

Mike Klein, 87

Nov. 17, 1914 - March 1, 2009

DENVER, CO — Cornelius Michael Klein was born to Albert and Mary (Schommer) Klein on December 9, 1921 on a farm in Westphalia. He was their sixth child and fourth son. As a child he attended Catholic grammar school and enjoyed being the child assigned to pull the rope to ring the church bells. At the age of thirteen, he joined the Civilian Conservation Corps and moved to Washington State. While in Washington, he sent home money to his family back in Iowa. After a couple of years, Mike moved back to Iowa and began working for Fred and Minnie Backhaus on their farm. It was here that he met his future wife, Irene.



September 14, 1942, Mike enlisted with the United States Army Air Corps at Camp Dodge. After serving abroad in World War II, Mike was honorably discharged in November 1945, having attained the rank of Corporal. He then followed his older brothers to Omaha, NE and became an apprentice and then a Journeyman Sheet Metal mechanic. Mike, in his own provincial way, referred to himself as a "tinner."

June 22, 1946, Mike was united in marriage to Irene L. Backhaus at St. Peter's Catholic Church in Omaha. To this union, two daughters were born: Gloria and Peggy. After their wedding, Mike and Irene made their home in Omaha and retired there in 1984. In November 2003, a year after the death of his beloved wife, Irene, Mike moved to Denver, CO to be closer to his daughters. Mike died on Sunday, February 8, 2009, at his home having attained the age of eighty-seven years, one month, and thirty days.

Mike is preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Irene; his sisters Cecelia (Thielan) Zimmerman and Adeline Thielan; and his brothers Urban, Edwin and Arthur. He is survived by his daughters: Gloria and her husband Jim Jefferies and Peggy Talbot all of Denver, CO; two grandchildren: Dr. Kara Jefferies of Arlington, VA and Alex Jefferies and his wife Stacie of San Francisco, CA; his brother Ralph Klein of Omaha; nieces; nephews; other family members and many friends.

The family following Mike's heartfelt request would like any donations for masses sent to Capuchin Province Mid-America Inc., PO Box 40575, Denver, CO 80202-0575 or Capuchin Missions of Papua New Guinea, PO Box 40575, Denver, CO 80204-0575 for the reprinting of Huli prayer books. This Mission is the former parish of Father Malachyis, who after serving in Papua New Guinea faithfully served in Mike's community, Dayton Place Community until his death last year.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Friday, February 13, 2009, at St. Michael's Catholic Church in Harlan. Rev. Bob Hoefler celebrated

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the 11:00 AM service. Military Rites were held at the Harlan Cemetery by the Shelby County VFW Post No. 941 and the Harlan American Legion Helmer Reyelt Post No. 150. Serving as casket bearers were James Talbot, Stanley Goetzinger, Dennis Klein, Alex Jefferies, Douglas Backhaus, and James Coatsworth.

Jones
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