

Deacon Walker, pro-life advocate, dies at 69

By George P. Matysek Jr.

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Deacon George William “Bill” Walker Jr., who served many years at Our Lady of the Fields in Millersville and was a passionate pro-life advocate, died Jan. 1. He was 69. Deacon Walker served at Our Lady of the Fields from his 1986 ordination until 1999, when he retired from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.

After moving to Upper Marlboro, Deacon Walker ministered in the Archdiocese of Washington. In 2008, he relocated to Delaware, ministering in the Diocese of Wilmington. In 2013, he began assisting again at Our Lady of the Fields.

“He was definitely a man who lived the Gospel of Life,” said Monsignor Jay O’Connor, pastor of Our Lady of the Fields. “He respected the dignity of each person.”

Monsignor O’Connor noted that Deacon Walker and his wife of nearly 44 years, Laurie, were involved in Birthright of Annapolis and Welcome Home, a shelter home for single mothers. While living in Delaware, Deacon Walker volunteered in hospice care.

Monsignor O’Connor said Deacon Walker loved serving in the diaconate and had an ability to “listen to people and appreciate them.”

Deacon Walker attended Maryvale Preparatory School in Lutherville and Loyola Blakefield in Towson. He earned a bachelor’s degree in political science from what is now Loyola University Maryland in 1965. He also pursued post-graduate studies at the University of Maryland.

Deacon Walker worked in rural economic development for the Appalachian Regional Commission in Maryland and was the former executive director of the Maryland Rural Development Council. He is survived by his wife; daughter, Kristen Swartz; three grandchildren; and his younger brother, Timothy Walker of West Virginia.

Visitation will be held at Our Lady of the Fields from 4 to 8 p.m. Jan. 7. A wake will be offered at 7:30 p.m. Visitation will continue Jan. 8 from 9:30 to 10:15 a.m. at Our Lady of the Fields, with a funeral Mass to be offered at 11 a.m.

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