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LRB100 21866 ALS 39671 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, In 1868, eight families gathered in a newly-constructed, wood-frame building on South Washington Street in Salem, Illinois for the founding of the St. Theresa of Avila Parish; until then, area Catholics attended mass in nearby Odin; however, with the construction of the new building and the help of assistant pastors from neighboring parishes, mass could be celebrated in Salem; by 1933, the parish had grown to include 46 families; and

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WHEREAS, In 1938, oil was discovered in the area, and the parish's membership increased to 67 families, which led Belleville Bishop Henry Althoff to appoint Father A.B. Schomaker to the Salem community in the fall of 1939; his task was to "organize a parish and erect a church"; and

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WHEREAS, The church was built within a year, and Father Schomaker was appointed pastor of St. Theresa of Avila on June 27, 1940; the parish continued to grow, which prompted the construction of a school, staffed by the Adorers of the Blood of Christ, in 1954; and

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WHEREAS, Within 15 years, the school had closed; by 1975, parents were concerned about declining religious values and the education of their children, so they petitioned their pastor

1 and the Belleville Diocese to reopen the school; and

2 WHEREAS, At the time of the petition, a large printing firm
3 relocated to Salem, and many of its 1,800 employees were
4 Catholic; in 1976, the school reopened, staffed by three
5 Felician Sisters from Chicago and three lay teachers; and

6 WHEREAS, St. Theresa Parish is a vital part of the larger
7 Salem community and continues to witness to the Gospel through
8 the celebration of the sacraments, outreach to the poor and
9 marginalized, defense of the dignity of all human life, and the
10 cultivation of moral character and civic responsibility;
11 therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
13 HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
14 applaud and commend the Salem community for their willingness
15 to support the St. Theresa of Avila parish and school since its
16 founding 150 years ago, and we recognize the parish on the
17 occasion of its anniversary; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
19 presented to Father Ben Stern as an expression of our esteem
20 and respect.