

In Loving Memory Of

Francis Keith Kirby

July 6, 1930
Gettysburg, South Dakota

April 15, 2020
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Ever-Living God,

Your power brings us to birth,
Your providence guides our lives,
and by Your command we return to dust.

Lord, those who die still live in Your presence,
their lives change but do not end.

In company with Christ,
Who died and now lives,
may they rejoice in Your kingdom,
where all our tears are wiped away.

Unite us together again in one family,
to sing Your praise forever and ever.

Amen.

VISITATION:

11:00 a.m., Tuesday, April 21, 2020
Luce Funeral Home
Gettysburg, South Dakota

GRAVESIDE SERVICE:

12:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 21, 2020
Sacred Heart Catholic Cemetery
Gettysburg, South Dakota
With Military Honors

OFFICIATING:

Fr. Jerry Kopel

CASKET BEARERS:

John Kirby, Nathaniel Kirby,
David Kirby, Jessica Kirby,
Sarah Kirby, Dalton Larson,
Danni Larson, Lance Kirby, Kale Kirby,
Blaise Kirby and Abbey Larson



Gettysburg, South Dakota
www.familyfuneralhome.net

Francis Keith Kirby was born July 6, 1930 in Gettysburg, South Dakota to Lee and Lois (Blunt) Kirby. Francis spent his early years in Avon Springs Township on the family farm. He attended grade school at Evergreen Country School. Francis would ride his horse, Pearl, to school. On the way home he always stopped at Grandpa and Grandma Kirby's for milk and cookies. Francis enjoyed life on the farm and all of the neighbors. One of the bachelor farmers taught Francis to break horses to pull a wagon, while another taught him to hunt. Yet another neighbor sold Francis his first saddle, an E.C. Lee, which Francis used as long as he had horses.

While Francis attended high school, the family lived in Gettysburg. Francis worked at the pool hall to earn some extra money. He also learned to play a pretty good game of pool. When Francis graduated high school in 1948, the family moved back to the farm where Francis farmed with his dad. In 1951 Francis joined the army and served in the Korean War. He was honorably discharged in 1953.

Upon leaving the army Francis returned to farming. In 1954, he attended a social at Copp School where he met the new schoolteacher, Theresa Engel. As Francis told it, he had all these girls chasing him and Theresa outran all of them. On June 25, 1956, the couple was married at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Hoven.

After their marriage Francis and Theresa lived on the Brunner place. Their children Patricia and Colleen were born during this time. In 1960, the family moved to Lebanon where daughter Ellen was born. In 1962, Francis and Theresa moved their house in Lebanon to the farm in Avon Springs. Children Michael, Mark, and Mary were born after the family moved to the farm.

Francis was a member of the Lebanon Legion, Gettysburg VFW, Knights of Columbus, National Rifle Association, NARF, and Sacred Heart Catholic Church. He served on the Copp School Board and the Potter County Fair Board. Francis was serving on the school board during the years that school consolidation took place.

His six children were very important to Francis. The kids would go wherever Francis went. All the kids loved to "go with Dad" to get equipment repaired, take livestock to the sale barn, or to stop in at the neighbors. When there were too many kids to fit in the pickup Francis would load them in the back. Francis taught all of his kids how to work with livestock, drive tractor, build fence, milk cows, and basically do any farm work that needed to be done. Of course, it wasn't all work. In the winter Francis would plow a path out to the hay land. He would then load up all the kids and take them sledding. In the summer there would be fishing, movies at the drive-in and trips to the State Fair.

Francis enjoyed life. He loved to read and to visit with friends over coffee. He loved visiting his family as often as possible and was always happiest when everyone was at home. Most of all Francis loved farming. It was all he ever wanted to do, and he felt blessed to have spent his life in Potter County. Many times after church Francis would say "well let's just see how the crops are doing" and the family would drive all over the countryside. He could tell you who had lived on each abandoned farm. "Oh, that was the William's place and the Dreblows lived there and there were two bachelor brothers that lived over there. They were digging a well and were both overcome by gas." It was more than just a Sunday drive; it was a history of the people who settled Potter County.

Francis is survived by his wife, Theresa; children: Patricia Kirby, Pierre, Colleen (Darron) Busch, Pierre, Ellen (William) Chelmo, Detroit Lakes, MN, Michael (Roberta) Kirby, Hershey, NE, Mark (Rebecca) Kirby, Newell, and Mary (Stuart) Larson, Lusk, WY; grandchildren: Lance and Kale Kirby, Hershey, NE, John and Jessica Kirby of Newell, Blaise Kirby (Kathleen), Idaho, Nathaniel, Sarah and David Kirby, Newell, Abbey Larson, Minnesota, Dalton and Danni Larson, Lusk, WY; step-grandchildren: Matthew (Katie) Busch, Nemo, and Stephanie Busch, Seattle, WA; brother, Kenneth (Renea) Kirby, Lebanon; and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his father, Lee, and his mother, Lois.



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1930 ~ 2020