



JOHN "MILTON" GRAF

May 6, 1921 - January 8, 2015

John "Milton" Graf, Caledonia, Minnesota, died peacefully early on January 8, 2015. He was 93 years old.

Known to family and friends as "Milton," he was born on May 6, 1921, in Caledonia, Minnesota, to Thomas and Magdalena (Hoffmann) Graf. A graduate of Loretto Catholic High School, he attended Wisconsin Technical Institute in La Crosse, Wisconsin, where he trained to be an industrial photographer. After completing the program in 1940, Trane Company hired him to photograph large equipment. Soon thereafter, the United States drafted Milton into the Army. From 1942-1944, he served with the Detached Company, Military Police, 7th Service Command, first at Camp Carson and then Camp Hale, Colorado. In 1945, he was transferred to Fort Lewis, Washington, and assigned to the 104th Infantry Division, where he remained until the end of the War.

After the surrender of Japan, he returned to Caledonia, where he took employment at Henry Blexrud's grocery store. In 1946, he married Helen Robertson of Argyle, Minnesota, in a private ceremony in at the Church of Nativity in Torrance, California. After returning to Caledonia, the couple purchased a grocery store in Lime Springs, Iowa. While living in Lime Springs, the arrival of four of their five children blessed their home.

In 1959, Milt and Helen returned to Caledonia and purchased Blexrud's grocery store. They operated Graf's Grocery on the corner of Main and Market until 1981, when Milton retired and sold the store. During that time, the couple raised their five children, belonged to St. Mary's Catholic Parish, and promoted the civic and business health of the community. Milton served as a Post Commander of American Legion Post 191 in Caledonia.

In retirement, he pursued his interests of reading about history. In addition, he co-founded the Rosary Guild in Caledonia, a group that produced nearly 80,000 rosaries before he turned the reins over to a younger generation. A lifelong outdoorsman, he instilled a love of hunting and fishing in his children.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Sister (Alice Marie) Olga Graf, and only sibling, Elaine Bay. He is survived by his wife Helen; children Tom (Lisa), Celine (Alans) Lauermann, Joseph (Carla), James (Joan), and John (Diane); grandchildren Trisha (Brad) Majestic, Bryce Graf, Nolan (Megan) Graf, John Lauermann, Mary (Douglas) Pearson, Helen Lauermann, and Andrew Neuman; and one great grandchild, Jonathan Pearson.

The family wishes to extend a special thanks to the staff of the Caledonia Care & Rehab. They graciously and gently cared for Milton during his last few months.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be at 10:30 am, Monday Jan. 12, 2015, at St. Mary's Catholic Church, Caledonia. Father Matt Fasnacht will officiate and burial will be in Calvary Cemetery, Caledonia. Visitation will be from 3 to 5 pm on Sunday, at Holy Family Hall, next to the church where there will be a rosary said at 3 pm and at 5 pm. Visitation will also be from 9:30-10:30 am Monday morning before the service at the church.

In lieu of flowers, memorials will be used to benefit St. Mary's Grade School in

Caledonia, or EWTN.

McCormick Funeral Home, Caledonia is assisting the family with arrangements.