



Emily Louise (Girven) Helminiak passed away gracefully in the presence of her family on January 15, 2022.

She was born at home on March 31, 1931 to George Avery Girven and Flora Ingaborg Thompson Girven in Bear Lake. She was the youngest of their five children. Emily attended Bear Lake Agricultural School.

In 1947, she moved to Manistee, where she worked at a shoe factory, Woolworth and the Glen of Michigan.

On May 29, 1948, she married the love of her life, John J. Helminiak. They raised their family in the home they built in Grant Township, where, through the years, many visitors were welcomed. She and John owned and operated John's IGA in Free Soil for 10 years. Emily had many hobbies, including sewing, crocheting and playing cards. She loved baking, making and decorating cakes for many special occasions. She was well-known for making terrific homemade bread and canning a variety of delicious pickles. She enjoyed bowling with her very good friend, Mary Ann Tuka, taking an occasional trip to the casino, winning on a scratch-off lottery ticket and listening to her husband play his concertina. She was active in her community, participating with the Firemen's Auxiliary, PTA and numerous other events and causes. Emily loved the Lord and practicing and sharing her Catholic faith at St. Joseph Church. She humbly demonstrated her compassion for others through acts of charity. She especially looked forward to celebrating the beauty of the Easter Vigil. Imagine her surprise when she discovered the artful wooden miniature carving of the Church (currently displayed in the entryway) was the work of her maternal grandfather, Hans Thompson, a master wood carver from Copenhagen, Denmark.

Emily is survived by her beloved children Linda (Gary Loper) Helminiak of Free Soil, Richard (Teresa) Helminiak of Manistee, Jean (Michael) Slimmen of Rockford, Karen (Bruce) Giles of Canton and Kristie (Gerald Jr.) Funk of Ludington; her grandchildren and great-grandchildren Alana (Zeng) Zhou, Jamie Slimmen-Bennett and her children Ava Norman and Kayla Bennett, Scott (Stacey) Slimmen and son Landon, Jared Funk and Jayson Funk; her step grandchildren and step great-grandchildren are Gary (Missy) Loper Jr. their children Gavin and Neila, Chad (Shalon) Loper and their children Dylan, Kaylee and Riley, Josh May and his sons Sidney and Evan, Bryan (Amy) May and their daughters Lexie and Leah, and Jacob (Meghan) May. She is also survived by two half-sisters Sandi Orsini and Paula Stolc; sisters-in-law Helen Helminiak and Florence Girven; brother-in-law Fred Johnson; many nieces and nephews; and, her feline confidante Stormy.

She was preceded in death by her parents George and Flora; parents-in-law John F. and Sadie Helminiak; loving husband of 66 years John; and her siblings Jenetta Dempsey, Harlan Girven, Rush Girven and Margaret Blasdell.

Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated Wednesday, January 26, 2022, at 1 p.m. at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Manistee with Rev. Zeljko Guberovic celebrant. Burial will follow at Mount Carmel Cemetery also in Manistee. Family and friends will pray the Rosary at 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday morning at the church, with visitation to begin following the rosary.

Emily Helminiak has left a legacy of love, faith, laughter, devotion and dedication to her beloved family, friends, neighbors and her most recent community at Village Manor in Ludington.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a direct donation to a charity of your choice. The family respectfully requests COVID-19 masking protocols be followed.

The Herbert Funeral Home of Manistee is in charge of funeral arrangements.