

Fr. Walter Victor MASTALERZ 54 USA PR

* March 6, 1931 Three Rivers, MA

+November 8, 1985 Ponce PR

He did his primary and secondary studies at Ware MA and worked as a dance instructor at the Arthur Murray Studios before opting for the priesthood. After some additional studies at Cornwells, he made his vows on August 22, 1958 at Ridgefield CT. In his final year of theology at Ferndale's seminary he was ordained a priest on May 30, 1963 at the age of thirty-two. He had earned the B.A. and B.D. degrees.

The following year he was assigned to Puerto Rico. His entire life as a priest would be spent there. From 1964 until 1970 he served as an assistant at Our Lady of Monserrate parish in Jayuya, followed by San Juan Bautista parish in Orocovis in 1970. He became its pastor four years later. In 1978 he served briefly as pastor at Our Lady of Monserrate parish in Salinas and then resumed the assistant position in the same parish until his death of cancer in 1985.

The turnout for his funeral showed how highly he was regarded by all. The crowd was so large that the funeral Mass had to be celebrated in the public square of Salinas. Sixty priests had come to concelebrate the service. And the town's mayor paid tribute to him. Then the people carried the body in a funeral procession to the entrance of the town while a helicopter flew overhead dropping flowers on the cortege.

Interment took place at the Santa Cruz cemetery in Arecibo.

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