

## MOVEMENTS 1: ENCOUNTERING GOD WHO IS LOVE, LOVING

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**Petitionary Prayer:** *I ask for the grace to know beyond doubt of God's love, and personal care for me.*

**Prayer 1.** Read Jeremiah 1:4-5 and 31:3b-4a (“*I knew you... loved you*”)

The word of the LORD came to me thus: *Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you.... With age-old love I have loved you; so I have kept my mercy toward you. Again I will restore you, and you shall be rebuilt...*

**For Reflection:** What are my thoughts, feelings, and desires as I pray over God's words? How has God's love led me here to this time and place in my life?

**Prayer 2.** Isaiah 43:1-7 (“*I called you by name*”)

But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, and formed you, O Israel: *Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name: you are mine. When you pass through the water, I will be with you; in the rivers you shall not drown. When you walk through fire, you shall not be burned; the flames shall not consume you. For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your savior.... Because you are precious in my eyes and glorious, and because I love you, ...Fear not, for I am with you; ...Everyone who is named as mine, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.*

**For Reflection:** What words of God from this passage resonate within you? What does it mean for you that you are God's beloved, precious in His eyes?

**Prayer 3.** Isaiah 41:10 (“*I am with you*”)

*Fear not, I am with you; be not dismayed; I am your God. I will strengthen you, and help you, and uphold you with my right hand of justice.*

**For Reflection:** How has God helped me in the past? What areas in my life have I tried to go it alone? What hesitance am I sensing in my relationship with God? What areas do I need to be strengthened in?

**Prayer 4.** Psalm 23 (The Lord is my shepherd)

A psalm of David. The LORD is my shepherd; there is nothing I lack. In green pastures you let me graze; to safe waters you lead me; you restore my strength. You guide me along the right path for the sake of your name. Even when I walk through a dark valley, I fear no harm for you are at my side; your rod and staff give me courage. You set a table before me as my enemies watch; You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Only goodness and love will pursue me all the days of my life; I will dwell in the house of the LORD for years to come.

**For Reflection:** What words or images from David's response to God speak for you? Read this passage again: Where has God guided you, given you rest? What am I sensing God is saying to me now? What am I feeling as I read the passage? What do I want to share with God about His loving care?

**Prayer 5.** John 3:16 (For God so loved the world)

For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life.

**For Reflection:** Imagine how God felt when He gave Himself to us and for us. Spend some time reflecting upon this gift of God's own Self for you. Talk with God, share your response with Him.

**Prayer 6. Repetition:** Select from the previous scriptures to pray with again. Choose from those that brought movements in prayer. Consolations: being lifted up, felt presence of God. Desolations: struggle, dryness, uncomfortable, a felt sense of a distance from God.

**For Reflection:** What has God provided for me? What concerns or fears do I want to let go of as I move through this retreat? Share your concerns, listen for His response.

**Prayer Period Gathering the Graces:** Review and savor God's gifts to you. Make notes for sharing with your spiritual director or your faith-sharing group.

**Additional Scriptures:** Romans 8:26-34 (If our God is for us, who can be against us), Luke 12:22-29 ("do not worry"), Psalm 131 (Hope in the Lord), Galatians 2:20 (God who has loved me), Jeremiah 31:3 ("with age-old love, I have loved you")