

2015 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 870

Celebrating the life of the Reverend Richard B. Martin.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 23, 2015

Agreed to by the Senate, February 25, 2015

WHEREAS, the Reverend Richard B. Martin of Burke, a devoted spiritual leader and passionate philanthropist who strengthened and supported communities in one of the world's poorest countries, died on May 3, 2014; and

WHEREAS, a native of Rhode Island, Richard Martin graduated from Providence College and studied at Saint Francis Seminary in Pennsylvania, before transferring to a Benedictine monastery in Alabama; he was ordained at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Richmond and served as a parish priest in Richmond and Arlington; and

WHEREAS, Father Martin served his country as a chaplain in the United States Air Force and later served as a rehabilitation counselor with the Department of Health and Human Services; he served as a pastor in Falls Church before becoming pastor of Church of the Nativity in Burke; and

WHEREAS, throughout his nearly 48-year career as a priest, Father Martin was admired as a compassionate leader and servant to his congregations; his inspirational words and kind acts brought immeasurable comfort to those in need; and

WHEREAS, in 1998, Father Martin sought to make the Lenten season more meaningful for his congregation and asked that each member donate 50 cents per day; by Easter that year, the congregation had raised almost \$67,000; and

WHEREAS, Father Martin sent the money to Food for the Poor, which built 27 houses in Haiti with the generous donation; by 2014, the ongoing partnership between Church of the Nativity and Food for the Poor financed houses for 1,300 families and facilitated access to community centers, clean water, education, and health care; and

WHEREAS, Father Martin named the project Operation Starfish after one of his favorite parables, and his efforts inspired the creation of more than 300 similar projects at churches, schools, and organizations throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, Father Martin touched countless lives in his congregation and the community, generously offering his time and wisdom to help anyone in need; locally, he worked with Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement to promote affordable housing and career opportunities for immigrants; and

WHEREAS, Father Martin cared deeply for his family, and he will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his siblings, Jack and Madeleine, and numerous other family members, friends, and parishioners; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of the Reverend Richard B. Martin, a beloved spiritual leader and philanthropist in Fairfax County; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of the Reverend Richard B. Martin as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

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