

## A look at WWME Community

Where two or more are gathered...  
(fourth in a series of five articles)

By Jack and Karen Baker

In *Community: Who Are WE?*, we shared an article with you regarding four ways WWME Communities provide ongoing support. They are:

- An environment of acceptance.
- Focus on priority of spousal relationship.
- Help with discernment of gifts.
- Facilitating the Weekend.

In this article, we want to focus on the importance of discerning and using our individual and couple gifts within the Marriage Encounter Community. WWME defines the word *Community* to include all who have made a WWME Weekend. Like so many other organizations, Worldwide Marriage Encounter seems to rely on 20% of the Community doing 100% of the needed tasks. Actually, 20% may be a high exaggeration. **YOU are Community and you have God-given gifts that can make a huge, positive difference.**

As I (Jack) think about this topic I recall a teenage party where the heaviest person was asked to lay on the ground and then six people were told to gather three to a side of that person and place just their fore finger and middle finger under the lying down person and lift them off the ground. The task seemed impossible but was done with ease because of the combined efforts.

Your WWME Community NEEDS you! You have a gift that will make the burden light if you will but share it. In 1 Corinthians 12:7 St. Paul tells us “To each person the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.” We realize that, to those of you reading this article, we may be “preaching to the choir”. You are probably among the 20% that are trying to Change the World. Our **challenge to you is** to reach out invite and affirm one priest or couple to join you so that they might also realize the joys of giving in service to build up your WWME Community.

I (Jack) know that it has been the encouragement of others that kept me going when I thought the small part I was doing really did not make a difference. I also know how grateful I am when someone offers to help in any small way to support our Communities. I know that the work can become fun and that lifelong relationships and memories can be formed.

As I (Karen) reflect on our involvement in the ministry of WWME, we have been asked to share our gifts in a variety of ways. We discerned through prayer, reflection and openness to the Holy Spirit. My prayer includes asking for guidance and openness in considering what is being asked of me and how God is calling me. I have to set aside my doubts and low self esteem and believe in what others see in me. Sometimes, I must step outside my comfort zone, but when others in the WWME Community affirm me, when I feel peace, fulfillment and joy in what I am doing, then I know I have discerned properly the gifts that I am using and giving to others.

No task offered as help is too small. You may never know the impact you might have on another through a small gift of your time. I once heard a man say he began to make his Weekend when someone met him and his wife in the parking lot to help carry their bags into the Weekend. Another said he changed his frame of mind about the Weekend when he got to their room and saw a sign on the television saying, “Turn on your spouse instead”. Many have had their Weekend enriched by the Prayer Letter they received on Sunday.

If you are already active in WWME, invite another couple or priest to join you. If you are not active consider the great benefit to you and the Community by sharing the “manifestation of the Spirit” that God has given you. Your time and your help are needed, and you do have gifts that are valuable. Please share them.

The needs vary by Community and include being a Prayer Couple, making phone calls, carrying bags on Friday night of a Weekend, hosting a Weekend, greeting couples and priests off a Weekend on Sunday, writing articles for your local newsletter, sending articles to [editors@eMatrimony.org](mailto:editors@eMatrimony.org), supporting a couple or priest off a Weekend by inviting them into your Love Circle/Share Group, helping to start new Love Circle/Share Groups, planning a Community activity, giving a Pulpit Talk or other inviting presentation, helping with registrations, helping to organize prayer couples for a Weekend, typing or copying, providing child-care for others while they attend an enrichment, offering to house sit or pet sit so a couple or priest can attend a Weekend or other enrichment, attending gatherings to support those organizing it, sharing your joys and sorrows so others might know they are not alone in their Sacramental journey. The list can go on and each small part done is a GREAT help.

**YOU ARE COMMUNITY; LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE!**

**Contact your local leadership and ask how you can help.**

**Local leadership, give the gift of love by seeking out and encouraging others to help.**