

1 Introduced by Council Members Peluso and Diamond and Co-Sponsored by
2 Council Members Johnson, Boylan and Amaro:

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5 **RESOLUTION 2025-201-A**

6 A RESOLUTION COMMEMORATING THE LIFE AND DECADES
7 OF SERVICE OF REVEREND WILLIAM "BILL" KELLY AND
8 EXPRESSING THE CITY COUNCIL'S CONDOLENCES UPON
9 HIS PASSING; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

10
11 **WHEREAS,** Reverend William "Bill" Kelly was born in Castlerea,
12 Ireland and ordained to the Catholic priesthood in June of 1959; and

13 **WHEREAS,** following in the footsteps of hundreds of other
14 priests from his homeland, Father Kelly came to the United States in
15 the early 1960s to offer his services in ministry in the state of
16 Florida, serving as a parish priest in Orlando and teaching at
17 Cardinal Mooney High School in Sarasota and at Bishop Barry High
18 School in St. Petersburg, before being recruited to the Diocese of
19 St. Augustine; and

20 **WHEREAS,** in 1965, Father Kelly was assigned as pastor of
21 Epiphany Catholic Church in Lake City where he served for 12 years
22 and also had the responsibility of serving the spiritual needs of the
23 mission churches without a resident priest throughout Live Oak and
24 Jasper. In 1977, he was named pastor at St. Paul's Catholic Church
25 in Jacksonville Beach, where he served with great distinction until
26 his retirement in 2015; and

27 **WHEREAS,** Father Kelly's 38-year tenure as pastor at St. Paul's
28 Catholic Church was filled with remarkable achievements and a myriad
29 of small acts of kindness, where the Church membership tripled to
30 over 3,200 families, the parish school doubled its facility's capacity
31 and enrollment, and a new Family Life Center was constructed. After

1 his retirement, a building heavily damaged by Hurricane Matthew was
2 reconstructed as a gymnasium and named the "Father William A. Kelly
3 Athletic Center" in honor of his decades of devoted service to the
4 parish; and

5 **WHEREAS,** Father Kelly's legacy of service in Jacksonville
6 includes his participation in the establishment of the Beaches
7 Emergency Assistance Ministry (BEAM), the parish's support for
8 Habitat for Humanity, his participation in inter-faith ecumenical
9 activities among churches of different faiths, and his long history
10 of hospital ministry and visitations to the sick and shut-in, bringing
11 blessings and encouragement to those in need; and

12 **WHEREAS,** throughout his ministry in Florida, Father Kelly was
13 known as a man of peace, humor and compassion, with a gentle spirit
14 and a heart for selfless service; now therefore

15 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of Jacksonville:

16 **Section 1.** The City Council hereby commemorates the life
17 and decades of service provided to the parish of St. Paul's Catholic
18 Church in Jacksonville Beach and to the people of Jacksonville by
19 Reverend William "Bill" Kelly, and extends to his parishioners,
20 family, friends and admirers the City's sincere condolences on his
21 passing. Father Kelly's life of faith and service will be a lasting
22 memorial to the thousands of lives he touched through his faith and
23 ministry.

24 **Section 2. Effective Date.** This Resolution shall become
25 effective upon signature by the Mayor or upon becoming effective
26 without the Mayor's signature.

1 Form Approved:

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3 /s/ Mary E. Staffopoulos

4 Office of General Counsel

5 Legislation Prepared By: Jeff Clements, City Council Research

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