
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

DECLARING OCTOBER 11TH A STATE HOLIDAY IN HONOR OF BLESSED
DAMIEN.

1 WHEREAS, Damien de Veuster, born Jozef de Veuster on
2 January 3, 1840, was a Roman Catholic priest and member of the
3 Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary; and
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5 WHEREAS, Damien de Veuster was ordained as Father Damien in
6 the Cathedral of Our Lady of Peace on May 21, 1864, in Honolulu
7 after taking his brother's place as missionary with the Sacred
8 Hearts Mission in Hawaii; and
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10 WHEREAS, Father Damien arrived at the leper settlement at
11 Kalaupapa on Molokai on May 10, 1873, after 200 Catholics
12 presented a petition asking for a resident priest; and
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14 WHEREAS, Father Damien's work at Kalaupapa included medical
15 care and social support services as well as religious
16 ministering; and
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18 WHEREAS, many consider Father Damien's arrival at Kalaupapa
19 a turning point for the community, where basic laws were
20 enforced, shacks became painted houses, working farms were
21 organized, and schools were erected; and
22

23 WHEREAS, at Princess Liliuokalani's request, King David
24 Kalakaua bestowed the honor of Knight Commander of the Royal
25 Order of Kalakaua on Father Damien for his "efforts in
26 alleviating the distresses and mitigating the sorrows of the
27 unfortunate"; and
28

29 WHEREAS, Father Damien died on April 15, 1889, at age 49 of
30 the same disease as those he had comforted and cared for,
31 causing him to be known as a "martyr of charity"; and



1 WHEREAS, on June 4, 1995, Pope John Paul II beatified
2 Father Damien and gave him his official spiritual title of
3 Blessed; and
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5 WHEREAS, Blessed Damien was placed on the liturgical
6 calendar on December 20, 1999, with a feast day celebrated on
7 May 10th; and
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9 WHEREAS, in April 2008, the Holy See ruled that Blessed
10 Damien was indeed responsible for the two miracles attributed to
11 him; and
12

13 WHEREAS, the overnight disappearance of Sister Simplicia
14 Hue's lingering intestinal disease upon her novena to Father
15 Damien in 1895 represents his first miracle; and
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17 WHEREAS, the second miracle attributed to Blessed Damien
18 involved a woman whose cancer disappeared completely after
19 praying over his grave on Molokai in 1997; and
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21 WHEREAS, the recognition of Blessed Damien's miracles
22 resulted in the announcement, on February 21, 2009, of his
23 canonization on October 11, 2009; and
24

25 WHEREAS, the Catholic Encyclopedia calls Blessed Damien
26 "the Apostle of the Lepers," and elsewhere he is known as the
27 "leper priest"; and
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29 WHEREAS, he has been memorialized through statues in
30 Honolulu, Washington, D.C., and Belgium, in the cities of
31 Brumbard, Tremelo, and in Louvain, where he entered the Sacred
32 Hearts Congregation as a postulant; and
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34 WHEREAS, he is venerated in not only the Roman Catholic
35 Church, but the Anglican Communion and individual Lutheran
36 Churches as well; and
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38 WHEREAS, Blessed Damien continues to be a source of
39 inspiration and comfort as the spiritual patron for those with
40 Hansen's Disease (leprosy) and HIV and AIDS; now, therefore,
41

42 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
43 Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session



1 of 2009, the Senate concurring, that this body recognizes
2 October 11th as a state holiday in honor of Blessed Damien; and
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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that individual State departments
5 and agencies are not required to recognize this holiday as a
6 paid holiday; and
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8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
9 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Reverend
10 Clarence (Larry) Silva, Bishop of Honolulu, Father Donal
11 McCarthy, Provincial Superior of the Congregation of the Sacred
12 Hearts, and Father Alfred Bell, Postulator General of the
13 Congregation of the Sacred Hearts.
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16

OFFERED BY:

Mele Carroll

<u>Melita</u>	<u>AMM</u>
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MAR 18 2009

