

Seneca, KS



Vivina Strathman ,97, of Seneca, went to her eternal home February 3, 2021 at Country Place Senior Living.

She was born January 7, 1924, on a farm southeast of Baileyville, Kansas, the daughter of Francis and Rose Olberding Holthaus. She attended the Catholic School in Baileyville for eight years, then her first year of High School in St. Benedict. She was a previous member of St. Michael's Church in Axtell, where she was an Eucharistic Minister for a number of years, a Guild Officer, and a volunteer at Life Care Home in Seneca, leading the Rosary and the Stations of the Cross. She is currently a member of Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Seneca.

On January 7, 1941, she married Sylvester Strathman at Sacred Heart Church, Baileyville. After their marriage they lived for almost a year south of Baileyville, then moved to a farm northwest of Baileyville until 1946 when their house and all their contents were destroyed by fire. They then moved to a farm west of Axtell, where they lived for 57 years. Sylvester and Vivina celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary and he passed away on January 6, 1996, the day before their 55th anniversary.

In memory of her husband, she and one of her granddaughters started the idea of the Community Garden (as it was first called) on the corner of Main Street in Axtell.

Vivina and her husband joined a Square Dance Club in 1981 and they also belonged to a bowling team for a few years. She enjoyed helping her husband on the farm and doing work in her garden and in her many flower beds. She loved nature and all its beauty and was always sharing seeds and plants from her large garden with her many friends and neighbors even as far as Topeka, Kansas City and New Jersey. Music was also enjoyed, "Gospel", "Country and Western" and dancing to Polka. When the grandkids came during summer vacation to stay with Grandpa and Grandma or when they came for a visit, you never got to leave without Grandma's special treat of an ice cream cone or maybe some fresh flowers also. Her husband and family and friends were most precious to her and she was very devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Holy Spirit was her guide.

She and her family are lifetime members of the Association of the Miraculous Medal, they received the Pope's Apostolic Blessing, and for 25 years or more supported the Benedictine Mission House in Schuyler, Nebraska. She and her husband, Sylvester, were always present at their grandchildren's special occasions, and she continued to celebrate these whenever possible.

Sylvester and Vivina were parents of 10 children. She was preceded in death by her husband, Sylvester, in 1996, a stillborn daughter, Jeralyn, in 1965 and a son, Dale, in 2018, her parents, Francis and Rose Holthaus and all of her siblings, brothers, George, Edwin and Leo and sisters Sister Sharon Holthaus, and Rita Strathman.

She is survived by four sons, Don (Mary Doris); Jim (Jane); Ken (Tina), all of Seneca; Dave (Marian) of Axtell; four daughters, Sharon Schmelzle (Larry) of Oneida; Marilee Deters (Virgil) of Baileyville; Jeanita Lapa (Stan) of New York; and Mary Jane Deters (Donald) of Axtell; and a daughter-in-law, Verna of Topeka. Also 53 grandchildren, 160 Great-grandchildren and 43 Great-Great-Grandchildren.

Rosaries will be at 2:00 p.m., on Sunday at Lauer Funeral Home in Seneca. Mass of Christian Burial will be on Monday at 11:00 a.m. with a rosary preceding at 10:30 a.m. at St. Michael's Church, Axtell, KS.

Memorials will be designated to St. Michael's Parish in Axtell, KS. Masks are recommended.

Lauer Funeral Home in Seneca is in charge of the arrangements.