev. John Ryan, and Rev. Joseph Robert Inzina; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Msgr. C. Murray Clayton was a young priest who would lead for nearly a quarter century, from 1969 until his retirement in 1993; and

WHEREAS, Father Clayton's list of associates included Rev. Paul T. "Buddy" Ceasar, Rev. Roger McMullen, Rev. Russell Lemoine, Rev. James A. Foster, Rev. Jesús Oliva, Rev. Curtis Woods, Rev. Stephen Wright, Rev. Matthew Woollett, Rev. Ted Albert, Rev. John Pardue, Rev. Franz Graef, Rev. Michael Kammer, and Rev. Msgr. Walsh; and

WHEREAS, later clergy included Fr. Stephen Wright, Fr. Karl Daigle, Rev. Peter B. Mangum, Rev. Douglas S. Sweet, Rev. Joseph Kallookalam, Rev. Charles Glorioso, Fr. Mark Franklin, and Fr. Mike Thang' Wa; and

WHEREAS, St. Joseph now lies in the capable hands of the latest generation of devoted leadership who flourish in God's grace; and

WHEREAS, seven decades ago St. Joseph was built as a monument to faith; its parish continues as a vibrant community that encourages the tenets of Catholicism through education and service to mankind; and

WHEREAS, this faithful congregation of St. Joseph Catholic Church are disciples who worship their God, rejoice in a living faith in Jesus Christ, and reflect upon His love, goodness, and teachings.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend St. Joseph Catholic Church of Shreveport on the occasion of its seventieth anniversary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Reverend Matthew T. Long.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES