



Letter of the Superior General regarding the death of Rev. Kenneth Walker, FSSP

Dear Friends of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter,

In the midst of mourning for our dear confrere, Fr. Kenneth Walker, one great consolation has been the outpouring of prayers and condolences expressed by so many bishops, religious communities, fellow priests and faithful. Many of you have informed us of the hundreds of Masses which have already been offered for the repose of his soul and for the health of Fr. Joseph Terra. By the grace of God and thanks to your prayers, Fr. Terra's life is out of danger and we expect him to make a full recovery.

By now you have read on various news outlets and websites about the virtues of Fr. Walker as a priest and how badly he will be missed by his confreres and parishioners. In an age where we seem so centered upon 'clerical stars' and are constantly searching for the 'newest approach to evangelization', the life of our confrere gave witness to one of the greatest priestly virtues, a quiet and consistent strength, which is a mark of the Good Shepherd who watches vigilantly over his flock in season and out of season.

He has been described by the parishioners he served in the same manner that he would be by his confreres; he was earnest: he was persevering; he was ready first to serve; nothing ever seemed to inconvenience him. Our Lord's description of Nathaniel perhaps fits him best: he was a man without guile. He will perhaps be remembered as an example to us as confreres more for what he *did not* say; one would be hard pressed to find anyone who ever heard him complain or speak badly about anyone. As a former professor of Fr. Walker in the seminary, and as superior, I also knew him as one who took correction well; never pridefully objected; and sincerely sought to improve in all areas of formation both as a seminarian and a later as a priest.

In such tragic circumstances I realize that it can be easy to fall into hyperbole, but there was an innocence to Fr. Walker which is rarely found in this valley of tears.

His life and his priestly work here below have been cut tragically short – just two short years serving in the vineyard of Our Lord. But we are grateful for the time he had to serve in the Fraternity and that he was given the vocation that he sought. His reason for becoming a priest was already beautifully formulated in his application to the seminary:

"God, in His infinite love, desires all men to be saved and so achieve their true end. Along with the Church, then, I am deeply grieved by these errors concerning the nature and dignity of man accepted by so many people in the world, which deviate them from their supernatural end. In full view of the situation in the world, then, the only vocation that I could be satisfied with, as a work, would be one that would be dedicated to bringing people to salvation in whatever way God wills for me to do so."

As confreres we know that Fr. Walker would not want us to waste our time in anger over what has happened; over the gross injustice which has been done. As great as this is a tragedy for us, so too it will bear great graces for our Fraternity: *O altitudo sapientiae et scientiae Dei: quam incomprehensibilia sunt iudicia ejus, et investigabiles viae ejus!* The first grace will be as an encouragement to each of us to take nothing for granted in the call of Our Lord to the Sacred Priesthood. We are His instruments to serve, and must do so always more faithfully in accordance with His will and that of the Church for His greater glory. For the moment let us waste no time, and simply concentrate our efforts in praying for the repose of the soul of Fr. Walker.



We thank the many parishes which have organized Holy Hours and will hold Masses of Requiem on Monday; again, we are humbled by your charity. Fr. Eric Flood, District Superior of North America, will offer a Requiem in Phoenix on Monday in the presence of Bishop Thomas Olmsted, and I will offer one here at the Basilica of Notre Dame in Fribourg on the same day. The funeral arrangements are on hold until the body of Fr. Walker can be transferred to Kansas. The Fraternity will of course publish these details when they are in place.

*Veni Sancte Spiritus, Consolator optime;
In fletu solatium, reple cordis intima tuorum fidelium!*

Mater Misericordiae, Ora pro nobis

*Requiem Aeternam dona ei, Domine. Et lux perpetua luceat ei.
Requiescat in pace.*

Very Rev. John Berg
Superior General FSSP
Ember Saturday of Pentecost, June 14, 2014



Biography of Fr. Kenneth Walker

Rev. Kenneth Walker, FSSP, was born September 13, 1985, in Poughkeepsie, NY. He was baptized on October 13 of the same year at St. Mary's Church in Wappingers Falls, NY. During his high school years, his family discovered and began attending the Traditional Latin Mass. He was strongly influenced by both the Mass and the devotion of his family, and began considering a vocation to the priesthood. After high school, he attended Our Lady Seat of Wisdom, Barry's Bay, ON, pursuing a classical formation in liberal arts from the fall of 2003 until April 2005. After the influence of his parents, Fr. Walker always credited the College as being essential to his formation in the faith prior to entering the seminary.

By this time, he was dedicated to the idea of becoming a priest, and attended a vocations retreat with the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter. His motivation to become a priest is beautifully summarized in his own words, taken from his application to the seminary:

"God, in His infinite love, desires all men to be saved and so achieve their true end. Along with the Church, then, I am deeply grieved by these errors concerning the nature and dignity of man accepted by so many people in the world, which deviate them from their supernatural end. In full view of the situation in the world, then, the only vocation that I could be satisfied with, as a work, would be one that would be dedicated to bringing people to salvation in whatever way God wills for me to do so. This work is best carried out by the priesthood, which was instituted by Christ specifically for the care of souls; for by means of the Sacraments and the teaching of the Faith to the people, the people receive both the truths of the Faith and the sanctifying grace needed for the spiritual life."

Fr. Walker was accepted to the Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary, the Fraternity of St. Peter's International House of Formation for English speakers in Nebraska, in the fall of 2005, and began the normal course of studies and formation. His dedication to fulfilling the ideals with which he approached the priesthood was evident in his time in seminary. He performed very well academically, always receiving high marks in his courses. He immersed himself in the fullness of the program of formation, from the life of prayer and liturgy to recreation with other seminarians – especially in his love of playing soccer, a popular sport at the seminary.

After completing the First Year of Spirituality, he was first incorporated into the FSSP, received the cassock, and received Tonsure from Bishop Alvaro Corrada, SJ, on October 6, 2006. After five more years of prayer, work, and study, Bishop Fabian Bruskewitz ordained him to the subdiaconate on January 29, 2011. He was permanently incorporated into the FSSP on March 18, and on the next day, March 19, 2011 – the feast of St. Joseph – he was ordained a deacon by Bishop Czeslaw Kozon of Copenhagen.

As a deacon, he traveled to our Fraternity's other seminary in Wigratzbad, Germany for several months in order to complete further studies and gain the perspective of the Fraternity's international presence. He also assisted for a number of months at the Mater Misericordiae Mission of the FSSP in Phoenix, AZ. Interestingly, he performed his first Baptism on October 13, 2011 – the anniversary of his own Baptism. Returning to Nebraska in May of 2012, he made a retreat in preparation for his priestly ordination, the culmination of his seven years of studies and prayer life.

On May 19, 2012, Kenneth Walker was ordained to the Holy Priesthood of Christ our Savior in Lincoln, Nebraska by Bishop Fabian Bruskewitz. He offered his first Mass at the Chapel of Sts. Peter and Paul at Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary, and was assisted by Fr. John Berg, Superior General of the FSSP. He received his first priestly assignment that summer, returning to Mater Misericordiae in Phoenix as an assistant priest under Fr. Joseph Terra, FSSP.



His priestly life and ministry at Mater Misericordiae was a continuation and affirmation of the ideals that led him to the priesthood. He dedicated himself to his priestly mission, offering Holy Mass in the Traditional Latin Rite daily and hearing confessions regularly. He was remembered for visiting parishioners often as both priest and friend. Desiring to spread devotion to Our Lady, he made a practice of personally bringing a replica of the "Pilgrim Virgin" statue of Our Lady of Fatima to the homes of parishioners. He also assisted in starting a Knights of Columbus council to aid and encourage the men of the parish in their prayer life and the works that they performed for the community. His works of charity among the homeless population in the area were well known by both attendees of the mission and the neighborhood community.

On June 11, 2014 - Ember Wednesday of Pentecost - Father Kenneth Walker was tragically and fatally shot in an incident at Mater Misericordiae Mission. Fr. Joseph Terra, critically injured in the same assault, was able to give Fr. Walker absolution and the Last Rites before being rushed himself to the hospital.

The members of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter join together in prayer and remembrance of the life and priesthood of Fr. Walker with his entire family, the members of the Mater Misericordiae Mission, and all those whose lives were touched by his. The great outpouring of prayers and Mass intentions gives us great hope and consolation that he may rest eternally in the Beatific Vision, one with the Divinity whom on earth he held in his consecrated hands.

We ask for your prayers for the repose of the soul of Fr. Kenneth Walker and that God in his Love and Mercy might grant great consolation to his family and his parishioners in this terrible tragedy.

Oremus:

O God, Who didst give to thy servant, Kenneth, by his sacerdotal office, a share in the priesthood of the Apostles, grant, we implore, that he may also be one of their company forever in Heaven. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Requiem Aeternam dona ei, Domine.

Et lux perpetua luceat ei.

Requiescat in pace.