

By: Representatives Peranich, Simpson

To: Rules

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 75

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE
2 CATHOLIC CHURCH AND CONGRATULATING IT UPON ITS CENTENNIAL
3 ANNIVERSARY.

4 WHEREAS, this year marks a milestone in the history of St.
5 Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church, as it embarks upon a journey
6 of reflecting upon its rich legacy as it celebrates its centennial
7 anniversary on July 3, 2005; and

8 WHEREAS, the missionary fathers of the Congregation of the
9 Mission, founded by St. Vincent de Paul and known as Vincentians,
10 accepted an invitation in 1905 from Bishop Thomas Heslin of the
11 Natchez Diocese to establish a mission in Long Beach, Mississippi,
12 to care for the spiritual needs of the Catholic residents of Long
13 Beach, Mississippi City, Perkinston and Wiggins; and

14 WHEREAS, the Vincentians, after acquiring forty acres of land
15 on the Gulf of Mexico, built a forty-room, two-story vacation
16 retreat house for priests known as St. Thomas Villa; and

17 WHEREAS, a church with 13 altars and seating capacity for 500
18 people was constructed on the property and dedicated as St. Thomas
19 the Apostle Catholic Church on July 19, 1905; and

20 WHEREAS, the mission church, having grown as the population
21 of the City of Long Beach increased, was designated as a parish
22 church by Bishop John Gunn in 1915 with Father Joseph Hagar, C.M.,
23 serving as the new parish's first pastor; and

24 WHEREAS, St. Thomas Elementary School, staffed by the
25 Daughters of Charity, opened September 3, 1922; and

26 WHEREAS, the original church of the 13 altars was destroyed
27 by Hurricane Camille on August 17, 1969; and

28 WHEREAS, Bishop Joseph B. Brunini dedicated a new church on
29 August 20, 1972; and

30 WHEREAS, the Vincentians ceded the parish, which had grown to
31 over 1,000 families, to the Diocese of Biloxi in the summer of
32 1993 and Father Louis Lohan was named pastor of the congregation;
33 and

34 WHEREAS, to meet the needs of a growing parish, a Parish Life
35 Center was dedicated on the property in November 2002; and

36 WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to recognize
37 such outstanding and contributory religious institutions as St.
38 Thomas the Apostle Parish, which continues to be a vital part of
39 the Long Beach Community, serving over 1,700 families:

40 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
41 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING
42 THEREIN, That we do hereby commend and congratulate the diligence
43 of the pastors and parishioners of St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic
44 Church upon the occasion of the church's 100th year anniversary
45 and extend our warmest wishes for continued prosperity, spiritual
46 growth and success.

47 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
48 furnished to St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church, the Diocese
49 of Biloxi and to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.