

Resolution Number 56
Reverend Leo J. Spezia

Whereas, Reverend Leo J. Spezia was born in St. Louis, Missouri in 1950. His parents lived on “The Hill”, which was and is the Italian neighborhood. From an early age he knew that he wanted to be in position to help or serve people. This he has managed to do in several capacities and for numerous organizations; and

Whereas, in the early 1980’s Father Leo was assigned to the St. Francis DeSales Parish in south St. Louis. The area around the parish was in transition and Father Leo recognized that the area could be stabilized. Working with members of his parish and other community leaders, Father Leo was instrumental in establishing the DeSales Community Housing Corporation for the neighborhood. This corporation would buy problem properties and rehab them and sell them to people that would help revitalize the area. Twenty years later, this housing corporation is still active; and

Whereas, currently Father Leo is assigned to St. Mary Magdalen Parish in St. Louis. Ever the activist, he is a board member of the Gravois Business Association. In this capacity he helped to invigorate the board. The board was able to pass a controversial redevelopment plan, which should stabilize the business district. When this plan was presented to the business community, Father Leo served as facilitator and was neutral while everyone discussed their concerns with this plan. He is currently serving as President; and

Whereas, Cardinal John Joseph Carberry assigned Father Leo as Director of the Office of Family Ministry/Family Life Services for the Archdiocese of St. Louis. He served in this capacity from 1979 to 1992. He developed programs for the numerous personal problems that confront families and organized support groups; and

Whereas, in 1991 he organized the chaplaincy department for the FBI. He currently serves as the chaplain for the St. Louis Office and also out of Washington D. C. Former FBI Director Louis Freeh, provided Father Leo with an office down the hall from his own office. Father Leo began the chaplaincy department for the Missouri State Highway Patrol in 1997. He currently serves as the main chaplain for them. He serves both the State in general, out of the state capital in Jefferson City, and in St. Louis as troop chaplain for Troop C; and

Whereas, Father Leo has made many contributions to the Bevo Area Business Community, the Bosnian Chamber of Commerce and the South Kingshighway Business Association.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY the Board of Aldermen of the City of St. Louis that we pause in our deliberations to thank and recognize Reverend Leo J. Spezia for his many years of service and commitment to the citizens of the City of St. Louis and we further direct the Clerk of this Board to spread a copy of this Resolution across the minutes of these proceedings and to prepare a commemorative copy to the end that it may be presented to our honoree at a time and place deemed appropriate by the Sponsor.

Introduced on the 8th day of June, 2012 by:

Honorable Carol Howard, Alderwoman 14th Ward

Honorable Lewis E. Reed, President of the Board of Aldermen

Adopted this the 8th day of June, 2012 as attested by:

David W. Sweeney
Clerk, Board of Aldermen

Lewis E. Reed
President, Board of Aldermen