

Father Walter was born on February 12, 1930 in Toronto, Ontario to Marion and Katherine Werbicki - their first child. Fr. Walter was admitted to Queen Mary Hospital with a diagnosis of tuberculosis at age six. His parents were very poor so they were unable to visit him often as they needed to depend on public transportation. He remembers the boys in his ward would often wad up paper and they would play floor hockey. While in the hospital there was no schooling provided. He remembers seeing children dying. His sister, Mary, was age three when he was admitted and by the time he was discharged four years later a new baby sister had arrived, his sister, Stella. On December 31, 1940 he was discharged from the hospital and closely monitored.

The Sunday after his discharge he attended liturgy at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Byzantine Catholic church with his family. His Pastor, Monsignor Kamenecky, was a wonderful role model. Fr. Walter was very moved by the way Monsignor Kamenecky celebrated the Byzantine liturgy and shortly thereafter decided he wanted to become a priest.

He told his mother of his decision and she told him that by the time he was a grown man he would change his mind. Father's mother wanted her son to become an attorney. However, as we know today, his desire to become a priest only strengthened, he never changed his mind. He prayed to become a loyal and holy priest and on June 30, 2017 he will have served the Lord for 60 years.

Fr. Walter attended De La Sale High School and was taught by the Christian Brothers. He was a very good student and graduated with high honors. He applied to his Bishop Isidore Borecky for admission into studies for the priesthood. He was accepted and assigned to the Seminaire de Philosophie in Montreal, Quebec, a Roman Rite Seminary. He studied at the Seminaire de Philosophie for two years and then went on to the Grand Seminaire , also in Montreal, for two more years of study.

He had to take one year off from his studies due to illness and then he was assigned to St. Augustine Seminary in Toronto where he completed his studies.

He was ordained on June 30, 1957 by Bishop Isidore Borecky.

Fr. Walter studied at Roman Rite seminaries and taught himself the Byzantine Rite Liturgy. His first assignment was at St. Josaphat's Cathedral in Toronto where he was ordained. He served two separate assignments in Montreal then on to Windsor. His first assignment as a pastor was in Timmins, Ontario. One the assignments he had was as chaplain at St. Pius IX High School in Montreal, Quebec. This is the school where he received his ring as a gift from the students. In the summer of 1973 Fr. Walter was asked to go to Houston Texas for two months to help out until a new priest was assigned. These two months extended to eight years.

In 1983 he was transferred to Lackawanna, NY to serve as pastor at Our Lady of Perpetual Help and St. Basil's Ukrainian Catholic Church in Lancaster, NY. He met Fr. Frank Barone (now deceased) in Lackawanna and sought permanent bi-ritual faculties as Fr. Barone asked him to help out at St. Anthony's Roman Catholic Church also in Lackawanna. Fr. Barone was a chaplain at Wende Correctional facility and Fr. Walter helped there with reconciliation

services and mass. This led Fr. Walter to work as a full time chaplain at Lake View Correctional facility.

Because of the long drive to Brocton during the winter months he decided to seek residency at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish as a priest in residence. He is still with us today.

Fr. Walter is a humble man, a man we have all come to love. As we celebrate 60 years of his priesthood we thank him for sharing so many years with us. He always replies: "It is all of your prayers and deep faith why I am still here today. I thank all of you with all my heart and soul for you have sustained me and my priesthood with your prayer and faith". And as he feels that St. Elizabeth Ann Seton is family for him, when the Lord calls him home, he will be with us all at St. Mary's Cemetery.