



Orland "Ole" Arthur Nelson

May 28, 1932 - November 3, 2025

Orland "Ole" Nelson of Dassel passed peacefully on the afternoon of Monday, November 3, 2025, at the Cokato Manor. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, November 8th, 2025, at the St. Philips Catholic Church in Litchfield with Father Jeffrey Horejsi officiating. The interment will be held following the service at the St. Johns Catholic Church Cemetery in Darwin.

A visitation will be held two hours prior to the service on Saturday, November 8, 2025, at the St. Philips Catholic Church in Litchfield.

Military honors will be provided by the Litchfield Military Honor Guard.

The Mass of Christian Burial will be streamed at:

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100069068800296>

In Lieu of flowers donations are preferred to be given to the Dassel Volunteer Fire Department and the Meeker County Dairy Club.

The Johnson Funeral Home in Dassel is in charge of the funeral arrangements.

He leaves behind a legacy of love that includes his wife of 73+ years, Mary Ellen (Fitterer) Nelson; 10 children and their 10 spouses, 25 grandchildren/spouses and 55 (and still growing) great grandchildren.

Ole was born to Arthur B and Olga Nelson on May 28th, 1932, in Litchfield MN. He was raised on a farm outside of the Litchfield/Forest City area with a younger brother and graduated from Litchfield High School in 1950. Following high school, he was in the Air Force and stationed in England during the Korean War. On June 14, 1952, he was married to his lifelong mate, whom he continued to refer to as “his Bride” until his death. Ole and Mary Ellen had eleven children in just under 15 years. All of their children were graduates of the Dassel-Cokato school district and when the youngest one graduated, they and their children hosted a reception for all the living teachers their children had ever had.

Second only to his family, caring for and showing cattle was Ole’s passion. While his work with purebred Jersey cattle took them to multiple locations in the early years, including Wisconsin and New Jersey, the majority of the years were spent at the farm on the outskirts of Dassel since 1963 and since 1996, at their home in town in Dassel. Marynole Farm and Nelson Farm were how they were known. The family hosted numerous “premier” cattle shows and showed purebred Jersey cattle continuously thru the decades at both county fairs and the Minnesota State Fair, a tradition carried on through the grandkids in 4-H and to the present time with son Greg and multiple grandchildren.

Ole and Mary Ellen were actively involved in the community, their Church, and the Dassel-Cokato schools during all the years of their married life. They were known as “bleacher” parents and grandparents and rarely missed an event any local family members were involved in.

Among his activities, Ole served on the Dassel Fire Department for 21 years

and was Fire Chief for seven years. He was elected to the Dassel-Cokato School Board and the Board of the Dassel Lakeside Home. He served in the Air Force 1950-1951 and was a member of the Litchfield American Legion Post. He served 16 years on the Minnesota State Dairy Association and 4 years on their Executive Committee; Chairman of the Meeker County Dairy Association, Minnesota Jersey Cattle Club board and President of the Meeker County Holstein Board.

Within his church community at St. John's, Ole chaired the St. John's Education Center Building Committee and was an active Lector and usher.

Ole is survived by his wife, Mary Ellen and his ten children: Terry (Tony) Saber, Edina; Steve (Becky) Nelson, Dassel; Tom (Kerry) Nelson, Howard Lake; Mary Pat (Richard) Kusler, Dassel; Susan (John) Alrick, Hutchinson; Michelle (Andy) Schoolmeesters, Litchfield; Barbara (Kurt) Bollman, Fargo, ND; Greg (Sara) Nelson, Dassel; Chuck (Cindy) Nelson, Dassel and Julie (Mark) Krause, Delano; 25 grandchildren, their spouses and his 55+ great grandchildren. Additionally, he is survived by his brother Wes (Kathy) Nelson of Stewart.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Art, and Olga Nelson, two stillborn siblings, an infant son Michael and two great grandsons, Hunter Heyrman and Merrick Kamm.

Cemetery Details

St. John's Catholic Cemetery

Darwin, MN 55324

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV 8. 8:30 AM - 10:30 AM (CT)

St. Phillips Catholic Church
821 E 5th St
Litchfield, MN 55355

Mass Of Christian Burial

NOV 8. 10:30 AM (CT)

St. Philips Catholic Church
Litchfield, MN 55355

Tribute Wall

LS

“ Dear Nelson family you are my thoughts and prayers.

Lynn L Sowders - January 05 at 01:29 PM

MF

“ Marissa (Roden) Hengemuhle and Family purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Orland "Ole" Arthur Nelson.



Marissa (Roden) Hengemuhle and Family - November 08, 2025 at 07:52 AM

MF

“ Marissa (Roden) Hengemuhle and Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Orland "Ole" Arthur Nelson.

Marissa (Roden) Hengemuhle and Family - November 08, 2025 at 07:52 AM

DH

“ My sincere condolences to you all. Orland and your family were such an integral part of the 4-H program during my years involved. He left a legacy, indeed.

Deb Carlson Holtz

Deb Holtz - November 07, 2025 at 02:11 PM

SD

“ Sending hugs and prayers to the entire Nelson family. Bruce & Sharon Dicke

sharon Dicke - November 07, 2025 at 10:49 AM

DS

“ Chuck and Cindy and Michelle and Andy. My sympathies to you and the rest of the family in the loss of your father. May God wrap you all in his loving arms and help you through the days ahead. Hugs. Donna

Donna Shepersky - November 06, 2025 at 05:52 PM

TP

“ Tim and Lynn (Huotari) Pinoniemi purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Orland "Ole" Arthur Nelson.



Tim and Lynn (Huotari) Pinoniemi - November 06, 2025 at 01:20 PM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Orland "Ole" Arthur Nelson.



November 06, 2025 at 10:56 AM

MK

“ I want to offer my deepest sympathies to the family of Ole Nelson. I knew Ole for many years in my service to the Midwest Dairy Association and very much appreciated his support for the dairy industry. Ole leaves a legacy of leadership that will be long remembered by his many friends in dairy across the state. Mike Kruger

Mike Kruger - November 06, 2025 at 10:40 AM

JJ

“ Jan and Paul Johnson planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Orland "Ole" Arthur Nelson.

Jan and Paul Johnson - November 06, 2025 at 08:06 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Orland "Ole" Arthur Nelson.



November 06, 2025 at 08:06 AM

GN

“ My Deepest Sympathy in the Loss of Orland. Live on all the Great Memories and keep him alive in the Grandkids and Greats to come. They will love to hear the stories. Gail (Putzier) Nelson



Gail Nelson - November 05, 2025 at 01:29 PM

CK

“ Pat, you come from a couple of great people. Sorry for you loss.

Casey Krause - November 05, 2025 at 08:25 AM

JF

“ We send our deepest sympathies to all the Nelson family. What a great legacy he left in the wonderful family surviving him. May you find peace and comfort in your memories.

Doug and Julie Fett

Julie Fett - November 04, 2025 at 08:29 PM

JL

“ Josh and KamiJo Lenzen purchased the Pretty PI ease for the family of Orland "Ole" Arthur Nelson.



Josh and KamiJo Lenzen - November 04, 2025 at 05:34 PM