



RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Archbishop Emeritus Joseph Fiorenza of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston was an extraordinary servant of Christ and the Catholic Church; a tireless advocate for social justice and human rights; and a beloved family member, friend, and faith leader who left an enduring impact on all who knew him; and

WHEREAS, Joseph Fiorenza was born on January 25, 1931, in Beaumont, Texas. Descended from Sicilian immigrants, he was the second of four sons born to Anthony and Grace (née Galiano) Fiorenza. As a youth, he attended St. Anthony High School where he served as class president and captain of the football team; and

WHEREAS, Archbishop Fiorenza answered the call to the Catholic priesthood. He attended St. Mary's Seminary in La Porte, Texas, and was ordained on May 29, 1954. He faithfully served the Catholic Church and its members. He was named honorary prelate of his holiness by Pope Paul VI on December 5, 1973. He later served as Bishop of the Diocese of Galveston-Houston from 1985 to 2006 and was made Archbishop in 2004, when the diocese was elevated to the status of archdiocese by St. Pope John Paul II; and

WHEREAS, Archbishop Fiorenza also answered the clarion call to action during the Civil Rights Movement, where he marched from Selma to Montgomery in Alabama and worked to end segregation in Houston, Texas. He continued marching and throughout his life dedicated his time, voice, and conviction to fighting injustice and advancing civil and human rights for all people; and

WHEREAS, Archbishop Fiorenza, together with his dear friends Reverend William Lawson and the late Rabbi Samuel Karff, led an inter-faith effort in service to their shared values to do good, seek justice, and defend the oppressed (Isaiah 1:17). Known as the "Three Amigos," they worked to end poverty, reform the justice system, overcome racism, serve the unhoused, ensure the fair treatment of immigrants, expand health care, and make the world a better place; and

WHEREAS, Archbishop Fiorenza was a voice of conscience and a man of action who lived by his faith to serve the least of these, empower the powerless, and hold the powerful accountable. His moral compass always pointed toward justice. In these times of trials and tribulations, where the dire and dehumanizing effects of bigotry, hate, and racism threaten the progress he dedicated his life to achieving, may we all follow his path in pursuit of a better world; and

WHEREAS, Archbishop Emeritus Fiorenza leaves to cherish his memory his treasured family members and dear friends who remember him for his quiet strength, deep love of humanity, and abiding faith.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Harris County Commissioners Court hereby honors

ARCHBISHOP EMERITUS JOSEPH FIORENZA

for his service and dedication to equal justice for all and further extends our deepest sympathies to his friends and family.

ADOPTED on this **27th day of September 2022** by Harris County Commissioners Court, Harris County, Texas.

LINA HIDALGO, County Judge

RODNEY ELLIS, Commissioner
Precinct One

ADRIAN GARCIA, Commissioner
Precinct Two

TOM S. RAMSEY, P.E., Commissioner
Precinct Three

R. JACK CAGLE, Commissioner
Precinct Four

ATTEST:

Teneshia Hudspeth, County Clerk
Harris County, T E X A S