

Joseph P. Kenkel, 97

Nov. 20, 1900 - Aug. 9, 1998

EARLING - Joseph Peter Kenkel, the eldest son of Tony and Catherine (Jacoby) Kenkel, was born Nov. 20, 1900, on a farm east of Earling. He was baptized, received his first communion and was confirmed at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Earling and attended St. Joseph Catholic School in Earling. As a young man, he helped his parents on the family farm and worked at various jobs in the Earling area. He was an active lifetime member of St. Joseph's Parish and the Holy Name Society.

Feb. 10, 1925, he married Antoinette Blum at St. Boniface Church in Westphalia. This union was blessed with the birth of eight children. After their marriage, they farmed in the Earling area until the spring of 1958 when they retired and moved to their newly built home in Earling. She died Nov. 20, 1958 and he remained active with the Farm Service Coop in Harlan where he served as a Board member for many years.

Joe married Irene (Stolz) Swanson Jan. 15, 1972, at St. Rose of Lima Church in Denison. They lived in Denison 13 years. Irene died March 10, 1985. He moved back to a home in Earling, where he lived until entering Little Flower Haven March 6, 1992. He died Aug. 9, 1998, at age 97 years, eight months and 19 days.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wives, Antoinette and Irene; and by one son, Bob, missing and presumed dead since Jan. 24, 1994; and by one stepson, Gene Swanson; two older sisters, Mary Reinig and Lucy Rauterkus; four younger brothers, Hubert, William, Aloysius and Alfred Kenkel. He is survived by his children, Bernice (Bud) Bissen of Defiance; Father Ben Kenkel of Guthrie Center/Panora; Sister Kathleen Kenkel, FSPA of LaCrosse, WI; Elaine (Marvin) Staley and Germaine (Donald) Staley of Charter Oak; Joe Ray (Loretta) Kenkel of Dunlap; George (Bonnie) Kenkel of Earling; Bob's wife, Maxine Kenkel of Omaha, NE; 31 grandchildren; 46 great grandchildren and one great great grandchild; one brother, Vince (Irene) Kenkel of Harlan, and sister-in-law, Tillie Kenkel of Earling; eight stepchildren, Richard Swanson of Manilla; Darrell and Jerry Swanson of Denison; Gail Swanson of Las Vegas, NV; Darlene Reis and Judy Broderson of Denison; Pat Getty of Alpharetta, GA; Corine Bogart of Omaha, NE; 51 step grandchildren; 74 step great grandchildren; nieces and nephews and other relatives.

A Mass of Christian Burial was concelebrated Aug. 12, 1998, at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Earling, with Rev. Michael Berner celebrant and Father Ben Kenkel and Father Leonard Kenkel concelebrants. Burial was in St. Joseph's Cemetery with Bill Bissen, Rick Staley, Carl Kenkel, Randy Staley, Steve Kenkel and Brian Kenkel casket bearers. Pauley Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

