

Proclamation



Bob Buckhorn, Mayor

WHEREAS, **Saint Peter Claver Catholic Church and School** was founded in 1893 when the Jesuit Fathers at Sacred Heart Church purchased land to build a school for the African American children of the Tampa, Florida community, and it is one of Tampa's oldest Catholic Churches and the only historically Black Catholic Church in the community; and

WHEREAS, Saint Peter Claver Catholic Church and School is named in honor of Saint Peter Claver, S.J. (1580-1654), a Spanish Jesuit priest and missionary born in Catalonia who became the patron saint of slaves and seafarers after his many years of dedication to his ministry and to human rights; and

WHEREAS, classes at Saint Peter Claver Catholic School began on February 2, 1894 with only sixteen students, but just ten days later arson destroyed the school building, so a parcel of land was purchased at Scott and Governor Streets where a new structure was built, and by the close of the 1894 school year, enrollment had increased to eighty students; and

WHEREAS, its success mandated a larger facility, so a beautiful two-story red brick building was dedicated in 1929, and thereafter an annex was erected, modular classrooms added, science lab installed, and the school has grown to include students in Pre-Kindergarten through the 8th Grade; and

WHEREAS, the mission of Saint Peter Claver Catholic School is to be a sanctuary of faith, hope and love where each child is prepared for their future in a supportive learning environment centered around God and nourished through Sacrament and Word, and it accomplishes it through spiritual, intellectual, physical, social and moral formation, and it has one of the lowest teacher-to-student ratios in Florida; and

WHEREAS, the City of Tampa is pleased to congratulate Father Hugh Chikawe, Pastor, Maria Babatunde, Principal, teachers, staff, students, and supporters as they kick-off the year-long **Saint Peter Claver Catholic Church and School's 125th Anniversary Celebration** beginning on Sunday, September 10, 2017 with a **Celebration Mass** followed by a reception, and upcoming events during the year will include opportunities to share with the community all that has been accomplished since this great historic institution was established well over a century ago.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bob Buckhorn, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the city of Tampa, Florida, do hereby proclaim Sunday, September 10, 2017 as

"SAINT PETER CLAVER CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL DAY"

in the city of Tampa, Florida, and urge all citizens to join me in recognizing the rich history and many contributions Saint Peter Claver Catholic Church and School has made to our community including its many outreach programs, and in thanking them for their dedication to the children who have been taught, nurtured, prepared, and shaped for a bright future, allowing them to reach their full potential.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 31st day of August, 2017.



Bob Buckhorn

Mayor