



## DIocese OF VICTORIA *Office of the Bishop*

March 3, 2026

My dear brothers and sisters,

I want to share with you the news that Bishop David Fellhauer has died. We know the bond and power of our Christian faith and so I ask that we offer prayers for his merciful reception into the divine embrace, an eternal reward he longed for and now receives. We should include in our prayers his surviving sister and friends across the country as they grieve the loss of Bishop David.

Bishop David was a “doctor of the law” in its best sense. Within the Code of Canon Law the Church details the obligations and responsibilities of a man called to the episcopacy: *they are teachers of doctrine, priests of sacred worship, and ministers of governance.* The threefold work of Christ we all share by Baptism—priest, prophet and king—becomes a consecrated duty when the Holy Spirit through Peter calls one of the pastors of the Church to share in his collegial work of shepherding. Bishop David was a man who loved Christ and His Church, a true pastor at heart, and dedicated himself to service. His intellect and gifts were shared with the Church of Victoria when he was ordained as its second bishop on May 28, 1990. He would lead this diocese as a steady and kind shepherd of souls until his retirement, submitted according to Canon Law, and accepted by Pope Francis on April 23, 2015.

Following Bishop David as his successor was a great gift in the commencement of my own appreciation for the model of episcopacy he lived. His episcopal motto—*to witness the charity of Christ*—proved to be a true description of his ministry. He was always available, offered true insights based on his own strengths and weaknesses that he would readily acknowledge, and always offered affirmation to me personally, as well as those he worked with in the governance of the Diocese—priests, deacons, laity—and in particular those who comprised the “chancery family” he relied upon with appreciation. As his health diminished in recent years, he often mentioned that one of the best ways he could be of assistance was to pray for the faithful of the Victoria Diocese. And in line with how an apostle supports his coworkers, he often prayed the rosary for our priests. Introverted by nature and intellectual by training, there was no pretense in his character. Many priests recall that in challenging moments involving difficulties and changes, he would frequently observe: *the needs of the Church often outweigh our own personal needs.* It wasn’t just a call to refocus for the priest—one knew it was a challenge he personally met in his own vocation.

Arriving in Victoria at age 50—the age of an elder brother—his duration here would transition from brother to father to grandfather for many in their life of faith, accompanied by the wisdom and patience that comes with years of experience. As so many “grew up” with him, it was easy to understand how he was embraced and appreciated. With the past few years of personal health challenges he endured—complicated in these last months with considerable limitations and declining strength—he personally chose to enter hospice care. The staff at Hospice of South Texas Center of Compassion provided him with wonderful comfort and support. While residing there, members of his “Victoria Diocese” family (deacons, priests, lay faithful) kept prayerful vigil with him so that he not be alone.

Bishop David’s legacy for the Church of Victoria involved the fulfillment of the responsibilities he received at his consecration—he was a teacher of doctrine, a priest of sacred worship, and a minister of church governance. May Bishop David now know intimately the experience of hearing our Lord say: *Well done, good and faithful servant!*

When funeral arrangements are available, the Office of Communications will publish them. Let’s keep each other in prayer!

+ *Brandon Cahill*