



**Media Release  
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**Nuncio remembered as dedicated diplomat, good friend and man of faith**

The late Apostolic Nuncio to Australia, Archbishop Ambrose De Paoli was remembered today as a dedicated and highly experienced diplomat, a warm and personable man with a great sense of humour, and first and foremost, a man of great faith.

The Church community was joined by the diplomatic community in farewelling Archbishop De Paoli at a Solemn Memorial Mass at St Christopher's Cathedral, Canberra. The 73-year-old Archbishop, died in the United States last Wednesday, of Leukaemia.

Principal celebrant at the Mass was Archbishop Mark Coleridge and the homily was preached by the Charge D' Affaires at the Nunciature, Monsignor Jude Okolo. Among those concelebrating were Cardinal Edward Cassidy, Bishop Pat Power and Bishop Max Davis. A large number of priests also concelebrated.

The Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr Michael L'Estrange represented the Australian Government.

In his homily, Monsignor Okolo spoke on the meaning of death from a philosophical and Christian point of view. He said that when Archbishop De Paoli learned that he had only a matter of months to live, "he began to get ready, with a very, very serene attitude".

"In fact, most of his colleagues here wouldn't have even known that this man was dying," he said. "He enjoyed life intensively. He was very happy."

Monsignor Okolo said that the way Archbishop De Paoli lived his life and particularly his last months, gave much meaning to his death.

"Death is not nothingness. It is something. It is passing from life to life. How we live is how we will die."

At the conclusion of the Mass, the congregation heard brief eulogies from the DFAT Chief of Protocol, Ms Lyndall McLean and the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, Ms Karin Ehnborn-Palmquist, Ambassador of Sweden.

Ms McLean said Archbishop De Paoli was "a dedicated and highly experienced" diplomat, whose appointment to Australia was welcomed.

"He left us much earlier than we would've wanted, but not before making an indelible mark, not only here in Australia, but elsewhere," she said.

Ms McLean said that the Archbishop would joke that after Australia, Antarctica was the only continent still to be included on his life's itinerary.

"Intelligent, thoughtful and reflective, he was also modest but not to be underestimated," she said.

"Underpinning all that the Archbishop did in Australia and elsewhere was the depth of his faith in God, his commitment to the Catholic values by which he lived his life, and his dedication to the welfare of others. He was open, engaged, tolerant and focused on working

with all men and women of goodwill to enhance the common good and to promote faith and values that endure.”

Ms McLean said Archbishop De Paoli had been very much looking forward to World Youth Day next year.

“He worked tirelessly on preparations for the event and his legacy will be carried forward by others as they put in place the final arrangements for what will be an inspiring international gathering of young people from the Catholic as well as other faiths.”

Ambassador Ehnbohm-Palmquist told the congregation that the Diplomatic Corps had lost “a most appreciated colleague and a very dear friend”.

“Archbishop De Paoli had a long and distinguished career in the diplomatic service of the Holy See. He always had a smile and a twinkle in the eye and a great sense of humour that I will never forget,” she said.

“To all of us, he was, above all, a kind and trustworthy friend you could feel you could always turn to.

“Ambrose never spoke of his illness. Indeed I believe many of us were not aware of how sick he was and I believe that was how Ambrose wanted it.

“We will miss you dearly and keep your memory in our hearts.”

At the conclusion of the Mass, Archbishop Coleridge read a message from Pope Benedict XVI for the family of Archbishop De Paoli, to be read out at his funeral Mass in Miami, Florida today.

“Deeply saddened to learn of the death of the Most Reverend Ambrose De Paoli, Apostolic Nuncio, I offer you and your family my heartfelt condolences and the assurance of my closeness in prayer,” the Holy Father’s message said.

“I recall with gratitude the Archbishop’s resolute commitment to the spread of the Gospel during his selfless years of service to the Universal Church as an official in the Secretariat of State and then as Papal Representative in Sri Lanka, South Africa, Japan and most recently in Australia.

“In a special way during this time of sorrow, I join you and all who mourn the late Archbishop in commending his noble soul to the infinite mercy of God our loving Father. To all assembled for the solemn mass of Christian burial. I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of consolation and strength in the Lord.”

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