DIocese of Madison

Wedding Anniversary Celebration

AUGUST 11, 2019
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Couples married 50, 55, 60+ years share their advice for a successful marriage
“I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad,
in sickness and in health.
I will love you and honor you all the days of my life.”
Marital Bliss

What a joy it is to me to introduce this incredible compilation of marital experience and wisdom. In the pages ahead, you will read of 79 couples married for more than 50 years – representing almost 4,000 years of marriage! The respondents completed a short survey sharing their stories and lessons learned in the hopes that it will benefit those already married or considering marriage in the future. What emerges is a picture of true marital bliss that is only possible this side of heaven because of the steadfast commitment of love and faith kept by each of these couples.

Here are some interesting facts for the 79 responding couples:

- The average marrying age for respondents was 20 years for women and 22 years for men.
- The average number of children per couple is 4. The largest family includes 10 children.
- The average number of grandchildren per couple is 7; Joseph and Ann Karl & Louis and Ruthie Vosberg both have the largest number of grandchildren at 21.
- The average number of great-grandchildren per couple is 2. Robert and Joanne Monson have the largest number of great-grandchildren at 15.

The survey questions asked of each couple included:

- How did you meet one another?
- What did you love most about each other when you were engaged?
- What did you find to be the most challenging in your marriage?
- What helped you most to overcome these challenges?
- What is the most rewarding part of being married?
- How has your faith helped your marriage?
- What advice would you give to couples getting married?

I invite you to flip through these pages and read the insights of couples who have experienced the true joy and happiness of the Sacrament of Matrimony. May God continue to bless each of the celebrating couples in this special anniversary year and all the years ahead.

In Christ’s Love,

Beth Ulaszek
Associate Marriage & Family Coordinator
Diocese of Madison
**How did you meet?** My younger sister and Dick’s younger sister set us up as “kind of a blind date” at Jimmy’s (a gathering place for teenagers) in Montello. Guess they thought we were meant for each other.

**When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?** Spending time together and getting to know each other’s interests, goals, families, and enjoying the same things.

**What challenges did you face?** At one point Dick had lost his job and was in the process of finding another while raising 3 girls. Also in later years, I was diagnosed with breast cancer and had to have a bilateral mastectomy.

**How did you overcome them?** A lot of prayers and a great support group of family and friends which means the world to us.

**What’s most rewarding about being married?** Still being with my best friend and caring person. Loving each other.

**How has faith helped your marriage?** We believe that a family that prays together, stays together. The faith helps through problems and good or bad times.

**Advice for engaged couples?** Working together as you are now WE not ME. Knowing each other well and able to talk through everything good or bad. Communicate all feelings and ideas of future plans. Work through changes over the years. When we got married our advice was never to go to bed mad or upset with each other. Problems should be solved as soon as you can talk it out.

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**Name Withheld**  
# of Children: 2 # of Grandchildren: 4

**How did you meet?** Spencerian College, Milwaukee, WI.

**When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?** Easy to talk to. Friendly, kind, thoughtful, respectful, enjoyed shows and theater. We were simple people and worked with what we had.

**What challenges did you face?** Making sure each other knew what the other was going to do on holidays with family due to one living on the WI/ILL border and the other on the WI/MI border. Jerry had cancer at 55.

**How did you overcome them?** Working with family and tried to be fair with time. Prayer.

**What’s most rewarding about being married?** Still being with my best friend and caring person. Loving each other.

**How has faith helped your marriage?** We believe that a family that prays together, stays together. The faith helps through problems and good or bad times.

**Advice for engaged couples?** Working together as you are now WE not ME. Knowing each other well and able to talk through everything good or bad. Communicate all feelings and ideas of future plans. Work through changes over the years. When we got married our advice was never to go to bed mad or upset with each other. Problems should be solved as soon as you can talk it out.

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**Richard & Donna Beahm**  
# of Children: 3 # of Grandchildren: 6

**How did you meet?** My younger sister and Dick’s younger sister set us up as “kind of a blind date” at Jimmy’s (a gathering place for teenagers) in Montello. Guess they thought we were meant for each other.

**When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?** Spending time together and getting to know each other’s interests, goals, families, and enjoying the same things.

**What challenges did you face?** At one point Dick had lost his job and was in the process of finding another while raising 3 girls. Also in later years, I was diagnosed with breast cancer and had to have a bilateral mastectomy.

**How did you overcome them?** A lot of prayers and a great support group of family and friends which means the world to us.

**What’s most rewarding about being married?** Raising three beautiful daughters that have married wonderful men and have given us six grandchildren and one great-grandchild so far (But only 1 granddaughter).

**How has faith helped your marriage?** Prayer has gotten us through the difficult times. We believe that God will take care of us.

**Advice for engaged couples?** Allow each other to pursue their own interests as well as sharing
common interests. Talk to each other and turn me into WE.

Marvin & Harriett Breunig
# of Children: 10 # of Grandchildren: 17 # of Great-Grandchildren: 2

How did you meet? We both lived in Roxbury and went to the same grade school and high school. Started dating after we graduated.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? His respect for me and we had the same interests in sports, church and family. Husband says he just loved everything about his girlfriend. We had the same interests.

What challenges did you face? Making ends meet and raising ten children together. Talking to each other and controlling your temper.

How did you overcome them? Talking the problems over with each other and never letting the sun set on an argument. Love yourself as much as you love your spouse.

What’s most rewarding about being married? The time we have had to spend together. And that God blessed us with a healthy family. The love we have for each other and that we learned to compromise. How our love grew stronger.

How has faith helped your marriage? Family that prays together stays together in thick or thin. We always say a rosary when we travel for a safe ride and the wellbeing of our family. Go to mass on weekends together.

Advice for engaged couples? If you have any disagreements, work them out and do not give up right away. Marriage should be a two way street of give and take. Respect each other’s opinions.

Norbert & Marian Brunner
# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 13 # of Great-Grandchildren: 4

How did you meet? Norb was a friend of Marians little brother. Norb came to the farm often to play flag football.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? Much of our courtship was writing daily letters when Norb was in the Army, sixteen months in Korea. We enjoyed spending a lot of time together, dancing, movies, and card games with family and friends after his return from Korea. We were engaged four months after his return and married ten months later on May 12, 1959.

What challenges did you face? Raising our four children, finding family time with Norb’s involvement with work and many civic organizations.

How did you overcome them? Patience, prayer, good communication, and compromise.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Someone to share all life’s experiences with - bad as well as happy.

How has faith helped your marriage? We pray together regularly. The power of prayer is unbelievable to get through tough times and give thanks for blessings received.

Advice for engaged couples? Pray together daily. Attend Mass weekly. Communicate and compromise
often. Discipline children right from the beginning. Be patient - friendship comes later in your lives when you have families.

**Name Withheld**

# of Children: 3 # of Grandchildren: 7 # of Great-Grandchildren: 8

**How did you meet?** We met in high school. Virginia was a freshman and Bill was a junior. Both lived in rural areas.

**When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?** My wife was very attractive with a friendly smile and easy to communicate with. She was a nice person to be with.

**What challenges did you face?** Most challenging in our marriage was starting a family with little financial support. And overcoming a serious cancer condition.

**How did you overcome them?** Communicating with each other. Accepting additional responsibilities. Becoming more patient with each other.

**What’s most rewarding about being married?** The most rewarding part of being married is having a close loving friend and watching our family mature with marriages, grandchildren, and great grandchildren and remembering some of the same circumstances we encountered in our early years of marriage.

**How has faith helped your marriage?** Faith has kept our marriage active. We have been fortunate in attending family type parishes involving leaders in family activities. The prayer to St. Francis is a great foundation for a marriage.

**Advice for engaged couples?** A successful marriage is possible if each of you is honest and respectful toward each other. This will increase the degree of love between partners in this sacrament.

We pray together regularly. The power of prayer is unbelievable to get through tough times and give thanks for blessings received.

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**Jeff & Sharon Davis**

# of Children: 3 # of Grandchildren: 6

**How did you meet?** Mutual friends arranged a date for each of us.

**When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?** We were separated by 200 miles during our 6-month engagement because Jeff was at the U of I in Urbana, Ill and Sharon was at Quincy College. So writing letters, phone calls, and once a month visits were very important.

**What challenges did you face?** Learning to accept the fact that the other person does things differently than you even though many times the outcomes were the same.

**How did you overcome them?** Realizing that one of the characteristics that we admired in the other was that we were different. Being blessed with children helped because now the spotlight was not on just each of us all the time.

**What’s most rewarding about being married?** Having someone with whom you can share your deepest longings and concerns while knowing that the other person is going to respect your confidentiality. Having someone who is always interested in your physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing.

**How has faith helped your marriage?** When you welcome GOD into your marriage, you more easily recognize GOD’s intervention into matters of JOY, sorrow, and challenges. You more easily see your spouse as your closest companion rather than someone with whom you are growing apart.

**Advice for engaged couples?** Write down today all
of the reasons that you are marrying your fiancé. Put those papers in your wedding album. When either of you are feeling unloved, both of you go and read what the other wrote. Then talk a bit about what you read.

Dennis & Sandra Dawiedczyk
# of Children: 3 # of Grandchildren: 4

How did you meet? High school sweethearts introduced at a high school dance.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? Everything! We went together through high school and college so by the time we were engaged senior year of college, we were good friends and had seen one another at our best and worst.

What challenges did you face? We have been blessed in our marriage with few major challenges. Most had to do with issues in our children’s lives as adults.

How did you overcome them? Understanding that God is always with us to guide us through trials and tribulations. Hope in the Lord is what carries us through.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Knowing there is one person who is always there to support and love you.

How has faith helped your marriage? Faith has brought us together through Baptism of children and

John & Charlotte Dischler
# of Children: 2 # of Grandchildren: 3 # of Great-Grandchildren: 2

How did you meet? We met in high school.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? We shared many of the same beliefs.

What challenges did you face? How our money would be spent.

How did you overcome them? Always compromise.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Having someone to count on in good times and in bad but also to show our children and grandchildren that marriage can last if you’re willing to work at it and Pray!!

How has faith helped your marriage? Many times, it was what kept us together. We were brought up to believe marriage is forever, or until death.

Advice for engaged couples? Trust in God and remember to forgive each other.

Ed & Mary Drinkwine
# of Children: 3 # of Grandchildren: 3

How did you meet? High school sweethearts introduced at a high school dance.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? We went together through high school and college so by the time we were engaged senior year of college, we were good friends and had seen one another at our best and worst.

What challenges did you face? We have been blessed in our marriage with few major challenges. Most had to do with issues in our children’s lives as adults.

How did you overcome them? Understanding that God is always with us to guide us through trials and tribulations. Hope in the Lord is what carries us through.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Knowing there is one person who is always there to support and love you.

How has faith helped your marriage? Faith has brought us together through Baptism of children and

Advice for engaged couples? Make sure the person you marry is more than your lover. That they are a good friend you can trust and rely on in happy and stressful times.
How did you meet? Met at Cathedral High School in Superio, WI. High School Sweethearts.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? I loved that Mary was funny, bright, and fun to be with. I loved that Ed was thoughtful, responsible, and strong. They called him “steady Eddie”.

What challenges did you face? Serious medical issues with our first child and no medical insurance for her. Also, moving many times due to work.

How did you overcome them? Our faith and the support and love of our family and friends. And hope! Making a daily decision to love each other.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Enjoying our children and grandchildren. Learning from the difficult times. Continuing to discover the beauty of our sacrament and each other.

How has faith helped your marriage? Our faith has and continues to pull us and provide opportunities for us to grow in our love for each other. Our involvement with Worldwide Marriage Encounter, St. Vincent de Paul and our parish allows us to use our sacramental bond as God has called us to

Advice for engaged couples? Be open to growth, change and do not take each other for granted. Prayer, compromise, affection and a good pair of dancin shoes.

Mike & Marie Dwyer
# of Children: 7 # of Grandchildren: 12 # of Great-Grandchildren: 13

How did you meet? We were introduced to each other while conversing at a bar in the village of Plain during the intermission of a wedding dance being held that evening. The friend was also a close friend of others of Mike’s neighbors and friends, whom felt that we should get acquainted.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? The actual appearance of each other, plus our style of being able to mingle with other people that we ever were associated with.

What challenges did you face? The fact that our farm, which we took over shortly after we were married, was located adjacent to Larry. It was hard to keep Mike from being too close to all our neighbors. He would like to join them. However, the everyday activity of the farm and the ability to keep all of our ongoing debts paid, kept us constantly begging God’s help with the management of trying to make a go of it.

How did you overcome them? Our constant commitment with attending the weekly Mass held at St. Patrick’s Loreto no matter what was happening in our locality that day and being able to attend church to give thanksgiving to God and also beg for his constant help to get us through whatever was giving us the most stress for that particular week.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Our seven children. As we are in our last decade of living, all of the children will come to attend to our various needs, according to their schedules. They take their turn to take us grocery shopping, to Church and also various family gatherings, thereby enabling us to remain living in our home. They also do love to have mom cook them many Sunday meals.

How has faith helped your marriage? I just don’t believe that we would be living here as we have always prayed for a peaceful existence wherever and whenever we chose to manage the daily living.

Advice for engaged couples? Always consider the feelings of your partner and try to bring out dissatisfaction with the appropriate person.

Write down today all of the reasons you are marrying your fiance. Put those papers in your wedding album. When you are feeling unloved, go read what the other wrote & talk about what you read.
David & Cathleen Egan  
# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 7

*How did you meet?* We met at a friend’s wedding dance.

*When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?* We were engaged when I was a senior in 1968. We loved the fact that we had so much in common and yet were so different. Loved that we came from large Catholic Irish families. I was from Chicago and Dave was raised on a farm in New London, WI.

*What challenges did you face?* Our 4th child Annie, who is now 40 was born with profound disabilities. We kept her at home for 16 years and those years were extremely difficult! We are so blessed that she now lives in a group home near us so we can visit daily. Only God knows the reason she is still with us. Our other children were always so great to her and they are still a big part of her life. Dave had many jobs (one being 35 years in the military) so I could stay home and care for the children. I went back to teaching at St. Bernard when Annie went to “school”. That was a life saver for me.

*How did you overcome them?* I would say that our faith was sometimes the only thing that got us through our hardest times. Also the wonderful support from our extended families and friends. Through our faith we are able to see the meaning for Annie’s life! We will never know the reason, but we sure know there is meaning to the difficulties.

*What’s most rewarding about being married?* Dave and I are very close and yet very different. It is so wonderful to know that you always have your best friend with you and you can still be the individual that God made you to be. We are able to do so much together and still do the other things in life that we personally enjoy. The key is to allow each other to BE!

*How has faith helped your marriage?* We never would be where we are today without our faith! We are very active in our Church Community and would be lost without it. There were so many times when we needed Jesus! We prayed and did not always get the answer we wanted, but we always got the answer we needed in the end.

*Advice for engaged couples?* Always be kind and very willing to compromise. This journey is not just about you! Don’t run away from all the difficulties, but face them together! All will work out in the end. Commit to making your marriage work! It is not an easy road, but so worth the ride! Do things together, but allow each other to be who they are too.

James & Esther Esser  
# of Children: 3 # of Grandchildren: 3

*How did you meet?* We met at a friend’s wedding.

*When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?* We both enjoyed doing the same things.

*What challenges did you face?* Everyday life, as in employment and spiritual needs.

*How did you overcome them?* Our faith in God and our love for each other, also our family and friends.
What’s most rewarding about being married?
Being together as best friends, being able to talk to each other, sharing our love for each other.

How has faith helped your marriage?
Our faith is the center of our marriage, raising our children to be good Christians. Always trying to be helpful to others including family and friends.

Advice for engaged couples?
Liking each other as best friends to overcome the bumps in the roads as to children, health, family and all the material things in life. Treat your partner with total respect and love.

James & Jeanie Farmer
# of Children: 2 # of Grandchildren: 2

How did you meet?
Jim was in the Air Force, after basic training and tech school he was stationed at Edwards Air Force Base in the middle of Mojave Desert, CA. TV reception wasn’t that great and the base theatre played the same movie over and over again. But 15 miles north was California City. To stave off base boredom he and several other GI’s got off duty jobs at a little restaurant, washing dishes. Jeanie worked weekends as a waitress. We dated for a couple of months before he was sent to Viet Nam and kept in touch writing daily letters.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?
I loved his considerate treatment of me and I was impressed with his faith and love of God. My family did not attend church regularly and I wanted that for my future. I loved how intelligent she was and the respect that was shown towards me and others. Also how patient she was with me.

What challenges did you face?
We had children after we were married only 17 months. When our children started school, Jeannie decided to go back to college. It was very challenging to balance school, work, taking care of children, housework and finding time for each other.

How did you overcome them?
Patience, knowing there was an end in sight when Jeannie graduated. Jim’s mother attended church together every Sunday with us. For our 26th anniversary, Jim bought dance lessons for us. We went on to take lessons for several years and our lesson night became the time we made for each other every week and reminded us that we loved each other.

What’s most rewarding about being married?
Having a partner to share life’s experiences. We love to travel together and we still dance almost every week. We managed to live through good and difficult times and thankful we are able to celebrate. Our children and grandchildren have also been very rewarding. They both graduated college, have rewarding careers and chose equally thoughtful and respectful partners.

How has faith helped your marriage?
Going to church weekly has helped us to take the time to reflect on what God has provided us with; two healthy children, two healthy grandchildren and a successful way of life.

Advice for engaged couples?
Don’t give up. Get married with the idea of making it work. Work through your problems, communicate, be patient with each other and have faith. Do things for each other, many small things can feel like big rewards.

Most Rewarding:
확실히 We love to travel together and we still dance almost every week. We managed to live through good and difficult times and are thankful we are able to celebrate.
Melroy & Shirley Feit
# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 4

Our home was a good living house but small. Being part of the St. Dennis community allowed us to develop friendships, support, and assistance from families whose needs were very similar to ours.

What's most rewarding about being married? Having someone in your life every day to love and share difficulties and pleasures. Support for each other planning family, church, and school activities. Expand each horizon in meeting new people, challenges, opportunities. Discuss medical and religious questions and opportunities.

How has faith helped your marriage? Our marriage is centered on Christ. Especially the activities of St. Dennis Church and school. Our children attended St. Dennis School. Mel was a coach and Shirley was a parent coordinator were active participants in all the school and Church activities.

Advice for engaged couples? Love is an important part of marriage but second to the love of God. There will be many ups and downs. It will be necessary that each is willing to give and take. All ideas and events will not be viewed the same by either side. Correct each other if you must but provide laughter to fill in instead of anger. Say I am sorry when you do things that upset your spouse. It is better to ask for God's help then to do it alone. Love, sacrifice, and God make marriage work.

Francis & Lois Gartland
# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 8

How did you meet? We met in a small town WI bar. Mel was home on military leave from Fitzsimons Hospital Denver, CO. Shirley and her girlfriend were talking about a planned vacation out west. Mel said that they should come to Denver. The girls did that -spent some time with Mel and his friends. Four years later Mel and Shirley married.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? When we were engaged, Shirley lived in Manitowoc, WI and Mel was working in Madison, WI. We did not see each other much. One or two weekends a month. The time we would spend together was short and enjoyable. Absence must have made the heart grow fonder.

What challenges did you face? Our first child, a premature 6 month baby, needing three surgeries, started us with a large financial burden and a need for additional health protection. Three additional children followed within the 10-year period. The most challenging was money-medical bills, adequate food and housing. We formed a plan where we could obtain adequate training, education and transportation for each of the children. We planned a work schedule that would permit at least one parent home with children. We planned an education method that would be of benefit to the children.

How did you overcome them? Mel worked full time. Shirley worked evenings and weekends. We obtained food in large quantities but did not obtain the extras.
Sally & John Bregman
# of Children: 2 # of Grandchildren: 2

How did you meet? We were engaged, what did you love most about each other? We loved just being together.
What challenges did you face? The most challenging times were when we were mad at each other.
How did you overcome them? When we were mad at each other, I would stop and say three Hail Marys and wait until we cooled down.
What’s most rewarding about being married? One of the most rewarding parts of our marriage is having someone to talk things over with and to share the good and bad times in life with.
How has faith helped your marriage? Our faith has kept us together.
Advice for engaged couples? Always attend mass together every weekend. Always say I love you before you go to bed.

Ralph & Geraldine Jacobsen
# of Children: 2 # of Grandchildren: 4

Martin & Patricia Honer
# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 14

Fred & Barbara Grelle
# of Children: 2 # of Grandchildren: 4

Stan & Molly Jerdee
# of Children: 2 # of Grandchildren: 5

How did you meet? At a dance. Lois was attending the College of Great Falls and Francis was stationed at Maelstrom Air Force Base in Great Falls, Montana.
When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? The joy of doing things together and of planning for our future.
What challenges did you face? Secrecy and alcoholism.
How did you overcome them? Our faith and a supportive family.
What’s most rewarding about being married? Learning to trust in God that He would give us strength and the resources to meet the challenges life gave us. Our wonderful children and grandchildren that all come together to love and support everyone.
How has faith helped your marriage? It has given us the strength and tools to meet all of life’s challenges.
Advice for engaged couples? Communication is the key to a happy courtship and marriage.

How did you meet? I worked at a cheese factory that Marty sent milk to. I was the bookkeeper and he had to come in for cheese or supplies.
When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? March 24, 1969. His blue eyes. Molly’s smile and crazy fun loving ways.
What challenges did you face? Raising 2 girls!
How did you overcome them? Doing it together.

How did you meet? Stan’s sister introduced us. They drove by my dad’s farm every day.
When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? Secrecy and alcoholism.
What challenges did you face? Raising 2 girls!
How did you overcome them? Doing it together.
Robert & Margaret Kaether  
# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 2

What’s most rewarding about being married? Someone to be there through thick and thin.

How has faith helped your marriage? The rock we can lean on and keep us going through all of life’s challenges.

Advice for engaged couples? Marriage is the hardest full time job you will ever have. It takes a lot of love.

Paul & Mary Jesberger  
# of Children: 1

How did you meet? We met through mutual friends.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? Being fun loving. Feeling of being loved and respected.

What challenges did you face? We found getting to know each other’s habits and routines were challenging at times. Our personalities are different and that can be a negative and positive.

How did you overcome them? Talking through difficulties and trying to understand both viewpoints.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Always having the person you love beside you through great life experiences and difficulties.

How has faith helped your marriage? We didn’t seek out a Catholic but were blessed with the same faith and beliefs. When one weakened, the other was strong.

Advice for engaged couples? Have patience. Work at your relationship. Respect each other.

How did you meet? We worked at the same company in different departments and saw each other every day, but hadn’t met. One day I saw Marge waiting at a bus stop. I asked if she would like a ride home, and she accepted. I wish she had been that agreeable when I attempted my first marriage proposal. I thank God to this day that I didn’t give up after that painful rejection. We also spent many nights dancing at Rusty’s in Middleton.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? I loved her beautiful smile, her outgoing and loving and caring personality, and she is a great cook. I was an introvert who lacked self-confidence, so she provided the balance I needed in my life. I loved the gentleman in him, his morals and honesty. We were blessed to start our life together sharing the same Catholic faith and family values. Many of our dates were attending Mass together.

What challenges did you face? Communication and different parenting/disciplining styles. I was an introvert who lacked self-confidence, so she provided the balance I needed in my life. I loved the gentleman in him, his morals and honesty. We were blessed to start our life together sharing the same Catholic faith and family values. Many of our dates were attending Mass together.

How did you overcome them? Our Catholic faith, lots of prayers, and strong support from our families. Even during times of anger, reconciliation was a
must. We would still attend Mass together and hold hands during the Our Father.

What’s most rewarding about being married? We got married after he entered the Army, so we spent our first two years together away from family and friends, and thus had to be totally committed to each other; raising our children to be responsible and caring adults; retiring and traveling together; having someone to share both good and bad times; growing in our faith together by being involved in church activities.

How has faith helped your marriage? It has helped us stay focused on our primary responsibility of getting ourselves, our children, and our grandchildren to heaven.

Advice for engaged couples? Top priority: finding a practicing Catholic with similar family values should eliminate two of the most difficult challenges in a marriage. Remember that you aren’t just marrying an individual, you are marrying into a family. Get to know your potential in-laws real well before making the commitment because, God willing, you will be spending a lot of time with them through the years.

Jeff & Pauline Kidd
How did you meet? High school.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? Matching personalities and came from good families.

What challenges did you face? Being in the Navy kept us apart for the first 6 months.

How did you overcome them? Retired from the Navy.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Always being there for each other.

How has faith helped your marriage? Helped us get through these 60 years.

Advice for engaged couples? Be loving, have good communication, be forgiving and put God first.

Lawrence & Carol Kilian

How did you meet? Going to Church at St. Joseph’s Fond du Lac.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? We both loved that the other was a practicing Catholic and shared the same values. We also enjoyed each other’s company.

What challenges did you face? Running a business together. Sometimes it was difficult to keep business separate from our personal lives.

How did you overcome them? Listening to each other and realizing each other’s strengths in each area of the business and our personal life. The few times we didn’t do this there was conflict.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Knowing you always have someone you can count on. Having children and grandchildren.

How has faith helped your marriage? It’s a constant in our lives. God is in charge and we have many wonderful saints to intercede for us. Our faith has been our bond through good times and not so good times.

Advice for engaged couples? Understand your wedding as a sacrament. Do not let yourselves be overwhelmed by all the preparations. Keep things simple and enjoy this precious time.

Joseph & Anne Karl

# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 21

How did you meet? Going to Church at St. Joseph’s Fond du Lac.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? We both loved that the other was a practicing Catholic and shared the same values. We also enjoyed each other’s company.

What challenges did you face? Running a business together. Sometimes it was difficult to keep business separate from our personal lives.

How did you overcome them? Listening to each other and realizing each other’s strengths in each area of the business and our personal life. The few times we didn’t do this there was conflict.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Knowing you always have someone you can count on. Having children and grandchildren.

How has faith helped your marriage? It’s a constant in our lives. God is in charge and we have many wonderful saints to intercede for us. Our faith has been our bond through good times and not so good times.

Advice for engaged couples? Understand your wedding as a sacrament. Do not let yourselves be overwhelmed by all the preparations. Keep things simple and enjoy this precious time.

Lawrence & Carol Kilian
# of Children: 3 # of Grandchildren: 2
How did you meet? At a dance when he returned from serving his country in Vietnam.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? We met in November 1968. Started dating January 1, 1969. We got engaged July 8, 1968 on Larry’s birthday. We both grew up on dairy farms. Love of outdoors and tractor events.

What challenges did you face? Communications. You always need to talk things out.

How did you overcome them? We had to keep trying to talk to each other. We prayed for the right way to handle things we didn’t agree on.

What’s most rewarding about being married? All of what we have accomplished together. Faith, family, love.

How has faith helped your marriage? Prayer gets you through a lot of trials. Keep the faith.

Advice for engaged couples? Couples getting married these days have a lot of conflicting ideas to deal with. May they approach life prayerfully and trust in each other and the Lord.

LeRoy & Maria Kluever

# of Children: 2

How did you meet? We met in the United States Marine Corp. We were stationed at the same military base.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? His car.

What challenges did you face? Day to day living with another person.

How did you overcome them? For me my faith. With my faith I am able to help my husband through tough times; 2 brain bleed, death of our only son, PTSD from VN, loss of vision (he has limited vision).

What’s most rewarding about being married? Companionship. We grow together.

How has faith helped your marriage? When times are hard I place my problems in “God’s” hands. Through my faith I can see miracles and find strength to help my husband.

Advice for engaged couples? We live in a time where more is better. Excitement is needed for stimulation. We need to see ourselves; accept ourselves. We need to present our problems to GOD and then we must listen with our ears, eyes, and heart.

Name Withheld

# of Children: 3 # of Grandchildren: 4 # of Great-Grandchildren: 1

How did you meet? We went to school together, started dating and got engaged while in college.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Our love has grown and matured over the years. With the constant help of the Lord and the Church, and the support of each other, our friends and families, understanding clergymen and the parishioners wherever we lived, the journey has been one we look back on fondly.

Advice for engaged couples? Couples getting married these days have a lot of conflicting ideas to deal with. May they approach life prayerfully and trust in each other and the Lord.
**How did you meet?** At a dance with friends in the area.

**When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?** We enjoyed the same interests and community together.

**What challenges did you face?** There are many challenges in life. The most challenging was the death from cancer of our daughter at age 50, leaving a husband with six children, grade school age through college.

**How did you overcome them?** We relied on the support of family and friends, and attended many Masses and prayers.

**What’s most rewarding about being married?** Having companionship, especially when challenges arose.

**How has faith helped your marriage?** Faith and prayers are important, we keep them close and use them often.

**Advice for engaged couples?** Keep God in your marriage. Help each other, don’t put yourself first. Marriage isn’t 50/50...more like 100/100. Treat each other with respect.

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**Mark & Sharon Lesar**

# of Children: 3 # of Grandchildren: 7 # of Great-Grandchildren: 2

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**Ronald & Corrinne Maki**

# of Children: 7 # of Grandchildren: 14 # of Great-Grandchildren: 6

**How did you meet?** We were classmates in high school sweetheart and graduated together.

**When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?** We were engaged for 3 years planning for our future. Mark was very level headed and kind with a wonderful sense of humor and strong in his faith. My wife to be was very bubbly and outgoing, very good to be with and showed kindness to everyone. Someone I wanted to be with forever. We loved each other!

**What challenges did you face?** The loss of our son. So unexpected it rocked us on our heads.

**How did you overcome them?** Our faith in God, family and wonderful friends helped us through the hard times.

**What's most rewarding about being married?** Our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. We hold all special memories of their lives in our hearts. We are also thankful for each other-partners for life!!!

**How has faith helped your marriage?** Our faith and church family is very important to us. Most of our close friends are active in our church. I tease Mark about being the oldest mass server ever. He assists our priests at daily mass when children are not available. He loves his work in the church and so do I. We have wonderful priests that encourage us in our faith.

**Advice for engaged couples?** Couples getting married today shouldn’t sweat the small stuff-lean on God for help. Communication is important-it will get you to the 50 and 60 year anniversaries.
Phil & Rita Marklein

# of Children: 5 # of Grandchildren: 4 # of Great-Grandchildren: 2

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? That we could be together and plan our future. Anticipation of a lifetime together was so important and we planned our life together with very similar goals.

What challenges did you face? Most challenging in the first couple years was financial worries; poor job availability locally. We left the area in 1960 and found steady employment. If we hadn’t left, our marriage would have soured.

How did you overcome them? We both have strong wills and wanted to succeed. We would never fail and our faith steered us in a good direction for a successful life together.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Always having each other; the children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. It is so satisfying to see them succeed and see the reward of our raising them to be good solid loving people.

How has faith helped your marriage? We knew when we said our vows we would always be married to each other! We weren’t heavy church goers but always did our Catholic duty and did quite well despite raising seven children and husband was a long distance truck driver. Church was very important.

Advice for engaged couples? Know each other’s wants. Don’t live together and play house and maybe marry sometime-or scatter! Don’t bring children into a non-marriage scenario. Marry in the Church and continue attending.

How did you meet? We were close neighbors. We both attended Catholic education classes together in grade school and high school. We were high school sweethearts and classmates.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? That we could be together and plan our future. Anticipation of a lifetime together was so important and we planned our life together with very similar goals.

What challenges did you face? After three months of marriage, Phil went into the service (Army) to serve our country during the Korean War and many changes took place. We were both lonesome and we prayed every day for his safe return home. Sometimes Phil would be a server at more than one Mass on Sundays. While Phil was in the Service we had twin girls who were born premature in Washington DC. Through lots of prayers and a miracle, they lived and were baptized at birth and later in the Catholic Church in LaPlata, MD where we lived for a year.

How did you overcome them? By our having deep faith and love for one another. Our commitment to each other, our wedding vows, and many prayers have helped us to overcome the challenges.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Just being together with so much love to share. We share our love and deep faith with our family. We have five girls who make us very proud! We have been blessed

Advice for engaged couples?

✍️ Don’t sweat the small stuff—lean on God for help. Communication is important. It will get you to the 50 and 60 year anniversaries.
with many miracles in our lives together. We thank the Lord for each day and for letting us celebrate. It seems like yesterday-67 years of marriage on October 25th of this year.

**How has faith helped your marriage?** With God’s help every day we were able to meet the challenges of our marriage. We attend mass with our family and Sunday was always a special day for our family. A day of prayer and reflection on God’s gifts to each of us. Phil had strokes in 1989 and 1990. With faith, prayers of everyone and God’s help we were able to overcome challenges.

**Advice for engaged couples?** Always remember love grows through marriage. Attend mass together as often as you can. Remember your wedding vows; till death do us part, in sickness and in health, better or for worse. Share your time, talents and treasure. Remember to always love and cherish each other. A kiss and a hug every day and say, “I love you.” Your faith will sustain you.

**Edward & Mary McFadden**
# of Children: 3 # of Grandchildren: 6

**How did you meet?** Best friends were dating and introduced us. We were in their wedding and they were in ours same year, 1964. Fifty-five years later, still best of friends and we get together often.

**When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?** We had a mutual feeling of starting a new life adventure together. Del had a good sense of humor and was a practicing Catholic and I liked her family. Ed was a practicing Catholic and I liked his family as well!

**What challenges did you face?** The most challenging was accepting more new job promotions, opportunities requiring frequent moves.

**How did you overcome them?** By researching schools in new areas which would provide the best education for our children.

**What’s most rewarding about being married?** Having a loving companion that gets better with age. Sharing good times and not so good times.

**How has faith helped your marriage?** Attending Sunday Mass keeps us focused on what’s important in life.

**Advice for engaged couples?** Let prayer and Sunday Mass be a part of your life together. Be good listeners and talk things out.

**James & Linda McHargue**
# of Children: 3 # of Grandchildren: 6

**Martin & Janet Meinholz**
# of Children: 5 # of Grandchildren: 8

**How did you meet?** Janet’s brother married Martin’s sister. We marched together as a couple in their wedding party.

**When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?** I loved Martin’s smile and his low-key approach to everything. Martin loved Janet’s outgoing personality.

**What challenges did you face?** We couldn’t
come up with any one time or thing that was more challenging. When you farm together 24/7, you just go with the flow.

**What’s most rewarding about being married?**
The companionship, trust and knowing the other is always there for you. Our daughter and grandsons.

**How has faith helped your marriage?**
It has helped us get through the tough times. Asking God’s help in making decisions. We also love going to church in the many places we have traveled.

**Advice for engaged couples?**
Keep the sex for marriage, not before. Communicate, communicate, communicate. Be patient and kind to each other. Talk things over together and respect each other. Forgiveness.

Robert & Joanne Monson
# of Children: 3 # of Grandchildren: 7 # of Great-Grandchildren: 15

**How did you meet?**
At a dance.

**When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?**
Kindness, understanding, respect.

**What challenges did you face?**
Husband’s employment involved traveling a distance from home and not being able to get home every weekend. Our children were in early grade school years. We missed each other so much but it was a good job that provided a living for our family.

**How did you overcome them?**
Our faith and our love.

**What’s most rewarding about being married?**
Having someone to share your thoughts and ideas and dreams with.

**How has faith helped your marriage?**
Through prayer and trusting that God is always with us.

**Advice for engaged couples?**
Communicate with one another and be a good listener. You have to give and take.

Fred & Linda Meinholz
# of Children: 1 # of Grandchildren: 2

**How did you meet?**
We met through a mutual friend at the St. Peter’s Church picnic in Ashton.

**When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?**
How much we had in common. Our Christian values. And after three years dating we were ready to move on to the next stage of our lives together.

**What challenges did you face?**
Having cancer while also being pregnant and not being able to have more children.

**How did you overcome them?**
Our faith in God and our parents and family.

**What’s most rewarding about being married?**
Our family, love and companionship.

**How has faith helped your marriage?**
We are firm believers that everything happens for a reason. There were times when things seemed to happened for no reason but we still managed to get through it. That’s when we realize God is there walking through life by our side.

**Advice for engaged couples?**
Always pray together and respect each other. Also, have the same values and expectations in your faith, family and finances.
families and ourselves better.

**What challenges did you face?** We come from different backgrounds. It was a challenge to meld that into our own lives.

**How did you overcome them?** Love and patience.

**What’s most rewarding about being married?** Loving spending time together.

**How has faith helped your marriage?** This is constant and gives us strength to handle the up and down of everyday decisions.

**Advice for engaged couples?** Listen, have patience, love and compassion.

***Tim & Jerrie Murphy***

# of Children: 3 # of Grandchildren: 9

**How did you meet?** At Piggly Wiggly grocery store. Jerrie was a part time checker and Tim was the evening manager.

**When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?** Engaged 9-6-68. Tim proposed at the University Arboretum. We loved everything most! He was witty and generous. We loved being together every moment possible. She was the joy of his life.

**What challenges did you face?** My mother (his mother in law). She was opinionated, critical, hurtful of our relationship. She also tried to control and dominate us. Her jealousy and narcissism made our relationship with her challenging.

**How did you overcome them?** Setting limits with her and temporary estrangements. Our love and faith united us and gave us the strength we needed.

**What’s most rewarding about being married?** Being happily retired together. Watching our children and grandchildren grow, sharing in their happiness and success. Enjoying the satisfaction of our accomplishments. Most rewarding—loving each other and always being together.

**How has faith helped your marriage?** Kept us together through difficult times and gave us hope in the belief God would hear our prayers and guide us.

**Advice for engaged couples?** Pray together. Keep your Catholic faith alive in your family. Compromise, compliment and always be supportive of your spouse. Forgive.

***Rick & Sandy Murphy***

**How did you meet?** We met in high school. We were a grade apart. I was a year ahead and started dating the summer after I graduated. Sandy was a junior.

**When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?** Great personality and sense of humor. Very caring and responsible. Dedicated. We had common interests and enjoyed doing everything together.

**What challenges did you face?** Living together and adapting to each other’s way of doing things. Learning to accept each other’s habits and shortcomings. Starting and raising our family, wondering if we were doing things right.
**How did you meet?** One of Norman’s brothers and his wife, that I rented a room from brought me up to his parents’ house in Lodi. Norman was recovering from a car accident and couldn’t leave. So we visited with each other for a few hours, then we started dating.

**When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?** I loved that he came from a loving large family (16 kids). He was very kind, very polite, very nice young man. He was handsome.

**What challenges did you face?** Some drinking and him having flashbacks from being in Vietnam in the beginning. It got better after a few years. Also just getting used to each other. We got engaged after 6 months of dating and after 1 year of dating got married. Not hearing that he loved me.

**How did you overcome them?** God helped me overcome those problems; along with Norman and I maturing. We also knew that we married forever. We were not going to divorce. We worked things out.

**What’s most rewarding about being married?** Sharing life with a person who has the same outlook and values that you have. Having a family and raising two wonderful daughters and enjoying the grandchildren. Facing the many challenges that life throws your way. As a couple, overcoming the difficult times and enjoying the great moments.

**How has faith helped your marriage?** Faith has played a very important role in our lives. With decisions you have to make, the choices you make are based on the strength you find by putting faith and God as priorities in your marriage. When things are difficult and times are hard you wonder how you will get through those times. You embrace your faith and no matter what you survive it all.

**Advice for engaged couples?** Marriage is a commitment and regardless of how difficult things get, you have to find ways around them. Do things together and yet allow each other space and support each other. Have a strong faith and be involved in your church.

**Norman & Donna Neumaier**

# of Children: 4  # of Grandchildren: 12

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**Advice for couples:**

Pray together.
Keep your Catholic faith alive in your family. Compromise, compliment and always be supportive of your spouse. Forgive.
How did you meet? We lived around the corner from each other our whole pre-married life. We actually met when our mothers got together for coffee right after Helen was born. So I guess you could say we met at birth.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? We loved the safeness and trust of being together. We were friends long before we fell in love, so that friendship provided us the enjoyment of sharing new and exciting moments in our lives.

What challenges did you face? Keeping our lives focused on living a balanced married life, spiritually, emotionally, and physically. Making decisions together keeping in mind what was going to be the best for our family.

How did you overcome them? We set aside time in our lives as a couple. Continuing to communicate thoughts and feelings while maintaining a respect for one another and remembering to laugh at the silly things of life.

What's most rewarding about being married? We always have our best friend along for the adventure.

How has faith helped your marriage? We realize we are not in this thing alone. God is a “voting member” of our union. We try to remember and trust that the Lord will provide whatever we need. We have experienced the “loaves and fishes” many times in our lives and we have always been thankful for how things worked out. Thank you Lord for being part of our adventure.

Advice for engaged couples? Make each other better through respect, love and friendship. Remember you are entering into the most intimate of relationships that you will experience in your life. Keep it that way by not sharing intimacies with everyone else. When working out difficulties between the two of you, don’t use your friends or parents as mediators. Ask God for help, because he is there with you.

Alvin & Mary Orvis
# of Children: 2 # of Grandchildren: 2

How did you meet? Both worked at the post office.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? He was a wonderful, honest, hardworking person. He was Catholic. She was a good person. We had a lot in common.

What challenges did you face? In-law problem. His mother caused problems. His work schedule.

How did you overcome them? I loved my husband. Patience.

What's most rewarding about being married? After all these years, we are still in love. Our two sons and their families have been a great joy. Being a grandparent has been the best! We have had wonderful friends. A lot of them we have met at Church.

How has faith helped your marriage? Helps you to bond. Wanted to bring children into the Church. It is wonderful to share church and same faith with same beliefs and customs.

Advice for engaged couples? Communicate - communicate!! Be committed to each other and your family.

Richard & Judith Pape
# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 9 # of Great-Grandchildren: 2
How did you meet? Social gathering.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Having children and grandchildren and great grandchildren. Sharing our faith with each other through daily rosary, prayers and attending Mass.

How has faith helped your marriage? Our faith has always meant a lot to us. We both attended Catholic grade schools as well as our children.

Advice for engaged couples? Not to give up on marriage at your first disagreement. Work together to solve your problems and always put your partner first.

Ross & Lucy Parisi
# of Children: 5 # of Grandchildren: 10

How did you meet? Ross and I met while we were both in school. Ross at the UW and I was in the nursing school at St. Mary’s in Madison.

What challenges did you face? Carrying out Christ’s simple command to “Love one another.” Life is such a beautiful gift but also the source of unexpected challenges.

How did you overcome them? Hopefully who we are as husband and wife can help our children and extended family love one another.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Ross evolved from the insurance industry to owner of Rossario’s Italian Restaurant in Monona for 35 years. I have been an RN for 50 years. We are both enjoying retirement in the country. Twenty years ago we moved to Vermont Township where Ross has renovated an 1860’s barn into our home, “The Farm.” Everyone loves to come to our peaceful valley home.

It is a source of fun, a place to gather, and sometimes a place to heal.

How has faith helped your marriage? Ross converted from the Episcopalian Church to Catholicism before we married. Weekly mass and the sacraments have made our 55th wedding anniversary a true celebration of our life together.

Anthony & Marian Pawlowsky
# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 5 # of Great-Grandchildren: 1

How did you meet? Marian was maid of honor. Tony was best man at friend’s wedding.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? We were both striving to achieve a better life than our parents did. Tony at University of Illinois. Marian in nursing school.

What challenges did you face? Learning to be more patient and understanding of opposing views and thoughts.

How did you overcome them? Maturity, love and commitment. There will be good times and bad times. You must learn to work through the bad times and hang in there.

What’s most rewarding about being married? There is no “most rewarding”. Life together is all rewarding. Having a wonderful partner!

How has faith helped your marriage? Yes!

Advice for engaged couples? Be patient and understanding of opposing views and thoughts.

Bernard & Jane Powers
# of Children: 2 # of Grandchildren: 4
Charles & Joycelyn Ramsden
# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 5

How did you meet? At church.
When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? Caring and friendship.
What challenges did you face? Reconciling points of view.
How did you overcome them? Patience and willingness to compromise.
What’s most rewarding about being married? Our children and grandchildren.
How has faith helped your marriage? Encourages talking things out.
Advice for engaged couples? Be patient and willing to compromise.

Bob & Rita Reif
# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 10 # of Great-Grandchildren: 7

How did you meet? We met at social events in 1953 while attending the University of Wisconsin. Two years later, after graduation, we began dating and were married in late 1956.
When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? We always appreciated the mutual honesty, positive attitudes, care and concern for others and interest in family, friends and community.
What challenges did you face? Being separated during the first part of Bob’s military service, living off base in Germany, having our first child born in Germany, and giving birth to four children in successive years.
How did you overcome them? Sharing our thoughts, working together, keeping faith in God and family, forming strong communities in each neighborhood and having a strong tie to our parish and parish family.
What’s most rewarding about being married? Our continuing practice of sharing and working on every problem together; the success, happiness and strong family ties with our children; and continuing strong attachment to our parish community.
How has faith helped your marriage? Our faith has been most important to us during every step of our lives together. We are most thankful for the help, care, and concern of all those associated with our various clergies and congregations.
Advice for engaged couples? Talk to each other. Take care not to compete with one another. Work hard. Give more than you get and keep hope alive!

Mike & Kitty Repas
# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 7

How did you meet? We met at a bowling center.
When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? We enjoyed planning and preparing for our coming marriage. It was an exciting time.
What challenges did you face? Raising our daughters! We always tried as hard as we could to learn through their lifetime experiences and to be
confident in their choices. We and they were blessed in the awareness that we all did a pretty good job!

**How did you overcome them?** Our faith in our Lord that we would come through the hard times. Our faith, our love for one another was key.

**What’s most rewarding about being married?** Knowing that we could love each other. Trust each other and gain confidence that our Lord would answer our prayers. It has been a true blessing!

**How has faith helped your marriage?** We were able to get through the tragic death of our first daughter, a down syndrome child. In those 10 years we were blessed to be a part of her life and she in the lives of our daughters. She taught us so much about love. God blessed us with her presence in our lives and we thank God for her to this very day. It will always be that way.

**Advice for engaged couples?** Be true and unwavering in your love for one another, no matter what differences you might have. Be faithful. Be true to one another. Thank God every day that he brought you together and will always be with you. Our Lord cares for you and loves you. Be prayerful in your thanksgiving.

**Felix & Millie Ring**

# of Children: 7 # of Grandchildren: 19 # of Great Grandchildren: 24

**How did you meet?** Dated senior year in high school.

**Advice for engaged couples?** Pray together.

**Richard & Barbara Roberts**

# of Children: 3 # of Grandchildren: 3

**How did you meet?** We met in study hall at Edgewood high school in Madison, WI.

**When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?** He was fun to be with. He was kind and patient and loved me. She was pretty and fun. We enjoyed common interests. She was animated and made me feel comfortable around her.

**What challenges did you face?** Finding time to be just a couple. Finances were difficult at times but turning in my charge card occasionally helped. How and where to spend could be a problem at times.

**How did you overcome them?** Establishing a weekly date night with conversation that did not include the kids. Compromising and problem solving which is a give and take issue. We became aware of the intensity of the other person, which guided our decisions of when to give in.

**What’s most rewarding about being married?** I have my best friend to talk with, laugh with and to love. Our children to watch them grow up, become their own person and become parents themselves.

**How has faith helped your marriage?** It’s the glue bonding us to God and our commitment to each other. We could not have survived without shared values, which in turn came from our faith. We both knew that marriage would not be easy, our shared faith gave us the strength to work at our marriage.

**Advice for engaged couples?** Make sure you are committed to “until death do us part”. If you are not, the first big disagreement will begin the erosion of your love. Understand that nothing worthwhile comes without effort! Be realistic, dedicated to your
How did you meet? Dan's first cousin also went to Edgewood College and we were roommates. My pastor came to Madison from Davenport, IA to marry us. My home parish was meeting in an auditorium at that time due to construction of a new Church. We were the first alumni to be married in the chapel. Dan's pastor assisted.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? Common family backgrounds; enjoyed doing some activities; sense of humor; similar work ethic.

What challenges did you face? Communication when our ideas differed.

How did you overcome them? Giving each other space to think things through, prayers, support of friends and family.

What's most rewarding about being married? Sharing so many common family values. Many memories of raising our family. Watching our children mature into adults and then becoming parents themselves.

How has faith helped your marriage? We were both Catholics when we married but came from different experiences. One grew up going through public schools. The other had Catholic education k-16. We have had many discussions about the Church and issues our Church are dealing with and is still struggling with. Most often we share the same opinions and that strengthens our marriage.

Advice for engaged couples? Expect marriage to be a series of highs and lows. Enjoy the highs and use faith to get through the lows.

Marvin & Kathy Ruhland
# of Children: 5 # of Grandchildren: 9

How did you meet? We were childhood next-door neighbors and attended St. Luke grade and high school.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? We had same family values.

What challenges did you face? Balancing time with children, work, and commitments.

How did you overcome them? Faith in God and in the power of prayer. Being able to compromise when decisions are difficult.

What's most rewarding about being married? Being able to enjoy and share our lives together and those of our children and grandchildren.

How has faith helped your marriage? Faith is a constant reminder that God is present in our lives and will guide us in our journey.

Advice for engaged couples? Remember marriage is forever. Keep a song in your heart - it’s a wonderful world.

To engaged couples we would stress the importance of having common goals, good communication, loyalty to each other. And to view marriage as a permanent union.
**Robert & Rita Schelble**  
# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 9 # of Great-Grandchildren: 8

How did you meet? At a party with mutual friends.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? We had similar interests and goals and we were spiritually and physically attracted to each other.

What challenges did you face? Properly raising and supporting our four children.

How did you overcome them? Praying and trusting in guidance from God—having a stay at home mom and diligently working on good communication skills with our children.

What's most rewarding about being married? We have had a wonderful time sharing life together. We are extremely proud of our four sons and their wives. We feel very blessed that we have lived to appreciate the fine way they have raised their families.

How has faith helped your marriage? Sharing the same religion has been a very important element in our marriage. Attending mass together and participating in various church activities has been very meaningful to us.

Advice for engaged couples? We would stress the importance of having common goals, good communication, loyalty to each other. And to view marriage as a permanent union.

**Art & Mary Schuman**  
# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 5

How did you meet? We were classmates at Edgewood High School.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? Spring of 1958. Mary’s positive attitude to things. Art’s fun at almost everything and his caring ways.

What challenges did you face? Being young and raising four children.

How did you overcome them? Working challenges together with our Lord’s and Blessed Mother’s help each day.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Sharing our life together with the one you love.

How has faith helped your marriage? Keeps us...
honoring our commitment to God and ourselves. And keeps us focused as to what is really important in life.

Advice for engaged couples? Love and be patient with one another and stay true to your faith commitment each day!

James & Phyllis Schwartz  
# of Children: 3 # of Grandchildren: 11

How did you meet? In high school.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? Being together. Sharing everything.

What challenges did you face? Learning to live with another.

Ken & Eunice Soda  
# of Children: 5 # of Grandchildren: 13

How did you meet? We met through Chuck’s cousin, Dolly - who was one of my best friends. The meeting was actually at Chuck’s grandparent’s 50th wedding anniversary. And here we are now today, 61 years later. Wow!

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? We did not get engaged until we were married 9 years. By then Chuck could afford the beautiful solitaire diamond he gave me at Christmas. Wow what a surprise.

What challenges did you face? Learning to share with one another. Giving 100% to one another and trusting in one another through hard times as well as the good ones.

How did you overcome them? Our faith in God and one another.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Falling truly in love with one another once and on each anniversary. When you are blessed enough to meet, trust and work (and we do mean work) with one another, your faith grows and really helps a couple bond. The words shared on our wedding day were just that-words. But over the 61 years we’ve shared, the good and the bad times and our mutual faith in the Blessed Trinity and Mother Mary is what has really bonded us together.

How has faith helped your marriage? With God all things are possible.

Advice for engaged couples? The wedding day is the party - then all the truly hard work begins when
the dust settles. Hold on (mutually) to your faith in the Blessed Trinity, the Blessed Mother Mary, the saints and angels. Believe in them, call on them and together place your love and faith in them daily.

John & Helen Stanek
# of Children: 8 # of Grandchildren: 16 # of Great-Grandchildren: 8

Kenneth & Joyce Statz
# of Children: 2 # of Grandchildren: 5

Name Withheld
# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 9 # of Great-Grandchildren: 4

How did you meet? In grade school. Our parents were friends.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? We never considered engagement.

What challenges did you face? Working and raising 4 children in 6 years. However, all of them are successful in their lives.

How did you overcome them? Working together with help from parents.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Watching and helping our family grow up and all become good parents.

How has faith helped your marriage? We have great priests in our lives and we will all remember them. They all attended 8 grades in the Catholic school.

Advice for engaged couples? Be true to each other and solve your problems within.

Edward & Valeria Sutter
# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 10 # of Great-Grandchildren: 7

How did you meet? Probably in the entrance of church. In the cry room.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? Just being together.


How did you overcome them? Just being together.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Having kids, grandkids and now great grandkids.

How has faith helped your marriage? Church and religion always help. Ed has had 2 aunts that were nuns and are now deceased. I had an aunt that was a nun and an uncle that was a priest. I have a 1st cousin that is a priest. This all helps. Going to church each Sunday and Holy Days helped our family.

Advice for engaged couples? Say you love each other each day.
William & Carole Symanski  
# of Children: 2 # of Grandchildren: 3

*How did you meet?* At a dance at college in Albany, NY.

*When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?* Her personality and his faith, he went to church and he loved to hunt and fish.

*What challenges did you face?* Raising a family while having a job that required travel.

*How did you overcome them?* Being a family of faith and having a great parish.

*What’s most rewarding about being married?* Having a partner to share life with and being grandparents.

*How has faith helped your marriage?* It is the glue that holds us together. Being part of a faith community is so important. Our daughter teaches kindergarten at Queen of Peace and our grandchildren go there.

*Advice for engaged couples?* Always remember the good in your partner and why God gave you that person to share your life with.

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Ron & Dorothy Timmerman  
# of Children: 3 # of Grandchildren: 5 # of Great-Grandchildren: 7

*How did you meet?* We grew up as neighbors and started dating after spending time together at a wedding.

*When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?* That we both shared the same religion and morals.

*What challenges did you face?* Alcoholism and all the struggles that go along with that.

*How did you overcome them?* Counseling and family support helped him give up alcohol and bring us closer together as a family.

*What’s most rewarding about being married?* Raising our three beautiful daughters and enjoying our grandchildren and great grandchildren.

*How has faith helped your marriage?* Going to Mass and being active in our church activities has helped us grow spiritually and socially.

*Advice for engaged couples?* Communicate and pray together. Do not give up in difficult times.

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Tom & Janet Timmerman  
# of Children: 5 # of Grandchildren: 13

*What’s most rewarding about being married?* Falling truly in love with one another once and on each anniversary.
Donald & Charlene Tolmie

# of Children: 5 # of Grandchildren: 8 # of Great-Grandchildren: 2

How did you meet? A friend and neighbor arranged a blind date for us.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? Don said he loves me because I grew up on a farm so he knew I was a hard working gal. I loved him because he respected me and as a surprise he converted to be a Catholic before we married. He was hard working and he wanted a family.

What challenges did you face? Don’s brother lived with us for 6 months. His parents moved to Florida the year after we married as did a favorite Aunt and Uncle. All of my immediate family lived an hour and a half away.

How did you overcome them? My involvement in our church, having our first daughter early in our marriage. I also worked for a while and made friends through work.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Having a partner we could depend on through good times and bad, especially after we started having our children. We thoroughly enjoy our 8 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. Our family is so good to us-especially now when we need their help.

How has faith helped your marriage? We tried to live our Catholic faith responsibly to be an example for our children. By sending them to Catholic school, they could expand on their Catholic faith and hopefully they too will be a good example for the rest of their lives- for their children and grandchildren.

Henry & Mary Veith

# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 10 # of Great-Grandchildren: 4

How did you meet? In high school.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? Doing things we both enjoyed.

What challenges did you face? Raising children and finances.

How did you overcome them? Trusting each other and working together on our issues.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Companionship, doing things together and enjoying each other.

How has faith helped your marriage? We have always prayed together through good and bad times.

Advice for engaged couples? Faith, honesty and trust in each other.
Louis & Ruthie Vosberg
# of Children: 7 # of Grandchildren: 21

How did you meet? We were introduced by a mutual friend while at a Roller Skating Party in Platteville, WI.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? Her smile, her confidence and her up-beat personality. His smile, his love for music, he seemed confident, great dancer and had long arms to wrap around me.

What challenges did you face? Trying to survive the deaths of two of our sons, Luke age 14, swimming accident and Wayne 39 a victim of depression. Only by God’s love and promises and the prayer, love and support of family and friends, did we survive. We have the blessed assurance that one day in heaven we will see them again. We knew we had to keep on “keeping on”!

How did you overcome them? Being patient with each other. Being grateful for our family and friends. The fact that we will see them again in heaven.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Having someone to listen and share our sad times, trials and our joys with. Companionship, support—physically and emotionally.

How has faith helped your marriage? Our faith in God has been our glue. Remember that this is not a perfect world. We’ve learned not to try to change others, let God do that. Instead of all the explaining that’s going nowhere just say, “I’m sorry—I love you”!

Advice for engaged couples? Be willing, open and honest and talk about everything. Keep it real and be yourself. Be a good listener. Appreciate (openly)

what he/she does to help you, be forgiving as soon as possible. Sometimes it’s better to have a close friend to complain to rather than your partner. Hang onto each other and Jesus for dear life!

Thomas & Elaine Walstad
# of Children: 2 # of Grandchildren: 3

How did you meet? At the church picnic at St. Mary’s of Pine Bluff.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? We just loved being together and doing things together.

What challenges did you face? Raising our kids and trying to be good parents.

How did you overcome them? Talking things over and praying to God that we make the right decisions in raising them. Looking back now, we know we did. They are awesome kids with great spouses and wonderful kids.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Having each other to do things with and raising and enjoying our children and grandchildren.

Advice for engaged couples? Enjoy each other and take the time to do things as a family.
Joe & Lucille Wankerl
# of Children: 6 # of Grandchildren: 6 # of Great-Grandchildren: 3

How did you meet? Lifetime acquaintance. Our farm homes were 2 miles apart.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? January 1952. Our moral values were equal.

What challenges did you face? Establishing a survivable niche in society.

How did you overcome them? Helping people in need. Doing things no one else wanted to do.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Teamwork.


Advice for engaged couples? Define your spiritual and financial values before you sign a contract for life.

James & Mari Anne Warren
# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 3

How did you meet? Mari Anne was in nursing school. She was caring for Jim’s dad and his cousin, Charlotte. Charlotte and Mari Anne became friends and she arranged a blind date with Jim.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? Jim was a perfect gentleman and respected me and my parents. Mari Anne was from a nice family and she was always happy and polite.

What challenges did you face? Finances were tight. Jim was teaching and was only paid for 9 months each year. He was also finishing his Master’s degree. Like most young couples we learned to live within our means.

How did you overcome them? Learning to budget! Jim changed jobs after a few years of teaching.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Being blessed with four healthy children. Sharing all the joys and struggles with someone who is understanding. We’ve been fortunate to always be here for each other.

How has faith helped your marriage? When our third son was killed in an accident at age 19, our lives came to a standstill. It was only our faith that brought us through that difficult time. Our faith helps us see through each day.

Advice for engaged couples? You must respect each other’s difference. You’ll never agree on everything. Be honest and don’t give each other any reason to mistrust. Be sure and tell each other, “I love you” every single day! WWJD - this is a reminder that I say every day. It’s a great question to ask yourself.

Jim & Peggy Weber
# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 11

How did you meet? We knew each other through our families and parish.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? Our appreciation of the same values in life.

What challenges did you face? Our different personalities.
How did you overcome them? Patience and appreciation of our different God given gifts and talents.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Going through life with a teammate.

How has faith helped your marriage? The sacrament of matrimony has helped us stay together. We were active in our parish. We attended Sunday Mass together and went to breakfast after with our parish friend.

Advice for engaged couples? Be patient with each other and always appreciate your spouse’s gifts.

Glenn & Jean Weisensel
# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 6

How did you meet? I was in the army and stopped at home while transferring back to Leonard Wood after a TDY assignment. I was in the pavilion at the Sun Prairie sweet corn festival. Mike Frodec came in with his future wife and her sisters, Jean and Jane. Jean had these horn rimmed glasses and when she went to the ladies she took them off. She denies doing it to get my attention, but it worked. The next June I came on leave to Mike and Mary’s wedding and got together with Jean.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? Jean was then and remains now the nicest person I know.

What challenges did you face? Communication, or more specifically that we didn’t know how to communicate effectively.

How did you overcome them? We did a Marriage Encounter Weekend in May of 1998 and we joined an image group. We get together with other couples and try to keep on track.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Having a partner who is always there for me in good times and bad.

How has faith helped your marriage? We certainly recognize the marriage triangle. God is always there helping to hold this covenant together.

Advice for engaged couples? Strive for effective communication. I highly recommend Marriage Encounter. Appreciate your spouse. Jean always says thank you, even for things I am supposed to do anyway. Those two words are probably more important than I’m sorry. When she says them I feel loved and appreciated.

Dale & Susan Werla
# of Children: 3 # of Grandchildren: 2

David & Joyce Williams
# of Children: 5 # of Grandchildren: 10

How did you meet? Our senior year of high school, after a basketball game a group of boys came and sat down with a group of girls at a local restaurant. Dave happened to sit right next to Joyce. Both of them were on the quiet side but for some reason found themselves talking up a storm. It was pretty much love at first sight.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? Joyce went off to nursing school after graduation and Dave went to the University of WI for a year. As soon as he did not enroll for another semester, he was drafted into the Army and
eventually sent to Vietnam. They reunited when Dave was discharged. All the comfortable feelings and love were still there. They were engaged on New Years Eve 1967. We had a lot in common, especially attending church every weekend, working hard, being kind and honest to everyone.

**What challenges did you face?** Joyce was raised Lutheran and loved her faith. David was raised Catholic, attended parochial school through 8th grade and loved his faith (was an alter boy) and admired a young priest. The big challenge: How can we work this out! We did not want a split family worship.

**How did you overcome them?** Live. Love for God #1 and love for each other second. Also, this was the 1960’s. An ecumenical movement was also underway. More people in both churches were finding out their faiths were not far apart. Both of our families were understanding and we were not treated like we were outsiders for our thoughts or actions.

**What’s most rewarding about being married?** Growing together and growing old together. We are not the same 2 teenagers who sat together that 1st night. Life is richer having grown and changed along the way. After we both were retired from paying jobs we found out we still liked being together doing whatever.

**How has faith helped your marriage?** Our faith has literally been the rock we built our life, marriage, family and future on. It has been the constant strength around which everything else exists. We could have made better choices all along the way (it would be amazing to go back and raise our five children knowing what we know now). When we celebrated our 50th with our family, one of the kids brought up the memory of “no matter where we went, we always had to go to church.” That made us smile.

**Advice for engaged couples?** A warm smile and hug full of God’s love can turn a day or night around and get you through a storm life might throw at you.

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Carlos & Betty Winters
# of Children: 4 # of Grandchildren: 6

**How did you meet?** We met at a dance through mutual friends.

**When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other?** I admired my husband’s strong faith and commitment to his Catholic faith. I am a convert and love my Catholic faith.

**What challenges did you face?** The last 10 years have been a challenge, as my husband has Alzheimer’s and has been in a nursing home for the past 6 years.

**How did you overcome them?** Prayer, faith and family support.

**What’s most rewarding about being married?** My husband still calls me Betty Jean or BJ.

**Advice for engaged couples?** Put God first.

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Strive for effective communication. I highly recommend Marriage Encounter. Appreciate your spouse. Jean always says thank you, even for things I am supposed to do anyway.
How did you meet? We met in college at the University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh. Gail was a second semester freshmen and Tom a second semester Junior.

When you were engaged, what did you love most about each other? We loved our connection and the joy of being together, planning our future and making a life together.

What challenges did you face? We found that trying to fit time with our family, immediate and extended, plus carving out time to be together alone was a challenge.

How did you overcome them? Time management and the give and take of schedules. It never was perfect but we made it work.

What’s most rewarding about being married? Our family and the memories of all the times spent together.

How has faith helped your marriage? Our faith was a place to celebrate together and turn to during difficult times.

Advice for engaged couples? Try to carve out time to communicate and celebrate your relationship.
This love is above all fully human, a compound of sense and spirit. It is not, then, merely a question of natural instinct or emotional drive. It is also, and above all, an act of the free will, whose trust is such that it is meant not only to survive the joys and sorrows of daily life, but also to grow, so that husband and wife become in a way one heart and one soul, and together attain their human fulfillment.

It is a love which is total—that very special form of personal friendship in which husband and wife generously share everything, allowing no unreasonable exceptions and not thinking solely of their own convenience. Whoever really loves his partner loves not only for what he receives, but loves that partner for the partner’s own sake, content to be able to enrich the other with the gift of himself.

Pope Paul XI

Humanae Vitae: Of Human Life
Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, it is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never fails.
Our mutual faith in the Blessed Trinity and Mother Mary is what has really bonded us together.

- Chuck & Norma Sophie