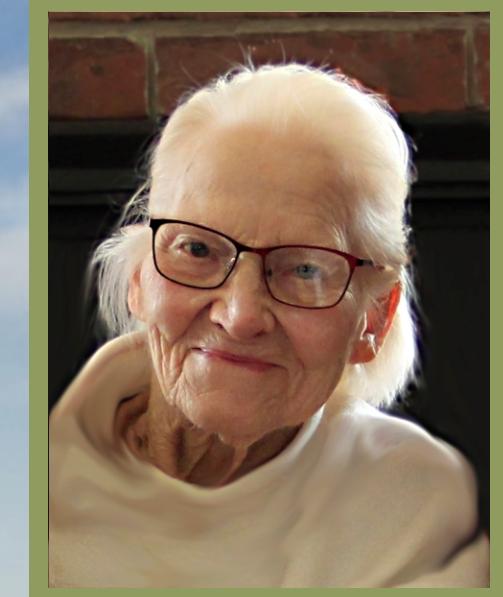




Remember me when light breezes blow.
When flowers bloom along the way.
When birds are flitting around the yard.
Think of me and say a prayer.
Say a prayer of thanksgiving
For the many things we've had
And all the things you have today.
And I will lightly answer,
Lightly answer among the clouds.

Written by, Shirley Ann Pekarek Garrigan



Gift of Finest Wheat
Shirley Ann Garrigan
January 1, 1926 - September 3, 2021

Shirley Garrigan passed into eternal life on Sept. 3, 2021, at the age of 95 at her daughters' home in Basehor, Kansas, embraced by her strong Catholic faith and her large, loving family.

She leaves behind 10 children and their spouses, 21 grandchildren and 23 great grandchildren to celebrate a good life well lived in service to her church, her community and to the causes of social justice that she championed and sought to inspire in her children.

Born to Joe and Theresa (Lucas) Pekarek on New Year's Day in 1926, she grew up with two sisters and two brothers on a farm in south Hyde County. A child of the Depression, she was resilient and resourceful her entire life.

Upon graduation from Highmore High School in 1943, she earned a teaching certificate from Black Hills Teachers College and, with World War II raging, began her first teaching job in a rural elementary school at the age of 17. A determined woman with boundless energy, she earned her bachelor's degree in summer school and night classes while raising a family, and then a master's degree in education from the University of South Dakota in her 60s. She was a lifelong educator, whether in a school classroom, or a catechism class at St. Mary's Church or instilling a love of learning in her children.

In 1951, she married Charles "Red" Garrigan and together they raised 10 children: Leigh Ann, Robert Joseph, Bret Alan, Natalie Rae, Kevin Charles, Mary Therese, Jon Francis, Loretta Noel, Megan Colleen and Grant Gerard, in the red brick house at 501 Third St.

At the age of 65, she welcomed another child, Jacqueline St. John, into her heart and her home. She would spend nearly 60 years of her life in that house, actively raising children there for 51 years.

Her life was a daily lesson in advocacy for the underdog and care of people on the margins -- the widow, the orphan, the poor and the marginalized. She gave generously of her time, her talents and her treasure, donating to Catholic orphanages, schools, missions and pro-life causes around the world.

She nurtured her family with her love of reading, her garden and a commitment to healthy eating and nutrition that was far ahead of its time. She believed in praying the rosary daily, planting a big vegetable garden every spring and reducing the amount of sugar in most recipes by half. She did not suffer fools, tolerate bullies or hesitate to criticize a bad decision as "asinine."

She was proud that all of her children earned college degrees. But she was even prouder that they all love and respect each other and enjoy spending time together whenever possible, including regular and raucous group phone calls and, more recently, online video gatherings.

Shirley left her beloved Hyde County for the last time in 2020, to be cared for by her daughter, Loretta, and son-in-law, Don, at their acreage in Kansas.

Her final days were filled with the sights and sounds of her childhood on the farm: chickens clucking, cows grazing, birds chirping and gardens growing. She saw her legacy blooming into the future as she held her great-granddaughter, Violet, on her lap.

Shirley was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, and her siblings: Leona Wade, Marion McCance, Larry Pekarek, Ronald Pekarek, and an infant brother, William. She is survived by all of her children and grandchildren: Leigh (George), Boise, ID; Bob (Joan), Sioux Falls; Bret (Beth), Boise; Natalie (Tom), Highmore; Kevin, Coulterville, CA; Mary (Kevin), Rapid City; Jon (Maureen), Council Bluffs, IA; Loretta (Don), Basehor, KS; Megan (Leonidas), Barton, VT; Grant (Heide), Centennial, CO.; and Jackie, Redfield.

We thank God for her life and our great luck in having her for our mother. We know God has welcomed her home, saying "Well done, Shirley, my good and faithful servant."