

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 116

BY SENATOR FRED MILLS

A RESOLUTION

To recognize May first of each calendar year as St. Joseph the Worker day in Louisiana; to commemorate the "Year of St. Joseph"; and on May first of each calendar year, to recognize and appreciate the dignity of all working men and women in Louisiana.

WHEREAS, Pope Francis in his Apostolic letter entitled *Patris Corde* ("With a Father's Heart") describes St. Joseph as a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father, a father who is creatively courageous, a working father, and a father in the shadows; and

WHEREAS, in a much more sublime and supernatural way, Joseph found favor with his heavenly Father and was entrusted with the Father's greatest treasures, his only begotten son, Jesus Christ, and Mary, the mother of Jesus; and

WHEREAS, the Gospel of St. Matthew attests to the holiness of Joseph when he is described as "a righteous man" (Matthew 1:19); and

WHEREAS, as head of the family, Joseph's responsibilities would have included leading the family in common prayers before meals, gathering the family for synagogue services on the Sabbath, and leading the family on annual pilgrimages to the temple in Jerusalem to celebrate "The Festival of Unleavened Bread", "The Festival of Weeks", and "The Festival of Shelters" (Deuteronomy 16:16), and "The Passover Festival" (Luke 2:41); and

WHEREAS, four times in scripture, Joseph heard the word of the Lord in a dream (Matthew 1:20, 2:13 and 22), and each time Joseph arose and "did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him" (Matthew 1:24); and

WHEREAS, Jesus and Mary needed housing, food, and clothing, and it was Joseph who provided for these necessities through his manual labor as a carpenter and who taught Jesus to work, and Jesus himself was referred to as a carpenter, "Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary?" (Mark 6:3); and

WHEREAS, when the angry King Herod ordered the massacre of all male children

two-years old and younger, it was to Joseph as protector of the family that the angel of the Lord was sent; Joseph took heed and fled into Egypt with the child and Mary and thwarted the attempt on Jesus' life (Matthew 2:13-15); and

WHEREAS, Christians for hundreds of years have invoked Joseph for his great chastity in taking Mary into his home and for respecting the fact that she belonged exclusively to God; and

WHEREAS, during turbulent times in 1870, these truths inspired Pope Pius IX to once again "Go to Joseph," and on December 8, 1870, to proclaim Joseph as "St. Joseph Patron of the Universal Church"; and

WHEREAS, in 1909, Pope Pius X approved the "Litany of St. Joseph," highlighting his titles, privileges, and heroic virtues as follows: noble offspring of David, light of patriarchs, the spouse of the mother of God, chaste guardian of the Virgin Mary, foster-father of the Son of God, zealous defender of Christ, head of the holy family, Joseph most just, Joseph most chaste, Joseph most prudent, Joseph most courageous, Joseph most obedient, Joseph most faithful, mirror of patience, lover of poverty, model of workmen, glory of domestic life, guardian of virgins, pillar of families, comfort of the afflicted, hope of the sick, patron of the dying, terror of demons, and protector of the Holy Church; and

WHEREAS, to counteract the "May Day" celebration for workers sponsored by the communists, Pope Pius XII, in 1955, established the "Feast of St. Joseph the Worker" on May first of each calendar year; and

WHEREAS, in January 2020, Father Donald Calloway, a devout and faithful Catholic priest with The National Shrine of The Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, Congregation of Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, believing "the world needs St. Joseph now more than ever," published a book to bring new awareness and devotion to St. Joseph entitled *Consecration to St. Joseph: The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father*, selling more than one million copies worldwide; available in more than fifteen languages, the book was modeled after the Consecration to Mary of St. Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort (31 January 1673 – 28 April 1716), a French Roman Catholic priest and missionary, and inspires many faithful in Louisiana to embrace a new found devotion to St. Joseph; and

WHEREAS, inspired by the need for increased virtue in the world, a number of bishops in the state of Louisiana, including Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond of the Archdiocese of New Orleans and Bishop Douglas Deshotels of the Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana, called for a celebration in their respective regions for a "Year of St. Joseph" for all to learn from St. Joseph's obedience to God's will, his role as leader and protector in the holy family, his faithful and fervent life of prayer, his work ethic, and radiant chastity; and

WHEREAS, the devout, faithful Superior of the Community of Jesus Crucified, Father Michael Champagne responded by creating the "Exodus 290 St. Joseph Pilgrimage," a pilgrimage encouraging the faithful and the citizens of Louisiana to retrace the same distance Joseph traveled in the Bible, which is approximately two hundred ninety miles, by visiting churches in the Diocese of Lafayette that are dedicated to St. Joseph, as outlined in the following order of progression:

Beginning at St. Martin de Tours, originally named St. Joseph at the Attakapas, in St. Martinville, Louisiana;

then to St. Joseph Catholic Church in Parks, Louisiana;

then to St. Joseph Catholic Church in Loreauville, Louisiana;

then to St. Joseph Catholic Church in Centerville, Louisiana;

then to St. Joseph Catholic Church in Patterson, Louisiana;

then to St. Joseph Catholic Church in Broussard, Louisiana;

then to St. Joseph Catholic Church in Milton, Louisiana;

then to St. Joseph Catholic Church in Maurice, Louisiana;

then to St. Joseph Catholic Church in Rayne, Louisiana;

then to St. Joseph Catholic Church in Iota, Louisiana;

then to St. Joseph Catholic Church in Evangeline, Louisiana;

then to St. Joseph Catholic Church in Ville Platte, Louisiana;

then to St. Joseph Catholic Church in Plaisance, Louisiana;

then to St. Joseph Catholic Church in Cecilia, Louisiana;

Ending the "Exodus 290 St. Joseph Pilgrimage" at the seat of the Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana, the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, to complete the two hundred ninety-mile journey; and

WHEREAS, at the request of Father Donald Calloway, MIC, Father Michael Champagne, CJC, and many others, on December 8, 2020, Pope Francis in Rome, Italy, on the 150th anniversary of the declaration of St. Joseph as the Patron of the Universal Church, to mark the occasion, proclaimed the "Year of St. Joseph" from December 8, 2020, to December 8, 2021, for the entire church worldwide for the first time ever in Catholic Church history; and

WHEREAS, on May 1, 2021, Pope Francis added seven new titles to Joseph in the Litany of St. Joseph as follows:

Custos Redemptoris (Guardian of the Redeemer);

Serve Christi (Servant of Christ);

Minister Salutis (Minister of Salvation);

Fulcimen in Difficultatibus (Support in Difficulties);

Patrone Exsulum (Patron of Exiles);

Patrone Afflictorum (Patron of the Afflicted);

Patrone Pauperum (Patron of the Poor); and

WHEREAS, in time of trial and distress, when all of Egypt and the entire world became hungry and begged for bread, Pharoah told the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph; what he says to you, do" (Genesis 41:55), and while Pharoah was referring to Joseph the son of Jacob, who was sold into slavery because of the jealousy of his brothers (Genesis 37:11-28), and who subsequently became a viceroy of Egypt (Genesis 41:41-44), popular trust in St. Joseph is seen in the expression "Go to Joseph"; and

WHEREAS, our situation in the world today is not unlike the situation of God's people during the great famine in Egypt; we recognize our need for heavenly power to safeguard and steer us through the many trials of our day.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize May first of each calendar year as St. Joseph the Worker day in the state of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize and commemorate the period of December 8, 2020, to December 8, 2021, as the "Year of St. Joseph".

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize May first of each calendar year as a day to be observed to honor the working men and women in Louisiana, who get up every day and work hard to provide for and lift-up their families, their communities, the state of Louisiana, and the United States of America.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the executive branch of the state of Louisiana, to the extent practical, to cause an appropriate celebration on May first of each calendar year to bring recognition and appreciation to the dignity of all working men and women in Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be sent to Father Donald H. Calloway, MIC, Father Michael Champagne, CJC, Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, Bishop Douglas Deshotels of the Diocese of Lafayette, the Louisiana Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the governor of Louisiana.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE