

Bishop recovering after cancer surgery

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ROCKFORD – Diocese of Rockford Bishop Thomas Doran is expected to make a full recovery from emergency cancer surgery, officials announced Monday.

Doran, 70, is recovering at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., until doctors decide that he is healthy enough to travel. He likely will be on light duty for six to eight weeks after that, Monsignor David Kagan said. Doctors on Thursday removed about a quarter of Doran's left lung.

"We are truly grateful, first to Almighty God, that this condition was discovered very early," Kagan said. "This is the best possible result that they could have hoped for with this condition, a malignancy of this nature."

Doran is listed in good condition at the hospital, said Penny Wiegert, editor of The Observer, the diocese's newspaper. Although the tumor was malignant, doctors were confident that they had removed all of it and confirmed that it had not spread to Doran's lymph nodes.

Doctors found the tumor during a routine annual check-up the week after Thanksgiving, diocese spokesman Owen Phelps said. A spot on Doran's right lung that caused concern for doctors turned out not to be a tumor, Kagan said.

Doran has supervised the diocese, which covers 105 parishes in 11 northern Illinois counties, including Kane and McHenry, since 1994.

About 450,000 Catholics live in the area covered by the diocese, which has more than 100,000 households in its registry, Wiegert said.

During his tenure, Doran and the diocese had been named in a lawsuit claiming that they turned a blind eye to the behavior of former priest Mark Campobello, who eventually was convicted of sexually abusing two teenage girls.

Parishioners prayed at Geneva's St. Peter Catholic Church, where Campobello had lived before being sent to prison in 2004 for molesting two teenage girls, one of whom attended the church's school.

Cherie Ammon of Geneva heard about Doran's surgery at Sunday Mass and prayed for him with her children that night.

Monsignor Joseph Jarmoluk wished Doran a "speedy and complete recovery" in a faxed statement.

Added Monsignor Joseph Linster, of St. Patrick Catholic Church in St. Charles, "People are hoping and praying for his good health."

Both girls, now adults, claim in their lawsuits that the diocese did not adequately check Campobello's background. Campobello also served in the Crystal Lake area at St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church from October 2000 to April 2001, and briefly before that as a parochial administrator at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton.

Campobello was sentenced in 2004 to eight years in prison after accepting an agreement with the court that spared both families a trial. He confessed to the molestations, which took place between 1999 and 2000.

Depositions are ongoing in the suits, and a hearing is scheduled for today in front of Circuit Judge Keith Brown.



The Most Reverend Thomas G. Doran, Bishop of Rockford, leads mass at St. Peters in Geneva in 2003. (Chronicle file photo)