

## Laurina Schmitz, 87

*Oct. 4, 1915 - June 12, 2003*

**HARLAN** – Laurina Helen Schmitz, the daughter of Henry Adam and Mary Coenen Stracke, was born Oct. 4, 1915, on a farm in Westphalia Township, Shelby County. She was baptized, confirmed and received her First Holy Communion at St. Boniface Catholic Church in Westphalia, and attended school at St. Boniface Catholic School. Laurina was a member of the graduating class of 1934. Upon graduation, she worked as a housemaid until her marriage.

Sept. 21, 1936, she married Joseph Nicholas Schmitz at St. Boniface Catholic Church in Westphalia. Seven children were born to this union, Marleen, Kathleen, Elizabeth, Marietta, Therese, Robert and Michael. For the first seven years of their marriage they lived on a farm northwest of Portsmouth. The couple then moved to Joseph's family home in the Panama community, until 1974, when they retired and moved to Portsmouth. Laurina was very active in the church and community. She was the chairperson in 1977 through 1979 for the Portsmouth Golden Pioneers, served as Shelby County Chairperson in 1979 through 1981 on Aging for the Council Bluffs Region Agency, a board member of Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Council of Catholic Women in 1979, Chairperson for Harlan Region of Catholic Council for Women in the 1970's, a member of the Shelby County Public Health Board in 1989, a lector, communion minister, and Liturgy Board Member at the initiation of Vatican II and continued to be for many years. Laurina was also a member of Teens Encounter Christ, TEC, prayer committee and cook for five years, a Rosary Altar Society member in Panama and Portsmouth and was the president for two years in Panama, and she was privileged to have written articles that were published in the Catholic Diocesan Paper and received an award. Laurina died June 12, 2003, at her home in Harlan at age 87 years, eight months and eight days.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Joseph, and her brothers and sister, Alphons, Joseph, Leonard, Norbert and Sabina Reisz. Survivors include her children, Marleen Naby of Stockton, MO; Kathleen (Orville) Leinen of Panora; Elizabeth "Betty" Anderson of Lincoln, NE; Marietta (Albert) Bellingtier of Fort Dodge; Therese (Michael) Ratigan of Council Bluffs; Robert Schmitz (Susan) of Panama; Michael Schmitz (Barbara) of Defiance; 26 grandchildren; 45 great grandchildren; brother and sisters, Marie Nufrio of Fountain City, IN; Bernadine (Lee) Ausmann of Phoenix, AZ; Bernard Stracke (Barbara) of Manilla; sister-in-law, Bernice Stracke of Harlan; nieces, nephews and other relatives.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held June 16, 2003, at St. Michael's Catholic Church with Rev. Jack McClure, C.P.P.S. celebrant. Burial was in St. Mary's Cemetery in Panama, with Ed Stracke, Don Stracke, Mike Paglia and Dan Nufrio honorary casket bearers. Casket bearers were Bill Reisz, Peter Croghan, John Digilio, Phil Stracke, Roger Stracke and Lenny Stracke. Pauley Jones Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

