



## Kathleen Ann Gardener

January 9, 1950 - August 4, 2025

Kathleen Ann Gardener, age 75, of Olivet, passed away on August 4, 2025. She fought with relentless strength until the very end. Surrounded by her family, she passed peacefully, leaving behind a legacy of fierce devotion, resilience, and grace. Born in Lansing, Michigan on January 9, 1950, to Elmer and Patricia (Masseau) Neff, Kathleen lived a life marked by compassion, creativity, and a fire that never dimmed.

She had a smile that could light up a room; radiant, comforting, and unforgettable. It was the kind of smile that made you feel seen, safe, and loved. Whether she was tending her garden, comforting someone in grief, or simply sharing a quiet moment, Kathleen brought warmth and beauty into every space she entered.

Kathleen's love for gardening was more than a hobby, it was a reflection of her nurturing spirit. So profound was her connection to nature that she embraced the name "Gardener," a tribute to the beauty she cultivated in her life and in the lives of others. Her gardens bloomed with purpose, and she often used her talents to support charitable causes, including the Children's Miracle Network and other organizations close to her heart.

A gifted cosmetologist and educator, Kathleen taught at Wright Beauty Academy in Kalamazoo and Battle Creek until 1996, inspiring countless

students with her skill and warmth. She had a knack for making others feel beautiful; inside and out and her generosity extended far beyond the classroom. After enduring the unimaginable loss of three daughters, Kathleen became a beacon of comfort for others navigating grief, always putting their needs before her own.

One of the most profound ways Kathleen expressed her love and empathy was through the grave blankets she hand-crafted each winter for over 30 years. What began as a way to keep her daughters "warm" in spirit became a mission of comfort for grieving families across the country. Each blanket was made with care, delivered personally, even to Arlington National Cemetery and served as a quiet, powerful gesture of remembrance and love.

Kathleen was the emotional center of her family; the one they turned to for guidance, comfort, and connection. Her daily phone calls, thoughtful gestures, and creative spirit brought light and love into the lives of her children and grandchildren. She didn't need big gatherings to make an impact, she was the heartbeat of her family, always present, always giving.

She is survived by her devoted husband of 30 years, Charles Sharp; her children, Jennifer (Jason) Peterson, Michelle Davis, Andrea Davis, and Aaron Davis; ten beloved grandchildren, Kylie, Wesley, Michaela, Trenton, Elle, Akera, Gavin, Noah, Lukas, and Ashley; and her siblings, Delbert "Jim" Neff, Patti Soblesky, and Robert Neff. She was preceded in death by her daughters, Rachel, Cassandra, and Gabrielle; as well as her parents, Elmer and Patricia Neff.

Kathleen's family invites friends to honor her memory by attending services or sharing stories on her Tribute Page at [www.prayfuneral.com](http://www.prayfuneral.com). Funeral services on Friday, August 8, 11:00 a.m. with visitation one hour prior at St. Mary Catholic Church in Charlotte, officiated by Rev. Fr. Dwight Ezop, with

interment following at Bosworth Cemetery. The service will be webcast for those unable to attend in person. You may watch it from any computer, smartphone, or mobile device that has internet access. Go to [www.prayfuneral.com](http://www.prayfuneral.com), click on Kathleen's tribute, then click on Photos and Videos from your computer (or Media from your smart phone).

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Children's Miracle Network, a cause Kathleen deeply believed in. The family is in the care of Pray Funeral Home, Charlotte.

# Cemetery Details

## Bosworth Cemetery

6933 South Stine Road  
Olivet, MI 49076

# Previous Events

## Visitation

AUG 8. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Mary Catholic Church  
807 St. Mary Boulevard  
Charlotte, MI 48813

## Funeral Mass

AUG 8. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Mary Catholic Church  
807 St. Mary Boulevard  
Charlotte, MI 48813

## Burial

AUG 8. 12:30 PM (ET)

Bosworth Cemetery  
6933 South Stine Road  
Olivet, MI 49076



# Tribute Wall



“ *Pray Funeral Home, Inc created a Webcast in memory of Kathleen Ann Gardener*



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**Pray Funeral Home, Inc.** - August 08, 2025 at 09:07 AM



“ *Pray Funeral Home, Inc created a Tribute Video in memory of Kathleen Ann Gardener*



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**Pray Funeral Home, Inc.** - August 07, 2025 at 07:02 PM



*Absolutely beautiful. Thank you, Pray Funeral Home for this amazing tribute!!!*

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**Aaron Davis (son)** - August 08, 2025 at 06:18 AM



*Absolutely beautiful. Fly high with the angels Kathy.*

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**Kim Jeneary** - August 08, 2025 at 09:15 AM

JR

“ So sorry for your loss, there are no words to express the sadness, I am so honored I had the pleasure of sitting with her at Gavens wedding. :(

Jill Robinson - August 16, 2025 at 10:14 AM



“ 30 files added to the album Life Tributes



Love you



Pray Funeral Home, Inc. - August 07, 2025 at 06:58 PM

AD

“ *My mom was the absolute BEST mother anyone could ask for. She wasn't just my mother, she was my bestest friend and I was honored to be a part of her life. Im so lost and shattered without her...but I know she's not suffering anymore.*

*Anyone that knows her, knows her passion and love for everyone and every thing.*

*This all seems like on miserable dream...it doesnt feel real.*

*Fly high in heaven mom and keep shining down on me and guiding me because all of us need you more than ever right now.*

*I love you more than words could ever express. I miss you so much.  
:-(*

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**Aaron Davis** - August 05, 2025 at 07:14 PM

KJ

“ *My thoughts and prayers go out to the entire family. Kathy was a great step mom and love me like her own. She will be missed by so many. RIH 💔*



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**Kim Jeneary** - August 05, 2025 at 05:56 PM