

## Walter Whitlow

**This church, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, has been Walter's spiritual home throughout his life. His parents were married here in 1920. He went to the school here. The priests here inspired him so much that he tried seminary life. Walter married Mel Marie here in 1961. Today, after 61 years of marriage, he makes his final journey to this church, a symbol of the final journey he makes before the throne of God.**

**Outside this church Wally contributed to society in countless ways. He served his country in the US Army. He succeeded as an employee both in large corporations and small businesses. He also succeeded in retirement, where after ten years away from Kansas City, he returned because he missed the family he loved. He was an exemplary husband and a responsible father. The time he invested in work, family and hobbies produced the admiration of his friends. He was a faithful servant.**

**Jesus praised faithful servants in a parable. He presents a house where servants followed a daily routine—hunting and gathering food, watching for the arrival of visitors, and keeping the residence clean—a routine that culminated when they put on aprons at the end of the day and served the master's meal. The master of this parable surely smiled contentedly while he observed those servants, but he wanted to know more: Were they faithful even when he was away? He saw his opportunity when he attended a wedding. He prepared for his journey and left his servants behind so he could enjoy the merriment of his friends. The servants had no idea when he would return. They had to keep watch at every hour. The master surely wondered if upon his return he would find his servants asleep or ready. He arrived, and as soon as he knocked, they opened the door to welcome him home. These were faithful servants.**

**Walter was that kind of servant. He followed his routine with attention to detail—so that when his master returned at an unexpected hour, he'd be ready to open the door to Christ. Jesus concludes his parable saying, "should [the master] come in the second or third watch and find [the servants] prepared in this way, blessed are those servants." Indeed, the master, eyeing the aprons, turned the tables on his servants. Jesus says, "he will gird himself, have them recline at table, and proceed to wait on them."**

**In this church, as a child, Wally served at the table—by his own count, 626 Masses. An altar boy, a Mass server, puts on a special garment and waits on a table. It is the table of the Lord, the table where those who are invited eat the richest food: the Body and Blood of Christ. From his childhood, Walter showed the future of his life: serving God and providing for a family so that they could eat and drink, grow in love, and share the values that made him an exemplary person. Today Walter is wearing the medal he received for serving Mass as a child in this church. Our prayer is that when he stands before his judge, the master will recognize his faithful servant and turn the tables: that Christ, who came to serve, will wait on his faithful servant, seating him at the table of eternal life.**

**May Walter's example inspire us to serve not ourselves, but others, that we all may enjoy his company again at the table of the Lord.**

Wednesday, November 2, 2022