



Bishop Walter Sele Chalmers

Bishop Sele was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and raised in North Philadelphia, which was once labeled by the local news media as “the jungle.” Of course, this was just another case of yellow journalism and negative propaganda. His calling to be of service started at an early age. His career, like several of our Maccabees’ careers, hinged on giving service to others and the community-at-large. As early as the 4th grade, he was appointed to the school’s safety patrol. He was always available for errands and assisting the elders of the community. This respect for elders and our people continues until today. After graduating from Dobbins Technical High School, Bishop Sele attended the University of Pennsylvania through a special urban program. Later, he, Card. Baye, Maj. Kalomo and Sgt. Macharia followed Mw. Sekou’s lead and came to visit the Shrine of the Black Madonna in Detroit on April 1, 1973.

Upon hearing the words of our Holy Patriarch Jaramogi Abebe Agyeman in the sermon, we knew we were in the right place and almost ran over each other down the aisle to join during the Call. Shortly thereafter, Bishop Sele was inducted as a Candidate for the Order of the Maccabees, and appointed by General Masai as Sergeant-at-Arms and Security Coordinator for the Philadelphia Cadre, which post he held while also functioning as Assistant Cadre Leader. He was commissioned to the rank of Sergeant in the Holy Order in Atlanta at the BCN National Convention in 1975. During this time, he was also the Missionary Outreach Coordinator, the Special Assignments Coordinator (SA), and was eventually promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. Yes, down through the years Bishop Sele held many jobs and had many responsibilities in the church as well as in the larger community.

By the end of 1975, the Philadelphia Cadre moved to the BCN National Training Center in Detroit, Michigan. There he attended and later graduated from Wayne County Community College summa cum laude. He also attended Madonna University in Livonia where his studies were in the Criminal Justice Program. He was promoted to Captain in the Order. Shortly thereafter he was promoted to Major and assigned to Shrine of the Black Madonna #8 in Flint, Michigan as the Maccabee-in-Charge and Assistant Project Leader. Ultimately, he became the Shrine Administrator of Shrine 8. When he returned to Detroit this time he functioned as Shrine Administrator at Shrine of the Black Madonna #3 on Wyoming and 7 Mile. In due course, he was consecrated as Bishop by Jaramogi Abebe Agyeman and assigned to the Kalamazoo Cadre as Shrine Administrator in 1978. However, in December of 1979, he was assigned to Shrine of the Black Madonna #10 in Houston, Texas where he functioned as Coordinator of the Black Slate, the Southwest Congregation and Community Outreach.

His community service outside the church was also impressive. He was a part of the Detroit Police Reserve Program and a squad leader in that Program. He worked with the Police Athletic League (PAL), Meals on Wheels, Devil’s Night Patrol, and he was a part of the security detail for the Honorable Nelson Mandela when he visited Detroit to speak. Also, he was assigned to the Sex Crimes Unit, as a transportation office that transported rape and trauma victims to court, and various other appointments that they had to go attend. In his capacity as a correction shift supervisor, he worked with a program for the children of incarcerated parents.

He worked with the Big Brothers and Big Sisters Program, in conjunction with the Malcolm X Academy. Presently, he is the licensee, president and Chief Executive Officer of The Maccabee Vanguard Security Agency, an independent agency. While most people with his many years of service have retired, he is still going strong. He is a prime example of the church's teachings that “service is the highest praise.”