

Remembrance

Bernice Crescentia Stracke, 100

May 8, 1918 - Jan. 9, 2019

WESTPHALIA – Bernice Crescentia Stracke, daughter of Henry and Agnes (Stoll) Coenen, was born May 8, 1918 on her family farm in Westphalia. She was baptized and confirmed at St. Boniface Catholic Church in Westphalia. She was the oldest of her five siblings, went to country school and then attended St. Boniface School, where she graduated with the class of 1937. After graduation she worked in Harlan for several different families as a housekeeper/nanny.



On December 30, 1943, Bernice was united in marriage to the love of her life, Leonard Clement Stracke at St. Boniface Catholic Church in Westphalia. They were blessed with five children: Lenny, Grace, Diane, David, and Mary.

Bernice was a beautiful, sweet, gentle, kind loving Mother, Grandmother and Great Grandmother. Her love of family and her strong faith were very important in her life. She was involved in the Altar Society in Westphalia, teaching religious education, sewing circle, and helped with the Westphalia parish picnics, and belonged to the St. Michael's Woman's Guild in Harlan.

Bernice and Leonard farmed outside of Westphalia and also north of Harlan. She helped on the farm with raising chickens, growing a large garden and planting beautiful flowers. She was known to have a big strawberry patch so her strawberry jam was famous. She enjoyed canning, sewing, cooking, baking and loved to entertain in her home. Her apple pie won first place several times at the county fair. After retiring in 1981, Bernice and Leonard enjoyed traveling and one of their favorite trips was to Rome in which they saw the Pope. Playing cards with family and friends was also a favorite activity. Her love of nature and bird watching was evident by the way she could name a kind of bird just by hearing them sing. But the love of raising her children, taking care of her husband and her spiritual life with God was the most important to her.

Bernice died on Wednesday, January 9, 2019 surrounded by her loving family at Avoca Specialty Care in Avoca, attaining the age of 100 years, eight months and one day. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband Leonard, her brothers Ray Coenen, Kenneth Coenen, and Henry Coenen, Jr.

She is survived by her children Lenny Stracke and his wife Ellen of Perry; Grace and her husband Ron Stava of Omaha, NE; Diane and her husband Gary Weihs of Harlan; David Stracke and his wife Deb of Harlan; Mary and her husband Greg Stava of Elkhorn, NE; 15 grandchildren, 21 great grandchildren; sister Marilyn Rauterkus of Omaha, NE; sister-in-law Dorothy Coenen of Woodbine; nieces and nephews; other family members and friends.

An 11:00 AM Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated by Rev. Don Bruck on Monday, January 14, 2019 at St. Michael's Catholic Church in Harlan. David Weihs and Nickolus Stracke served as honorary casket bearers. Bryan Stava, Joe Stava, Michael Weihs, Stacey Massey, Allison Leinen, and Ashley Villaverde served as casket bearers. Interment was held at St. Boniface Cemetery in Westphalia.

Pauley Jones Funeral Home was in charge of the arrangements.

Pauley Jones
FUNERAL HOME & CREMATION

(712) 755-3135 • (800) 831-6805

www.pauleyjones.com

Baldwin at 9th, Harlan, IA
1304 N. Sawmill Rd., Avoca, IA