

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 7

BY SENATOR CLAITOR

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death, on January 24, 2019, of dedicated and beloved priest and tireless advocate for the disabled, Father Patrick Joseph Mascarella, at the age of seventy-seven.

WHEREAS, Patrick Joseph Mascarella was the eleventh child of Charles and Lucy Territo Mascarella, first generation Sicilian farmers and grocery store owners in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, Patrick Mascarella was raised with his numerous siblings next door to the family grocery store on Highland Road; and

WHEREAS, Patrick Mascarella felt the call of God at a young age and by the eighth grade entered St. Joseph Seminary in St. Benedict, Louisiana, in St. Tammany Parish and continued his education in 1961 at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans, Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, as a seminarian, Father Mascarella said he was taught the joy of learning which he enjoyed throughout his entire life and credited his faith formation and foundation to these early years; and

WHEREAS, having completed his education and training, Father Mascarella was ordained a Catholic priest on December 17, 1966, eventually serving for over forty years until his retirement from full-time ministry in 2009; and

WHEREAS, Father Mascarella said his parents were good faith role models and he particularly remembered his mother always walking around the family home carrying her rosary; and

WHEREAS, during his long service in the priesthood, Father Mascarella served in numerous parishes in the Diocese of Baton Rouge, including St. Charles Borromeo Church in Baton Rouge, St. Theresa of Avila Church in Gonzales, Our Lady of Mercy Church in Baton Rouge, St. Isidore the Farmer Church in Baker, Christ the King Church and Catholic

Center in Baton Rouge, St. George Church in Baton Rouge, St. John the Baptist Church in Brusly, Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Church in Denham Springs, St. Joseph Church in Paulina, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Gramercy, and St. Michael Church in Convent; and

WHEREAS, Father Pat made an indelible impression on each of the parishes in which he served, relating his homilies to his own life experiences, connecting with the congregations in a very personal and caring manner; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his leadership of these parishes, Father Pat was instrumental in developing key programs of stewardship on the parish level, directing continuing formation for priests, helping to create and adopt new ways of evangelization through faith-based classes, retreats, and increased liturgical participation; and

WHEREAS, Father Mascarella's greatest challenge was his deteriorating eyesight, having worn glasses most of his life, the results of detached retinas, macular degeneration and other issues stealing his ability to see and remain independent in living his life; and

WHEREAS, much like any other challenge in his life, Father Mascarella faced his ever degenerating eyesight head on, taking a sabbatical to learn Braille and how to use a white cane and eventually pairing with his beloved service dog, Pace; and

WHEREAS, after spending two weeks in Oregon getting to know each other, Father Pat and Pace returned to Baton Rouge to live a full and independent life, depending only on each other; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, with Pace an active participant throughout, Father Mascarella earned his master's degree in religious studies from Louisiana State University; and

WHEREAS, in the course of obtaining his advanced degree, Father Pat took art classes that kindled an interest in painting, sculpting, pottery, and other artistic endeavors, and was pleased to have his own small exhibit at a local facility in Baton Rouge; and

WHEREAS, through his personal struggles with his loss of sight, Father Pat became a vocal and untiring advocate for those with disabilities, lobbying at the Capitol with Pace at his side; and

WHEREAS, in response to his dedication to Father Mascarella, Pace was named Service Animal of the Year in 2011; and

WHEREAS, as Father Pat was retiring from his clerical life, he and Pace settled down in Spanish Town, where Father Pat was active in the Historic Spanish Town Civic Association, and the pair was a familiar and welcomed presence on the sidewalks of that area in the capital city; and

WHEREAS, if the calling to live a religious life is, at its heart, a dedication to the service to others, to bringing the teachings of the Church to congregations, and to living according to the teachings of Jesus Christ, there has been no better servant than Father Patrick Joseph Mascarella, a dedicated and loving servant of the Church and a fixture in the Catholic community in Baton Rouge and its surrounding parishes.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express sincere condolences upon the death of Father Patrick Joseph Mascarella, a man of the Church and a dedicated servant of God.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Lucian Mascarella, on behalf of Father Mascarella's entire family.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES