



Private Masses of Christian Burial:

10:00 a.m., Thursday, April 9, 2020
Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church
Rapid City, South Dakota

Celebrants: Father Timothy S. Hoag
Father Adam Hofer

11:00 a.m., Tuesday, April 14, 2020
St. Liborius Catholic Church
Polo, South Dakota

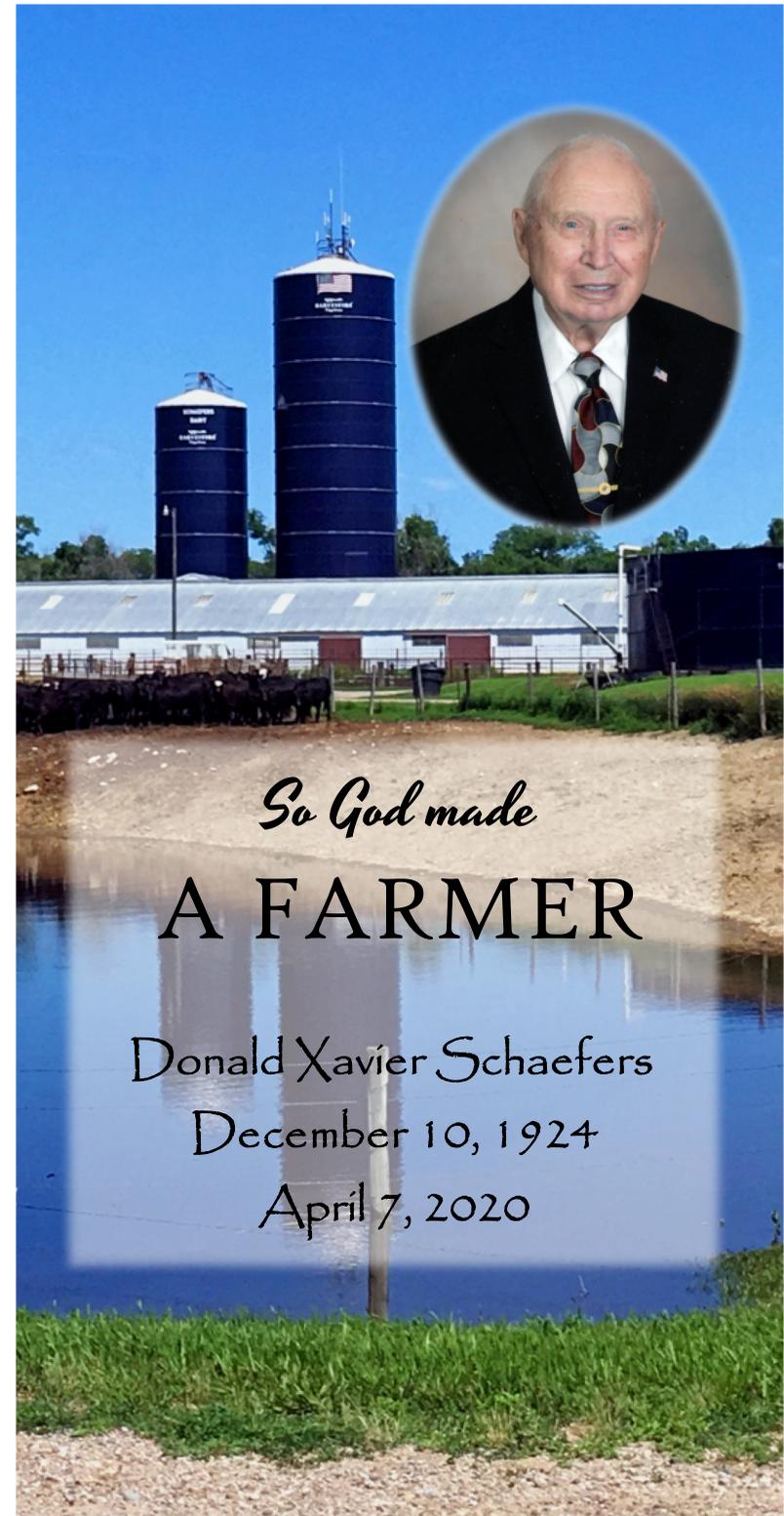
Celebrant: Rev. Christopher Hughes

Casketbearers:
All Donnie's Grandchildren

Musician: Ken Schaefer

Hymns:
"We Gather Together"
Victimae Paschali Laudes
"Gifts of Finest Wheat"
"Be Not Afraid"
"Ave Maria"
In Paradisum
"Alleluia! Alleluia! Let the Holy Anthem Rise!"

Interment:
Mount Calvary Cemetery
Polo, South Dakota



So God made
A FARMER

Donald Xavier Schaefer
December 10, 1924
April 7, 2020

Donald Schaefer, 95, of Rapid City and formerly of Polo, passed away Tuesday, April 7, 2020 at Monument Health Center in Rapid City after being hospitalized for an abdominal infection 6 days prior.

Donnie was born December 10, 1924 to Conrad and Justina (Oligmueller) Schaefer on the family farm just south of Polo, SD. He was the oldest of three siblings. Donnie and his sisters attended school in Polo. During the harsh winters they would stay at their Uncle Tony and Aunt Lena Schaefer's place a quarter mile west of the school. There was a slough half-way between the home and the back of the school. Donnie would say that because of the slough it truly was uphill both ways. After his two sisters married and moved to their homeplaces, Donnie stayed and continued to run the farm with his father, enjoying annual trips to the Black Hills for deer hunting with friends and many other traveling adventures. He once took several weeks off to travel across the country with his friend Jerry Gebes. He told of this adventure many times and always with a great smile. Family was very important to Donnie. It is also how he met his first love. Donnie was visiting his cousin Ambrose Schaefer and his bride Charlotte and met Charlotte's charming sister, Lila Gleason. They fell in love and married September 25, 1956. They were soulmates and Lila enjoyed traveling just as much as Donnie. They took one month for their honeymoon and traveled south to take Route 66 west, traveling up the west coast and then home to the family farm in Polo. Donnie and Lila had four children, sons: Jerome, Joseph, James, and daughter, Jane. Donnie and Lila loved their farm life and filled the farm with many animals. The cattle of course, pigs on occasion, the dog, many cats and kittens, and one of Lila's favorites; almost 200 chickens. As the kids are quick to note though, no horses. When the boys were old enough and could go check on the herd alone, Donnie bought them motorbikes. He said, "Boys, these are better than horses; when you shut them off, they stop eatin."

Donnie was always willing and had a calling to do more. He was a pioneer in the then new technology of artificial insemination working with the American Breeders Service and building his black angus herd in the 1960's. Additionally, he was very active with St. Liborius Church in Polo. He served as sexton at Polo Cemetery for many, many years. Donnie's faith was of the utmost importance to him, he attended Sunday Mass regularly up until the Covid-19 virus suspended all public masses just recently. St. Liborius Church was especially dear to Donnie's heart. His family ties to the church are the roots of the church and even after having moved to Rapid City, he tried to attend the Polo Bazaar every year. He often built quilt racks and other wood gifts for raffles and prizes. He served on the Hand County Memorial Hospital Board for 30 some years as well as the Treasurer for the Alden Township Board.

He was also a member of the Catholic Order of Foresters. Donnie lost Lila to cancer and God's care on March 27, 1984. Donnie continued running the farm, now Schaefer Dairy. A few years later he was lucky enough to fall in love again and find a second soulmate in life with Lois (Bunny) Warren. Bunny and her husband Jerry were friends of Donnie and Lila for many years as Lila and Bunny attended nursing school together. Jerry also passed away in 1984. Donnie would visit Bunny on his trips, hauling cattle, to Yankton over the next few years. Their friendship grew and Donnie more than doubled his loving family when he and Bunny married April 6, 1991. Donnie loved his stepchildren: Lynn, Bill, Jeff, David, Donald, Nancy, and Dan. Though Donnie and Bunny lived in Sioux Falls, Donnie continued to be active with the Dairy and farm until 2000.

In 2001 Donnie and Bunny moved to Rapid City. They both had dreamed and often talked about spending their retirement in the Black Hills. Donnie and Bunny also had several young grandchildren in Rapid City that they wanted to spend more time with. Donnie and Bunny enjoyed their elder years in Rapid City, joining the Holy Elders group at Blessed Sacrament Church, and the Senior Citizens Center until Bunny also lost her battle to cancer June 24, 2014. Finding himself widowed again, Donnie moved to Good Samaritan St. Martin's Assisted Living Center in Rapid City, April of 2015. There he remained active, made many friends and continued his wood working projects. Donnie often referred to Lila and Bunny as "the girls" and missed them terribly.

Don had many hobbies through-out his life. He and Lila loved dancing and attended many dances. Donnie was even known to take over drumming duties for the band to give the drummer a break. His surprise talents didn't stop there. Many may remember his star role when he took up acting in the Polo All School Reunion, playing the part of a preacher. Donnie could always be counted on to accept an invitation to play pool or cards. He was known as much for his laughter as his kindness and hard work. Donnie was also an active member of the Knights of Columbus for 73 years; becoming a Knight in 1947 and earning his 4th Degree with Assembly 1079 in 1950. He loved being a 4th degree Knight and proudly wore his regalia and was always willing to volunteer his services. He attended the Knights of Columbus State Convention almost every year up until 2018. In 2017 he received a 70-year member cap and he wore it with great pride up until a few weeks before his passing. Donnie also took great joy in his grandchildren.

He kept a cookie jar with cookies in it at his assisted living apartment, just for when one of the grandkids would visit. He and Bunny moved to Nebraska for several months to care for Jennifer Bombardier and Jerry Bombardier after their mother, Nancy Bombardier passed away so that they could finish their school year there. Donnie and Bunny also traveled the country and to Canada, taking their granddaughter Katie, to many tractor-pull competitions. He enjoyed watching his grandchildren's concerts and sporting activities, most recently watching Wyatt Thomas play soccer just one month before his passing. All of his grandchildren and great grandchildren were loved and cherished; whom he loved and often had their drawings and home-made cards posted with pride on his refrigerator.

Donnie was a kind and selfless man who served the Lord so well during his life here on earth, and now gets to reap the reward in eternal peace with his Lord and Savior. He can now dance in peace with "the girls". Donnie was a loving husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, whose love and laughter will be greatly missed.

Grateful to have shared in his life are his sons: Jerome (Tammie), Joseph (Christine), and James (Terri); daughter, Jane (Kelly) Thomas; stepchildren: Lynn (Lloyd) Stockwell, Bill (Rhonda) Warren, Jeff (Theresa) Warren, David Warren, and Donald Warren; grandchildren: Patrick (Emily) Schaefer, Lisa (Casey) Aalbers, Mark (Katie) Schaefer, Karen Schaefer, Katie (Danny) Orwa, Logan (Bethany) Schaefer, Fallyn (Brian) Page, Brock (Lacie) Patterson, Riley Patterson, Lauren Schaefer, Brandon Thomas, Michael Thomas, Wyatt Thomas, Whitney Stockwell, Bernard (Hilary) Stockwell, Natasha (Eric) Hite, Dustin (Heather) Warren, Nathan Liembach, Nicole (Jason) Reiser, and Brady Warren; 24 great grandchildren; sisters: Gen Blindert and Gerry Wernsmann; and a host of nieces and nephews.

Preceded in death were his two wives: Lila in 1984 and Lois (Bunny) in 2014; two stepchildren: Dan Warren and Nancy Bombardier; and three brothers-in-law: Ralph Wernsmann, Don Blindert, and Don Blankartz.

Arrangements Entrusted To
 Reck
FUNERAL HOME
Miller, South Dakota
www.familyfuneralhome.net