

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. _____

Commemorating the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Sisters of
Charity of Nazareth, on December 1, 1812.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. McCONNELL) submitted the following
resolution; which was referred to the Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Commemorating the 200th anniversary of the founding of
the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, on December 1, 1812.

Whereas 19-year-old Catherine Spalding, born in Charles
County, Maryland, and Bishop John Baptist David, born
in France, responded to the need for education on the
Kentucky frontier by founding the Sisters of Charity of
Nazareth (referred to in this preamble as the “Sisters”),
on December 1, 1812;

Whereas, after Ellen O’Connell, a gifted teacher from Balti-
more, Maryland, and daughter of a college professor,
joined the Sisters and prepared Catherine Spalding and
Harriet Gardiner for teaching, the 3 Sisters opened their
first school, in 1814, at St. Thomas Farm, in Nelson
County, Kentucky;

Whereas, after 2 years of teaching, the school serviced both boarding and day students with a total enrollment of 37 girls, including 13 non-Catholic students;

Whereas, in 1822, the Sisters purchased property located 3 miles north of Bardstown, Kentucky and named that property Nazareth;

Whereas, at Nazareth, the Sisters built log houses and a new school, known as Nazareth Academy;

Whereas, in 1825, Henry Clay, Kentucky statesman and orator, gave the first commencement address at Nazareth Academy, where his daughter, granddaughter, and great-granddaughter eventually received an education, along with Sarah Knox Taylor, the daughter of President Zachary Taylor;

Whereas, during the Civil War, the Sisters nursed both Union and Confederate soldiers;

Whereas Dr. J. O. Murray, a physician in the Union Army in Louisville, Kentucky, wrote to Nazareth, "I regret very much to inform you of the death of Sister Catherine Malone on January 31, 1862, at General Hospital No. 1 in this city. She, as well as the other sisters at this hospital, have been untiring and most efficient in nursing the sick soldiers. The military authorities are under the greatest obligation to the sisters of your order.";

Whereas, in 1861, at the request of a commanding officer of the Union Army, 22-year-old Sister Mary Lucy Dosh and the other Sisters at St. Mary's Academy in Paducah, Kentucky closed their school to nurse Union soldiers and Confederate prisoners of war;

Whereas, while nursing, Sister Mary Lucy Dosh consoled patients and often gave up her own food to provide nourishment for the sick and wounded;

Whereas Sister Mary Lucy Dosh contracted typhoid fever and died on December 29, 1861, resulting in doctors and soldiers from Union and Confederate forces calling a truce to mourn her death and officers from both sides accompanying her body up the Ohio River on the U.S. Gunboat Peacock, for burial at St. Vincent's Academy, in Union County, Kentucky;

Whereas, on January 17, 1865, President Abraham Lincoln sent the following letter to Nazareth as a precaution against any military intrusion: "Let no depredation be committed upon the property or possessions of the Sisters of Charity at Nazareth Academy, near Bardstown, Kentucky.";

Whereas, in 1878, a yellow fever epidemic besieged the people of the Mississippi River Valley, during which time approximately 120,000 cases of yellow fever were reported and 20,000 people died;

Whereas, in Holly Springs, Mississippi, the Sisters closed a local parochial school to nurse the sick, with 6 of the Sisters succumbing to yellow fever between September 22 and October 11, 1878, which prompted the townspeople to erect a monument at the gravesites of the 6 Sisters, honoring their service and sacrifice;

Whereas, in 1918, 29 Sisters, along with sisters from other orders, helped nurse over 10,000 wounded and sick World War I soldiers at Camp Taylor, in Louisville;

Whereas the Sisters, finding the soldiers sleeping on bare mattresses and dressed in uniforms and boots, requested

bed linens and hospital clothing for the sick and wounded at Camp Taylor;

Whereas 90 soldiers, many with Spanish Influenza and battle wounds, died during the night that the Sisters first arrived at Camp Taylor;

Whereas deaths at Camp Taylor noticeably declined as the Sisters provided skilled nursing and a commitment to hygiene;

Whereas an officer remarked that he knew when a Sister was in the barracks at Camp Taylor, because the men were especially quiet and well-mannered;

Whereas, by the mid-20th century, the Sisters were located in 10 States, taught in more than 100 elementary schools, 30 secondary schools, 2 colleges, and 6 schools of nursing, and cared for the sick in 12 hospitals and children in 6 orphanages;

Whereas the Sisters opened their first foreign mission in India in 1947, and subsequent foreign missions in Belize in 1975, Nepal in 1979, and Botswana in 2000;

Whereas, in 1986, Nazareth Home, a nursing care facility that the Sisters opened in 1976, in Louisville, became the first long-term care facility in Kentucky to accept HIV/AIDS patients;

Whereas, as of November 2012, the Sisters—

(1) staff an HIV/AIDS hospice and administer 2 preschools in Botswana; and

(2) provided disaster relief and housing assistance in many places, including—

(A) New Orleans, Louisiana;

(B) Joplin, Missouri;

(C) Nelson County, Kentucky;

(D) Appalachia; and

(E) Belize; and

Whereas the Sisters find inspiration and strength for their service in the words of 2 Corinthians 5:14, “Caritas Christi urget nos” (“the charity of Christ urges us”): Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) commemorates the 200th anniversary of the
3 founding of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth (re-
4 ferred to in this resolution as the “Sisters”), on De-
5 cember 1, 1812;

6 (2) commends the dedicated service of the Sis-
7 ters who provided nursing care during the Civil War,
8 World War I, and epidemics of yellow fever, cholera,
9 and smallpox in the South;

10 (3) recognizes the service of the Sisters in pro-
11 viding health care on the frontier of Kentucky and
12 elsewhere through the establishment of hospitals in
13 Kentucky, 4 other States, the District of Columbia,
14 and abroad;

15 (4) lauds the role that the Sisters continue to
16 play in providing education, health care, and nursing
17 home care in response to the needs of economically
18 and socially disadvantaged individuals, families, and
19 communities; and

1 (5) directs the Secretary of the Senate to trans-
2 mit an enrolled copy of this resolution to the Sisters.