

Atlanta archbishop recuperating after prostate surgery

ATLANTA - Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory of Atlanta was recuperating at home following a Nov. 5 surgical procedure for early-stage prostate cancer at Emory University Hospital, and he was expected to resume a limited work schedule in December.

"From my heart, I am deeply grateful for the outpouring of love through prayers and good wishes for my healing," the 59-year-old archbishop said in a Nov. 9 statement. "Please be assured of my prayers for you."

Dr. Fray Marshall, chairman of the urology department at Emory, said Archbishop Gregory "tolerated the procedure well, and there were no unforeseen problems." He received a "favorable pathology report" Nov. 9, Marshall added.

The physician said caring for Archbishop Gregory was "a pleasure" because "he is good to all the people around him."

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men.

Writing in the Oct. 30 issue of the archdiocesan newspaper, The Georgia Bulletin, Archbishop Gregory urged priests and other men to undergo regular medical screenings.

"We men ... often neglect regular attention to our health - and priests may be near the top of the list in that category," he wrote. "I urge all my brothers to attend to your health. I urge any man who may be in a high-risk category to be screened for prostate cancer or any other illness that can be detected by simple testing."

In a side note to his female readers, the archbishop said, "Ladies, you know that you also have your own list of medical concerns that need similar proactive attention."

Archbishop Gregory said he hoped to continue writing his newspaper column during his recuperation, even though "I will have only limited things about which to write."

He said some might wonder about why he was “being so candid” about his health. “Well, you are my family, and you have a right to know. Besides, if I were to be absent for an entire month, the rumors would be far worse than telling you the simple truth upfront.”