

FRANK AND FREDA DOMICO



My uncle and aunt, Frank and Freda Domico, were like parents to me throughout my life. I lived with them on West Street temporarily after birth before moving to my parents' home in Minnesota. My mother, Carmella Barberi, was Freda's youngest sibling. After settling in Rockford in 1974 for my career, my family and I visited them frequently on Holland Street.

My uncle, Frank Domico, was born on April 18, 1908 in Independence, LA the son of Michael and Antonia D'Amico. Frank married the former Freda Barberi in Rockford on October 26, 1929 – three days before “Black Tuesday” when stock prices plummeted and the start of the Great Depression.

Frank was employed as a machinist and machine repairman at Twin Disc Company for more than 25 years. I worked one summer in the 1960s at Twin Disc as a sweeper and changed the oil in machines. That experience afforded me the opportunity to see my uncle in action tackling some complicated and challenging machine repairs. Frank belonged to a golf and bowling league at Twin Disc.

My aunt, Freda, was born on November 4, 1909 in Sicily, the daughter of Joseph and Carmela Faranna Barberi. Freda worked as a seamstress at Nelson Knitting Company for over 44 years. For many of those years, Freda worked at Nelson Knitting Co. with her sister, Catherine (Walter) Nadolny. I visited them one summer at work and was impressed with their nimble hand skills and the demands of piece work production at the shop.

For a number of years Frank & Freda operated the concessions at several golf courses for the Rockford Park District.

The Domicos belonged to St. Anthony Church where Frank was a member of the Knights of Columbus. Freda was a member of the Third Order of St. Francis. She attended daily mass either at St. Anthony, the Poor Clares Monastery, or St. Mary's Church.

Frank and Freda had a son, Frank, Jr., who died tragically on June 22, 1933. He is buried at St. Mary's Cemetery near his grandparents (Joseph and Carmela Barberi).

Frank and Freda treated me as a son and my wife, Lynn, as a daughter, and our three children as their grandchildren. We visited them on weekends, especially on Sundays, when Freda prepared dinner. Freda was known among her family as a five star cook. Some of her Italian specialties included: traditional spaghetti and meatballs; eggplant parmesan; chicken cacciatore; peppers and sausages; and many other traditional dishes. At Christmas she prepared and mailed to out of town family members: Italian fig cookies, lemon cookies, and biscotti cookies.

Freda was a saintly and holy woman who attended daily mass, prayed a daily rosary and recited a variety of prayers/novenas from several religious sources. She was devoted to the Sacred Heart, Our Blessed Mother, St. Anthony, St. Francis, and St. Padre Pio. She hosted the Pilgrim Statue annually in her home.

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