

# Marriage

## Couple's formula for 70-year marriage includes prayer

By Gary Morton  
Catholic News Service

SECRETARY, Md. — Frances and Andrew Moxey of Secretary don't get involved in complicated explanations when asked what has been the formula for their successful marriage of 70 years.

"Just love each other. Love does a lot of things," said 88-year-old Frances Moxey.

"I think love and being loved are about two of the best things I know," said 91-year-old Andrew Moxey.

Then, after a moment's pause, Frances Moxey added one more word. "Prayer," she said.

With about 25 relatives on hand, the Moxeys renewed their wedding vows during a Mass celebrated at their home by Father William P. Mathesius, pastor of Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish.

Father Mathesius thought it appropriate that the Mass was on Dec. 28, feast of the Holy Family. He said he had never met anyone married for 70 years. "You are the longest-married couple in our parish, and possibly all of Maryland," he told them.

As they talked about their marriage, the Moxeys sat in



Gary Morton/CNS  
Frances Moxey watches as her husband, Andrew, places her wedding band on her finger during a recent ceremony to renew their vows. The couple was married Jan. 1, 1927, at Our Lady of Good Counsel Church in Secretary, Md., where they are still parishioners.

chairs in front of a wall where a crucifix was hanging. Close to it was a blessing they received from Pope Paul VI for their 50th wedding anniversary.

The blessing was mentioned during the Mass by Father Mathesius, who remarked that almost another generation has passed since that time.

"Surely God has blessed you with a good family and a long life," he told them.

The two knew each other

while growing up in Dorchester County, on Maryland's Eastern Shore. But Frances recalled that it took a childhood game to start their romance.

"We were playing games outside, ring-around-the-rose, and he dropped the handkerchief in front of me, and that kind of started things," she recalled in an interview with *The Dialog*, Wilmington's diocesan newspaper. "We went together, what was it, a year and a half, and got

serious."

On Jan. 1, 1927, Frances Wanex and Andrew Moxey were married at the old church of Our Lady of Good Counsel, where they are parishioners to this day. Frances doesn't remember much about the wedding day except that "we had a crowd at the house, all well-wishers."

In renewing their wedding vows at their 70th anniversary Mass, Andrew Moxey once again placed a ring on his wife's finger — the same one he placed there in 1927.

Neither Andrew nor Frances seem to think there has been anything unusual about their lives together.

"We just worked together and loved each other and cared for each other," Frances said.

She recalled that one of the more intense times in their lives came when their house burned down and then Andrew had to build the home where they live

today.

"He's been a hard-working man," Frances said.

Andrew Moxey remembered the hardships of the Great Depression of the 1930s.

"There were some pretty hard times there," he said, recalling how he had to work on farms and on oyster boats in the Chesapeake Bay to help the family get by.

The commitment the Moxeys have made to each other for the past 70 years seems to have influenced other family members. Frances' sister and brother, Elizabeth and John, have been married 63 and 62 years, respectively. And of the Moxeys' three children attending the Mass, Bernice has been married 39 years; Kay, 27 years; and Kenneth, 20 years.

"They have definitely been good role models for the family," Kenneth said of his parents' long marriage. "Both of them have been hard-working people."

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