

Benedict Leroy Vanderheiden was born October 22, 1914 in Cedar Rapids, NE, the son of Theodore and Ida (Bruening) Vanderheiden. He grew up in David City, NE where he attended school. Following school Ben helped out at his father's store and later on the family farm. Ben began working on and repairing windmills in Nebraska. When these windmills began to generate electricity, Ben taught himself repair and installation of generators on windmills. He continued learning about electricity and electronics. When radio, and later, television, came to rural Nebraska and Minnesota Ben was in a position to provide the need repair services.

On June 1, 1937 Ben was united in marriage to Dorothy. The couple made their home in Winnebago, MN and later Heron Lake, MN where they were blessed with four children. Ben continued working at a repair store in Heron Lake. He also learned to do refrigeration repair. With the advent of color television it became more difficult for Ben to keep up on the technology changes. Eventually the repair shop was turned over to the next generation and Ben and Dorothy moved to the Alexandria, MN area where Ben loved the fishing. He continued working for twelve more years at Bellanca Aircraft where he installed and repaired hydraulic systems. Following his retirement from Bellanca Ben and Dorothy did craftwork for about twenty years.

The money earned from craftwork helped Ben and Dorothy to travel. They made several trips to Europe. They also traveled to Mexico, Alaska and Canada. They enjoyed taking their camper throughout Minnesota. Ben was a skilled mushroom harvester and knew the best places to pick fresh mushrooms; and blueberries, too. He enjoyed many trips to the casino and seemed to be luckier than the average guy. Ben also hunted pheasant but his favorite outdoor adventure was fishing in the summer and winter.

Ben was a person who continued his education throughout his entire life. He never stopped trying something new or different. Ben made a point to keep himself informed on current affairs and about what was going on in the community. Seeing how his community was changing over his lifetime was a great interest to him.

Ben was a longtime member of St. Mary's and was also a longtime member of the Knights of Columbus.

On Wednesday, December 20, 2017 Ben died at the age of one hundred three years of age. He was preceded in death by his wife of nearly seventy-five years, Dorothy Vanderheiden; daughter, Phyllis Hussong; brother, Rev. Fr. Joseph Vanderheiden; sisters, Lenora Beuhler, Alda Wilgus and Bernice Jones; brothers-in-law, Arthur Kunz and wife, Beatrice and Claire Kunz; sisters-in-law, Adeline Fladmo and husband, Earl, and Lorraine Haberman. Ben is survived by three sons, Don Vanderheiden and wife, Mavis, of Heron Lake, MN, Richard Vanderheiden and wife, Sharon, of Lakeland, FL and Charles Vanderheiden and wife, Cindy, of Brooksville, FL; son-in-law, Ray Hussong of Shakopee, MN; eleven grandchildren, seventeen great grandchildren; four great great grandchildren; brother, Merle Vanderheiden of Houston, TX; brother-in-law, Marv Haberman of New Ulm, MN and sister-in-law, Emily Kunz of Madelia, MN.

In Loving Memory



Ben Vanderheiden

1914 ~ 2017

Fisherman's Prayer

God grant that I may

Live to fish,

Until my dying day,

And when it comes

To my last cast,

I then most humbly pray,

When in the Lord's

Safe landing net,

I'm peacefully asleep,

That in his mercy I be judged,

As big enough to keep.

In Memory of

Benedict Leroy Vanderheiden

October 22, 1914 † December 20, 2017

Mass of Christian Burial

Church of St. Mary

Alexandria, Minnesota

Thursday, December 28, 2017

11:00 AM

Celebrant

Reverend Father Steve Binsfeld

Casket Bearers

James Vanderheiden

Sarah Vanderheiden

Steven Vanderheiden

Drew Vanderheiden

Laura Vanderheiden

Joel Kern

Entombment

St. Mary's Mausoleum Cemetery

Alexandria, Minnesota

