



Rita Ann DesRoches Pfarr Gibson

February 13, 1929 - December 23, 2020

Rita Ann DesRoches Pfarr Gibson,

Unconditional love can be expressed in many ways. Rita showed hers through sacrifice for her children and kindness, thoughtfulness, and generosity of time, energy, and resources to her family, friends, church, and many charities.

She began her life in a loving family in Astoria, Long Island, New York February 13, 1929 to Canadian-born Emanuel and Marie Hebert DesRoches.

Rita was the youngest of five children born but lost two young sisters. Job opportunities brought the family to Indianapolis. She and her sister Therese both attended grade school at St. Philip Neri and high school at St. Mary's Academy. Rita attended one year of Business College before entering the workforce.

After marrying William Pfarr, Jr., they moved to Little Flower parish in 1952 and started their family of four living children. After their divorce in 1969, Rita accepted a position at Scecina Memorial High School when daughter Cathie was a senior. Despite the sacrifices, all four children finished their Catholic school education at Scecina. Rita never criticized Bill for leaving because she said had it not been for him, she would not have her four wonderful children. The next year she began working for the best boss ever, Joe Striby, at the Sheet Metal Union Apprenticeship Office. She retired after 20 years of service in 1990. By then she had met and married Ken Gibson who brought love, joy, security and a new family to the union. During their marriage of 28 years they traveled to all 50 states, Canada, and the British Isles. She enjoyed making

new friends through his work as State Director for Indiana, Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training, his church Irvington United Methodist Church, and his involvement in the Freemasons.

Early on, Rita was also actively involved in: all of her children's activities at school and at church. Chauffeuring them to ball games, sitting/standing for hours at games in all kinds of weather, Cub Scout den mother, PTO officer, and Room Mother. Once the children were gone, she continued volunteering at Little Flower in many roles including a greeter at Mass, the Mercy Meals after funerals, the Ladies Club Card Parties, the Liturgy Committee, and decorating windows in the St. Patrick's Room year round. All this gave her great pleasure working with like-minded people and a chance to make new friends. Rita loved animals, hats, being with friends, praying the rosary and was crazy about her great-grands.

After Ken died and the house on Butler became too much, her plan was to live at St. Paul Hermitage so she could go to daily Mass. It was a wonderful place for her until the pandemic hit. As her hearing and vision declined, so did her ability to enjoy reading and doing puzzles. The additional isolation from the pandemic affected her mental and physical health. In October she fell and broke her hip. As unfortunate as that was, there was a hidden blessing because, after eight months, her family was finally able to be with her again at the hospital and in rehab. (Thank you staff at Community East and Community North Rehab.) Sadly, that was the last time she was able to be with family. After moving to another facility, she tested positive for COVID. Soon after, it appears she had another stroke. Sadly, on Wednesday, December 23, Rita died alone in isolation due to COVID restrictions.

The family would like to thank: Sr. Heather; nurses Phyllis, Joan, and Sr. Helen; Deena; and all the other WONDERFUL staff at The Hermitage who loved Rita until the end. Thanks too to Jordan, Kyle, Nikki, Rev. Tom, and Ashley at Kindred Hospice.

Rita was preceded in death by: husband, Ken Gibson, parents Emanuel and Marie DesRoches, brother Emile DesRoches, sister Therese Campbell, and

niece Rose Marie Peterson; In-laws Ralph Campbell, Joan DesRoches, Marge DesRoches, Pauline Gibson, Joan and Wayne Johnson, and Sam Gordon.

She is survived by: daughters Catherine Pfarr (Larry Lynch), Sherry Bernal (Daniel), Valorie Shutt (Robert), and Vickie Doenges (Wayne); sons Michael Pfarr (Brenda), Thomas Pfarr (Frough Kamali), and David Pfarr (Babs); grandchildren: Megan Chamblee (Stephen), Matthew Pfarr (Andrea), Erik Pfarr (Danielle), Austin Duncan, Marie Lynch, Celina Pfarr, Nadia Pfarr, Nathan Gordon, Amber Baker (Jim), Matthew Shutt (Teresa), and James Shutt (Jennie); great-grandchildren Monica, Rebecca, Jacob, Andrew, and Avilla Chamblee, Damian, Maria, and Elena Pfarr, Ian and Everett Pfarr, Jace Gordon, Aleesa Galvin and Damien Shutt, and Kalin and Martin Shutt.

Rita is also survived by: nieces and nephews Susanne Sperback (Bob), Dianne Morey, Joseph DesRoches (Jan), Carol Thiele (Don), Richard Pfarr (Rosie), Phillip Pfarr (Debbie), Lynne Lanyon (Bill), and Barbara Schnepf (Chuck); and godchildren Barbara Prieshoff, Susanne Sperback, and Mark Campbell.

Rite of Christian burial will be Saturday, January 2, 2021 at Little Flower Catholic Church with calling from 9:30 a.m. until Mass at 11:00 a.m. Burial will be after Mass at Oak lawn Cemetery. Due to COVID-19, per state guidelines, please practice social distancing and wear a mask. www.shirleybrothers.com

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 2. 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Little Flower Catholic Church
4720 East 13th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46201
(317) 357-8352

Mass of Christian Burial

JAN 2. 11:00 AM (ET)

Little Flower Catholic Church
4720 East 13th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46201
(317) 357-8352

Tribute Wall

RK

“ When I and my family became members of Little Flower parish we always sat in the front, west side pew of the church and Rita and family sat in the first or second row in the main area. We became acquainted as she frequently took the time after mass to compliment my wife and I on the "admirable" behavior of our two children, Dane and Cass adding how much she enjoyed watching them grow up.

Some time later, I became a member of the Liturgy Committee and had the pleasure of participating in those meetings with Rita. When Rita commented during discussions at these meetings, I always admired her brief statements regarding her ability to be thoroughly honest, to the point, her clarity and on target in the expression of her views which often influenced a change of mindset in other members. Rita in my view, always remained uplifting and positive. and I feel privileged to have known her. Our condolences to the family, sincerely,
Dick Kramer

Richard Kramer - December 29, 2020 at 08:49 AM

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“ Chris & Deborah Rettig purchased the Beautiful i n Blue for the family of Rita Ann DesRoches Pfarr Gibson.



Chris & Deborah Rettig - December 26, 2020 at 03:16 PM