

LOIS ROTH KEMMY

January 25, 1926 - February 7, 2018



*Loving wife, mother,
grandmother and great
grandmother.*

Preceded in death by her husband, Jack Kemmy; parents, Irene and Alfred Roth; sister, Alice McGowan; brother Al Roth; and son, Christopher. Survived by her children, Kathy (Mike) Clay; John Kemmy; Pat (Lana) Kemmy; Michael (Debbie) Kemmy; Terry (Jackie) Kemmy; Tom (Ginger) Kemmy; Jackie (Bill) James; and numerous grandchildren, great grandchildren, loving nieces and nephews and friends.

In 1939, as motion pictures were transitioning into color, from black and white, a Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer film about a lost and frightened Midwest farm girl, starring Judy Garland, swept the country. The Wizard of Oz, Academy Award winner of Best Original Song for "Over The Rainbow," has been named by the Library of Congress as the most-viewed motion picture on television syndication.

This movie not only had a captivating storyline about young girl named Dorothy that appealed to the masses; it also had an uncanny, mystical resemblance to the real life struggles and triumphs of Lois Kemmy. The similarities are too rich to ignore:

-Dorothy grew up in the Midwest, without her parents, raised by an aunt and uncle.

Lois grew up in Omaha with a packing house and one of the largest stockyards in the Midwest as her backyard.

Since her mother tragically passed away when she was three, and her father just six years after that, Lois was raised by her aunt and uncle.

-Dorothy was lost, confused, anxious and frightened. She faced a world of uncertainty, bewilderment and at times sheer hopelessness. But somehow she held tight to a dream of finding a more balanced, peaceful, purposeful life even if that was as distant as the far side of a magical rainbow.

Lois, the youngest of three, lost both of her parents before the age of 10. Her world was virtually turned upside down as she was just starting grade school. Through the love of her siblings, and later with her Uncle Johnny and Aunt Eliza Roth (her adoptive parents), her cousins (who became her sisters) Henrietta and Loretta, and the grace of God, Lois kept her faith and never gave into despair.

-Dorothy found herself through a traumatic, life-changing journey. She discovered that she was a survivor, in the truest sense of the word. She learned that the key to true happiness lies in being connected to a holy spirit that resides deep within her...one which grows exponentially by staying connected to those who mean the most to her...her family. And lastly she discovered that "home" had more to do with where your heart is, than it did a physical location.

Much of the same was true for Lois. Just prior to marrying Jack Kemmy, she was told by a physician that she probably would never be able to have children of her own, and would need to consider adoption if she wanted a family. She even offered to cancel the wedding, but Jack would have none of that, and on June 12, 1948 they were married. Eight Baby Boomer kids later, Lois felt she proved that doctor wrong.

The miracle part of this story is clearly the triumph of Lois' spirit against the overwhelming odds that suggested her young life would turn out to be anything but happy, normal, meaningful and significant.

Lois Kemmy was an educator. She attended Creighton University and graduated from

Omaha University (later named the University of Nebraska at Omaha) with a teaching degree. She taught all over San Antonio, including Blessed Sacrament, St. Thomas More, OLP in Selma, Holy Spirit, and others. Several of her former students are now parents and grandparents and fondly remember her.

Lois was a magician in the kitchen. No one had more savory recipes for venison (available year-round in our house) than her, and no one put on a better party spread or Thanksgiving Dinner.

Lois was a community builder. When they arrived in San Antonio, not knowing anyone, Lois and Jack turned to the church to get connected to other families. Several of those families became lifelong relationships, lasting today through their children. They were among the first families to settle into Blessed Sacrament Parish and Elementary School, where all eight of their kids graduated.

Lois was a Christian, a devout Catholic, and a champion of the underdog. And to her there was no bigger underdog than the life of an unborn child. For 34 years, she spent hours upon hours volunteering at Birthright counseling women who had unwanted pregnancies.

Lois was into health, long before it was the "in" thing to do. She wasn't too fond of doctors or taking prescription medicine. Her children rarely had soft drinks, often showed up at school with wheat bread sandwiches (which then was practically unheard of) fresh fruit, and took Shaklee protein and vitamins.

Lois was a lover of life...Whether it was planning a poker party with close friends, or organizing a family coast trip to Rockport, or shuttling a houseful of kids to CYO games around the clock, or riding a jet ski in her 80s, or shooting her annual deer at the close of hunting season...nothing got in her way of living life to the fullest.

Lois was a daughter, a sister, a wife, a mom, an aunt, a grandma and great grandma. She was the Matriarch of our family, and her family and her faith meant everything to her. To look at how

her life began - how the cards were stacked against her - and the wonderful and sometimes painful journey she went through...and to try to count the many, many lives she powerfully impacted is to simply acknowledge and marvel in wonderment at the loving handiwork of God.

Lois was unshakeable in her faith. And like Dorothy from Kansas, even during the darkest, stormiest periods of her life, she held fast and believed in something she couldn't see, a beautiful life on the far side of that rainbow. We celebrate her life, and we happily rejoice in God finally calling his Omaha daughter "home."

*Somewhere over the rainbow
Way up high,
There's a land that I heard of
Once in a lullaby.*

*Somewhere over the rainbow
Skies are blue,
And the dreams that you
dare to dream
Really do come true.*

Services:
Rosary, 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 9,
at Blessed Sacrament
Church, 600 Oblate Dr.
78216, with Visitation starting
at 6 p.m.

Funeral Mass, 11:30 a.m.
Saturday, Feb. 10, at Blessed
Sacrament Church. Reception
to follow immediately at Holy
Spirit Catholic Church,
Banquet Room, 8134 Blanco
Rd. 78216.

In lieu of flowers, please send
donations in her name to the
charity of your choice.

