

RESOLUTION NUMBER 79
St. Matthews the Apostle Parish

WHEREAS, we have been apprised that St. Matthews the Apostle Parish will be receiving a formal dedication of the Shrine of St. Peter Claver, the Jesuit priest who was canonized and elevated to Sainthood in 1888; and

WHEREAS, St. Peter Claver was born at Verdu, Catalonia, Spain, in 1580, of impoverished parents descended from ancient and distinguished families. He studied at the Jesuit college of Barcelona and entered the Jesuit novitiate at Tarragona in 1602; and

WHEREAS, he took his final vows on August 8, 1604. While studying philosophy at Majorca, the young religious was influenced by St. Alphonsus Rodriguez to go to the Indies and save millions of perishing souls; and

WHEREAS, in 1610, he landed at Cartagena (modern Colombia), the principle slave market of the New World, where a thousand slaves were gathered every month. After his ordination in 1616, he dedicated himself by special vow to the service of the Negro slaves-a work that was to last for thirty-three years; and

WHEREAS, he labored unceasingly for the salvation of the African slaves and the abolition of the Negro slave trade, and the love he lavished on them was something that transcended the natural order; and

WHEREAS, boarding the slave ships as they entered the harbor, he would hurry to the revolting inferno of the hold and offer whatever poor refreshments he could afford. He would care for the sick and dying, and instruct the slaves through Negro catechists before administering the Sacraments; and

WHEREAS, through his efforts three hundred thousand souls entered the Church. Furthermore, he did not lose sight of his converts when they left the ships, but followed them to the plantations to which they were sent, encouraged them to live as Christians, and prevailed on their masters to treat them humanely. He passed away in 1654.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Aldermen of the City of St. Louis that we pause in our deliberations to recognize St. Matthews the Apostle Parish and we further direct the Clerk of this Board to spread a copy of this Resolution across the minutes of these proceedings and to prepare a commemorative copy to the end that it may be presented to our honoree at a time and place deemed appropriate by the Sponsor.

Introduced on the 28th day of June, 2013 by:

Honorable Samuel L. Moore, Alderman 4th Ward

Adopted this 28th day of June, 2013 as attested by:

David W. Sweeney
Clerk, Board of Aldermen

Lewis E. Reed
President, Board of Aldermen