

Year's Mind Mass for Bishop David E. Foley, D.D. – April 17, 2019 – Fr. Bryan Jerabek, J.C.L.  
Cathedral of Saint Paul, Birmingham, Alabama – 12:10pm Daily Mass – 430 words

“At the name of Jesus, every knee should bend...”. I thought of our beloved Bishop Foley when I read the entrance antiphon for this Mass, for even before his knee surgeries – when bending the knee was still extremely painful for him – he always made sure to genuflect upon reaching the altar. If we should bend the knee at the mere mention of Jesus’ name, how much more should we genuflect before his Real Presence? Bishop Foley always set a good example in this way.

Indeed, the way he approached the Sacred Liturgy, in general, was edifying. In the gospel for this Mass we heard about the preparations for the Last Supper. And we see how Christ took care for that sacred meal to be celebrated in a particular way. He picked out a certain house. In one of the parallel passages of the other gospels it tells us that the upper room in that house was “large..., furnished and ready”.<sup>1</sup> Christ always cared about the particulars of worship.

I never saw Bishop Foley celebrate Mass in a casual or careless way. He “entered in”; he took seriously his role as priest standing *in persona Christi* – in the person of Christ. He cared about the particulars. But what about us? Do we recollect and prepare ourselves? Do we consider that we are beneath the Cross of Christ when we kneel before the altar for the Holy Eucharist? May the memory of Bishop Foley’s reverence and solemnity inspire us to do better.

More than how he celebrated, there was how he preached. “The Lord God has given me a well-trained tongue”, the prophet said in the first reading – “That I might know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them”. We were all touched by Bishop Foley’s preaching: well-prepared, from the heart, and quite to the point. The prophet Isaiah was, of course, pointing ahead to the Messiah – to Jesus Christ; Bishop Foley always pointed us to Jesus, as well.

In any case, it has now been a year since he left us, and he asked us to pray for him. So we take this opportunity to do so, even as we remember with fondness the example of sacred worship that he gave. If he is still in need of our prayer, we are helping him right now. If he is no longer in need, we ask him to remember us. Either way, let us neither forget his good example nor fail to learn from it. May our Lord Jesus Christ grant to Bishop Foley eternal rest. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> Mark 14:15.