

Patricia Gross, 69

Aug. 12, 1938 - April 27, 2008

DES MOINES – Patricia Mary Gross was born to Emil and Aquinata (Kaufman) Gross on August 12, 1938, at the home of her maternal grandmother near Westphalia, IA. She was baptized at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Earling, IA. Her first year of formal education was at a country school near her farm home. She then attended St. Boniface School in Westphalia, received her First Holy Communion and Confirmation at the parish church there, and graduated from St. Boniface High School in 1956. Pat felt honored to be the oldest of the family, and her twelve siblings always respected her position. After high school, Pat entered the Franciscan Convent in Milwaukee, WI as a postulant. On her 19th birthday, she was received into the order as Sister Maryelle, OSF. She remained in the order for fifteen years and continued to keep close ties with the Sisters who helped shape her life.



Pat received a licensed practical nursing degree in Omaha and thus began her career in the medical field. When living in Evansville, IN, she received a Bachelor of Science degree in social work, and after moving to Buffalo, NY, she broadened her résumé by earning a Master of Arts degree in Pastoral Ministry. In the mid-1990s, Pat relocated to Des Moines to be closer to her family. She was employed by Nurse Force and did private duty nursing in people's homes. Many clients were like extended family to her. In each of the various places Pat lived, she made lasting friendships, and routinely she would travel back just for a visit. Fondly, she recalled her attendance at the 50th high school reunion in 2006 and the 50th anniversary with her sister classmates at the convent in 2007. With family members or friends, she also enjoyed traveling throughout Europe and South America. In 2003, she cruised to Alaska. Pat's persistence and determination turned several of her life challenges into triumphs. She was diagnosed with leukemia in 1992 and braved the ordeal of a bone marrow transplant. When she broke her back, she endured body braces and inactivity until healing was complete. Both times she returned with gusto to her work of service.

January 29, 2008, Pat suffered a debilitating heart attack. Her strong spirit brought her through surgery, but physically she was weakened. Throughout her struggles, she was blessed with the constant support of her family and dedicated nurses and staff at Mercy Hospital, many of whom came by on the last day to get a whispered greeting or a smile. Pat remained aware of her condition and died peacefully in the evening of April 27, 2008, having attained the age of sixty-nine years, eight months, and fifteen days.

Pat was preceded in death by her father Emil Gross, her godchild Kevin Gross, and her niece Laura Gross. She is survived by her mother Aquinata Gross of Westphalia, IA; her sisters: June and her husband Tony Prom of Harvey, ND, Bonnie McCoy of Des Moines, IA, Therese and her husband Steve Becker of Storm Lake, IA, and Rose and her husband Jeff Wignall of Creston, IA; her brothers: Jerry Gross and his wife Sue of Westphalia, Father Ken Gross of Red Oak, IA, Joe Gross and his wife Mary of Donahue, IA, Andrew Gross and his wife Denise of Des Moines, Ed Gross and his wife Leslie of St. Paul, MN, Paul Gross of Atlantic, IA, Norman Gross and

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his wife Laurie of Spring Valley, MN, and Nick Gross of Glenwood, IA; thirty-three nieces and nephews; many other relatives and friends.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at 10:30 AM on Thursday, May 1, 2008, at St. Boniface Catholic Church in Westphalia, IA. Presiding was her brother Father Ken Gross with concelebrants: Father John Dorton, Father Don Bruck, and other priests. Interment was held at St. Boniface Cemetery with her brothers Jerry, Joe, Andrew, Ed, Paul, and Norman serving as casket bearers.



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