

Senate Resolution 565

By: Senators Balfour of the 9th and Johnson of the 1st

A RESOLUTION

Recognizing March 12, 2009, as Catholic Day at the state capitol; and for other purposes.

WHEREAS, the Catholic presence in Georgia began with Spanish missionaries in the 16th Century; and

WHEREAS, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Savannah was established on July 3, 1850, with its territory extending over the entire State of Georgia, and included a total of about 5,000 Catholics; and

WHEREAS, the Diocese of Atlanta was established in 1956 by separating the northern 69 counties of the state, giving the state two dioceses, Savannah and Atlanta; and

WHEREAS, in 1962 the Diocese of Atlanta was elevated to the status of Archdiocese, becoming the center of an Ecclesiastical Province which now covers the States of Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, the Diocese of Savannah now covers 90 counties in South Georgia, serving a population of approximately 80,000 Catholics in 54 parishes and 25 missions and mission stations; and

WHEREAS, the Diocese of Savannah also serves five Catholic high schools, 16 elementary schools, two Catholic hospitals, and many other social service facilities, all of which are available to all persons without discrimination; and

WHEREAS, the Archdiocese of Atlanta now has a Catholic population of nearly 750,000 with 99 parishes and missions; and

WHEREAS, there are nine Catholic high schools, 21 elementary schools, five Catholic health care facilities, as well as other social service agencies available to all persons without discrimination in the Archdiocese of Atlanta; and

WHEREAS, the Archdiocese of Atlanta and the Diocese of Savannah have, through their institutions and their people, reached out to serve all people in Georgia, whether newcomers or long established families, from all parts of the world, including refugees, immigrants, and those seeking asylum from religious and political oppression.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body commend the many members of the Catholic faith in Georgia for their commitment to the spiritual and temporal welfare of the state and recognize March 12, 2009, as Catholic Day at the state capitol.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to Archbishop of Atlanta Wilton D. Gregory.