

2019-J876

Senate Resolution No. 876

BY: Senator GRIFFO

COMMEMORATING the 100th Anniversary of Our Lady of Lourdes Church of Utica, New York, on May 5, 2019

WHEREAS, Religious institutions, and the many spiritual, social and educational benefits they confer, play a vital role in the development of the moral fabric of a responsible citizenry; and

WHEREAS, It is the tradition of this State and this Nation to pay tribute to those institutions and individuals who have contributed to the ethical and spiritual values of their communities; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body takes pleasure in commemorating the 100th Anniversary of Our Lady of Lourdes Church of Utica, New York, to be celebrated at a Dinner Dance on Sunday, May 5, 2019, at Hart's Hill Inn in Whitesboro, New York; and

WHEREAS, In addition, the congregation and community members are invited to participate in a special Celebratory Mass earlier in the day; and

WHEREAS, Our Lady of Lourdes Parish was established in April of 1919, in response to the growing population in South Utica; the first Mass was celebrated on the 13th of that month in a wooden frame home on the corner of Genesee Street and Barton Avenue (then called Mason

Place); and

WHEREAS, Prior to the establishment of the parish, the building was used for Sunday school instruction and as a chapel for the neighborhood; after an addition was added, the church was enlarged in 1940, and a stone exterior was added; and

WHEREAS, In 1925, plans for Our Lady of Lourdes School were begun and the neighboring home to the south of the Church was purchased for use as a rectory; staffed by the Daughters of Charity, the school was opened in 1929; an addition to the school and a new convent on Barton Avenue was built in 1959; and

WHEREAS, For many years, Masses were held in both the church and the school auditorium every Sunday until the present church was completed in 1969; the grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes was later added, and a new rectory adjacent to the Church was built in 1976; and

WHEREAS, In the 1980s and early 1990s, the artwork behind the altar was enhanced, and the Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Seton, a new sound system, confessional rooms and a new organ were installed; in 1995, the parish school became a regional school, and the Daughters of Charity ended their service as teachers; and

WHEREAS, During the next 15 years, numerous improvements were made to the parish campus and many ministries were established; the newsletter "Blessings" and a parish website were developed and the convent was converted to the Seton Center, housing parish offices and meeting rooms; and

WHEREAS, Eucharistic Adoration in the Seton Chapel was implemented

and on the second floor, Evelyn's House opened its door to young girls; in 2009, the church interior was refurbished to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the parish; and

WHEREAS, In 2009, Our Lady of Lourdes School became the only Catholic school in the area and was renamed Notre Dame Elementary School in September of that year; and

WHEREAS, Since 2002, Father Joseph A. Salerno has helmed the pulpit of Our Lady of Lourdes Church; in 2011, approximately 1,200 families were officially registered as members of the Church; and

WHEREAS, Our Lady of Lourdes Church stands on the threshold of tomorrow, prepared to meet the challenges of the coming decades while retaining that spiritual resolve which characterizes its past; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to take note of enduring religious institutions and to bring such institutions to the attention of the people of this Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of Our Lady of Lourdes Church of Utica, New York, fully confident that this tribute reflects the belief in those values which enhance the dignity and purpose of life; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Reverend Joseph A. Salerno, Pastor and Regional Vicar, Our Lady of Lourdes Church.