



## Theresa Cain

January 20, 1924 - June 9, 2022

Theresa Ann Murry Cain, 98, passed away June 9, 2022, with her beloved children by her side. She was born on Cross Creek in rural Jackson County, Kansas, on January 20, 1924, the daughter of William A. and Mary Cecelia (McNeive) Murry, and the fifth of seven children in a tight-knit and loving Irish American farming family.

After Theresa's father died suddenly in 1931, her teenaged brothers—Bill, Tom and Frank—bore down to keep the farm running through the worst years of the Great Depression and beyond. Theresa attended a one-room schoolhouse until eighth grade, traveling to class on the family pony each day with her two sisters, Kathleen and Clare.

She attended her first two years of high school at Immaculate Conception Academy in St. Marys, but transferred to Emmett High School after Immaculate's sole mode of student transportation, an old hearse, gave up the ghost. While still in school, she helped support the family as a part-time clerk/typist with the Work Progress Administration (WPA). She graduated as the salutatorian of the Emmett High School Class of 1942.

Soon after, Theresa and a cousin, Virginia McNeive, pitched in on the home front to support the troops overseas by going to work at the Sunflower Army Ordnance Plant in De Soto, Kansas. Theresa labored alongside chemists in

the laboratory, testing and carefully packing nitroglycerin for use in bombs and shells. Off the job, she embraced scrap drives: collecting metal, rubber and newspaper and honing the habits of frugality she would retain all her life.

When the war ended, Theresa used her laboratory training to land a job as a medical assistant with Topeka physicians John Cavanaugh and Hubert Harris. One evening, Theresa's brother, Bill, came home from a hunting trip with handsome Daniel O'Connell Cain. Sparks flew and Terry and Dan eventually married on September 29, 1956.

The new family grew quickly: Six children—Pat, Ann, Dan, Eileen, Clare, and Bridget—all arrived between 1957 and 1965. Terry stayed busy raising her kids while continuing part-time employment as a medical assistant. The children soon came to appreciate her fair but firm parenting style, and through the years, many of their friends benefited from her hospitality and generosity.

An excellent cook and hostess, Theresa always had an extra seat in the car, another plate at the table and one more sleeping bag for the floor. She was a valuable friend and reliable neighbor and often utilized her medical knowledge to diagnose rashes, remove ticks and provide splints and slings for the kids of the neighborhood.

She also was an excellent shoulder to cry on and would offer unwavering support to all in need. Her uncommon empathy was born from a giving heart and her deep Catholic faith. She prayed for many people. Theresa embraced her Most Pure Heart of Mary family through the Supper Club, Bible Study and as a member of the Resurrection Choir, which sang at parish funerals.

Theresa loved music and, and until the very end, sang every day of her life. With a perfect memory for melody and lyrics, she could have been a champion on "Name That Tune." Theresa and Dan enjoyed the Topeka Jazz

Workshop, band concerts in the park and listening to their beloved kings and queens of swing: Tommy Dorsey, Glenn Miller and Ella Fitzgerald.

Through the labors and joys of life, Dan and Theresa remained best friends and partners. They had joint ownership of farmland around Topeka and were surrounded for 65 years by many loyal friends. They played the card game Tripoley for over 40 years with the same couples. Countless highballs, laughs, appetizers and pennies were swapped and shared by the group through the decades.

Theresa was a member of the Jeffersonian Club and the Nautilus Club of College Hill. She also volunteered at her College Hill polling place. She was the consummate grandmother, but did not shy from occasionally threatening to produce the yardstick she kept over a kitchen doorway. She called it “the reminder“ for any child or grandchild who strayed over the line.

Theresa’s kindness and true heart were an unrelenting source of warmth and comfort to all who knew her. She always reminded her children to be thankful for their many blessings. As they tumbled out of the family station wagon at Randolph Elementary School each day and scattered toward the playground, she’d yell out the car window—much to the kids’ chagrin—“Offer your day to the Lord!”

To anyone reading this obituary, she’d give the same advice.

Theresa is survived by her children: Patricia Rodewald (Lance), Beijing, China; Ann Cain (Bonar Menninger), Merriam, KS; Dan Cain III (Michelle), Kansas City, MO; Mary Eileen Cain, Lawrence, KS; Clare Stafford (George), Lawrence, KS; and Bridget Cain, Portland, OR; and grandchildren Theresa Rodewald (Matt Sherman), Thomas Rodewald, Grace Menninger, Clare Cain,

Michael Cain, Ellen McGivern, Maura McGivern Kirby (Matt), Joseph McGivern, Helena Stafford, Owen Stafford and Abigail Bushman; her sister Clare Murry Johnson (George) of Sioux Falls, SD; as well as several nieces, nephews, great nieces, great nephews, and cousins. She was preceded in death by her husband, Dan O. Cain, and by her brothers, William Murry, Thomas Murry, Frank Murry, and Joseph Murry, and her sister, Mary Kathleen Murry Reding.

The family will greet family and friends beginning at 5 p.m., Thursday, June 16, followed by a parish rosary at 6:30 p.m. at Most Pure Heart of Mary Church, 3601 SW 17th St., Topeka, KS 66604. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated Friday, June 17, at 11 a.m. at the church. The family requests that masks be worn at the services.

Thanks to the many dedicated caregivers who looked after Theresa, including those at Brewster Place, Home Instead, Care Haven Homes and Elara Hospice.

Memorial contributions can be made to the Cain Land and Grain Value-Added Scholarship at Kansas State University and Catholic Relief Services to help Ukrainian families, sent in care of the Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home, 2801 SW Urish Road, Topeka, Kansas 66614.

Condolences may be sent online to [www.kevinbrennanfamily.com](http://www.kevinbrennanfamily.com).

# Cemetery Details

## Mount Calvary Cemetery

801 SW Westchester Rd  
Topeka, KS 66606

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUN 16. 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM (CT)

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

## Rosary

JUN 16. 6:30 PM (CT)

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

## Mass of Christian Burial

JUN 17. 11:00 AM (CT)

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



# Tribute Wall



“ Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Theresa Cain

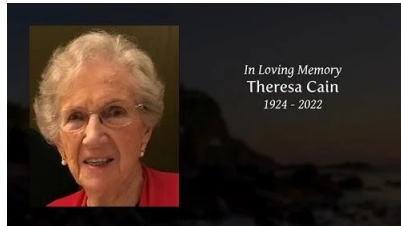


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Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home - June 16, 2022 at 02:17 PM



“ Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Theresa Cain



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Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home - June 16, 2022 at 02:17 PM



“ Theresa Cain

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January 28, 2023 at 12:08 PM

DJ

“ I have just wonderful thoughts and memories of Aunt Terry and my childhood visits to Topeka. I was so very blessed to have Aunt Terry, Uncle Dan and all the Cains in my childhood. One of my very favorite memories is from long ago listening to Terry, Kathleen and my mother sign old songs. Beautiful voices that melded together with such joy. I can close my eyes and see them singing and smiling, they so enjoyed signing together. Prayers and love to all the Cains.

*Dan & Kim Johnson*

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**Dan Johnson** - June 21, 2022 at 11:53 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* was purchased for the family of Theresa Cain.



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June 16, 2022 at 03:17 PM

RM

“ *so sorry to hear of your mom's passing, she and your dad were truly warm, loving, genuine people, who no doubt passed those great traits on to their children! Love and miss you all! Rob McDonough and family*

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**Robert McDonough** - June 16, 2022 at 02:18 PM

PR

“ *looking forward to visiting with the family after the funeral.*  
*Patty (Murry/Roth) Redman*

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**Patty Redman** - June 16, 2022 at 01:20 PM

PJ

“ Dear Cain Cousins, Your mom was such a great person. She had so much personality and instilled fun and passion into whatever she had going on. Trips to Topeka always brought together much family and fun. At times Danny and I had more fun than we should have had, and thankfully Terry never pulled down the yardstick to use " the reminder" to introduce a bit more sense to our misguided judgment. I love her dearly and my entire family mourns her passing.

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**Phil Johnson** - June 15, 2022 at 02:38 PM

KA

“ Dear Cain Cousins, We're so sorry to hear you've lost your mom. We loved her and your dad all these years and will miss hearing all the family stories and memories. We love you, Kate and Jane

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**Kate McNeive and Jane Albright** - June 15, 2022 at 12:25 PM

GA

“ Eileen and Family,  
Our heartfelt condolences to you. It was indeed an honor and privilege to be a part of your parents' life.  
She had an amazing life and spirit. A life worth celebrating indeed.  
Our prayers are with you all.  
Gail and the CAREGivers at Home Instead

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**Gail** - June 15, 2022 at 11:19 AM

JT

“ Dear Eileen, Ellen, Maura, and Joe,

*Although I did not know Theresa, after reading her obituary, I truly wish I had that privilege. What a legacy! Tears fell as I read of adding one more plate to the table or one more sleeping bag to the floor. The idea of “the reminder” is brilliant. I’m sorry I will not be able to attend her services due to a family conflict, but know my thoughts and prayers are with you.*

*Hugs,  
Jane Land-Tilghman*

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**Jane Tilghman** - June 15, 2022 at 10:50 AM

SJ

“ As a young nephew my early memories include her wedding to Dan. There were three or four attendants including my mom, Clare. All the ladies had large hoop skirts that were quite a sight for someone about four feet tall. The concern of my mom was to keep the hoop of the skirt from showing up the fabric on the dress. Before Dan I recall other men in her life but once Dan showed up their marriage was not long in coming.

*Of course Terry was a great cook, like my mom, I am sure it was all learned on the banks of Cross Crick. According to Clare the water was the favorite place to play. Also the pony ride to school was reserved for bad weather only, all other times were on foot.*

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**Stephen Johnson** - June 12, 2022 at 03:44 PM