

GLADYS E. THORNTON



It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of our beloved mother and grandmother, Gladys Elizabeth Thornton, who was called home to the Lord Friday, December 11, 2020, after attaining the prestigious age of 91. She was preceded in death by her husband Ernest Phillip Thornton, Sr.; a son Jerry Wayne; and all of her siblings.

She is survived by two sons Ernest Phillip, Jr. and Daniel Terry; a daughter Linda Gayle; five grandchildren Louie, Tracy, Andrea, Jerry and Amy; as well as numerous great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild.

Gladys was born on August 4, 1929 in Daisy, Georgia. She grew up in the areas of Screven, Blackshear, and Baxley, the second oldest of seven children. She moved to Jacksonville at the age of 16, accompanied by her older sister, Margaret, where they rented a room downtown and took jobs at a shoe factory. A year or two later, Gladys went to work at King Edward Cigar Factory, where she met her husband for life, Ernest Phillip Thornton. They married in the summer of 1948 and Gladys left the cigar factory to settle into a life of homemaking and motherhood. She returned to King Edward years later and remained until her retirement in 1994.

She was passionate about her family, always putting God and her children first. Gladys Thornton was no stranger to the concept of self-sacrifice. The Thornton family endured their share of hard times and Gladys never faltered or failed to make the necessary sacrifices to ensure her children were loved and provided for. She carried that same passion and devotion to the next two generations; her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, who affectionately call her "Nanny." She remained active in their lives, even throughout the declining health of her latter days. Gladys was known for her kind and generous heart, a work ethic that was nothing less than herculean and a resilience and dogged toughness that was truly heroic. Though we lay her mortal body to rest, the love, warmth and memories that Gladys inspired within this family is very much alive and will remain so forevermore.

The family received friends prior to the funeral service held Thursday, December 17 at Nassau Funeral home with Pastor Rodney Keith officiating. Burial followed in Evergreen Cemetery in Jacksonville.

Arrangements under the direction of Nassau Funeral Home, Callahan, 904-879-1770.