

RESOLUTION NUMBER 94

WHEREAS, our beloved Saint Peter Claver “the Apostle of Slaves” (a man who knew how to love), was born in 1580 in Verdie, a town in Northern Spain; died September 8, 1654; Beatified by Pope Pius IX in 1851; declared a Patron Saint of all Negro Missions in 1888, after his canonization; and

WHEREAS, in 1604, he took vows and became united with the Society of Jesus and thought himself as a slave of God, but became a slave of slaves; and

WHEREAS, at the age of thirty, he set out for the new world, upon arrival to Cartagena, he knelt down and kissed the ground, because to him it was the promise land; and

WHEREAS, St. Peter Claver dedicated himself to bringing some degree of comfort to the slaves. Whenever the slave ships arrived, he visited the slave pens distributing gifts of food, medicine, brandy and tobacco, caring for the sick, ministering to the souls of all; and

WHEREAS, it is said that, in forty years, he is believed to have baptized over 300,000 slaves and never admitted any inferiority in them; he was a true brother, not master and there were many miracles attributed to Father Claver; and

WHEREAS, Father Claver, made frequent visits to the hospitals and prisons in town and spent many hours of each day hearing confessions and preaching in public squares; worn out by his labors, he endured a painful illness for four years until his death; and

WHEREAS, the miracle which helped to sanctify him occurred in St. Louis at the Shrine of Joseph. Today the relic of St. Peter Claver is enshrined at the church, St. Matthew “the Apostle” Catholic church and the White House Jesuit Retreat House in St. Louis, Missouri;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Aldermen of the City of St. Louis that we pause in our deliberations to join with the Knights and Ladies of St. Peter Claver in the celebration of St. Peter Claver Day and we thank them for their many contributions to the St. Louis community and we further direct the Clerk of this Board to prepare a commemorative copy of this Resolution to the end that it may be presented to our honorees at a time and place deemed appropriate by the Sponsor.

Introduced on the 1st day of September, 2006 by:

Honorable Michael McMillan, Alderman 19th Ward

Adopted this the 1st day of September, 2006 as attested:

Patrick J. Connaghan
Clerk, Board of Aldermen

James F. Shrewsbury
President, Board of Aldermen