

By: Gallego

H.R. No. 366

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Nearly 80 years ago, Father Francis Bugnard, a
2 French missionary from the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, offered the
3 first Mass at St. Joseph's Church in Del Rio, and many dedicated
4 pastors have since followed; and

5 WHEREAS, A religious order of the Roman Catholic Church, the
6 OMI was organized in France in 1816 to spread the teachings of the
7 Church to poor, working people in the country's southern provinces;
8 in 1849, missionary Oblates arrived in the Texas Lower Rio Grande
9 Valley, where they began preaching and building chapels as they
10 traveled along the river on horseback; in 1908, the first parish was
11 established in Del Rio and Father Bugnard, then pastor at Our Lady
12 of Guadalupe, discovered the need for a church to serve worshippers
13 from the Chihuahua area of the city; St. Joseph's Church was
14 officially blessed on December 8, 1927; and

15 WHEREAS, With Father Bugnard's retirement six years later,
16 Father Frederick Caldwell led the church from 1933 to 1935,
17 organizing and developing several parish societies; succeeding
18 him, Father Leoncio Maria Roque served St. Joseph's for eight
19 years, building the first rectory and organizing the Holy Name
20 Society; in 1943, Father Agustin Perez assumed leadership, guiding
21 efforts to remodel the sanctuary, installing a new altar, and
22 establishing the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine; and

23 WHEREAS, Following interim pastor Father Alan Brelivet,
24 Father Roque returned to the parish for two years in 1952 and

1 subsequently oversaw the construction of the present-day church;
2 two interim pastors, Fathers Raymond Jacobs and Joseph Buckley,
3 followed, and then in 1956, Father Nicolas Diez began a 12-year
4 tenure; during this time, the church welcomed its first parochial
5 vicar and St. Joseph's Parish School was opened; Father William
6 Luyten served the church for a year before the assignment of Father
7 Jose Velasco, whose decade of service to St. Joseph's included
8 building the parish offices and remodeling the rectory; and

9 WHEREAS, After a period of service by interim pastors Fathers
10 David Tarlizzo, Richard Philion, and Edward Ward, Father Richard
11 Guerra joined the church in 1983 and remained for almost 10 years;
12 his parochial vicar, Father Robert Pena, assumed the role of pastor
13 in 1992 and served for six years, in which time the church purchased
14 land and built religious activity centers in Cienegas and
15 Chaparral; St. Joseph's current pastor, Father Ramiro Cortez,
16 arrived in 1998 and Father William Zapalac joined him as parochial
17 vicar in 2001; and

18 WHEREAS, The St. Joseph's community has further benefited
19 from the commitment and faith of the following parochial vicars:
20 Fathers James Smith, Robert Coupé, René Copet, Edward Blown, Blas
21 G. Mokarzel, Manuel Villarreal, and Charles Moran; and

22 WHEREAS, To devote oneself to religious service is truly a
23 noble calling, and, through the years, the many dedicated leaders
24 of St. Joseph's Church in Del Rio have built an inspiring legacy of
25 compassion and faith; now, therefore, be it

26 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 79th Texas
27 Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby honor the former and

1 present clergy of St. Joseph's Church and extend to all who have
2 shared their leadership and vision with the congregation through
3 the years heartfelt appreciation for their outstanding service;
4 and, be it further

5 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
6 prepared for the church as an expression of high regard by the Texas
7 House of Representatives.