

Atchison, KS



Ruth G. "Gere" Carrigan, 95, passed away Monday, August 15 at Dooley Center, Atchison.

Gere was born October 28, 1926 in Atchison, the fifth child of James F. and Mary (Hess) Carrigan. Gere attended St. Benedict's Grade School and was a 1944 graduate of Mount St. Scholastica Academy. From 1945 to 1952, Gere cared for her brother Joe's three young children, Judy (Sr. Celine Carrigan), Mike, and Patrick after the death of their mother, Rosemary.

Gere was employed as a bookkeeper and laboratory assistant at Midwest Solvents Co. from 1951-1972. She was instrumental in creating the McCormick-Midwest Employees Credit Union, serving as president in 1967. In 1970, the Carrigan family purchased the Hixon Lumber Co. in Atchison, establishing Carrigan Lumber Co. Gere became bookkeeper for Carrigan Lumber where she truly enjoyed getting to know her customers and their families. In later years at the lumber yard, she taught herself the art of picture framing and enjoyed putting the finishing touches on her customers' masterpieces until her retirement in 2009.

Gere was a lifelong member of St. Benedict Parish in Atchison, spending many hours in volunteer service to the Church. She was a cheerful and willing worker and a steadfast friend. She and several MSSA classmates formed a bridge club after graduation and played together for close to seventy years. She loved to garden and shared her beautiful tomatoes and zinnias with customers, friends and family. She built and painted wooden toys and intricate dollhouses for family members and donated many of her creations to the St. Benedict's Church Fall Bazaar. In her younger years, she and her sister Ann traveled in the US and Canada and in later years, enjoyed outings to casinos in the area, always hoping for the luck of the Irish.

In 1999, She was named Grand Marshal for the Atchison St. Patrick's Day Parade.

Gere's positive nature and her unwavering delight in her family were a blessing to her parents, brothers and sisters, and generations of nieces and nephews. She welcomed all with warmth, wit and wisdom.

In 2016, Gere moved to Dooley Center at Mount St. Scholastica Monastery. There, at the end of her life, she gained another family in the sisters, staff and volunteers who loved and cared for her every day.

Gere was preceded in death by her parents, brothers Francis “Bud” Carrigan and Joseph M. Carrigan, sisters Mary Catherine Westerhaus and Rose “Ann” Carrigan; nieces Sr. Celine Carrigan, OSB and Mary Ann Kristek, and nephews Patrick Carrigan and James Westerhaus.

She is survived by nephews J. Michael Carrigan, Alexandria Va., Michael J. Healy, Sunrise Beach, Mo. and Charles F. Carrigan, Atchison; nineteen great nieces and nephews; forty great-great nieces and nephews and four great-great-great nieces and nephews.

Services will be held at St. Benedict Church in Atchison on Monday, August 22.

A Parish Rosary will be recited at 10 am at the church, followed by Mass of Christian Burial at 11 am. Burial will be in Mount Calvary Cemetery, Atchison.

Memorials are suggested to St. Benedict Parish and to Mount St. Scholastica and may be left in care of the Arensberg-Pruett Funeral Home with whom funeral care has been entrusted.