**Resolutions to the Delegates of the 113th Annual State Convention**

**Of the Mississippi Jurisdiction of the Knights of Columbus**

**RESOLUTION Number 11**

Whereas, the Priests of the Sacred Heart, an international congregation of priests and brothers, established a province in the United States in 1934, and

Whereas, during a conversation with Father Michael McCarthy, pastor of St. Mary Cathedral, Natchez, in 1941, Father Charles Talsky, SCJ mentioned that the Priests of the Sacred Heart might be interested in missionary work with Southern Blacks, and

Whereas, Bishop Richard Gerow, learning of that potential interest, invited the Priests of the Sacred Heart to work to build the Church and to work among the poor in northern Mississippi, and

Whereas, Father John Flanagan, SCJ became the first member of the Priests of the Sacred Heart to work in Mississippi, being assigned in 1942 as associate pastor at St. Patrick Church, Water Valley, and beginning what is now known as Sacred Heart Southern Missions, and

Whereas, Father Flanagan was named as pastor of St. Joseph Church, Holly Springs in 1943 and the Priests of the Sacred Heart were given pastoral responsibility for five counties in northern Mississippi: Marshall, Benton, Tippah, Tate and Desoto, an area of over 2,000 square miles, and

Whereas, learning of a small cluster of Catholic families in Walls, and seeing the poverty of the area, the Priests of the Sacred Heart decided to build Sacred Heart Church in Walls in 1944, and

Whereas, as clusters of Catholic families were discovered in Desoto County, missions were established to meet the pastoral needs of the people, and

Whereas, knowing that education is the best tool to break the cycle of poverty, the Priests of the Sacred Heart founded Sacred Heart School in Walls in 1947, and, in Holly Springs, St. Mary School for African American students in 1948 and St. Joseph School for white students in 1951, inviting the School Sisters of St. Francis to teach in each of the schools, and

Whereas, Fr. Gregory Bezy, SCJ, who was assigned as the first development director for Sacred Heart Southern Missions, founded the Sacred Heart Auto League to promote prayerful careful driving on our nation’s streets and highways, and

Whereas, in 1968, the Priests of the Sacred Heart were given pastoral responsibility for four additional counties: Tunica, Alcorn, Prentiss and Tishomingo. For the next 40+ years, the Sacred Heart Southern Missions ministered in the nine northern counties of Mississippi, inviting sisters from a number of religious communities to join them, and

Whereas, currently Sacred Heart Southern Missions serves the Catholic community and the poor in the five counties of northwest Mississippi – Desoto, Tunica, Tate, Marshall and Benton – through a variety of ministries including:

Six parishes: Christ the King / Southaven, Queen of Peace / Olive Branch,
Holy Spirit / Hernando, St. Joseph / Holly Springs, Good Shepherd / Robinsonville and St. Gregory / Senatobia.

Two elementary schools: Sacred Heart / Southaven and Holy Family / Holly Springs.

Social service offices in Walls, Hernando, Olive Branch, Holly Springs, Tunica and Senatobia providing food, emergency assistance, skill development and advocacy; an HIV / AIDS ministry providing support services; a thrift store in Hernando; and the Garden Café, a soup kitchen in Holly Springs.

A volunteer program, attracting high school and college students from around the country as well as local church and civic groups, which primarily makes necessary repairs on the homes of the elderly and the poor.

A housing ministry which built and maintains Dehon Village, a subdivision of 38 rental homes for low income families in Walls as well as “scattered site” housing in Desoto and Marshall Counties.

Sacred Heart Auto League and other programs for friends and benefactors across the United States.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Knights of Columbus, Mississippi Jurisdiction hereby recognize and honor the contributions made by the Priests of the Sacred Heart and the Sacred Heart Southern Missions as they celebrate 75 years of dedicated service to the Catholic Community and the poor of Northwest Mississippi.

***Recommendation:***  Adopt

***Action: Adopted April 30, 2017***

Submitted by: Councils 7120, 8760 and 14051