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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 449

Offered March 1, 2018

Celebrating the life of Father Gerard Creedon.

Patrons—Hope, Adams, D.M., Ayala, Boysko, Bulova, Convirs-Fowler, Guzman, Heretick, Herring, Hurst, Krizek, Landes, Levine, Lopez, Plum, Rasoul, Robinson, Simon, Sullivan, Thomas, Turpin, Tyler and Ware; Senators: Deeds, Ebbin, Edwards, Favola, Howell, Locke, Marsden, McPike, Saslaw, Spruill, Surovell and Wagner

WHEREAS, Father Gerard Creedon, a dedicated and respected priest who offered spiritual guidance to countless people in Northern Virginia, died on November 16, 2017; and

WHEREAS, a native of County Cork, Ireland, Father Creedon was the fourth of 14 children born to his parents, John and Margaret; he attended seminary at All Hallows College in Dublin and was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Richmond in 1968; and

WHEREAS, Father Creedon held a bachelor's degree from University College in Dublin, a master's degree in theology from Washington Theological Union, and a master's degree in social work from the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, Father Creedon began his church service in 1968 as parochial vicar of Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church in Alexandria; he later served as parochial vicar at St. Luke Catholic Church in McLean and St. Agnes Catholic Church in Arlington as well as a pastor at Good Shepherd Catholic Church in Alexandria; and

WHEREAS, between 1981 and 1988, Father Creedon served as the director of diocesan Catholic Charities; in 1991, he relocated to Bánica, Dominican Republic, where he worked as founding pastor of the diocesan mission and spearheaded several influential social projects, including the opening of a pharmacy and funeral home and the establishment of an ambulance program; and

WHEREAS, Father Creedon spent 15 years as pastor of St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church in Arlington and from 2010 until his death he was pastor of Holy Family Catholic Church in Dale City; and

WHEREAS, a tireless advocate for immigrants and the poor, Father Creedon served the church and the community as diocesan director of Catholic Relief Services, diocesan director of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, and as a leader of the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy, Social Action Linking Together (SALT), and Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement (VOICE); and

WHEREAS, Father Creedon served on the Virginia Catholic Conference's Respect Life, Health, and Social Concerns Policy Committee for over a decade; he was also the founder of Catholics for Housing and Gabriel Homes for people with disabilities and developed the diocesan Peace and Justice Commission, which works to increase understanding of Catholic social teachings; and

WHEREAS, among other honors, Father Creedon was the recipient of the First Home Alliance's Alliance Leadership Award, the Ignatian Volunteer Corps' Della Strada Award, and the Alliance for Housing Solutions' Ellen Bozman Affordable Housing Award; and

WHEREAS, a talented musician who sang and played violin and mandolin, Father Creedon was also an accomplished writer and artist whose poetry was published in *Poetry Ireland Review*; and

WHEREAS, during his many years of service, Father Creedon's compassion, kindness, and spiritual leadership earned him the admiration and respect of both his parishioners and fellow clergy; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by his brothers, Michael, Cornelius, and Richard, Father Creedon will be fondly remembered and dearly missed by his brothers and sisters, Therese, Nora Mary, Oliver, Bernard, Thomas, Joseph, Dominic, William J., Miriam, and Margaret, their families, and his sister-in-law, Lorna, as well as countless other friends, parishioners, and members of both the Arlington and Dale City communities; 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 Father Gerard Creedon, a beloved priest who dedicated his life to ministering to others and serving the less fortunate; 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 Father Gerard Creedon as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.