

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.