



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose M. Serrano

## Statement from Senator Serrano on the Passing of Reverend John Grange

JOSÉ M. SERRANO October 18, 2013



(Bronx, NY) - State Senator José M. Serrano expressed his heartfelt sadness on the passing of beloved South Bronx priest, Reverend John Grange. Fr. Grange was a pioneer in the South Bronx during the tough times of the 1970's, reaching out to and welcoming a growing Latino and immigrant population. Fr. Grange was ordained in the Catholic Church in 1966, and from then he became universally known as a tireless leader serving the people of the South Bronx, where he was born and raised.

Fr. Grange was a fearless defender of his community, often organizing community rallies in support of social justice issues while promoting local empowerment and community engagement.

In the late 1970's, as a young priest, he fully engaged the large Puerto Rican community in the neighborhood surrounding St Jerome's Church, and later on in the 1990's was one of the first to welcome the growing Mexican immigrant population in Mott Haven (Fr. Grange was fluent in Spanish). Weekly Sunday Mass at St. Jerome's Church was standing room only, while Fr. Grange walked through the church in his non-traditional style, engaging parishioners while giving his Homily.

"Rev. John Grange is a man whose memory and passion will forever be ingrained in the minds and hearts of the people of the South Bronx," said Senator Serrano. "I myself have so many fond memories of Fr. Grange: it was at St. Jerome's Church where Fr. Grange celebrated my First Communion back in the 1970's. Years later, after I was married and starting a family, we were blessed to have Fr. Grange baptize both of our children. He was such a positive part of my family's life for so many years," continued Senator Serrano.

"Father Grange meant so much to so many, providing religious counsel for several generations in our community. He was also a pillar of social justice, fighting for issues like affordable housing and immigrant's rights. He spoke truth to power, and was never afraid to take on authority - even his own Catholic Archdiocese - when it was in defense of his flock. He was a voice for the voiceless, yet always remaining a humble servant to his faith and his community. Rest In Peace, Rev. John Grange. We love you and we'll miss you," concluded Senator Serrano.

\*Viewing for Reverend John Grange will take place Monday, October 21st from 2:00 pm-7:00 pm. Mass will follow at 7:30 pm. Funeral mass is scheduled for Tuesday, October 22nd at 10:30 am. All arrangements will commence at St. Jerome's church at 138th Street and Alexander Avenue in the Bronx.\*