



Grace Florence (Merchant) Kibler

November 6, 1905 - November 29, 2011

Grace Florence (Merchant) Kibler, age 106, loving mother, grandmother, great grandmother, teacher and friend, affectionately known to all as “Granny”, passed away peacefully on the evening on November 29, 2011 at the Heritage Center in Evansville, IN surrounded by her loving family.

Grace was born on November 6, 1905, in St. Joseph, MI, one of three children of Harry and Lena (Muchow) Merchant. She was the granddaughter of Leonard Johnson Merchant who in 1868 established the first weekly newspaper in the Benton Harbor – St. Joseph, Michigan area, The Herald Palladium. Grace’s father, Harry Merchant, was the pioneer of publishing and editing the newspaper.

Grace attended Oberlin College and later graduated from Western Michigan Teacher’s College. She taught in the Coloma Elementary School for 38 years before retiring in 1969. She stressed phonics, reading and the necessity of mathematics. An avid reader herself, she taught these values to her grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Granny was well known for the many varieties of Christmas cookies she baked for her family and friends. Her tins of chocolate chip cookies followed grandchildren and nephews through grade school, high school and college.

Grace made many crewel pictures for her family, three of which adorned her room at the Heritage Center. She also spent countless hours making Christmas ornaments to be enjoyed for generations. Grace spent many years studying genealogy and researching her roots and the roots of the Kibler and Merchant families. Amazingly, she can trace her ancestors back to 900 A.D.

Upon moving to Evansville in 1999 to be closer to her family, she became a member of St. Agnes Catholic Church.

Grace was preceded in death by her parents, brothers and sisters-in-law, Fred and Mary Merchant and Lawrence and Marion Merchant; sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law, Frances and Frank Dykas and Agnes and Charles Watts; niece, Karen Merchant and a nephew, Dr. Jeff Thomas.

Granny is survived by her daughter, Judy (Ed) Messal; grandson, Dr. Mark (Kelly) Messal; granddaughter, Lori (Jimmy) Pierre; great grandchildren, Indy, Ethan and Owen Messal, Josh, Ashley, Jacob and Joey Pierre, all of Evansville; niece, Joyce (Andy) Thomas of Coloma, MI and nephews, Roger (Robin) Merchant of Glenburn, ME and Charles (Sharon) Watts of Benton Harbor, MI.

Funeral services will begin at 10:00 A.M. Monday, December 5, 2011 at Pierre Funeral Home, continuing at 10:30 A.M. at St. Agnes Catholic Church, Rev. David Nunning officiating. Burial will follow in St. Joseph Catholic Cemetery.

Friends may visit with the family from 2:00 until 6:00 P.M. on Sunday at Pierre Funeral Home, 2601 W. Franklin Street, where there will be a memorial service conducted by the church at 4:00 P.M.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to St. Agnes Catholic Church, 1600 Glendale Ave., Evansville, IN 47712.

Condolences may be made online at www.pierrefuneralhome.com.

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 4. 2:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

Pierre Funeral Home
2601 W. Franklin Street
Evansville, IN

Service

DEC 5. 10:00 AM (CT)

Pierre Funeral Home
2601 W. Franklin Street
Evansville, IN

Service

DEC 5. 10:30 AM (CT)

St. Agnes Catholic Church
1600 Glendale Ave
Evansville, IN

Tribute Wall



“ Pierre Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Grace Florence (Merchant) Kibler



Pierre Funeral Home - November 29, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ Grace Florence (Merchant) Kibler

January 16, 2023 at 06:53 PM



“ I am 54 years old, and was very blessed to have had Mrs. Kibler for a teacher at Coloma Elementary School. What an amazing and beautiful woman. I have vivid memories of the dress attire and little heels she wore. I will forever cherish wonderful memories of her. Rest in peace.##imported-begin##Sandra Williams Draper Wotring##imported-end##

December 09, 2011 at 06:34 AM



“ I extend my condolences to the family. I grew up in the watervliet, colma area. In the 50's and 60's, attendance was also at the St. Joseph Catholic Church in Watervliet. Being that father's biological father's name was Jacob Kibler from Coloma, there may be some connection. Knowing that wonderful people such as Grace, could be a link in my past chain, gives my heart a special beat. Grace will be in a special place waiting for those that follow and believe.##imported-begin##richard kibler##imported-end##

December 07, 2011 at 02:32 PM



“ Have just read Grace's obituary in the Herald Palladium. What a wonderful long life. She was such a lovely person and I remember her with much admiration. It has been many years since Mark was in 4th grade, but I recall a very pleasant association and am sending you all my sympathy for your loss....Marnie Weber##imported-begin##Mrs. Weber, fourth grade, Washington School, Coloma##imported-end##

December 05, 2011 at 04:55 PM



“ My heart goes out to all of you. Mrs Kibler will remain in your hearts forever. My family lived behind her. Your Mother was my sister Cheryl's first teacher that she had when we moved in. Whenever we needed her help, she was always there. Mrs Kibler, enjoy God's gardens & listen to the whispers to you from those that love you here on earth. Yes, I love you Mrs Kibler....##imported-begin##Sandra Coleman Phelps-Slowik##imported-end##

December 04, 2011 at 07:34 PM



“ *Lori, you have our deepest sympathy in the loss of your granny. We know how close you were to her. She lived a long good life so be happy for all the memories you and your family have shared with her. I was always impressed at her good health for so many years.##imported-begin##Kim & Bill Gunn##imported-end##*

December 04, 2011 at 01:54 PM