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City Council Document Tracking Sheet

Meeting Date: 4/18/2012
Sponsor(s): Cullerton, Timothy M. (38)
Type: Resolution
Title: Congratulations extended to Father Michael Goergen
Committee(s) Assignment:

SALUTE TO FATHER MICHAEL GOERGEN

WHEREAS, Reverend Michael Goergen, an outstanding spiritual leader and member of his community, is celebrating his retirement as well as 50 years of being ordained as a priest of the Roman Catholic Church; and

WHEREAS, Father Michael was born on June 16, 1936, the eldest of eight children born to Virginia and Michael A. Goergen who are of German and Scottish descent. He discovered a love of God at an early age during the 18-year period that he and his family attended St. John Bosco on this city's West Side. A priest of the parish at that time, Father Don Cunningham, made a deal with Michael, asking him to attend Quigley Seminary Preparatory High School for his freshmen year and, if he "didn't fit", then he would be able to transfer out. Michael decided to stay; and

WHEREAS, In his fifth year at Quigley, Michael Goergen and his family moved to the western suburb of LaGrange Highlands until the time he was ordained when they settled in Darien, Illinois. After graduating, he entered St. Mary of the Lake Seminary in Mundelein. His father was employed at the R.R. Donnelly Company for 45 years and he was able to get Michael a job there while he was in the seminary. While working there, he was able to meet people of different backgrounds with whom he developed many friendships and gave him the opportunity to teach and share his Catholic beliefs; and

WHEREAS, On April 28th, 1962, Michael Goergen was ordained and assigned to St. Eulalia in suburban Maywood, Illinois. During this time priests weren't allowed to own a car until their fifth anniversary of service. As a result, he had to walk everywhere. This got him in shape to become an avid handball player. He was a member of the Firefighter's Engine No. 42 team and 60 other handball teams. During the 1960's, for three consecutive years Michael's team took first place at the Mercy Boys Home Handball Tournament; and

WHEREAS, Five years later, Father Michael was transferred to Queen of All Saints on this city's Northwest Side where he served for seven years. Following that, he was appointed to the Queen of the Universe on the Southwest Side for six years and then to St. Christina parish on the South Side for two years. In 1982, Father Michael was assigned to St. Nicholas of Tolentine at 66th and Lawndale. There he was able to get a dog, Bonnie, who became an icon of the parish. Additionally, this is also where he met his best friend, Father Stun Rataj; and

WHEREAS, In 1994, Father Michael was given the opportunity to go on sabbatical to Notre Dame. After his six-month retreat, he returned St. Robert Bellarmine that became his new home. There he adopted Madison, a Labrador who was his true and faithful companion; and

WHEREAS, In 2006, Father Michael decided to retire and joined the St. Bartholomew community. His two favorite ways to "enjoy retirement" are golfing and Door County, Wisconsin yet he isn't able to enjoy this much because he's always busy helping his community. Even after his retirement, Father Michael continues to celebrate mass, visit the children, comfort the sick, pray for families who have lost a loved one and celebrate weddings, anniversaries, or baptisms. If he isn't found doing any of these, he is on the Parish campus somewhere, putting his woodworking skills to work on the old wood found around the rectory or weeding the lawns and flowerbeds; and

WHEREAS, The Honorable Timothy M. Cullerton, Alderman of the 38th Ward has informed this august body of Reverend Father Michael Goergen's retirement and 50 years in the service of God and the Catholic faithful throughout the Archdiocese of Chicago, now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED That we, the Mayor and members of the City of Chicago City Council, gathered together this 18th Day of April, 2012 AD, do hereby salute the Golden Jubilee of Father Michael Goergen's ordination and retirement as well as extend our very best wishes in all his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to Rev. Michael Goergen.

TIMOTHY M. CULLERTON
Alderman – 38th Ward