



Shirley Willis

July 22, 1936 - August 22, 2025

Shirley Marie Willis, beloved wife and mother, passed away on August 22, 2025. Shirley was born on July 22, 1936, in Beatrice, Nebraska. She was raised in Washington, Kansas and graduated from Washington High School in 1954. Shirley then graduated from cosmetology school and worked as a hairdresser in Emporia and Topeka, Kansas. It was while she was working in Emporia that she met her husband, Russ. They were married at Sacred Heart Parish in Emporia on August 19, 1961, celebrating 52 years of marriage. Russ preceded her in death on December 29, 2014.

Shirley adored and deeply loved her girls and Russ dedicating her life to creating a loving and nurturing home. She was blessed with many creative talents and always placed her family first with an unwavering love. Shirley was a lifelong Catholic who was deeply devoted to God, the Blessed Mother and led a life of faithfulness. When faced with ongoing health challenges, Shirley had remarkable strength and courage, never complaining or questioning. She faced these challenges with grace and bravery.

Shirley loved working out in the yard with Russ and found pleasure in creating beautiful flower beds. Shirley was a member of Most Pure Heart of Mary Parish for 63 years participating in Let's Help, was a previous member of Women's Fellowship and was a committed eucharistic adorer for 28 years.

Shirley is survived by her daughters Cathy and Tracy. She is also survived by her sister Bea Martel and several nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her husband, Russ, her parents Anthony and Hilda Wetter, and her brother Lester Wetter.

Visitation will be 9 to 10 a.m. Rosary will be prayed at 10 a.m. and Mass of Christian Burial will follow at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, September 6, 2025, at Most Pure Heart of Mary Catholic Church, 3601 SW 17th Street, Topeka KS 66604. Burial will be private at Mount Calvary Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to Most Pure Heart of Mary Catholic Church, in care of Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home, 2801 SW Urish Road, Topeka KS 66614.

Condolences may be sent online at www.kevinbrennanfamily.com

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP 6. 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (CT)

Most Pure Heart of Mary Church
3601 SW 17th Street
Topeka, KS 66604

Rosary

SEP 6. 10:00 AM (CT)

Most Pure Heart of Mary Church
3601 SW 17th Street
Topeka, KS 66604

Mass of Christian Burial

SEP 6. 10:30 AM (CT)

Most Pure Heart of Mary Church
3601 SW 17th Street
Topeka, KS 66604

Tribute Wall



“ Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Shirley Willis



Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home - August 26, 2025 at 01:55 PM

TC

“ Cathy and family sorry for your loss

Tim Coder - September 13, 2025 at 01:58 PM

TS

“ Cathy and Tracy we are very sorry to hear about your Mother. You are in our thoughts and prayers.
Tim and Beth Simons

Tim and Beth Simons - September 06, 2025 at 03:43 PM

TA

“ Nana Shirley, it's been a true blessing to have you in our lives for the last 16 years! We will miss you so much! Tracy and Cathy our hearts break for you two! But knowing she is with the love of her life, you much feel some peace! ❤️



Tabitha - September 05, 2025 at 08:43 PM



“ Tracy and Cathy, I was so sorry to hear about Shirley she was definitely a very special lady and will be greatly missed by many. I have so many wonderful memories of all of you growing up, including the many 4th of July BBQs and walking to fireworks, etc. We will continue to keep you both in our thoughts and prayers as you endure this difficult time.

Rachelle Garland

Rachelle Garland - September 05, 2025 at 01:34 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Shirley Willis.

September 04, 2025 at 08:16 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Shirley Willis.



September 04, 2025 at 08:16 PM



“ Cliff and Carole Sadler purchased the Garden Accent - A heart of gold stopped beating... for the family of Shirley Willis.



Cliff and Carole Sadler - September 03, 2025 at 01:08 PM

CS

“ Tracy and Cathy, Cliff and I offer our deepest condolences. Your mom (and dad) were the best neighbors anyone could ask for: kind, friendly and helpful to the new kids on the block. I enjoyed our chats over the back yard fence over the years. She was strong, funny and wise. She will be greatly missed. RIP Shirley.

Carole Sadler - September 03, 2025 at 01:02 PM

MM

“ With our deepest sympathy. Our thoughts and prayers are with you at this difficult time. I will forever treasure our lovely moments together. We enjoyed our ice cream escapades, dancing in the living room, and hanging out on the deck and watching Gods delightful paintbrush at work. Rest in peace Shirley.



Monica Macdonald - September 03, 2025 at 10:19 AM

TM

“ The Macdonalds planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Shirley Willis.

The Macdonalds - September 03, 2025 at 10:08 AM

TM

“ The Macdonalds purchased the Pink Potpourri Bouquet for the family of Shirley Willis.



The Macdonalds - September 03, 2025 at 10:08 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Shirley Willis.

September 02, 2025 at 03:22 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Shirley Willis.



September 02, 2025 at 03:22 PM



“ Tracy and Cathy: I am so sad to hear about your Mom's passing. But, what a life well lived!! It's hard losing your parents but from someone who knows, it's the memories and each other that will get you thru those sad days. Of reading this news, I immediately thought about all the fun we had growing up!! Camping and going to Hot Spring was the best childhood-just sharing life with friends. Know we are thinking of you both. Becky (Hilbert) Burghart

Becky Hilbert Burghart - September 02, 2025 at 09:09 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Shirley Willis.

August 28, 2025 at 08:31 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Shirley Willis.*



August 28, 2025 at 08:31 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Shirley Willis.*



August 28, 2025 at 10:30 AM



“ *My deepest sympathy to the girls. Shirley was a customer of mine for MANY years and I adored her. Our conversations still remain with me. She had a lot of wisdom and we had great fun together.*

Linda Hodgson - August 27, 2025 at 09:27 AM



“ *Connie Lavin purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Shirley Willis.*



Connie Lavin - August 27, 2025 at 01:40 AM