

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 97

BY SENATOR PEACOCK

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To commend the Mary, Queen of Peace Catholic Church of Bossier City on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary and to celebrate the sacrifice and faith of its founders.

WHEREAS, it is with great respect of purpose that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend the good works and spiritual guidance provided by Mary, Queen of Peace Catholic Church to the community it serves; and

WHEREAS, Mary, Queen of Peace 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 Fr. Nicholas Onyach, and Permanent Deacon Michael Straub; and

WHEREAS, on Sunday, May 19, 2019, the congregation of Mary, Queen of Peace Catholic Church will observe this special occasion with a celebratory Mass, a luncheon, and other activities in recognition of its history and growth; and

WHEREAS, the Mary, Queen of Peace 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; its pastor ministers the sacraments 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, the notion of Mary, Queen of Peace began with the faith of the Thomas Caplis family that contributed to the development of the farming community of Caplis in south Bossier Parish; and

WHEREAS, a son, Johnny Caplis, and his wife, Beatrice, were devout Catholics with a dream of establishing a church; and

WHEREAS, Johnny convinced his mother, Maggie, to donate a parcel of land for the site and to consider a suitable name for the church; and

WHEREAS, the chosen name of Mary, Queen of Peace was to be in remembrance

of family members who had served in World War II and in gratitude of those individuals who remained in the community to continue farming in support of the war effort; and

WHEREAS, when completed, the first service performed in the new chapel was the wedding of a nephew, Joseph Edmund Caplis Jr.; and

WHEREAS, the chapel of Mary, Queen of Peace was dedicated on May 13, 1969, by Bishop Charles P. Greco of the Diocese of Alexandria as a mission of Christ the King Catholic Church in Bossier City; and

WHEREAS, Beatrice Caplis tended to the upkeep of the church until her death in 1979; in her will, a trust fund was set aside to maintain the chapel; and

WHEREAS, thirty years later, in March 1999, Bishop William B. Friend of the Diocese of Shreveport, established the parish of Mary, Queen of Peace with St. George Catholic Church in Coushatta as its mission; and

WHEREAS, the congregation continued to grow and a larger church building was dedicated on December 3, 2005, by Bishop William Friend; and

WHEREAS, today, Mary, Queen of Peace serves a devout church population of more than 330 families and the chapel is now referred to as the John Anthony Caplis Center; and

WHEREAS, the first pastor to serve the flock was the Reverend Fr. J. Carson LaCaze, while the Reverend Msgr. Earl Provenza served from 1999 until 2006, the Reverend Fr. Joseph Ampatt served from 2006 until 2018, and the Reverend Fr. Nicholas Onyach serves presently; and

WHEREAS, the heart of Mary, Queen of Peace is found in those individuals who set about to organize activities that reinforce a sense of spiritual devotion; and

WHEREAS, Mary, Queen of Peace now rests in the capable hands of the latest generation of devoted leadership who flourish in God's grace; and

WHEREAS, five decades ago Mary, Queen of Peace was built as a testament 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 Mary, Queen of Peace 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 Mary, Queen of Peace Catholic Church on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary on Sunday, May 19, 2019.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Reverend Fr. Nicholas Onyach.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES