



Proclamation

WHEREAS, the Brazos County Commissioners Court proclaims November 11, 2023, as Polish Day in Brazos County, Texas and to recognize the establishment of St. Joseph Catholic Parish in Bryan by Polish, Czech, German, and French families 150 years ago; and

WHEREAS, commemorating the Polish immigrants that settled in Brazos County and their many contributions in developing this state seeking religious, social, and economic freedoms; and

WHEREAS, on September 19, 1866, 12 planters from Walker/Austin Counties gathered at the Levy general store in New Waverly for the purpose of recruiting foreign labor; The members established themselves as the Waverly Emigration Society and commissioned Meyer Levy to travel to Europe to recruit 150 "foreign laborers" to work on their lands. The planters agreed to pay for passage of the immigrants to Texas and to pay the men \$90, \$100, and \$110 for their work in their first, second, and third years in America respectively, with women receiving \$20 less for their labors each year. On April 23, 1867, the first Polish immigrants to east Texas arrived at Galveston and arrived at their new homes on May 1, 1867; and

WHEREAS, according to the Catholic Directory for 1870, there were two priests located in Millican in 1869 servicing the missions of Anderson, Brenham, Independence, Navasota and Plantersville, areas of heavy Polish settlements.

WHEREAS, the early Polish immigrants as well as the Germans and Czech families came to Texas through the Port of Galveston and many of the descendants of these first families are still members of St. Joseph parish today; and

WHEREAS, Poles wrote letters home of the opportunities to buy cheap land in Texas and more families from Prussian Poland began to come. A few years later, an influx of Polish families from Galicia (Austrian-Hungarian participation) began to arrive in the Brazos Valley settling mostly in New Waverly, Bryan and Bremond, Texas.

WHEREAS, The Polish people that have come to Texas have helped shape the culture of Texas through their Christian faith, music, food, traditions and work ethic highlighting the values of faith, family, friendship and freedom;

WHEREAS, Over the past 150 years, we have seen Polish and other ethnic families move to Bryan/College Station and from surrounding parishes to St. Joseph. There are over 2,250 families within the parish, and we continue to celebrate our faith thanking God for the gift of this great country, the United States of America. There is no doubt that our diversity is what makes us strong, and we are all better for this.

WHEREAS, St. Joseph is the "Mother Parish" of all Catholic parishes in Brazos County; St. Joseph's is multi-ethnic today and our Sesquicentennial slogan reminds us, we are "Many Cultures- One Faith"; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED that Brazos County Commissioners Court does hereby proclaim November 11, 2023 as Polish Day in Brazos County, Texas and to recognize the establishment of St. Joseph Catholic Parish in Bryan by Polish, Czech, German, and French families 150 years ago.

Proclaimed this _____ day of November 2023.

Duane Peters, County Judge

Steve Aldrich, Pct. 1 Commissioner

Chuck Konderla, Pct. 2 Commissioner

Nancy Berry, Pct. 3 Commissioner

Wanda J. Watson, Pct. 4 Commissioner