

## Abundant Mercy

God's mercy is beyond our comprehension. God's forgiveness removes guilt and the residue of sin. If we fail to experience this, it reflects weak faith and poor understanding of love. Our human condition limits us to human expectations, reactions, and behavior, each falling short of Who God is to us and what God does for us.

When God forgives, it is absolute and generous, freeing us to resume living with hope and trust. When feelings of guilt remain, it is our remembrance and attitude towards life and others that causes it. We don't believe God forgives totally, so we must show God our regret by being miserable,

shameful, and fearful; these will earn what God already bestowed.

Isaiah expresses this to the people living in exile. God says, "Remember not the past for I am doing something new! I wipe out your offenses." God is faithful, always "Yes" rather than our human "yes and no." Only when we embrace the "yes" will we be free to live in the Spirit given to us.

One Gospel story sums up this truth. Jesus cures a paralytic and tells him, "Your sins are forgiven." The religious leaders, interpreters of the law, are furious: only God



can forgive sin. They convict themselves. Yes, only God forgives just as only God can heal the unheal-

able! Their control over God and people is being contradicted in their presence! If Jesus can do what God does (heal), then He can forgive and heal the soul, too! God's love and mercy fill us with awe and stagger our imagination. If God loves me so, how can I show God my appreciation?

I will live in the fashion God invites me to live. This is a very good attitude to enter into the sacred season of Lent. It needs our sincerest participation.