

## Leola "Omer" Thielen, 81

*March 6, 1923 - July 17, 2004*

**EARLING** – Leola Marie Thielen, the daughter of Michael A. and Theresa H. (Bayer) Wilwerding, was born March 6, 1923, in Westphalia Township, Shelby County. She was baptized and confirmed at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Earling. She attended St. Joseph's Catholic High School in Earling. Upon graduating from high school, she was employed at the Earling Telephone Office.

Aug. 24, 1943, Leola married John "Bud" Leroy Thielen at St. Joseph's Catholic Church. Six children were born to this union, Cheryl, Jackie, Theresa, Maxine, Julie and James. After their marriage, they farmed in the Earling area. She became an Avon Representative in 1965. In 1979, John retired from farming and they moved into Earling. John died March 13, 1987, and Leola continued to make her home in Earling. She retired from selling Avon in 2002. She was a lifetime member of St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Earling, the Altar and Rosary Society and the Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court of St. Katherine of No. 266 Earling. She died July 17, 2004, at her home in Earling at age 81 years, four months and 11 days.

In addition to her parents, Leola was preceded in death by a son, Jackie; her husband, John; and her sister, Ethel Schnuettgen. Survivors include her children, Cheryl (Walter) Bruck of Dow City; Theresa (Dean) Schnitker of Neola; Maxine (Larry) Gaul of Earling; Julie Thielen of Sioux City; James Thielen (Tina) of Harlan; 10 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; her brother, LeRoy Wilwerding (Joanne) of Omaha, NE; her dancing partner, Jerry Schafer of Panama; and other relatives.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held July 21, 2004, at St. Joseph's Catholic Church with Rev. Michael Berner celebrant. Honorary casket bearers were Mel Book, Jerry Schafer, Joe Wilwerding, Ray Wilwerding, Bob Thuelen and LeRoy Wilwerding. Casket bearers were Jeff Bruck, Bil Lockwood, Scott Schnitker, Jessy Thielen, Allan Boettger, Brian Bruck and Jason Milnahan. Burial was in St. Joseph's Cemetery. Pauley Jones Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

