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HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 8

Originated in House _____ Clerk

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 8

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING FATHER LOUIS "LOUIE" LOHAN UPON THE SPECIAL OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE DIOCESE OF BILOXI AND AS PASTOR OF ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

WHEREAS, Father Louis Lohan, affectionately referred to as Father Louie, is retiring after 43 years of blessed active priesthood serving the Diocese of Biloxi, which includes the last 21 years serving as the pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church in Long Beach, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, a native of Ireland, Father Louie attended grade school and high school in his native country, then earned a degree from Carlow College, also known as St. Patrick's College, in Carlow, Ireland; and

WHEREAS, in June of 1971, Father Louie was ordained a priest for the Catholic Diocese of Biloxi, which enabled him to minister in Christ's name and that of the Catholic Church; and

WHEREAS, after Father Louie was ordained, he came to the United States in August of 1971 and went on to serve as priest for

the following: Our Lady of Victories in Pascagoula, Mississippi, for three years; Our Mission in Saltillo, Mexico, for four years; Our Lady of the Gulf in Bay St. Louis for two years; Sacred Heart in D'Iberville for four years as well as churches in Wiggins, Lucedale and Leakesville for nine years; and

WHEREAS, after serving with various churches for 22 years, Father Louie came to St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church in Long Beach, Mississippi, in 1993, where he has served for the last 21 years and is dearly loved and respected by the parishioners of the church due to his kind spirit and genuine love of people; and

WHEREAS, as a true staple of the Mississippi Gulf Coast community, Father Louie became "everyone's spiritual leader" during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, which devastated the Gulf Coast in 2005; and

WHEREAS, described as becoming the pastor for all denominations the day Hurricane Katrina hit, Father Louie held mass outside of a local elementary school just one week after the storm, and hundreds from various denominations were given powerful words of encouragement by Father Louie, which ultimately resulted in letting them know that everything would be okay; and

WHEREAS, as a pillar of strength and beacon of light for the Gulf Coast community as well as a goodwill ambassador for all, Father Louie, who lost everything in the storm, remarkably and consistently places the needs of others before his own - which is truly a spiritual gift from God; and

WHEREAS, Father Louie's gift was exhibited by his great concern for the mental welfare of first responders of Hurricane Katrina and how they were coping in dealing with the devastation of the storm, and as a result, he came to see them two or three times a day just to visit and pray for the responders and their families; and

WHEREAS, during the trying time of the aftermath of the storm, Father Louie, as well as the parishioners of St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church, experienced the total loss of the church and its school, but due in large part to the leadership of Father Louie, the parish was able to obtain an abandoned skating rink to serve as a temporary church and school; and

WHEREAS, since that time, the New St. Vincent de Paul School, which merged St. Thomas the Apostle School and St. Paul Catholic School in Pass Christian, was built on the Long Beach/Pass Christian border, and a new St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church, community center, office complex and religious education center were also constructed due mainly to Father Louie's leadership; and

WHEREAS, Father Louie, during his remarkable service, has been honored with several well-deserved accolades such as being named a South Mississippi Hero and being named the recipient of the Gulfport Rotary Club's prestigious Founder's Day Award, which is given by the club to an individual who has contributed to the quality of life in the Gulfport area; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to pay tribute to a great spiritual leader such as Father Louie, whose fine character and innate ability to minster to the souls of others during their time of need has not only benefited the Mississippi Gulf Coast but has benefited this great state as a whole:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby commend and congratulate Father Louis "Louie" Lohan upon the special occasion of his retirement as pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church and for 43 years of selfless service to the Diocese of Biloxi, and extend best wishes for continued success in all of his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be furnished to Father Louis Lohan, St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church in Long Beach and to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
January 9, 2015

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
January 14, 2015

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE