

March 13, 2017
DN 9:4B-10
LK 6:36-38

Mercy is the trait we receive from God and should extend to our fellow human beings. God's gift of mercy, as all his gifts, is freely given. Daniel, trying to understand the scriptures of the prophets why they had been in captivity, cries out, "Lord, great and awesome God, you who keep your merciful covenant toward those who love you and observe your commandments! We have sinned, been wicked and done evil." (Daniel 9:4-5) To ask for mercy, first we must recognize that we have gone astray.

Pope Francis wrote, "God's patience has to call forth in us the courage to return to him, however many mistakes and sins there may be in our life." It takes courage to admit to someone else or even to ourselves that we have sinned. Now that we have asked for forgiveness we can now ask for mercy.

Jesus now challenges us to, "Be merciful, just as your father is merciful." (Luke 6:36) We must not only ask for and receive mercy but we must be merciful to those who ask us for mercy. Jesus explains that if we are unable to be merciful, non-judgmental or forgiving, we cannot expect the same treatment. If we are able to extend these gifts of God to others, then we will receive them not as we have given them but tightly packed and overflowing. Such is God's great love for us.

Reflection questions:

What is keeping us from seeking God's mercy?

In what ways can we extend God's mercy?

Lenten reflection by Deacon Ralph Huber, Our Lady of Consolation