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Newport Central Catholic students showing support for principal dealing with heart problems

Sep 20th, 2016 · 1 Comment



Students and faculty members at Newport Central Catholic High School attend a rosary prayer service for interim principal Ron Dawn at the grotto outside the main entrance. (Photo courtesy of the high school)

By Terry Boehmker

NKy Tribune sports reporter

Before classes started on Monday, students and faculty members at Newport Central Catholic High School conducted a rosary prayer service for interim principal Ron Dawn, who underwent surgery three times in 17 days since suffering a heart attack at school on Sept. 2.

Surgeons at Christ Hospital placed a stent in Dawn's main coronary artery to improve blood flow less than an hour after the heart attack. But he needed surgery once again last week to install a defibrillator device that uses electronic impulses to treat irregular heartbeats called arrhythmias.

On Monday morning, Dawn was in surgery for a third time because of internal bleeding in the chest cavity around his heart. His wife, Patty, said doctors planned to remove the drain tubes on Tuesday and he's no longer in the intensive care unit at Christ Hospital. He was even taking short walks in the hospital hallways as the first step in his recovery.

"It's amazing because he's in such good shape he just keeps bouncing back," his wife said. "All the doctors are saying, 'You don't look like you should be here.' They all say it wasn't in vain that he was in good shape because it's kept him alive."

Dawn's father had heart issues so he knew the problem could be genetic. That was one of the reasons he worked out several times a week. He also wanted to stay in shape while he was coaching basketball.



Ron Dawn

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Dawn spent more than 25 years as a teacher and basketball coach at NewCath before he was named interim principal last summer. He was boys' head basketball coach from 1989-2001 and took charge of the program once again from 2013-16. In between those two assignments, he was girls' head basketball coach for four years.

Dawn is the only coach to win Kentucky All "A" Classic state championships in both boys' and girls' basketball. His girls' team won the small-school state tournament in 2010 and he had three teams take the boys' title. He's also the only coach to win 9th Region post-season tournament titles in both boys' and girls' basketball. He took the boys' title in 2000 and 2016 and the girls' title in 2011.

Patty Dawn said the outpouring of support for her husband has been "really amazing." Last week, diocesan schools made announcements before classes and at football games to pray for him. On Tuesday, the Most Rev. Roger J. Foy, bishop of the Diocese of Covington, visited them in the hospital.

"He actually called my cell (phone) two nights ago to say he was praying for us and then (Tuesday) morning he came walking in (to the hospital) to see how he did," Patty said of the bishop's visit.

Recovery and rehabilitation are the next steps for Dawn. Patty said they'll take it "one day at a time" and see how everything goes before he returns to school.

"Obviously, his time was not up yet," she said. "He's got more work to do."



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Dennis and Phyllis Phirman

September 20, 2016 at 9:02 pm / Reply

may the Lord bless and guide Ron through his recovery and hopefully will be back to school soon .

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