

CITY OF NEW BEDFORD

IN CITY COUNCIL

November 23, 2021

RESOLUTION HONORING ST. LAWRENCE MARTYR CHURCH
ON ITS 200TH ANNIVERSARY

WHEREAS, St. Lawrence Martyr Church was originally established as St. Mary’s Church on the Feast of St. Joseph, March 19, 1821, and is the 4th oldest Catholic Church in Massachusetts; and

WHEREAS, St. Lawrence Martyr is the mother Church of the Diocese of Fall River; and

WHEREAS, Saint Lawrence Martyr Parish is an inner-city parish, with a 200 year old history and a parish school; the mission of St. Lawrence Martyr Parish continues after two centuries when they were blessed with their patron St. Lawrence’s great example of serving those in need, believing that they were the true treasures of the church; and

WHEREAS, The parish established a Catholic Cemetery, three parochial schools, the first Catholic High School, and a Catholic hospital, all of which had been staffed by Sisters of Mercy; and

WHEREAS, The land where St. Lawrence Martyr Church stands to this day at County and Hillman Streets was purchased from Dr. Lyman Bartlett by Father Henniss, who was appointed to St. Mary’s Parish and was New Bedford’s first American-born Priest and was Pastor of the church for 5-6 years and for 3 of those years laid the foundation for the present prosperity of the parish; and

WHEREAS, Measures were taken for the building of the church, but the Civil War broke out and construction had to be postponed, with ground eventually being broken for the church in May of 1866, and the corner stone laid November 1st of that year; and

WHEREAS, St. Lawrence Martyr Church was first opened to the public on Christmas morning 1870, with over 600 people attending the 5:00 a.m. Sunday Mass; and

WHEREAS, The membership of St. Lawrence Martyr Church constantly increased and the parish continued to prosper; and

WHEREAS, The St. Lawrence Martyr Church is known for its magnificent bell and clock tower; and

WHEREAS, In 1995, when Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta visited New Bedford, she chose to worship at St. Lawrence Martyr Church:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the New Bedford City Council hereby honors **ST. LAWRENCE MARTYR CHURCH ON ITS 200TH ANNIVERSARY**, and their two hundred years of service to Our Lord, commends them for their devotion to St. Lawrence, and thanks the Pastors and Priests who provided leadership and guidance to their parishioners and to the Sisters of Mercy, who for nearly two centuries have educated the children of the Parish and thanks them for the spiritual support and guidance they have provided to the City of New Bedford and joins them in celebrating 200 years of ministry.

Offered by:

Naomi R. A. Carney, Councillor at Large

Scott J. Lima, Councillor Ward Five

Joseph P. Lopes, City Council President

Brad Markey, Councillor Ward One

Linda M. Morad, Councillor at Large

Maria E. Giesta, Councillor Ward Two

Brian K. Gomes, Councillor at Large

Hugh C. Dunn, Councillor Ward Three

Debora Coelho, Councillor at Large

Derek Baptiste, Councillor Ward Four

Ian Abreu, Councillor at Large