



Catholic Diocesan Centre
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MEDIA RELEASE

Vale Most Rev. Michael Putney D.D AM Catholic Bishop of Townsville

Fr. Michael Lowcock, Vicar General of the Diocese of Townsville regrettably wishes to inform the community of the death of Bishop Michael Putney, Bishop of Townsville.

“ Bishop Michael was admitted to the Mater Hospital on Friday, 21 March for a procedure to drain a build up of fluid on his stomach which has been produced by the cancers in his stomach,” Fr Michael said.

“He remained in hospital under he passed away peacefully in the early hours of Friday morning.”

Bishop Michael’s health had deteriorated in recent weeks and in recent days had welcomed Apostolic Nuncio in Australia Archbishop Paul Gallagher for his annual dinner and also launched his book titled “My Ecumenical Journey” which was launched by Anglican Primate Archbishop Phillip Aspinall.

Bishop Michael Putney was 67 years old and was ordained as a priest in 1969 and ordained a Bishop on 27 July 1995 - Auxiliary Bishop, Brisbane. He was announced as the 5th Bishop of Townsville in January 2001 and was installed in March that year. Prior to his cancer diagnosis in December 2012 Bishop Michael was a member of the Permanent Committee of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and Chair of Bishops' Commission for Mission and Faith Formation, Catholic Co-Chairman of International Methodist / Roman Catholic Dialogue, Member of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and Chairman of the National Council of Churches. In 2013 Bishop Michael was made a Member of the Order of Australia in the Queens Birthday Honours list.

Fr Michael said “Bishop Michael had received many prayers during the past 15 months and believed that he had received a miracle which allowed him to continue his work last year and achieve many things that he had been working on.” “Last week Bishop Michael in a statement to the Priests of the Diocese he said that his life was very much one day at a time, and as always, he left each day in God’s hands.”

“Our thoughts and prayers are with Bishop Michael’s family at this time” Fr Mick said.

Funeral arrangements are currently being finalised. Many parishes in the diocese will be holding special masses this week, for more information people are asked to contact their local parish.

For phone interviews please call Neil Helmore, Townsville Diocesan Media Communications Officer, on 0427 047 162 or email nhelmore@tsv.catholic.org.au . Chancellor of the Diocese Mr Len Horner will be available for interviews at the Sacred Heart Cathedral this morning at 10.30am.

Media are welcome to attend the Mass on Thursday night.

Ends