



CONDOLENCE MOTION

Moved by: Councillor Michael Thompson

Seconded by: Mayor John Tory

The Mayor and Members of Toronto City Council are saddened to learn of the passing of Rocco Di Donato on December 26, 2019, at the age of 84.

Rocco's life is a quintessential Canadian immigrant success story. Born on August 16, 1935 near Naples, Italy he lost his father at the young age of 3 and was raised by his mother and older brother Mike enduring the devastation of war-torn Italy.

In 1955 Rocco married his wife, Margherita, and his sons Nick and Pat, soon followed.

Although he owned a café in his hometown, Rocco believed that better opportunities for his family were waiting in Canada. So in 1959, leaving his wife and children at home, Rocco joined his brother who had previously emigrated to Toronto. Working tirelessly for three years as a cleaner, plumber and at whatever other work he could find, he saved enough money to bring his family to Canada.

In 1963 Rocco and his brother opened what his family believes is the first Italian restaurant in St. Clair Avenue's "Little Italy" neighbourhood called San Marco. In 1965, the brothers opened Lorenzo's Restaurant on Bay and Dundas, bringing to the Toronto City Hall area one of the City's first, full-service Italian pizzeria restaurants. Another Lorenzo's Restaurant soon followed in the Galleria Mall.

Rocco's success formed the foundation of the Liberty Entertainment Group, owned by his sons Nick and Pat, through which his legacy of warmth, charm, hospitality and Italian culture lives on and grows.

The City Clerk is requested to convey to Rocco Di Donato's family, on behalf of the Members of Toronto City Council, our sincere admiration for his contributions and achievements, and our deepest sympathy on his passing.

January 29, 2020