

**Saturday, March 21, 2020; Third Week of Lent**

Hos 5:15-6:6;

Psalm 50(51):3-4, 18-21;

Luke 18:9-14

“God, be merciful to me, a sinner.”

God’s merciful love and compassion are as constant as the day follows the night. God is always so faithful. His mercy is always ready to embrace when we come to our senses and truly repent. That is today’s lesson.

In the first reading, God wondered about human faintheartedness as he compared his people’s love and fidelity to the “morning cloud, like the dew that quickly disappears,” lacking in constancy.

Our return must be devoid of self-righteousness, bloated ego and presumptuousness. That was the problem with the Pharisee; not that he was not a good man, but that he thought that his attributes were enough to buy God’s favor. God’s mercy is granted us undeservedly and gratuitously.

Our good deeds are necessary and proper responses to God’s goodness, faithfulness and mercy. Before God, we can boast of nothing as we always fall short of perfection. It is God, who completes and perfects us by accepting the little we are capable of and making up for the difference by his graciousness.

For us sinners and for our sinful world, today’s psalm offers a perfect prayer of return to God, an act of contrition that truly expresses our deficient humanity.

Lord, have mercy on us in your kindness. Amen.

--Fr. Maurice Igboerika, Parochial Vicar