

2019 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 244

BY SENATOR JOHNS

COMMENDATIONS. Commends the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Roman Catholic Church on its 60th anniversary.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To commend the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Roman Catholic
3 Church on its sixtieth anniversary.

4 WHEREAS, the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Roman Catholic
5 Church (Immaculate Conception) was organized on July 5, 1959, to serve the spiritual needs
6 of the faithful residing in the rapidly growing community of Maplewood, Louisiana; and

7 WHEREAS, thirty-four families formed the first Christian community of Immaculate
8 Conception and gathered for services in the Maplewood public school auditorium; and

9 WHEREAS, today, the parish comprises more than six hundred fifty families who
10 worship in a large, modern church that was formally dedicated on January 29, 1984; and

11 WHEREAS, on November 26, 1950, Reverend Jules B. Jeanmard, Bishop of
12 Lafayette, blessed and dedicated the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception, thus becoming
13 the third mission of Our Lady of Prompt Succor Parish; and

14 WHEREAS, ten acres on Parish Road were purchased from Dr. Charles Fellows and
15 the chapel was moved onto the land which became the parish's permanent home; and

16 WHEREAS, eventually a larger facility was required to serve the increased Catholic
17 population of Maplewood and the chapel was enlarged and bricked; and

18 WHEREAS, the first Mass in the renovated building was celebrated by the Reverend

1 Denis Monahan, M.S. on April 5, 1959, and on July 5, 1959, the Most Reverend Maurice
2 Schexnayder blessed the building and announced the formation of Immaculate Conception
3 of the Blessed Virgin Mary Roman Catholic Church of Maplewood Parish, whereby
4 Reverend Henry Lenz, M.S. was appointed pastor of the new parish; and

5 WHEREAS, in its early days, it served about two hundred eighty families who were
6 residents of Maplewood, Hollywood, Magnolia Forest, Beverly Hills, and other residential
7 subdivisions adjacent to the city of Sulphur; and

8 WHEREAS, in 1959, the Simon Huval home across the street from the church was
9 purchased and converted into a rectory, and Father Lenz subsequently purchased a building
10 from the Lions Club of Maplewood, moved it to the church property, and developed it into
11 a catechetical center prior to leaving in 1962; and

12 WHEREAS, Father Lundgren cleared the debt on the rectory and had air
13 conditioning installed before being reassigned in 1967, and in 1968, Father Shahrigian paid
14 off the original debt; and

15 WHEREAS, the new Immaculate Conception Center was built and blessed on
16 October 28, 1971, parishioners continued to improve and renovate parish facilities, and a
17 new rectory was built and an open house was held on September 26, 1976; and

18 WHEREAS, shortly after Father Fitzsimmons left, a tragedy sparked the major
19 growth movement that has led to today's impressive physical plant; and

20 WHEREAS, on August 31, 1981, a major fire burned the church to the ground; and

21 WHEREAS, the fire raced quickly through the thirty-one year old structure and
22 nothing could be saved despite the heroic efforts of firemen, two of whom averted personal
23 harm when the roof collapsed and came crashing down about twenty feet from them; and

24 WHEREAS, losses included the irreplaceable pews made of a now extinct type of
25 chestnut wood which had previously been in a church in Hartford, Connecticut; and

26 WHEREAS, the fire raged for at least three hours as parishioners and friends could
27 only stand by and watch helplessly as the fire was well under way when the fire department
28 arrived; and

29 WHEREAS, shortly thereafter, the parishioners of Immaculate Conception wiped
30 away their tears, rolled up their sleeves, developed plans to build a new church, and

1 fundraising, along with tithing, produced the revenue required to commence construction;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, the Most Reverend Jude Speyrer and Father Bernier broke ground for
4 the new church at the site of the old building and the following year, Bishop Speyrer
5 returned to bless the new church and officiate at a combined Mass of Dedication and
6 twenty-fifth anniversary celebration; and

7 WHEREAS, on the bright Sunday morning of November 6, 1988, the religious
8 community of Immaculate Conception Parish witnessed another memorable fire as
9 Father Brunnert presided over a ritual burning of the mortgage of their brand new church at
10 Maplewood Drive and Shasta; and

11 WHEREAS, on July 7, 1990, the parish council drafted a list of needs, including
12 additional office space and a multi-purpose building with meeting rooms, recreational
13 facilities, and a larger parish hall; and

14 WHEREAS, construction of the complex, comprising a youth center and
15 administrative office along with the refurbishment of existing facilities, was accepted on
16 September 15, 1994, and blessed by Bishop Speyrer in October 1995; and

17 WHEREAS, pastors following Father Vecchio include Msgr. Vincent Sedita,
18 Father Aubrey Guilbeau, Father Gigo George, Father Edward Richard, and current pastor,
19 Father Tim Goodly; and

20 WHEREAS, throughout its history, thanks to dedicated pastors and hard-working
21 parishioners, Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary parish has refused to be
22 deterred by hardships and adversity, and signals its intention to serve uninterruptedly as an
23 inspirational and spiritual center of the community for years to come.

24 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
25 does hereby commend and congratulate the parishioners of Immaculate Conception of the
26 Blessed Virgin Mary Roman Catholic Church on the celebration of its sixtieth anniversary
27 and does hereby express best thoughts and prayers for the congregation to remain faithful
28 in the work of the Lord.

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to
30 Father Tim Goodly.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Nancy Vicknair.

SR 244 Original

DIGEST
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Johns

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