



Text File

Introduced: 6/16/2015

Bill No: 2015-1748, **Version:** 1

Committee: City Council

Status: Adopted

WHEREAS, the first Croatians arrived in Western Pennsylvania at the turn of the 19th century. Many came to Pittsburgh in 1882 to work in the steel industry, mines, and slaughterhouses on Herrs Island and casket companies in what is now the Strip District. These immigrants came mainly from the large village of Jastrebarsko and surrounding smaller villages near the city of Karlovac; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Joseph Marohnic was a writer and a poet. He established a bookstore near St. Nicholas Roman Catholic Croatian Church, North Side, the first Croatian Parish in America in 1894 in Allegheny City, now known as the North Side of Pittsburgh. He and fellow parishioner F.A. Bogedek both published Croatian-English dictionaries. In 1893, Zdravko Muzina arrived in Pittsburgh and was instrumental in establishing the first Croatian Society in America in 1894 which became the Croatian Fraternal Union, now the largest Croatian Society in the world with members in the United States, Canada and Croatia; and,

WHEREAS, the parish established and operated a school for students in first through tenth grade. Boys left after the 8th grade, and girls studying business curriculum left after the 10th grade, and went on to Allegheny High School until graduation. The immigrants settled next to St. Nicholas Church on East Ohio Street which became known as Mala Jaska or little Jastrebarsko; and,

WHEREAS, Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation declared St. Nicholas Church a Historic Landmark in 1976 because it was the first Croatian Church in America and its unique architectural design; and,

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation in 2015 constructed a walkway that leads to what is now the St. Nicholas Church Historic Site. Artwork created through sandblasting techniques features six images with glimpses of history, the most significant being the St. Nicholas Church. The cornerstone of the church has also been incorporated into this historic site, plus three interpretive panels depicting Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto, St. Nicholas Church and the Mala Jaska Neighborhood. To the right of the memorial wall stands a Pennsylvania Historical Marker; and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby declare Saturday, June 20, 2015 to be “**St. Nicholas Roman Catholic Croatian Church North Side Day**” in the City of Pittsburgh.