



## Elsie Zellers

July 12, 1914 - July 14, 2013

Elsie Zellers, 99, a new resident of Ft. Gibson Nursing Home, died Sunday morning, July 14, 2013, just minutes after Father Mike Knipe of St. Joseph Catholic Church, of Muskogee, OK, gave her Communion and blessed her with the Last Rites in her room. She had been visited by the Eucharistic Minister, Ms. Melody Stacy, from St. Joseph's Parish, every Sunday for over a year with Communion and Scripture readings since mobility was difficult after a broken hip and hip replacement in 2008. Always fiercely independent, she had been living alone in an 'assisted living' apartment since her return to Oklahoma in 2007, after her eldest son died. She moved to Ft. Gibson so she could be near her daughter and son-in-law. Her other 2 sons were living in Tulsa at the time. Following an accident (fall) in April, 2013, she had been unable to return to her apartment and moved into the full care nursing home.

Born on July 12, 1914, in Scottsville, Kentucky, she was the second of five children of Edgar L. and Nuel (Wolfe) Hamm. The family moved to Elwood, Indiana. As time went on the family grew and prospered. Elsie married her high school sweetheart, Terrance C. Zellers, her husband of 49 years, on October 25, 1930. Elsie had her first child, a son, Terrance McClellan Zellers, on Sept. 8, 1931, in Wabash, Indiana.

Elsie was a helpmate to her husband in all of their struggles and achievements - from surviving the depression as a newlywed with her first child, to guiding the family through marital roadblocks, to finding a way thru health emergencies. Her husband, highly skilled as a glasscutter, would travel from glass plant to glass plant during rebuilding of furnaces and tanks. The companies had to rebuild the glass tanks to assure production of blemish-free flawless sheets of glass. So the family of three traveled from New York, to Pennsylvania, to Illinois, to Louisiana, and back to Indiana. The circuit came to include Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co. in Oklahoma where they eventually took residency thru seniority. During this early period, Elsie discovered that Terrance's faith was gnawing at him because of his lapse of attending and practicing his Catholic faith. As a child with a strong Baptist heritage, she had also failed in her religious training and was raising a son with no faith. She and their son began to attend classes at night at the St. Teresa's Catholic Church in Shreveport, LA. Upon completion of Instructions, she invited her husband to go to church with her at Christmas in 1944. Completely in the dark about her

accomplishment, he agreed to go. After the Mass, she introduced him to the pastor and explained she and their son were being baptized at St. Teresa's by Ftr M. Martin Walsh on New Years Day together! Terrance broke down to the priest and went to confession that night. He accompanied his wife and son on Dec. 31st, 1944 to be baptized and, together, Terrance & Elsie had their marriage blessed before God on Jan. 1st, 1945. Neither ever missed Mass on Sunday again.

Another disappointment was the inability to have another child after their first son, Terry. Many doctors tried to find a reason before finally telling her she would never have another child. But as if to show them how pleased he was about their awakening in faith together, God blessed them with another son, Theodore Campbell, in 1948, after 17 years of barrenness. Then, to show his benevolence, three years later, in 1951, Elsie was pregnant again and God fulfilled her desire and presented her with a daughter, Catherine Amelia. Also in 1951, her 1st son, Terry, joined the army and was sent to war in Korea. So, to keep her mind too busy to worry, God blessed her with her final pregnancy, Robert Arson in 1952. Elsie and Terrance were happier than words could tell, even though it would be difficult raising another family starting at 38 years old. They had always volunteered to bring 2-3 children into our home for a month each summer from state or Catholic orphanages. Elsie said 'Having our second set of children was what kept us young"! They returned their own good fortune to God by raising all of their children with a deep recognition of faith being the strength to carry on and prosper. By confession and forgiveness, we can be the Christians our Bible tells us to be. All 4 of her children attended St. Michael's Catholic School at least thru 8th grade, 1965, when the little school ceased to operate. The Church/School was a part of our family - especially since our home was located directly across the street during our years at home together in Henryetta.

All 4 children were baptized, made their 1st Confession, 1st Communion, Confirmation, and (1st ) Marriages at St. Michael's Catholic Church. Elsie also served in the Altar Society, in which she held every office and was dedicated to performing works for those in need and improve the quality of life for parish.

Elsie did have a hobby she enjoyed immensely – Bowling. For a ten year period, Elsie & Terrance were manager/operator of a bowling alley in Okmulgee, OK. After its close, they continued to bowl for entertainment and love of the sport on teams at the Henryetta Bowling Center each week, and belonged to leagues for tournaments.

When her last child started middle school, Elsie decided to go to work at the T.G. & Y. variety store. She worked over 15 years at the store, and became close personal friends with the other clerks, Mary Hedrick, Jean R Morgan, Mayoma Bardin, and others who have passed on. She enjoyed being with people and helping people so her job was part of who she was as well as a way to increase the family income to aid in her children's college plans.

Elsie and Terrance decided to sell their property and move to Texas when two of her sons and a grandson moved there for their jobs following the relocation of the Pittsburg Plate Glass Co. operations to Burkburnett, TX in 1978. Elsie also knew that her husband's health was rapidly declining and a cardiologist in Wichita Falls, TX, was able to improve his breathing for a time. But Terrance's emphysema finally overcame all the doctor's best efforts, and he died in Wichita Falls, TX on Dec. 7, 1979, after 49 years and 2 months of marriage. He was returned to Henryetta, OK, which they considered as 'Home' for much of their life together, and was buried in the family plot at the cemetery.

Elsie was still a still her family's matriarch and wanted to fulfill all the retirement plans and adventures that she and Terrance had planned for their retirement. She went on a Hawaiian cruise and, with a small group of widows, she frequently traveled to Nevada, Louisiana, and Mississippi for sight-seeing and casinos (she enjoyed slot machines the most). Back in Burkburnett, TX, the four ladies went frequently attended bingo for any group raising money, including the Catholic church and the D.A.V. until many of the bingo halls closed after the Indian Tribes legalized gambling in Oklahoma.

She was still lonely so she volunteered at the Catholic Bethania Hospital in Wichita Falls with the Ladies Auxiliary. Loneliness led her to move back to Henryetta, OK, for a brief time. During this time, she worked at Wal-mart, first as a greeter, then as associate in the Fabric department and Women's Clothing/Dressing Rooms. She still couldn't stay in one place very long and in 1983, she moved to Dallas, OR, with a friend, but that didn't last long as being away from all family did not work for her.

She lived in Ft. Gibson near her daughter and 2 grandchildren for a while in 1986 to 1987. Her blurring vision that she thought was a cataract turned out to be cancer and she had to have her right eye removed. While adjusting to her limitations, she decided to move back to Texas.

In 1990, her oldest son, Terry, lost his wife suddenly at 59 years old to heart disease. Elsie helped him adjust and learn to take over all the things he never had to do for himself. Then her health began to go downhill. She had beaten colon cancer in 1980 and retinal (eye) cancer in 1986. She still drove and traveled with only one eye and prosthesis. After a few accidents, Terry convinced Elsie to cut expenses and move into one apartment together with him. She cooked every day and handled the laundry, and he drove her to doctors' appointments visits to see her other children in Oklahoma. Terry worked part-time after retirement as a bookkeeper for a chain of convenience stores in charge of all lottery accounting. Elsie adjusted to the new schedule and they took care of each other. After a long struggle with lung cancer, her first son, Terry, died in March, 2007. Elsie was now 93 years old and had accomplished her goal of living to the turn of the century – 2000, so her next goal she said was to live to be '100'! She had a reputation for doing "What she wanted to do, When she wanted to do it! Well, she almost did it, living to be 99 years and 2 days!

Elsie was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Terrance C Zellers, one brother, Roy Hamm of Anderson, IN; 3 sisters: Ruby Beckett, and Norma Kleyla of Elwood, IN, and Virginia Ridenhour, of Spring Hill, FL, and 1 son, Terry Zellers.

Survivors include: children - 3: Theodore C. Zellers, son; Robert A. Zellers, son, both of Tulsa, OK; Catherine A. Garrett, daughter of Ft. Gibson, OK, and 7 grandchildren – Teresa A. (Zellers) Moody, Texas; Terry C. Zellers, Sapulpa, OK; & Christine (Zellers) Malloy, of Sapulpa, KS; and Michael J. Garrett of Enid, OK; & Stacey L. Garrett of Ewing, NJ; and Thomas C. Zellers of San Antonio, TX; & Rebecca A. Zellers of Wichita Falls, TX; and 10 great-grandchildren, including Cody B. Moody of Burkburnett, TX, & Melissa A. Morrow of Dallas, TX, and numerous great-great grandchildren and nieces and nephews.

Service will be 2:00pm Monday, July 22, 2013 at the Rogers Funeral Home Chapel with Father Peter Phung, officiating. Interment will follow at the Westlawn Cemetery under the direction of the Rogers Funeral Home.

# Cemetery Details

## Westlawn Cemetery

2800 West Main  
Henryetta, OK 74437

# Previous Events

## Visitation

**JUL 21.** 12:30 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Rogers Funeral Home  
1302 West Main Street  
Henryetta, OK 74437  
(918) 650-9090  
rogersfh@aol.com  
<https://www.rogersfuneralhomeinc.com>

## Service

**JUL 22.** 2:00 PM (CT)

Rogers Funeral Home  
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# Tribute Wall

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“ *My Pt my friend my granny, I love you Elsie I could not wait to get to ur house every day was a new day with lots of laughs smiles and fun there was never a dull day at ur house..I will truly miss u and I will never forget you I thank god daily for blessing me with you... May you Rest in peace my darling Elsie until we met again...*

tammy Mackey - July 29, 2013 at 09:22 PM



“ *Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Elsie Zellers.*



July 20, 2013 at 11:32 AM



“ *Vivid Recollections was purchased for the family of Elsie Zellers.*



July 17, 2013 at 12:02 PM

PC

“ *So sorry to hear of your Mother's passing. I'm sure you'll miss her dearly, but you will have comfort in knowing she had a long wonderful life and a very loving family.*

*Patricia Conway Cobb*

Patricia Conway Cobb - July 17, 2013 at 10:38 AM