

Proclamation

WHEREAS,

The Shrine of the Immaculate Conception is the oldest church in North Georgia and Atlanta's first Catholic Church and oldest complete building standing in downtown Atlanta; the church was established in 1848 and the first building was a simple wood frame structure that stood on the same site as the present Shrine of the Immaculate Conception; and



FULTON COUNTY

WHEREAS,

the original church was constructed on the corner of Lloyd Street and Hunter Street, now known as Central Avenue and Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive by an Irish missionary, Father John Barry; it was dedicated and named Church of the Immaculate Conception in early 1849 by Bishop Ignatius A. Reynolds of Charleston, South Carolina; and



FULTON COUNTY

WHEREAS,

behind the altar of their new church, the parishioners hung a reproduction oil painting of Murillo's "Immaculate Conception"; anecdotal evidence states that this painting was chosen because of the special devotion to the Blessed Mother held by early Atlanta Catholics; and



FULTON COUNTY

WHEREAS,

the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception has always been a place of inclusion and service, opening its doors every Saturday for more than 40 years to invite all who will come to the St. Francis Table soup kitchen to feed the hungry and unhoused; the church now operates a food pantry and morning sandwich line as well; and



FULTON COUNTY

WHEREAS,

in terms of inclusion, the Shrine was known as a gay-affirming church during the AIDS epidemic, and many people who suffered from AIDS, as well as their caregivers, met in the church basement for support during the crisis; the Shrine is still known as a safe haven for LGBTQ+ people and participates in the Atlanta Pride parade every year;



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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Fulton County Board of Commissioners recognizes the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception for 175 years of service and refuge to all of Christ's beloved children, and does hereby proclaim Sunday, November 5, 2023 as "THE SHRINE OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION APPRECIATION DAY" in Fulton County, Georgia.



FULTON COUNTY

Fulton County Board of Commissioners

Chair to the Commission

Attest:

Clerk to the Commission

F U L T O N C O U N T Y