

In Loving Memory Of

Bertha Veronica Murphy

December 15, 1932 – rural Lemmon, SD
July 8, 2023 – Carrington, ND

VISITATION

Wednesday, July 12, 2023
6:00PM - 7:00PM
Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Carrington, ND

ROSARY / VIGIL SERVICE

Wednesday, July 12, 2023
Rosary ~ 6:45PM
Vigil Service ~ 7:00PM
Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Carrington, ND

MASS OF CHRISTIAN BURIAL

Thursday, July 13, 2023
10:30AM
Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Carrington, ND

OFFICIATING

Father Terry Dodge

SPECIAL MUSIC

Eileen Savelkoul & Lily Savelkoul ~ Accompaniment
Sacred Heart Choir

PALLBEARERS

Grandsons

Christopher Biwer ~ Adam Biwer ~ James Murphy ~ Casey Murphy
Elliot Savelkoul ~ Connal Murphy ~ Jonathan Murphy

HONORARY PALLBEAERS

All of Bert's Grandchildren and Close Family

BURIAL

Carrington Cemetery
Carrington, ND

Arrangements By
Evans Funeral Home – Carrington & New Rockford, ND
www.EvansFuneralHomeND.com

“Know Thyself”



Bertha “Bert” Murphy

DECEMBER 15, 1932 - JULY 8, 2023

Bertha Veronica Seitz Murphy was born on December 15, 1932 near Shade Tree Reservoir in a sod house near Lemmon, SD. She was the 7th of 13 children, and the 3rd daughter, born to Alex and Rose Seitz, devout Catholics. Being she was the only blonde of the girls, she stood out from her noticeably handsome siblings. When she was just 2 1/2, her family moved north of Kensal, North Dakota, where Bert made most of her young memories. She often shared that despite the hardship of living at that time, she “had lots of fun,” especially with the siblings closest to her.

One day during her formative years, her Aunt Barbara visited. She took Bert’s little hands into her own and after silently inspecting them, she told Bert, “You have pillows on your fingertips. You will make a good nurse.” So, in the fall of her 13th year, Bert sadly left her home to attend high school in Jamestown, in anticipation of one day becoming a nurse. Because financing high school was difficult for her family, Bert worked to help support herself, sweeping the classroom, washing dishes, and working at a boarding house making beds, scrubbing floors, etc. During her junior year, she took on a nurse’s aid job from 3-9 p.m. at the Jamestown Hospital. She graduated from St. John’s Academy in 1950, and with a \$250 Red Cross Scholarship, she began nurse’s training at St. Alexius Nursing Program in Bismarck. Having graduated in August of 1953, she began working at the Carrington Hospital, and in September, she married John Murphy at Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Bordulac. They made their home on John’s family farm a few miles from Bordulac.

John and Bert were hoping to begin their family, but the arrival of children was made challenging by a medical condition that caused babies to be born much too early. A total of six babies were prematurely born and passed during John and Bert’s young marriage, one of whom “looked just like John” and lived only a day or two, bringing great heartache to them and their respective families.

In 1959, after suffering 5 miscarriages and spending almost nine months on bedrest, it was with great pride and joy, a full-term baby girl, Louise, was born! The secret to having children for Bert was a lot of bedrest and help from her sisters! Then, Michael arrived in 1961, Eileen came in 1963, John R. in 1965, and Paul was born in 1967. Bert loved her children very deeply, had high hopes for them, and encouraged their individuality by often telling them, "Don't be a sheep." Bragging about them was one of her favorite activities.

Bert continued working at the Carrington Hospital, but at the age of 43, with encouragement and support from her husband, she enrolled in the state’s first Family Nurse Practitioner Program at the University of North Dakota (UND), which was designed to help provide health care to rural areas. Following graduation in 1976, Bert began working under the supervision of “Doc” Voglewede, a military-trained physician who taught her excellent surgical skills, as well as other skills critical in rural health care. Bert worked with “Doc” until she was 62, but resumed working at both the Jamestown Hospital as a surgical nurse, and at the ND State Hospital in Jamestown until she was 82.

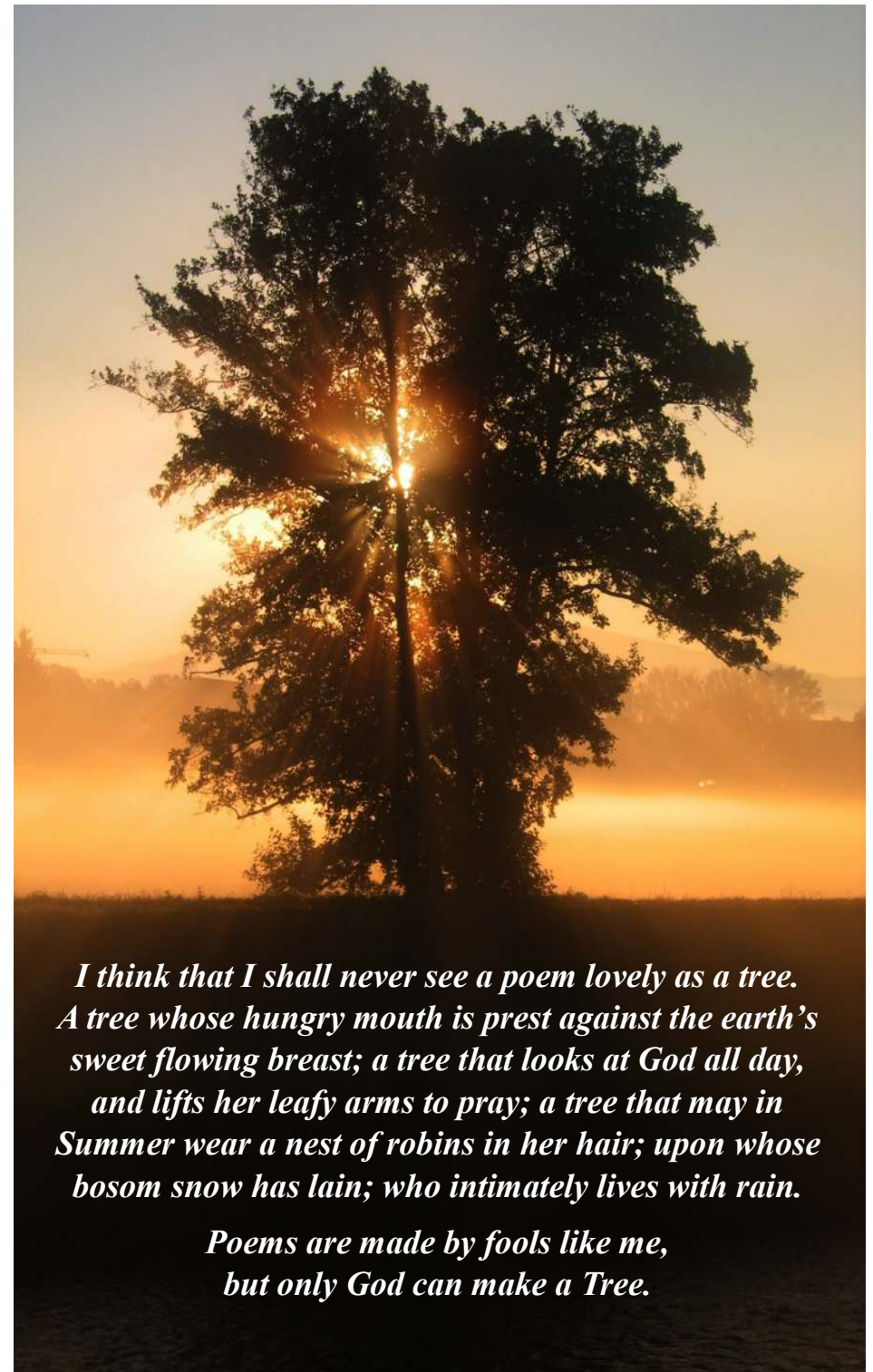
In 2006, at the age of 74, Bert was presented with the Outstanding Alumni Award from UND’s Physician Assistant (PA) Program, in recognition of having provided 30 years of healthcare. Between 1976 and 2016, Bert maintained PA certification, which required completion of 100 hours of continuing medical education every two years, and passing the PA certification test every six years. At the age of 85, Bert was presented with an Emeritus award from the National Committee on Certification of Physicians’ Assistants. A nurse she most definitely became, having worked 62 years and loved every moment!



Aside from being a skilled and compassionate nurse, Bert was also known for: a love of fishing and hummingbirds; hunting for mushrooms & asparagus; multitasking (sometimes at very inopportune times); love of music, ballroom dancing, & singing, especially in church with sons Michael and Paul; a car filled with all kinds of “merchandise” (mostly fishing equipment & tackle), so much so that rarely could she provide transportation to more than one, aside from herself; and her many driving “skills”, including driving over bags of seed corn, spewing them yards into the air, and “parking” her car between two trees with only an inch or two of clearance between the bumpers and the trees, and “taking” a cat to the hospital parking lot; a “stocked” refrigerator, complete with creative casseroles, saved food via mold scraping, and mixtures she sometimes called “ambrosia”; shooting black birds off the back step, sometimes two with one shot; being able to diaper a baby faster than most any one; butchering chickens; and the Kentucky Derby.

Bert leaves behind her children, 15 grandchildren, and 11 great grandchildren: Louise & Robert Biwer (Bismarck), and their children, Christopher (Mandan), Adam & Rachel Biwer and their daughters, Gwen & Mae (Phoenix, AZ), and Shannon & Peter Reimer and their sons, Ivan & Gabriel, with a baby on the way (Bismarck); Michael & Cindy Murphy (Carrington) and their daughter Jenna & Brett Hershberger, and daughter, Maria (Fargo), and son, Casey & Maartja Murphy and their son, Shepard (Carrington); Eileen & Rodney Savelkoul (Lansford), and their daughters, Margaret, Audra & Lily, and son, Elliot; John & Tina Murphy (Carrington), and their daughter, Jessica & Kristopher Skadberg, their two sons, Jack & Luke, and daughter, Emerson (Carrington), their son, James (Carrington), their daughter, Shania & Seth Gilliss (Carrington) and baby Russell; and their son, Jonathan Murphy; and Paul Murphy (Carrington), and his son, Connal (Grand Forks), and daughter, Ceara (Bismarck).

She was preceded in death by her husband, John; her sister, Dolores Plaisted; her parents, and her brothers: Herman, Dennis, James, Reinhold, Daniel, and Henry; and her premature infants.



*I think that I shall never see a poem lovely as a tree.
A tree whose hungry mouth is prest against the earth's
sweet flowing breast; a tree that looks at God all day,
and lifts her leafy arms to pray; a tree that may in
Summer wear a nest of robins in her hair; upon whose
bosom snow has lain; who intimately lives with rain.*

*Poems are made by fools like me,
but only God can make a Tree.*