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Obituary

Xavier Feliú Palá



My soul is in pain. I never thought I would have to write these lines. After a long and cruel illness, Dr. Xavier “Xavi” Feliú has passed away and we are left with a sense of frustration and rage after the death of a man who was full of life. Unfortunately, this feeling is not foreign to us in our surgical practice, but when death takes a good friend the sentiment is all the more intense and bitter.

Describing Xavi is simple because he was a good professional and a great friend. Xavi was trained at the San Llatzer Hospital in Terrassa (Spain), and afterwards he worked for different periods of his life at the Hospital de Figueras, Hospital Los Camilos de San Pere de Ribas and, finally, Hospital de Igualada, where he had been the Department Head for the last 7 years. This successful clinical career was equaled by his sustained interest in research and academia, mainly dedicated to endoscopic and abdominal wall surgery.

I met Xavi at a congress or scientific meeting more than 15 years ago, during a time of rapid development in endoscopic

surgery. We forged a solid friendship based on enthusiasm, naïve ambition in less aggressive surgery and the satisfaction of success in our projects and initiatives. He showed the utmost willingness and interest to develop multiple ideas and projects, most of which were associated with the Abdominal Wall and Endoscopic Surgery Groups of the *Asociación Española de Cirujanos* (AEC – Spanish Association of Surgeons). He ultimately became coordinator of the Abdominal Wall Surgery Group of the AEC, a position which he held until the very end. His career path in academia surpassed the boundaries of Catalonia and Spain, and he enjoyed international recognition as a collaborator at several meetings and congresses in other European countries, the U.S., Latin America and Brazil.

Anyone who knew Xavi would tell you about his prestige in his specialty, his work ethic and his interest. Likewise, however, they would agree that his greatest asset was his personality. Xavi was an especially jovial, good-humored, positive person, a *gourmet* with a grand sense of humor whose company livened up whatever activity he was participating in. Less than a year ago, a group of us surgeons who work with the AEC and in endoscopic surgery, all of us good friends of Xavi, made a long trip with him to Patagonia. We were all aware, as was he, that the trip was a farewell. We enjoyed his company while making fond memories that we knew would probably be the last. The cruel prognosis unfolded, and his illness has taken our colleague, friend, and a top-notch surgeon. I am convinced that the AEC has lost a noble, loyal collaborator, but I am even more convinced that we Spanish surgeons have lost a great friend to some and a great person for all.

Wherever you are, Xavi, rest in peace. Those of us who knew and worked with you will find it difficult to forget you.

Eduardo M. Targarona, Salvador Morales Conde,
José Luis Salvador Sanchis, Enrique Veloso Veloso,
Antonio J. Torres, José Ramirez Felipe, Carmen Balague on
behalf of the Spanish Association of Surgeons

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