

# **Statement of Archbishop Edwin O'Brien on Death of Cardinal John P. Foley**

In his almost 50 years as priest and bishop Cardinal John Patrick Foley was totally and singularly dedicated to Christ and His Church.

As editor of Philadelphia's Catholic Standard and Times and later as President of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications in the Vatican, the Cardinal's professionalism and integrity was universally respected among his peers. For members of the press and for the English-speaking public around the world, in press conferences and radio and television commentaries, he was a gifted evangelizer, explaining Catholic teaching and practice clearly and thoroughly and often with a self-deprecating humor.

He has long been regarded as the patriarch of the American Catholic press.

During his four years leading the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem-years he compared to "a spiritual retreat"-the order grew significantly in lieutenancies and numbers throughout the world, largely due to his devoted commitment to the Church in the Holy Land and his constant travel. I will be ever grateful for his words of support and counsel these three brief months since my appointment as Pro-Grand Master of the Order.

The Cardinal frequently expressed his gratitude in being able to spend his final months in his beloved Philadelphia and among his brother priests. His love for the priesthood was extraordinary. He faced his impending death with remarkable serenity, looking forward in Christian hope to the reward that awaited him in Christ.

Though very many of us will miss him, we prayerfully offer him back to God with gratitude for his friendship, his sterling priestly example and his many contributions to the kingdom of God on earth.

May he rest in peace.