

State of Wisconsin



1997 Assembly Joint Resolution 120

ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION

Relating to: honoring the Society of Jesus for its substantial contributions to the quality of spiritual, intellectual and cultural life in Wisconsin.

Whereas, the Society of Jesus was founded on September 22, 1540, by the Basque priest Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556); and

Whereas, the society was founded for “the progress of souls in Christian life and doctrine and the propagation of the faith”; and

Whereas, the Jesuits had an active community life that encompassed a number of forms of spiritual ministry, focusing heavily on educational institutions, especially universities and seminaries; and

Whereas, French Jesuit priests accompanied the fur trappers who penetrated the Great Lakes region and made contact with the Native American tribes of the area; and

Whereas, by 1661, the first Jesuit priest in Wisconsin, Father Rene Menard, S.J., arrived near the source of the Wisconsin River at Lac Vieux Desert; and

Whereas, Menard perished and was replaced in October 1665 by Father Claude Allouez, who resided at a trading post at Chequamegon Bay and who opened a mission post at Oconto and in 1670 opened a chapel dedicated to St. Francis Xavier at De Pere; and

Whereas, other Jesuit missionaries such as Claude Dablon and Louis Andre traveled throughout Wisconsin preaching the Christian gospel, celebrating the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and baptizing converts to the faith; and

Whereas, in 1669, Father Jacques Marquette arrived at the mission at Chequamegon Bay, and in 1673 he joined the young trader Louis Jolliet in plying the waters of the Fox and Wisconsin rivers, and camped near Milwaukee from November 23 to 27, 1674; and

Whereas, a vigorous American Catholic Church was growing and beginning in Baltimore in 1789, and the new nation was being carved up into dioceses in order to keep up with the spread of the American population westward; and

Whereas, in November 1843, the Diocese of Milwaukee, encompassing the entire territory of Wisconsin, was established and Father John Martin Henni, a Swiss-German priest, was appointed as bishop; and

Whereas, in 1856, Henni purchased land on “the Hill” — at present 10th and State streets — in Milwaukee for the purpose of establishing a school directed by the Jesuits; and

Whereas, in March 1864, the Wisconsin legislature formally incorporated Marquette College, to be erected on the 10th and State streets site; and

Whereas, on August 15, 1880, ground was broken for Marquette College, and the college was dedicated on August 28, 1881; and

Whereas, in 1907 Marquette College moved to its new buildings on Grand (Wisconsin) Avenue; and

Whereas, Marquette College was transformed from a liberal arts college to a university in 1908; and

Whereas, for the past 337 years the Society of Jesus has profoundly influenced the quality of life in the area that is now known as Wisconsin; and

Whereas, over the past 117 years, Marquette University has played an integral role in educating hundreds of thousands of men and women from around the world; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That the members of the Wisconsin legislature, during this, our Sesquicentennial year, respectfully honor the contributions made by the Jesuits in furthering Christianity and the advancement of Catholic higher education in the state of Wisconsin; and, be it further

Resolved, That the assembly chief clerk shall provide a copy of this joint resolution to the Reverend Robert Wild, S.J., president of Marquette University.

Senator Fred Risser
President of the Senate

Representative Scott R. Jensen
Speaker of the Assembly

Date

Charles R. Sanders
Assembly Chief Clerk