

APR 15 2015

OKLAHOMA SECRETARY  
OF STATE

## STATE OF OKLAHOMA



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

## Proclamation

**Whereas**, St. Joseph Old Cathedral is the oldest Catholic parish in Oklahoma City, with its first church opening August 4, 1889 and replaced in 1904 with a larger brick church at 307 NW Fourth St., which still stands today; and

**Whereas**, two weeks after the April 22, 1889, Land Run, the fledgling parish of 16 families began plans to build a church. Work on the 24-x-40-foot wooden structure began July 1, 1889. On Aug. 4, the 650-pound bell for the very first time rang out its joyful call to worship for all to hear; and

**Whereas**, St. Joseph soon outgrew its wood-framed building. On Oct. 19, 1901, excavation began for the foundation of a 137-x-64-foot brick building. This new church was solemnly dedicated by Oklahoma's first bishop, the Rt. Rev. Theophile Meerschaert on Dec. 18, 1904 and St. Joseph Church become the first cathedral in Oklahoma; and

**Whereas**, over subsequent decades, the church building, both inside and outside, has undergone several renovations, and has been remodeled numerous times. The most extensive restoration project, however, was necessary by the bombing of the nearby Murrah Federal Building. The old cathedral endured tremendous damage during that megaton explosion. Amazingly, the tabernacle candle remained lit throughout the violent blast and the beautiful old crucifix with its life-size corpus remained unscratched by the flying glass and debris;

**Whereas**, after being closed for almost two years, on Dec. 1, 1997, a joyful rededication Mass was celebrated in the newly restored cathedral. The happy re-opening of St. Joseph culminated in May 1997 with the solemn dedication of the "And Jesus Wept" statue; and

**Whereas**, today, St. Joseph Old Cathedral has grown into a vibrant and thriving part of Oklahoma's capital city. Its cosmopolitan and culturally diverse membership enlivens this growing downtown parish. Each year, hundreds of visitors from all over the nation and the globe attend Masses here; some simply stop in to admire its great beauty and to appreciate it for what it certainly is, an enduring testament to God's ever-present love;

**Now, Therefore, I, Mary Fallin, Governor**, do hereby proclaim May 1, 2015 as

**"St. Joseph Old Cathedral Parish Day"**

in the state of Oklahoma.

*In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Oklahoma to be affixed.*



ATTEST:

*Done at the Capitol, in the City of Oklahoma City, this 15<sup>th</sup> day of April, in the Year of Our Lord two thousand and fifteen, and of the State of Oklahoma in the one hundred and seventh year.*

*C. Benz*  
SECRETARY OF STATE

*Mary Fallin*  
GOVERNOR

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