



HR1364

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives wish to congratulate the congregation of St.
4 John the Baptist Catholic Church in Piopolis on the occasion of
5 the church's 175th anniversary in 2016; and

6 WHEREAS, The rich history of St. John The Baptist Catholic
7 Church began in 1841, when 25 pioneers left Ersingen, Germany
8 for the New World; they arrived in what is now Piopolis on
9 August 21, 1841; in 1843, additional settlers came from Germany,
10 including Tobias Brummer, and the congregation's first Mass and
11 Baptism were performed by Fr. Elisha Durbin in a log cabin; and

12 WHEREAS, In 1844, a 40-acre tract of land was bought by
13 Cajetan Aydt and later deeded to Bishop William Quarters, the
14 Catholic Bishop of Chicago; in 1846, the first log church was
15 completed and St. John's first Mass was celebrated on Ash
16 Wednesday; in 1860, a new frame church was completed and Bishop
17 Juncker of Alton came for Confirmation; in 1864, the parish's
18 rectory was completed and Fr. Edward Harriman began serving as
19 Pastor; and

20 WHEREAS, In 1865, St. John's second resident pastor, Fr.
21 Winterhalter, was installed and the Precious Blood Sisters of
22 Burwell, Germany located their new convent at the church; in

1 1870, a two-story Motherhouse and school frame building was
2 completed and nine nuns from Gurtwell, Germany arrived; in
3 1871, the third pastor, Fr. John Neuhaus, was installed; in
4 1876, Fr. John N. Enzilberger became the fourth resident
5 pastor; and

6 WHEREAS, In 1877, 13 acres of church property were laid out
7 into 50 lots to become a small village named Piopolis in honor
8 of Pope Pius IX, who was celebrating his 50th year as Bishop;
9 in 1880, the foundation was laid for a new church after the
10 frame church was moved aside; in 1881, the cornerstone of the
11 brick church was laid; the church was completed by the end of
12 1882 and was dedicated on October 1, 1884; and

13 WHEREAS, In 1892, a new rectory was built at St. John's; in
14 1902, Fr. Bernard Reusch was installed as the fifth resident
15 pastor; in 1910, new altars were installed in the first brick
16 church; in 1914, a new two-story sisters house was built on the
17 grounds of the church's present day rectory; in 1924, the
18 church's present school building was completed and dedicated by
19 Bishop Henry Althoff; in 1927, Fr. Eckerman started the St.
20 John's Annual Picnic; and

21 WHEREAS, On June 13, 1953, a severe storm damaged St.
22 John's brick church, which had to be torn down and replaced; in
23 1954, the cornerstone of the second brick church was laid in

1 March and construction was completed and the building's first
2 Mass held on Christmas Day; in 1955, Fr. Eckerman became ill
3 and was replaced with Fr. Edmund Schumacher as administrator;
4 after Fr. Eckerman's death in 1962, Fr. Schumacher became the
5 seventh pastor of the parish; in 1965, Fr. Schumacher passed
6 away and Fr. Meinrad Dunn was assigned as the eighth pastor in
7 October; in 1972, Fr. Dunn left the church and was succeeded by
8 Fr. Albert Jerome; and

9 WHEREAS, In 1975, St. John's Parish Council was
10 established, with various organizations being represented; in
11 1976, Fr. Jerome was transferred and Fr. James Van Oss was
12 installed as the 10th pastor of the parish; in 1981, the Parish
13 Council voted to redecorate the church and the Ministers of the
14 Eucharist was created; on July 6, 1982, Fr. Emil Maziarz was
15 installed as the 11th pastor; in 1983, Fr. Maziarz was assigned
16 to the Chancery Office and Fr. Joseph A. Lawler became the 12th
17 pastor of the church; and

18 WHEREAS, In 1991, St. John's celebrated the church's
19 Sesquicentennial of the Parish with various activities
20 including a photo directory, a history of the parish, a
21 re-enactment of the arrival of the first immigrants to
22 Piopolis, and other observances; in 1993, The Holy Name
23 Shooting Match was held in October and a Mission was held in
24 November; on April 19, 1996, a tornado hit the church, causing

1 over \$100,000 in damages; new roofs were placed on the garage,
2 house, school, and one-half of the church; in 2002, an outdoor
3 pavilion and new vesting cabinetry were installed; and

4 WHEREAS, St. John's hosted the Farm Blessing on April 26,
5 2007; on May 22, 2009, Fr. Slawomir Ptak of Poland became the
6 church's Associate Pastor; following Fr. Joseph Lawler's
7 retirement on July 12, 2011, Fr. Ptak became the 13th pastor of
8 the parish; and

9 WHEREAS, The congregation of St. John's serve as models of
10 hard work, integrity, and dedication for the people of the
11 State of Illinois; therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
13 NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
14 congratulate the congregation of St. John the Baptist Catholic
15 Church on the occasion of the church's 175th anniversary and
16 wish them continued success and happiness in the future; and be
17 it further

18 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
19 presented to the congregation of St. John the Baptist Catholic
20 Church as a symbol of our esteem and respect.