

Donna was born July 7, 1933, to Willis J. Sr. and Rema (Lenzen) Lee in Grand Forks, ND. She attended the Foxhome country school through eighth grade, going on to graduate from Breckenridge High School in 1951. That same year, on July 16th, she married the love of her life, Thaine “Doc” Willemssen. Donna was reunited with him in Heaven on what would have been their 70th wedding anniversary.

As a busy mother of six, Donna learned quickly how to care for her family and stretch a budget. As her children left the nest, she and Doc enjoyed traveling to see distant relatives and were active participants in square dancing—for which Donna created many of her and Doc’s matching outfits.

Donna was an expert at knitting, needlepoint, crocheting, hardanger, and tatting; creating beautiful afghans, blankets, scarves, and baby sets, for all her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren; as well as making countless knitted items for donation through church drives for the less fortunate. In her later years, she learned to make jewelry and became a very skilled painter. Along with many friends during her stay at Twin Town Villa, she enjoyed playing cards, bingo, and Wii bowling—a favorite of hers. She was never afraid to try new things, socializing with others, and making new friends all the time. Technology was more afraid of her than she was of it, and she carried her tablet and iPad with her wherever she went! Donna knew everyone! She could recite who they were related to, who they married, who their kids were, and could talk to you for 5 minutes and figure out who you were related to going back decades. She loved and cared for all of her kids, grandkids and great-grandkids, welcoming them with a big smile on every occasion.

Donna’s memory will live on through her children and their children: Thomas (Kim) Willemssen of Breckenridge, MN; Karleen Krause of Christine, ND; Shelly Willemssen of Breckenridge, MN; and Patsy Willemssen of Wahpeton, ND; her siblings, Jeannine (Gabe) Amon of Crookston, MN; Mary (Robert) Gadow of Foxhome, MN; and Douglas (Fran) Lee of Tuscan, AZ; and by her 9 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren, Adam (Monica) and Kayleigh Willemssen; Darcie (Eric) and Gannon Cribb; Derek Willemssen; Alysha (Tanner) Oliphant with their children, Lawson and Danika; Zach and his son Thomas Willemssen; Meghan (Carl) Tegtmeier with their children, Theodore, and Clara; Chelsea (Blaise) Birchem with their children Thane and Reyna; Jade Krause; and Christina Willemssen.

She is preceded in death by her husband, Thaine Willemssen; her sons, Donald, Gary, Rodney, and Leslie “Les” Willemssen; her son in law, Bruce P. Krause; and by her siblings, James (Evelyn) Lee, and Willis “Buzz” Lee.





Celebrating
 T H E L I F E O F
Donna Mae Willemssen



Born: July 7, 1933 ~ Grand Forks, North Dakota

Went to Her Heavenly Home: July 16, 2021 ~ Fargo, North Dakota

FUNERAL MASS

St. Mary's Catholic Church

10:30 a.m., Friday, July 23, 2021

Breckenridge, Minnesota

PARTICIPANTS

Father Stan Wieser, celebrant

Joni Biel, musician

Kayla Mohs, vocalist

Patsy Willemssen, special reader

Lawson & Danika Oliphant, gift bearers

PALLBEARERS

Brian Henderson ~ David Henderson ~ Derek Willemssen

Zach Willemssen ~ Tanner Oliphant ~ Eric Cribb

MUSIC

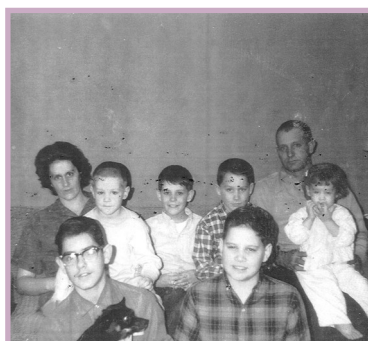
Amazing Grace ~ On Eagle's Wings ~ Prayer of St. Francis

The Supper of The Lord ~ Song of Farewell ~ How Great Thou Art

BURIAL

St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery ~ Wilkin County ~ Breckenridge, Minnesota

The family wishes to express their gratitude for your kind expressions of sympathy and for honoring Donna with your presence at the service.



Legacy OF *Love*

A wife, a mother, a grandma too,

This is the legacy we have from you.

You **TAUGHT US LOVE** and how to fight,

You gave us strength, you gave us might.

A stronger person would be hard to find,

And in your heart, you were **ALWAYS KIND.**

You fought for us all in one way or another,

Not just as a wife not just as a mother.

For all us you gave your best,

Now the time has come for you to rest.

So go in peace, you've earned your sleep,

Your love in our hearts, we'll

Eternally Keep.

