

## GETTING TO KNOW OUR PARISH FAMILY



**Andrew John Wellman** was born in the family home on a farm just outside of Humphrey, Nebraska on August 31, 1924. He was the seventh of eleven children born to Frank and Gertrude (Hoelscher) Wellman. Two of his siblings died in childbirth and one in infancy. He grew up in the Humphrey area, attended St. Mary's and St. Bernard's Catholic schools through eighth grade and then worked during his teen years as a farmhand for several area farmers. When he was in his early twenties, he farmed with his dad and brother, Francis.

Andy met the love of his life, Florine Kraus in 1949. She worked at the hospital in Lincoln, NE with his sisters Gertrude (Endres) and Clara (Schiller). They were married a year later on April 25, 1950 and lived in St. Edward, NE the first year of their marriage where Andy owned and operated a gas station. They moved to the family farm in March of 1951 when Andy's parents moved to Miesville, MN with his brother, Francis. It was there that they were blessed with their first child, Mary. And a year later, a second daughter, Kathy (Dick Seitz) was born. In the fall of 1952, they moved to a farm south of Florine's home town, Rosholt, SD. While living there, Paula (Ed Gergen) and Andrea (John Jewison) were born. In 1957, they bought a farm near Wheaton, MN where they welcomed their first son, John (Cindy Angell). Andy and Florine packed up the family in August of 1960 and moved to Hampton and became members of St. Mathias parish. Andy's three sisters, Marcella (Heiman), Gertrude and Clara lived the Hampton area. He began working as a cement mason. While living in Hampton, he was voted in as mayor by a write-in campaign. He also served on the fire department. Andy and Florine were blessed with four more children after moving to Hampton, Maynard (Karen Angell), Joanne, Julie and Gary. In 1966, Andy and Florine bought a farm two miles south of town. In addition to farming, he was a co-owner of W & W Construction. He was also employed at the Peavey flour mill in Hastings, the Creamery in Farmington, the Grain Exchange, Cenex and for his nephew at Greg's Meats.

In 1989, after retiring from farming, Andy became employed at St. Mathias Church and School. Over the next twenty-three years he served as janitor and sacristan until health issues forced him to retire in February of this year. During his employment at the church he began serving Mass again. It brought him so much joy to serve God.

In 2011, Andy and Florine celebrated their sixty-first wedding anniversary just six weeks before her passing.

Andy grew up during the great depression and learned to not be wasteful. He was very handy and made a hobby of fixing things. He also has enjoyed hunting, fishing and sharing stories

Andy has been blessed with a very strong faith his whole life. He learned to serve Mass as a young boy. At the age of seven, his mother taught him the Prayer to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. He has had a strong devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary since that time, asking for her intercession everyday through that prayer. He has shared his beautiful faith with his nine children, twenty-eight grandchildren and twelve great grandchildren.

While in St. Mary's Hospital earlier this year, a nurse in training told Andy that the nurses fight over whose turn it was to take care of him and because of this he wanted to know what was his philosophy of life. Andy responded "Always treat others the way that you would like to be treated." He paused for a moment and then said, "always do your best and no can ask any more of you".

Andy is now residing at Trinity Care Center in Farmington.