

Personal notes

John L. Allen Jr. | Sep. 15, 2006 All Things Catholic

Editor's Note: *NCR* is moving its e-mail lists to a new user-authenticated system. To continue to receive e-mail alerts for this column, you must re-subscribe before Oct. 12. Follow this link:

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I mentioned some time ago that a valued friend and colleague in the Vatican press corps, Orazio Petrosillo, had suffered a serious heart attack. Now misfortune has struck another member of the tribe, the longtime Rome correspondent of *The Irish Times*, Paddy Agnew. He's suffered a cerebral hemorrhage and is being cared for in Rome's Gemelli Hospital.

Anyone who knows Agnew realizes you'll never meet a nicer man, and one hopes his recovery will be swift and complete.

Finally, word reached me this week that my high school English teacher and newspaper advisor, David Wessling, died late Wednesday. He was a giant of a man, both physically and intellectually. To a great extent, it was Wessling who taught me to write, to love words and to approach language with reverence. Unfortunately, my powers of expression are still inadequate to capture everything he meant to me and to the others he touched, so suffice it to say the world is a less eloquent place without him.

For Petrosillo, Agnew and Wessling, and their families, I ask your prayers.

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