

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. 8530



Introduced by Representative Eric L. Olivarez

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The National Shrine of Our Mother of Perpetual Help is one of the largest Marian churches in the Philippines. Thousands of devotees flood the church every Wednesday to attend Mass and pray the Novena of Our Mother of Perpetual Help. This tradition of Wednesday worship by the devotees of the Mother of Perpetual Help made popular the term "Baclaran Day" in Metro Manila. During this Baclaran Day, the roads leading to the church are congested by thousands of devotees and pilgrims. The Shrine celebrates the annual feast day of the Icon of Our Mother of Perpetual Help every 27th of June, drawing more pilgrims and devotees to throng to the church.

Since the Feast of the Immaculate Conception 1958, the shrine has been authorized by the Holy See to remain open 24 hours a day throughout the entire year. The shrine itself was blessed by Pope John Paul II during his first Apostolic Visit to Metro Manila in 1981.

The present modern Romanesque church is the third to be built on the same site since the second church was burned during the Japanese occupation. It took six (6) years to build the present church from the donations of the devotees and pilgrims.

The National Shrine of Our Mother of Perpetual Help, popularly known as Baclaran Church, has been part of the socio-cultural landscape of the country, particularly in Metro Manila and has been a pilgrim site among the millions of Marian devotees in the Philippines, and also attracts domestic and foreign tourists.

Henceforth, it is essential that government take the necessary steps or programs to conserve and preserve this important cultural site, and protect and secure the thousands of pilgrims and tourists flocking to Baclaran Church.

In view of the foregoing, passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric L. Olivarez", with a stylized flourish at the end.

ERIC L. OLIVAREZ

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**AN ACT DECLARING THE NATIONAL SHRINE OF OUR MOTHER OF
PERPETUAL HELP OR THE REDEMPTORIST CHURCH (BACLARAN
CHURCH) LOCATED ALONG ROXAS BOULEVARD, PARAÑAQUE CITY A
TOURIST DESTINATION, PROVIDING FOR ITS DEVELOPMENT AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

SECTION 1. The National Shrine of Our Mother of Perpetual Help or the Redemptorist Church (Baclaran Church) located along Roxas Boulevard, Parañaque City and its environ is hereby declared a tourist destination. As such, its development shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT) in coordination with the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) and other concerned agencies subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of heritage site and tourist destinations.

SEC.2. The area encompassing the National Shrine of Our Mother of Perpetual Help and its immediate environs being declared as a heritage site and tourist destination shall be determined by a technical group to be organized by the DOT with NHCP, local government of Parañaque City and other concerned agencies.

SEC. 3 Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the DOT, in coordination with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and other concerned agencies of the government shall prepare a tourism development plan involving the construction, installation and maintenance of such appropriate facilities and infrastructure that shall improve the overall features of the area surrounding the Redemptorist Church , thereby ensuring its accessibility and the security of the faithful and tourists;

Provided, That said development plan shall ensure its preservation and conservation of the historical significance of the area.

SEC. 4. The DOT and its concerned attached agencies shall take immediate steps to implement the appropriate tourism development plan for the National Shrine of Our Mother of Perpetual Help or Redemptorist Church (Baclaran Church) and its immediate environs and shall incorporate the same in the National Tourism Development Plan.

SEC. 5 The Secretary of the DOT shall include in the Department's program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act and internally generated funds of the DOT.

Sec. 6. Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DOT, in consultation with the local government unit of Parañaque City, shall issue rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

SEC. 7. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in any newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,