

Rita Schmitz, 74

Aug. 11, 1934 - Sept. 19, 2008

PORTSMOUTH — Rita Ellen Schmitz was born on August 11, 1934, to John and Elizabeth (Malone) Smith in Panama, IA. She was baptized at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Panama and received her First Communion and was confirmed at St. Mary's in Portsmouth. She attended St. Mary's Catholic School in Portsmouth and graduated with the Class of 1952.

Rita was united in marriage to Lester Schmitz on November 24, 1953 at St. Mary's Catholic Church. Five children were born to this union: Greg, Jim, Peg, John, and Susie. Rita worked at Mutual of Omaha and then became a homemaker. Rita was a devoted wife, loving mother, and fun-loving grandmother.

She coached girls basketball and softball and attended her children's numerous school and athletic events. Rita was also active in the St. Mary's Rosary Society and decorated the altar for holidays. She taught CCD and volunteered at many school and parish events. Rita always wrote notes of encouragement to those going through hard times. She loved to garden, play cards, and spend time with her family. Rita died on Friday, September 19, 2008, at Jennie Edmundson Hospital in Council Bluffs, IA, having attained the age of seventy-four years, one month, and eight days.

Rita was preceded in death by her parents, her daughter Susie, and her siblings Jack, Bill, Michael and Mary Elizabeth. She is survived by her husband Lester, her children: Greg Schmitz and his wife Barb of Dallas, TX, Jim Schmitz and his wife Alicia of Pasadena, CA, Peg and her husband Tim Gaul of Ames, IA, and John Schmitz and his wife Kim of Iowa City, IA; nine grandchildren: Christine, Amy, Ben, Abby, Jacob, Aaron, Andrew, Isabella and Nicholas; two great-grandchildren: Ava and Noah; her sister Marge and her husband Ray Madsen of Fort Collins, CO, sister-in-law Onie Smith of Council Bluffs, IA; nieces and nephews, other family members, and friends.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Wednesday, September 24, 2008, in St. Mary's Catholic Church in Portsmouth, IA. The 10:30 AM service was celebrated by Rev. Paul Monahan and concelebrated by Rev. John Dorton. Casket bearers were Mark Danuser, Ben Gaul, Aaron Schmitz, Andrew Schmitz, Jacob Schmitz, Doug Schmitz, Ron Smith, Josh Weerns, and Nicholas Schmitz. Interment was held at St. Mary's Cemetery in Portsmouth, IA.



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