



Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

Grant that I may not so much seek

to be consoled as to console;

to be understood as to understand;

to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;

it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and

it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Celebrating The Life Of Irene Rose Welsh



Irene Rose Welsh passed away January 19, 2026. She was born in April of 1923 to Peter J. Welsh and Rosa (Simon) Welsh, at their homestead near Owanka, South Dakota. Irene studied in a one room school house, attended high school in New Underwood, followed by instruction at the National College of Business in Rapid City. Passing the civil service exam in 1941, she traveled alone by train to Washington, D.C. She had secured employment at the State Department / Foreign Service. Her 1st day of work was Dec 1, 1941... Days later, the bombing of Pearl Harbor shook the nation. On December 8, Irene and co-workers rushed to the windows to witness President Franklin D. Roosevelt in his convertible heading for the Capitol to declare war on Japan. Irene retained this vivid memory for life. She was promoted to the Office for Emergency Management, War Commission Department. Her first assignment was to Afghanistan in 1942, portending the beginning of her decades long service to our country and many adventures traveling the world. Irene worked hard, and rose through the ranks. She supervised a large contingent of employees, embassy dinner parties for Heads of State and oversaw millions of dollars in U.S. foreign aid. She survived multiple bombing attacks during WWII and various uprisings in Guatemala, the Philippines and Cambodia. After retiring, Irene lived in Washington D.C. volunteering at the Kennedy Center and multiple charities; her philanthropy benefits them to this day. She thoroughly enjoyed the fine arts, theatre and treasured Mexican food with a margarita. She was a voracious reader and continued doing so until a few days prior to her passing. Irene returned to the Black Hills in 2002, residing at Westhills Village where she volunteered in their library, followed by a move to the Courtyard assisted living. She often proclaimed her great satisfaction at both locations, speaking very highly of the superior service provided by Office Administration, Dining & Cleaning Staff, Nurses, CNA's, Physical Therapists and Hospice. We are beholden to each of you that provided such tender care for our beloved. Irene was a devoted lifelong Catholic, establishing membership at Our Lady of Perpetual Help where she volunteered and worshiped. She was forever grateful to her friend Phyllis Kinkler for her unwavering dedication and driving her to church for many years. We want to thank all of the other residents that offered their friendship to her. Irene is survived by her only remaining 1st cousin Edgar Simon of Owanka, 2nd cousins Becky Simon Wilkerson-Streeter (Shawn), Pat Simon (Judy), Bonnie Simon, Jim Simon (Roni), Sharon Simon-Mayer (Bob), daughter Margo Kaleda (Jeff), Mark Jensen (Fleda), Steve Jensen, Julie Jensen, Janey Jensen, Roger Jensen, Allen Simon, Marcella Simon, Ross Wright (Julie Anderson), Philip Wright, Peggy Chambers (John) children Cameron and Leah, Dick Wright and son Casey, Bud Wright (Char), Stu Wright and daughters Sadie Dirks (Michael) and Samantha Nouis (Evan). Irene was preceded in death by her parents Peter and Rosa Simon Welsh, sister Frances Welsh-Clapp, and husband Cliff Clapp, and infant brother, Irene's 1st cousins Dorothy Simon, Charlie and Ann Simon and daughter Deon Simon, and Tommy Simon, Lucy Wright and husband Tom, Albertine Jensen and Husband Thurlo. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Black Hills Habitat for Humanity 610 East Omaha, Rapid City, SD 57701 www.blackhillshabitat.org or Monument Health Hospice 224 Elk Street, Rapid City, SD 57701.

In Loving Memory

Irene Rose Welsh

Born

April 18, 1923

Wasta, South Dakota

Died

January 19, 2026

Rapid City, South Dakota

Vigil & Rosary

2:30 p.m. ~ Sunday, January 25, 2026

Osheim & Schmidt Funeral Home

Rapid City, South Dakota

Led by ~ *Deacon Greg Palmer*

Cantor ~ *Jessica Hicks*

Accompanist ~ *Justin Stephens*

Christian Funeral Mass

11:30 a.m. ~ Monday, January 26, 2026

Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Rapid City, South Dakota

Celebrant ~ *Fr. Matt Fallgren*

Cantor ~ *Jeanine Gerlach*

Accompanist ~ *Justin Stephens*

Casket Bearers

All Her Family & Friends

Interment

1:30 p.m. Monday, January 26, 2026

Lakeside Cemetery

Owanka, South Dakota


OSHEIM & SCHMIDT
FUNERAL HOME