

Bishop Newman remembered for modeling ‘justice, mercy, humility’

How admired was Bishop William C. Newman?

Applause cascaded through the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Homeland May 29, as the casket bearing his body was wheeled down its main aisle, toward his final resting place in its crypt.

A former auxiliary of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, Bishop Newman was 88 when he died after a long illness May 20 at Mercy Ridge Retirement Community in Timonium. Archbishop William E. Lori, who offered his funeral Mass, noted that it fell on the 63rd anniversary of Bishop Newman’s priestly ordination in 1954.

Concelebrants included Cardinal Edwin F. O’Brien, archbishop emeritus of Baltimore; present Baltimore auxiliaries, Bishops Mark Brennan, Denis J. Madden and Adam Parker; and past Baltimore auxiliaries, retired Pensacola-Tallahassee Bishop John H. Richard, Springfield, Mass., Bishop Mitchell T. Rozanski and Wilmington Bishop W. Francis Malooly, who offered the homily.

He talked of the readings that had been selected by Bishop Newman.

The first, Micah 6:6-8, was offered by School Sister of Notre Dame Edithann Kane, his former administrative assistant. It concludes “You have been told, O mortal, what is good, and what the Lord requires of you: Only to do justice and to love goodness, and to walk humbly with God.”

“Think for a moment,” Bishop Malooly said, “all of you who know or are related to Bill Newman. Is there anyone you know, more gracious, more faith-filled, more concerned about you, more loyal to the church and his vocation, a better example of Christian living, more down to earth, more pleasant, more filled with peace?”

“He was always happy to be part of his own family and so many other families. (He practiced) justice, mercy and humility.

The second reading, Philippians 1:19-22, was offered by Christian Brother John Kane, the president of Calvert Hall College High School, where Bishop Newman had been in the class of 1946. Bishop Malooly linked it to Archbishop Lori's final visit to Bishop Newman, when he found him at peace.

"What lies ahead for Paul?" Bishop Malooly said. "In his second letter to the Corinthians, he is ready and confident ... that eternal glory will come from (his) light affliction. I've always found it profound that as people of faith age and become more physically feeble, they are more spiritually adept and strong."

The Gospel, Luke 4:16-22, was proclaimed by Deacon Charles Hiebler, who serves at the cathedral, where Bishop Newman was rector from 1981 until his episcopal ordination three years later.

"In the Gospel of Luke's Gospel," Bishop Malooly said, "Jesus began his public ministry. He taught in the synagogue and was praised by all. He read (from a passage of Isaiah), 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.'"

"The Spirit of the Lord was upon him (Bishop Newman) throughout his life. He was sent, and he responded, and Isaiah was fulfilled in Bill Newman's life prophecy. It was not always easy assignments, but it didn't matter. The Spirit of the Lord was with him."

Among the hundreds of mourners was Larry Callahan, the president of Our Lady of Mount Carmel School in Essex, who served as director of secondary education in the archdiocese when Bishop Newman was superintendent of schools.

"He was probably the best person I've ever worked with, in terms of collegiality and caring," Callahan said. "He was so caring, and so supportive, and, he let you do your job."

Concelebrants included former St. Augustine, Fla., Bishop Victor Galeone, who worked with Bishop Newman at the former St. Paul's Latin School in the 1960s, and Archbishop Timothy Broglio, bishop of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA.

Among the dozens of priests concelebrating was Monsignor G. Michael Schleupner,

who worked with Bishop Newman at the Catholic Center from 1984 to 1998.

"If I had one word to describe him, it would be wonderful," Monsignor Schleupner said. "He respected everyone. He was clearly a man of his own mind and convictions, but he always carried himself in a way that was gentle, thoughtful and very considerate of other people."

Deacon Victor Petrosino and his wife, Carol, recalled how Bishop Newman advocated for his vocation despite concerns about his health.

"Our pastor at the time, Father (Francis) Callahan, said, 'talk to Bill Newman,'" said Deacon Petrosino, who was ordained in 1999 and serves at St. Margaret in Bel Air. "Bill told me, 'as long as you are here, you can do some good.' I was diagnosed with cancer in 1989, and I'm still here.

"He (Bishop Newman) did so much good."

One of eight children born into a north Baltimore family, Bishop Newman had 24 nieces and nephews. In his closing remarks, Archbishop Lori thanked his extended family for sharing him with the archdiocese.

One elderly mourner wore his Calvert Hall varsity C letter sweater. Bishop Newman starred in baseball there, and Archbishop Lori likened his abilities to a utility infielder who "batted 1.000"

Archbishop Lori recounted the selflessness Bishop Newman displayed May 18, two days before he died.

"He was concerned, to the end, with the challenges and prospects of our local church," Archbishop Lori said. "One final time, he lent his friendship and encouragement."

Also see:

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Bill Newman, bishop and jock, not necessarily in that order

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