

5 Ways to Love Your Wife

Objective: We are called to love our wives as Christ loved the Church. We know that can mean we need to step outside of our comfort zone and “nourish and tenderly care” in ways that will provide for her emotional, social, and physical needs. Sometimes, “giving himself up for her” means having a good conversation even if we are bad with words. Other times, it means doing an act of service or buying a gift, even if time and/or money is in short supply.

Song Suggestion: Servant Song

Bible and Catechism Readings:

Ephesians 5:25-33

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind—yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish. In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, because we are members of his body “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church. Each of you, however, should love his wife as himself, and a wife should respect her husband.

Catechism 1639

The consent by which the spouses mutually give and receive one another is sealed by God himself. From their covenant arises “an institution, confirmed by the divine law, ... even in the eyes of society”. The covenant between the spouses is integrated into God’s covenant with man: “Authentic married love is caught up into divine love.”

Saint: St. Louis Martin found many ways to show his love to his wife, St. Zélie Martin. Despite temptations and sufferings, he strove to keep God first through his marriage. He would take his wife to morning Mass every morning. He listened to his wife and encouraged her. He supported her emotionally through the loss of 4 children as infants. During the illness that would claim his wife’s life, he put aside his comfort and enjoyments to take care of her by always taking the spot furthest from the fire and putting away his fishing lines (despite being an avid fisherman). His daughters, including St. Thérèse of Lisieux, cited his devotion to Zélie as being particularly important in building their faith lives.

Vignette: – Marty feels like he has a fine relationship with his wife. They talk regularly, go to Church, and treat each other with respect. However, day-to-day life has been a little rocky lately. They seem to be arguing more often about unimportant things. He thinks about their relationship when they were dating. Looking at old pictures, he remembers that he used to buy her little gifts for no reason: flowers, her favorite wine, a nice card. That evening, he buys a bouquet of flowers. He knows that it won’t necessarily solve anything, but that, just maybe, he was not loving her in all the ways that fill her up.

Questions for Large and Small Group Discussion:

Are Paul's words to us in Ephesians 5 too idealistic for most of us to put into practice?

Do people see Christ's love for his Bride, the Church, in the way you love your wife?

Has your wife or another relative/friend inspired you by their example of selfless love?

When thinking of different ways to love your wife (in the lists below or in ways that you think of), what have you tried? How did your wife respond? What has been difficult?

Resources:

The Five Love Languages by Gary Chapman

1. Words of Affection
2. Quality Time
3. Receiving Gifts
4. Acts of Service
5. Physical Touch

[5 ways to love your wife](https://catholicgentleman.com/2014/05/5-ways-to-love-your-wife/#:~:text=Tell%20her%20frequently%20that%20you,she%20can%20do%20for%20you.) – Catholic Gentleman

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1. Listen to her – Engage in a real conversation
2. Help her – Find ways to lift some of her burdens and do them without being asked
3. Watch a chick flick – Do something you likes to do as an act of love
4. Surprise her – Learn what she likes most and give it to her, without reason
5. Tell her you love her – Express your love in words and be specific

Action Plan: Think about the different ways to love your wife and try out something you have not done in a while. Have a conversation with her about what you both find the most loved.

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