
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 328 Session of
2008

INTRODUCED BY FUMO, FERLO, TARTAGLIONE, WASHINGTON, FONTANA,
TOMLINSON, STOUT, KASUNIC, O'PAKE, ORIE, PUNT, RAFFERTY,
BOSCOLA, ERICKSON, COSTA, GREENLEAF, LOGAN, PILEGGI,
WONDERLING, DINNIMAN, HUGHES, A. WILLIAMS, PIPPY, STACK,
KITCHEN, EARLL AND RHOADES, MAY 12, 2008

INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED, MAY 12, 2008

A RESOLUTION

1 Extending congratulations on the 275th anniversary of the
2 founding of Old St. Joseph's Church.

3 WHEREAS, English Jesuits first arrived in Maryland in 1634,
4 and in 1704, the Jesuits began expanding their missionary
5 efforts to surrounding locations, including Philadelphia; and

6 WHEREAS, In 1733, a small church was established in
7 Philadelphia by Father Joseph Greateon called St. Joseph's
8 Church, and this church was the only place in the British
9 colonies where Mass could be legally celebrated in public until
10 the American Revolution; and

11 WHEREAS, In 1757, Father Robert Harding built a second church
12 that served as the home base for the Jesuit circuit riders who
13 expanded the mission to other mid-Atlantic states; and

14 WHEREAS, Old St. Joseph's Church was integral in establishing
15 both the nation's first hospital, Pennsylvania Hospital, and the
16 first Roman Catholic orphanage to help care for orphaned

1 children after the 1793 epidemic of yellow fever; and

2 WHEREAS, In 1808, Philadelphia became a diocese and
3 Philadelphia's first two bishops began residing at the church;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, In 1839, Father Felix Joseph Barbelin established
6 the current location and building for St. Joseph's Church, and
7 soon the church became known as Old St. Joseph's Church; and

8 WHEREAS, In 1840, St. Joseph's Hospital was established due
9 to the efforts of Father Barbelin to help care for Irish
10 immigrants who could not be cared for due to overcrowding at
11 other hospitals; and

12 WHEREAS, Father Barbelin also established many education
13 programs, including four parochial schools, a well-known Sunday
14 school and St. Joseph's University; and

15 WHEREAS, In the 1950s, the gardens and open space were
16 created when buildings to the north of Old St. Joseph's Church
17 were demolished; and

18 WHEREAS, In 1985, efforts were made to reach out to the
19 growing homeless population of Philadelphia, and programs were
20 created to serve dinner to homeless and low-income men and to
21 deliver dinner to people who lived in the area surrounding the
22 church; and

23 WHEREAS, Old St. Joseph's Church continues to build upon its
24 rich history of public service and ministry; therefore be it

25 RESOLVED, That the Senate congratulate Old St. Joseph's
26 Church on the occasion of its 275th anniversary.