



Mass of Christian Burial for Florence "Punch" Berends, 99, of Minneota, was held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, December 13, at St. Edward Catholic Church in Minneota. Interment followed the service at St. Edward Catholic Cemetery in Minneota.

Punch died on Tuesday, December 9, 2008, at the Minneota Manor in Minneota.

Florence "Punch" Marie (Brewers) Berends was born on June 30, 1909, on a farm in rural Minneota to John Arnold and Emerence Marie (Van Hee) Brewers. She went to school at Holy Trinity School in New Ulm and graduated from the eighth grade in 1923.

Punch was active at St. Eloi Catholic Church in Ghent. She was famous for her roles in community plays and was a member of St. Eloi Dramatic Club for many years. From 1923 to 1941, she lived at home with her parents.

On September 11, 1941, she was united in marriage to Peter A. Berends at St. Eloi Catholic Church in Ghent. After a brief time living in Moline, IL, they started farming on the Berends Homestead in Glenwood City, WI. In 1945, the couple moved back to the Ghent area and farmed until retiring and moving into their home in Minneota in 1970.

After retirement, Punch worked in Minneota for many years at the High School Cafeteria, the Minneota Manor and doing the cleaning and laundry at St. Edward Catholic Church until she was 89 years old. Even after she no longer "worked," she volunteered at the Manor for many years until her eyesight diminished at age 95. Punch continued to live at home until age 98. Her motto was "as long as you can work, you're ok!"

She is survived by her two sons and a daughter-in-law: Pat Berends of Randolph, Maine and Phil and Barb Berends of St. Charles, MN; eight grandchildren: Patrick Berends, Melissa Winchester, Sandra Anderson, Dan Lipinski, Cathy Olson, Mary Kae Truax, John Berends and Jerry Berends; 11 great grandchildren: April, Cassandra, Sophia, Danika, Grace, Luke, Cole, Brennen, Kenna, Riley and Emily; many nieces and nephews including cribbage partner Ray Bot and special nieces Mary Ann Christianson and Sister Anna Marie DeVos.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Peter, in 1981; son, Perry, in 1971; daughter, Paulette, in 2007; daughter-in-law Thalia, in 1994; son-in-law, Don, in 2007; five sisters: Mary, Lizzy, Louise, Helen and Julia; five brothers: Harry, Louie, Eddie, Joe and Emil; and also many nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, donations preferred to St. Edward Catholic Church.