



Love as a Gift

By: Clare Schiller, Certified Foundation 3 Pietra Fitness Instructor

PRAYER INTENTIONS, SIGN OF THE CROSS & OPENING PRAYER (Standing or kneeling*) *Glory to you, Lord. "Make my body healthy and agile, my mind sharp and clear, my heart joyful and contented, my soul faithful and loving."¹ Let my heart, therefore be holy, true to you O Lord my God, so that all may know I belong to You². Have mercy on us, and be with us today as we contemplate love as a gift.*

INTRODUCE TOPIC & SCRIPTURE **Romans 5:8:** "But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us."

BREATH-WORK & GRATEFULNESS

BODILY PRAYER VERSE **1 John 4:10** *"In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us."*

MEDITATION Sometimes we think we have to "be good enough" before someone can love us. The world often sends us this message: when you are kinder, when you lose weight, when you stop making mistakes, then you will be lovable. We learn this message early on in childhood and begin trying to make ourselves lovable. This is a very dangerous path to set out on spiritually. We may think that we have to become holy *before* we can be loved by God. This is actually quite backwards. God's love is always a gift. We cannot earn it. He loves you as you are. As St. Paul reminds us "God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us." God does not love you because you are holy. You can become holy because he loves you. St. John, the Beloved Disciple, sums it up by saying, "We love because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

RESOLUTION (Re-read Scripture.) Allow God's love into your heart--your heart as it really is, not as you wish it were. When you allow God's love to permeate you and especially the parts of you that you try to hide, then you will know what love really is. You will discover that only His love has the power to transform you. What part of myself am I most ashamed of? What part of myself do I hide from others and even from God? Lord, I want to open my whole self to you. Let your transforming love penetrate the depths of my heart. Holy Spirit, come...

ENDING PRAYER (Kneeling*) *Lord, we thank you for this opportunity to be able to come together- to work on ourselves and strengthen ourselves, physically as well as spiritually. May all we do glorify You. Mary, Mother of Divine Love, **pray for us**; St. Joseph, **pray for us**, St. John Paul II, **pray for us**. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.*

¹ St. Thomas Aquinas

² Based on 1Kings 8:61 and 43

*Modifications include raised -knee position or sitting with legs extended. *Cross legged seated position is not to be used during prayer.*

