



Office of the Chicago City
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Meeting Date:	7/6/2011
Sponsor(s):	Reilly, Brendan (42)
Type:	Resolution
Title:	Congratulations extended to Denedictine Sisters of Chicago
Committee(s) Assignment:	

Congratulations extended to the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago on their 150th
Anniversary

Whereas, August 23, 2011, marks the anniversary of three shy and weary Sisters (32 year old Sister Frances Knapp, 20 year old Sister Antonia Herman, and Sister Gonzaga) on Lake Shore Michigan train on August 23, 1861; and

Whereas, Sister Frances Knapp, only in America for six years served as the little community's superior for a year; and

Whereas, Mother Nepomucene, recorded to be the first prioress of the community, arrived in 1862, inaugurated the novitiate, and established a well disciplined community modeled on the Eichstatt, Bavaria tradition; and

Whereas, with the help of the Benedictine Fathers from St. Vincent Abbey, the Sisters settled into St. Joseph school and one-room convent located in a small frame house behind the church at Chicago Avenue and Cass Street (now Wabash Avenue); and

Whereas, despite the poverty to be found everywhere in the growing city, they managed to do much for the Church and school in a short time; and

Whereas, the young community grew rapidly, having twelve members by 1866, and opened St. Joseph Academy for girls; and

Whereas, in March of 1870, at age 26, Sr. Theresa Krug became the first elected prioress; and

Whereas, in the great Chicago Fire on October 8, 1871, the uninsured Sisters lost their home, school and every article they possessed and were provided temporary refuge by Notre Dame Sisters and Madames of the Sacred Heart until they left Chicago to stay at Benedictine houses in Pennsylvania and New Jersey; and

Whereas, Mother Theresa after appealing for funds from communities across the country, soon returned with her Sisters to continue their ministry, and resumed teaching at the new parish school in September 1972; and

Whereas, on July 1, 1872, the Illinois State legislature approved the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago as a lawfully organized corporation under the laws of the State of Illinois; and

Whereas, by September, 1874, the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago had purchased five lots close to the property of the relocated St. Joseph Parish, near what is now Hill, and

Orleans Streets, had built a frame convent, and sent three members to Nauvoo, IL where a new religious community was formed and became independent; and

Whereas, after 1882 the Sisters opened a “select school for girls” across the street from St. Joseph School, named for Saints Benedict and Scholastica; and

Whereas, During a the period of expansion in the 1880s the Sisters were sent to teach at Fourteen Holy Martyrs in Baltimore, and in the decades that followed into the twentieth century, the Benedictine Sisters took positions as teachers in eight parishes in the Archdiocese of Chicago; and

Whereas, In 1886 three Sisters were sent to Breckenridge, Colorado, missioned to establish St. Gertrude's School and administer a small hospital that served that mining community; and

Whereas, the shifting population trends in Colorado resulted in the Benedictine Sisters moving from Breckenridge to Cañon City, Colorado, in 1891 where they operated a boarding and day school for girls until 2011; and

Whereas, the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago over the years since 1890 have taught in parish schools, offered pastoral ministry, and done social work in southern Colorado; and

Whereas, in 1906, the Sisters moved to Rogers Park area on the far north side of Chicago, where the Benedictine Sisters still reside today in the original building; and

Whereas, the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago opened at the monastery site Saint Scholastica Academy, a corporate ministry of the community, operating today as a college preparatory International Baccalaureate school for young women; and

Whereas, the beginnings of their community were small, the founding Sisters were risk takers and even the Great Chicago Fire did not prevent the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago from becoming a community of women committed to lives of prayer and work, serving God by responding to needs of God's people; and

Whereas, Chicago, a flourishing city where business and politics keep pace with the population, continues to provide the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago with many challenges and opportunities to serve; and

Whereas, the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago originally came to educate children of immigrants their education ministry has expanded over the 150 years to service within twelve Catholic parishes, with Sisters serving in both private and public sectors, from pre-school to university level; and

Whereas, the Benedictine Sisters have engaged in social services, worked with those experiencing homelessness and imprisonment, and served as counselors and therapists; and

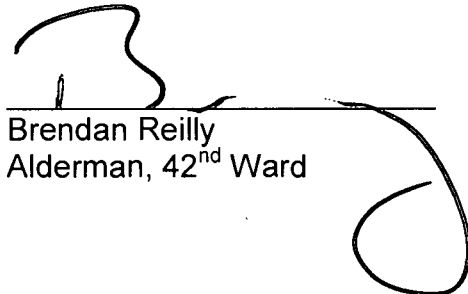
Whereas, the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago have actively engaged in working for justice, civil rights, and reform of immigration law, taken corporate stands for peace and against torture and trafficking; and

Whereas, on August 23, 2011, outside Hotel St. Benedict Flats, a City of Chicago landmark building at the corner of Chicago and Wabash Avenues, the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago will officially begin a year of celebration commemorating 150 years of presence in the city of Chicago; and

Whereas, Hotel St. Benedict Flats, one of the city's finest late 19th century apartment buildings, built over the charred remains of St. Joseph Parish buildings, was named to honor the Benedictine priests who served at the Church there and the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago whose original home was on the property; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, assembled this sixth of July, do hereby recognize and honor the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago for their 150 years of service to Chicago; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago, as a token of our appreciation and esteem for their efforts in the past 150 years in Chicago, with genuine good wishes for many more years of service and ministry at St. St. Scholastica Monastery in Rogers Park/West Ridge and in the city of Chicago.



Brendan Reilly
Alderman, 42nd Ward