



HR0596

LRB100 14214 ALS 28986 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives wish to congratulate St. Mary's Parish in Bloomington on the occasion of its Sesquicentennial anniversary; and

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WHEREAS, St. Mary's was founded in 1852 when a few German Catholic families arranged to have a priest from the Catholic boys' school, who spoke German, recite mass; as the church grew, the bishop agreed to send a priest for regular services, and the church eventually acquired a resident pastor; in 1869, parishioners built a small frame church; in 1886, the present Gothic church was built; by the early 1900s, the Franciscan Friars of Cincinnati, Ohio assumed the pastoral leadership; and

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WHEREAS, In 1962, St Mary's was remodeled, including the additions of new stained glass windows, a chapel with a baptistery, and a rear entrance to the church; and

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WHEREAS, St. Mary's Hispanic community donated a statue commemorating Our Lady of Guadalupe in 1985; the statue was blessed and placed in the baptistery; when the church was 111 years old, a \$250,000 interior renovation was completed; the renovation included a new wooden altar and portable baptismal font; the black, white, and pink marble from the old main altar

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1 and side altars was removed and used for decorative purposes
2 elsewhere in the church; the renovation revealed two windows
3 that had been covered in the 1920s; stained glass was added,
4 and the windows were restored; the church was rededicated by
5 the Most Reverend John J. Myers on September 22, 1996; and

6 WHEREAS, St. Mary's serves nearly 1,300 households; in
7 addition to daily masses, the church offers five weekend
8 masses, included one celebrated in Spanish; the church also
9 supports a grade school, which offers Catholic education from
10 grades pre-K through eighth; and

11 WHEREAS, The Franciscan Friars returned the care of St.
12 Mary's faith community to the Diocese of Peoria in June 2016,
13 after 135 years of faithful service and pastoral leadership;
14 the church's current pastor is Fr. Greg Nelson; Fr. Joe Baker
15 is the parochial vicar, and Fr. Tim Hepner serves as the
16 vocations director in residence; Jose Montenegro, Loren Keim,
17 O.F.S., and Antonio Herrera serve as deacons; therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
19 HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
20 recognize St. Mary's Parish on its Sesquicentennial
21 anniversary, and we wish it many more years; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be

1 presented to St. Mary's Parish.