



Mrs. Zelma Delois Sykes

May 2, 1927 - July 26, 2020

NOTE: Funeral Arrangements are listed below*

*****THE FAMILY REQUESTS IN LIEU OF FLOWERS to send charitable donations to:

Hospice Care of Southwest Michigan
222 N. Kalamazoo Mall, Ste. 100
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

-or-

Fresenius Dialysis of Oshtemo
6739 Seeco Dr.
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

Zelma D. (Palmer) Sykes passed away peacefully July 26, 2020 at Park Place Assisted Living Facility in Kalamazoo, MI. She was born on May 2, 1927 to the late Henry Palmer, Sr. and Delcie (Ward) Palmer in Hope, AR. After graduating high school, Zelma moved to Little Rock, AR to attend Dunbar Junior College, where she earned an associate degree in nursing (LPN). She sang in the choir and played basketball while at Dunbar.

It was in Little Rock where she met her future husband, Earl Sykes through a mutual friend. They were married on May 5, 1951 and were together 62 years

until Earl's death in 2013. She was the proud mother of Eric Sykes of Perris, CA; Kimberly (William) Hitchings of Kalamazoo and Brian Sykes, Sr. (Katie) of Portage, MI. Zelma's children blessed her with 7 grandchildren: Emerald, Erika, Brian Jr., Trista, Felicia, Lauren and Jaydan, along with 2 great grandchildren, Judah and Aurora.

She worked as a Certified Nurse's Aide at Borgess Hospital in the 1960's and then at the UpJohn Nursing Home from which she retired in 1991. During her lifetime she enjoyed reading, family vacations, camping trips, sewing, cultivating her large garden, planting flowers around the yard and traveling with Earl. Zelma also had a great love of television. She and her sisters Ernestine and Lucile were especially close. Zelma was known as a quiet, kind and loving mother and wife. When pushed too far, she would let you know she'd had enough and to leave her alone. She was sassy, stubborn and strong. Everyone loved her sweet potato pies, dressing and greens. She was an excellent cook.

Zelma was preceded in death by her parents, grandparents, beloved husband Earl Sykes, her sister Ernestine Bishop, brothers, Henry Palmer Jr., Otis Palmer, Elbert Palmore, Robert Palmer, Hildred Palmore, Horace Palmer, R.C. Palmer and James Palmore.

\She leaves to cherish her memory her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren; sister, Lucile Carter, sisters-in-law, Catherine (LeRoy) Baker and Delois Sykes. Zelma has a great number of nieces, nephews, cousins and friends who will miss her dearly.

Cemetery Details

Mt. Ever-Rest Cemetery

3941 S. Westnedge Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI

Previous Events

Graveside Service in Loving Memory

JUL 31. 11:30 AM (ET)

Mt. Ever-Rest Cemetery
3941 S. Westnedge Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI

Tribute Wall



“ *Mrs. Zelma Delois Sykes*

October 23, 2023 at 06:06 AM



“ *Mrs. Zelma Delois Sykes*

October 06, 2023 at 10:42 AM



“ *Lula Ligon lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Zelma Delois Sykes*



Lula Ligon - August 02, 2020 at 05:35 PM



“ *Kim - My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. Your mom sounded like a wonderful sweet person. I love how you wrote she could be sassy and stand up o her own! You definitely have a ton of her traits. Bless to you and your family's.*

Kathy Kronke

Kathy Kronke - August 02, 2020 at 10:07 AM