

## 2017-J5595

Senate Resolution No. 5595

BY: Senator MONTGOMERY

COMMEMORATING the 150th Anniversary of Our Lady of Victory Church in Brooklyn, New York, to be celebrated on June 10, 2018

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 150th Anniversary of Our Lady of Victory Church in Brooklyn, New York, to be celebrated with a special Mass, led by its Pastor, Father Alonzo Cox and Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio, followed by an event on Sunday, June 10, 2018; and

WHEREAS, The original wooden structure that stood as the Church of "Our Lady of Victories" was completed in July of 1868, on McDonough Street, near the corner of Throop Avenue in what is now deemed the historic section of Bedford Stuyvesant, Brooklyn; and

WHEREAS, Under the direction of its first Pastor, Reverend Patrick

Creighton, a stone building was erected on 136 McDonough Street in 1875; through the dedicated work of Father Creighton, and his successor, Reverend James J. Woods, Our Lady of Victory's building complex expanded to include a Parish school, a convent which housed the Sisters of St. Joseph, and a new rectory at the corner of Throop Avenue and Macon Street; and

WHEREAS, However, the crowning achievement for Fathers Patrick Creighton and James J. Woods culminated in the funding and construction of the several-story structure that is recognized today as Our Lady of Victory Church; this gothic style house of worship was designed by Chief Architect Thomas Houghton, modeled after St. Macartan's Cathedral in County Monaghan, Ireland; and

WHEREAS, In 1895, the cornerstone was laid, and Our Lady of Victory Church was officially dedicated by the first Bishop of Brooklyn, His Excellency John Loughlin; the Church received monetary donations from its Irish community and in particular, James McMahan, a wealthy Irish-American shipping magnate and President of the Emigrant Savings Bank; and

WHEREAS, The church proper was fitted with outstanding accoutrements, including a remarkable pipe organ built by Reuben Midmer & Son, as well as a handsome bell fashioned by the globally sought-after Meneely Brothers of Troy, New York; within a span of only a few decades, give or take a few years prior to the stock market crash of 1929, Our Lady of Victory was a thriving, bustling Parish, with thousands of Catholic families passing through its doors during any given season; and

WHEREAS, In the wake of the Great Depression, the majority of the Irish Catholic population departed Bedford Stuyvesant, leaving many of the now vacant buildings to be occupied by an influx of

African-Americans seeking new opportunities in the area; through their strong presence, coupled with the leadership of the Parish clergy, Our Lady of Victory Church survived the more difficult periods which affected the neighborhood at large; and

WHEREAS, From its humble beginnings, Our Lady of Victory has functioned not only as a place for American Catholics to call their spiritual home, but it has been a shining example of community solidarity in the Diocese of Brooklyn; and

WHEREAS, With Parish societies such as the Holy Name, St. Vincent de Paul and the League of the Sacred Heart, Our Lady of Victory and its congregation have been dedicated to serving those most in need; in 1975, Monsignor Joseph A. Nugent established Our Father's House, which diligently worked to provide housing, treatment, and resources for men suffering from substance abuse; and

WHEREAS, In the early 1990s, the world-famous nuns of the Missionaries of Charity took up residence at the convent, becoming caretakers for struggling pregnant single mothers in the area with the blessing of their fearless leader, Mother Teresa; and

WHEREAS, In addition, the Churches' old Elementary school currently serves as a privately run facility which helps to educate adults with special needs; and

WHEREAS, Under the current Pastorate of Father Alonzo Cox and his associate, Father Daniel Kingsley, Our Lady of Victory 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 150th Anniversary of Our Lady of Victory Church to be observed on June 10, 2018, fully confident that this commemoration reflects the belief in those values which enhance the dignity and purpose of life; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Father Alonzo Cox and Father Daniel Kingsley, Pastors, and Our Lady of Victory Church in Brooklyn, New York.