

Honoring Our Priests

By Fr. Bob McDonald, SM

Our Worldwide Marriage Encounter Family invites us to reach out to our priests and let them know we love them.

Two years ago, the ***Encounter Spirit*** (The New England WWME News Letter) featured Five Languages for speaking our love. Each of us is more comfortable speaking one of them. However, we may find we understand another language better.

If you are thinking of speaking to the priests who have touched your life, you may want to discover which language he understands best.

1. **Words of Affirmation:** Speaking one's endearing qualities. I have discovered that I like to hear you tell me about those qualities which you see in me that help you to know Jesus. If you come to me after Mass and tell me what has touched you and challenged you to grow, I believe in your love.
2. **Receiving Gifts:** Gifts can speak better than words, sometimes. But somehow I prefer to be the one giving the gift. At this point in my life, I am trying to dispose of all the gifts I have received, aware that I cannot take them with me when I move on from here.
3. **Acts of Service:** When you do something thoughtful for me, something I was not expecting, I understand you love me.
4. **Physical Touches:** I must admit that I have trouble accepting physical touches. I notice many priests are like that, keeping a stiff arm out when shaking hands. But when I read your hugs as true affection, I am pleased. I am getting to speak this language more freely.
5. **Quality Time:** When you take time to listen to me, I interpret that as true love. When I preach, and I see you showing interest, my spirit is lifted. If you interrupt me when I am trying to tell you something, I take that as opposition. If you wait until I have explained myself, then speak your mind to me, I like that. You do not have to give me a lot of your time. Just ***listen well*** to what I am saying. Especially, try to feel what I am feeling, and feed that back to me.

My First Language is **Quality Time**. But Words of Affirmation is a language I really like to hear. The December 2005 and January 2006 ***Encounter Spirit***, filled with love letters to me, filled me with great joy. Thank you for all those letters of affirmation. I love you!

Fr. Bob McDonald, SM