



Dear Parish Family

This morning I received the letter below from Bishop Baker's Office reference the current physical condition of Bishop Emeritus David Foley. As you can see from the letter, Bishop Foley is suffering from a very rare form of cancer that is basically untreatable. Therefore, he and his doctors have decided to cease all efforts to combat this disease.

Bishop Foley was our Chief Shepherd here in the Diocese of Birmingham from 1994 from 2005. After his resignation, he continued as the Administrator from 2005 until Bishop Baker's arrival in 2007. Bishop Foley was a Shepherd who was deeply involved with his sheep. He was constantly on the move visiting every parish in the diocese as frequently as he could. He was a superb administrator and manager, but his real forte was being the shepherd/leader of his flock. Even after he retired, he still maintained the same robust schedule, usually saying Mass every weekend at some Parish in the Diocese, often filling in for a Pastor who was on some other assignment. My own experience with Bishop Foley was wonderful. I found him a VERY pastoral priest who gave me great advice and brilliant insights into my own priesthood, especially how to be a better pastor.

I ask you to join me in praying for Bishop Foley, that God will give him the graces of peace, acceptance and perseverance. Please also beseech the Lord to help Bishop Foley offer all his sufferings to Christ, thereby making them salvific because Bishop Foley has chosen to meld his sufferings with those of Christ for the Church, the Diocese and the remission of the sins of the world.

Fr. Patrick, O.S.B.

Pastor

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Statement of The Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama

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As many of you are aware, Bishop David Foley was hospitalized on February 25, 2018 when he complained of shortness of breath and back pain. This was the result of medical issues for which he has been receiving treatment and because of biopsies that he had undergone to diagnose his medical condition. Because of these tests it has just been discovered and he has been diagnosed with a rare and aggressive malignancy. This is a very rare form of cancer originating in bone marrow precursor cells that is highly aggressive and unresponsive to chemotherapy. It has taken some time for his doctors to come to this diagnosis and has involved consultation with other, nationally-recognized cancer centers.

Bishop Foley had previously been diagnosed with Waldenström's macroglobulinemia, another uncommon malignancy of the bone marrow, for which he has been undergoing continuous treatment with chemotherapeutic agents for the past 6 months. In view of this most recent diagnosis, which carries a poor prognosis and for which effective treatments are not available, Bishop Foley and his physicians have determined that any treatment would be futile and would neither prolong his survival nor provide him benefit.

Bishop Foley will be moving to St. John Vianney Residence for Priests in the next few weeks. This location will allow him to be in the company of Bishop Baker, fellow priests, and near his doctors and caregivers. Please continue to keep him in your prayers.