



## Francis James DeGross

May 15, 1937 - December 2, 2022

Francis J. DeGross, 85, from south Minneapolis passed away early Friday morning, December 2nd. Fran was preceded in death by his wife of 54 years, Jen, his parents, Anton and Elizabeth, as well as brothers, Ambrose (Lorna), and Vincent. Fran is survived by 6 children, Mick (Jane), Tim (Cindy), Pat, Kathy (Jay) More, Tony (Jean), Jenny (Patrick) Stephan. He is also survived by grandchildren Derek, Elizabeth, Zach, Josh, Theresa, Lydia, Jacob, Ian, and Jacqueline.

Francis grew up in the New Market area on a farm about half-way between New Market and Elko. Francis was the youngest of three boys, although he never saw or met his middle brother Vince, who died when Francis was a year old. Ambrose was much older than Francis, but always stayed in communication over the years before he passed away in 2009.

When Fran was younger, lore has it that when Anton and Liz were doing their chores just before Christmas, Fran would sneak back in the house, play with his Christmas toys, rewrap them, and set them back under the tree. We heard this story for years and he never denied it. He also enjoyed his cars. His most prized possession was his '57 four door Chevy that he still missed all these years later.

Fran also served with the Army reserves based in New Prague.

He met the love of his life, Jen, at the Prom ballroom in St. Paul and they married on February 7th, 1959. They soon celebrated the birth of Michael followed by Timothy and then Patrick. Eventually a girl was born five years

later, Kathleen, followed by Anthony and finally Jennifer.

Fran was very involved with the St. Stephen's parish where they lived in a four plex apartment right across the street from the church. He was involved with working Bingo at St. Stephen's every Friday night and drove a bus of senior citizens to mass every Sunday for over 20 years.

In 1968, the family moved to the Holy Name parish and lived there until Jen passed away in 2013.

Fran was very involved at Holy Name serving as eucharistic minister and as an usher for many years. He also served the church in many other capacities. For many years he oversaw Bingo and then eventually became the bookkeeper for the annual church festival.

For many years, Fran was a mechanic and worked for his brother, Ambrose, at Phillips 66 in Mounds View then eventually opening his own shop, Fran's service, in Fridley, MN. Many, many times he took vehicles of fellow parishioners to the shop for any work that was needed (he rarely drove his own vehicle to work in most cases). He was very proud of the work he did and always had an answer for what's wrong with any car or truck.

He enjoyed the company of family and loved to play cards especially with Mary and Leo Molumby. He loved Memorial weekend with the card playing and the time spent with family.

A few years ago, a family ancestry book was compiled that included a photo with his parents holding both himself and Vince. It was the first time Fran had seen a picture of his older brother. Fran couldn't stop talking about that for some time.

He also enjoyed flying out to Las Vegas to "warm up" with the Bartholomew's for their yearly trip.

After Jen had passed, Fran moved into Walker and then an apartment in Bloomington. He loved to bake until his eyesight gave way, but at times still would manage to come up with something. After a couple of hard falls, Fran moved to assisted living in Burnsville.

In addition to his other acts of generosity, Fran was also an organ donor.

Mass of Christian burial is Saturday December 17th at 11:00am with visitation prior to the Mass starting at 9:00am at the Church of the Holy Name, 3637 11th Ave. South in Minneapolis. If you wish, you can send flowers directly to the church. All arrangements are being handled by Washburn-McReavy.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 17. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Church of the Holy Name  
3637 11th Ave South  
Minneapolis, MN 55407

## Mass of Christian Burial

DEC 17. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Church of the Holy Name  
3637 11th Ave South  
Minneapolis, MN 55407

# Tribute Wall



“ *Pretty Please was purchased for the family of Francis James DeGross.*



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December 14, 2022 at 10:19 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Francis James DeGross.*



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December 13, 2022 at 04:10 PM



“ *Uncle Fran was our friend, mechanic, and all around best guy who has been in our lives. We will miss you so much.*

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**Dennis and Viv OsHea** - December 10, 2022 at 05:04 PM

CB

*When we used to stay at the farm for a few weeks during summer vacation, we pestered Fran and hung around him all the time. Once, before his first date with Jen, he offered to pay us to thoroughly clean the inside of his 1957 Chevrolet, but when he inspected the car he noticed that we forgot the dashboard, which we promptly cleaned. Soon thereafter Fran and Jen were married and they lived happily ever after.*

*I remember fondly that my Uncle Fran picked me up in Mounds View on a blustery December evening and drove to a car dealer in Mpls. so I could look/purchase a new car. We joked about being able to get a super deal and as part of the negotiations we were taken to the snow covered roof of the dealer to see the actual cars, one of which I purchased in 1967.*

*Then at my wedding in 1973, the local aunt and uncle in Alameda forgot to go by the Alameda hotel to have my grandparents (who had never traveled outside MN previously) follow them in the car. We delayed the wedding as Fran jumped in his car, drove back to Alameda on unfamiliar roads and no Mapquest, found them waiting in their car and they all got back to the church for the wedding. It was truly an amazing act of caring and thoughtfulness that I'll never forget*  
*Candace DeGross Burns.*

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**Candace Burns** - December 11, 2022 at 02:46 PM

CO

*Like my sister said, we stayed out on Tony and Liz's farm for a few weeks each summer to give our mom a break. We did pester our uncle Fran (I got to call him Franny). He gave us rides on the tractor to go get the cows from the field, and we helped do some cow milking and hay bailing. He always had a radio playing in the barn and he knew all the songs. It was so much fun to ride on the hay wagon. We really thought we were helping. He used to take a bucket of milk and swing it around over his head to show us that the milk would never spill even though it was upside down over his head. He never explained why it didn't spill. I attended their wedding Feb 7, 1959, baby-sat for the first three boys so they could go dancing at the Prom Ballroom, and had a great time at their 25th anniversary on a very cold night in Minneapolis. Now that the Pope is named Francis, I called him Pope Franny when I'd call him. He and Jen were a wonderful couple. I always admired them and how they did so much with their kids and grandkids. I will miss him, but I know he is happy in heaven.*

*Love, Cookie*

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**Cookie** - December 19, 2022 at 02:27 AM