

Gomez: U.S. Church offers 'heartfelt prayers' for Pope Francis' recovery

WASHINGTON (CNS) – The U.S. Catholic Church continues “to offer our heartfelt prayers and good wishes” for Pope Francis’ recovery, said Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

“It is with gratitude that we received the news of the success of the Holy Father’s surgery this past weekend,” the archbishop said in a July 9 statement. “Even as he is recuperating in the hospital, our Holy Father, in his role as our shepherd has selflessly expressed his closeness to those who are sick and in most need of care.”

The Vatican press office said on July 9 Pope Francis had resumed working and celebrated Mass for his caregivers in the small chapel that is part of the suite of rooms reserved for the popes at Rome’s Gemelli hospital. Pope Francis led the midday recitation of the Angelus prayer on July 11 from his room on the 10th floor of Gemelli hospital.

The pope was hospitalized on July 4 for planned colon surgery, which took place that evening, and initially, he was expected to stay in the hospital for seven days.

On July 12, the Vatican press office said Pope Francis “will remain hospitalized for a few more days in order to optimize his medical and rehabilitation therapy.”

“In solidarity with the universal Church, we offer our prayers for all who are ill and in need of God’s healing touch, and for those who work tirelessly in health care to bring comfort and medical care to the afflicted,” Archbishop Gomez said in his statement. “Mary, Mother of Healing and Hope, intercede

for us!”

Catholic bishops, clergy and laity all over the world have tweeted messages of prayer for Pope Francis and good wishes for his full recovery from his surgery. Many tweets included prayers for all those suffering from an illness.

Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori said on July 6 he offered his prayers with “those of my fellow bishops, priests and all the faithful of the Archdiocese of Baltimore for the quick and full recovery of the Holy Father.”

“He is a beloved and cherished leader not only to Catholics but to so many throughout the world, and I know our prayers are joined by all who share his quest for fraternity and reconciliation among all humanity,” he added.

“Lord, may our shepherd and all those in the hospital for healing in these days find strength and comfort in your love,” Archbishop Gomez tweeted on July 5.

On July 4, Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller of San Antonio tweeted simply, “Pope Francis, we hold you in prayer.”

Pope Francis did have a brief episode with “a slight temperature” on July 7, Matteo Bruni, director of the Vatican press office, said on July 9.

The morning after running a temperature, the pope’s doctors performed a CT scan of his abdomen and chest as well as routine exams to ensure that he was not suffering from an infection, a common complication of intestinal surgery. The results of the scan and exams were negative, the Vatican press office had said on July 8.