

**September 13, 2020 – 24<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Dear Parishioners:**

**The wicked servant whose huge amount of debt had been forgiven by the king harshly treated his fellow servant who owed him a lot smaller. Despite the enormous mercy he received from the king, he refused to be merciful to the fellow servant. How could this happen?**

**First of all, it is because human beings are basically self-centered. We tend to consider what we owe to others to be nothing, whereas what others owe to us big. We take blessings we receive for granted, while those that others receive through us not. Selfishness of human person makes him a being that can never afford a loss.**

**Secondly, we often times either fail to realize or forget what the relief of our debts, that is forgiveness of our sins, implicates. In other words, we do not recognize the connectedness between the mercy granted us by God and the mercy that we are supposed to offer to others. After we receive the forgiveness of our debts, we have a new debt incurred, which is to be show mercy to others. This takes place simultaneously because the forgiveness of one's debt entails this obligation. According to today's gospel, if we didn't fulfill it, the forgiveness that we received gets forfeited. So, every forgiveness that we receive is conditional because it comes with a conditional clause that we too must forgive others' sins against us to complete the forgiveness that we obtain. If we always keep this in mind, it would be a lot less difficult for us to forgive others.**

**Thirdly, we are inclined to think that the forgiveness is only a matter between the people directly involved. Thus, we regard it as a purely private and secretive business. However, there are third parties that are negatively affected. "When his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were deeply disturbed, and went to their master and reported the whole affair." Some people may suffer from witnessing my unforgiveness or mercilessness. So, it is no longer a private matter. These people may petition to God that justice gets served. He knows everything without their prayers. But he may render fair judgement even here on earth in answer to their petitions. Then, I may be in a**

**miserable state just like the wicked servant in today's gospel. We cannot delay conferring mercy and forgiveness because it is no longer merely a private matter between the parties directly concerned.**

**Forgiving is not an easy task. But if we realize three things mentioned above, it would not be that difficult; Mercy and forgiveness that I receive from the Lord is a lot greater than those that I need to dispense, The forgiveness that I receive includes a condition that I must forgive others, and third parties may get negatively affected by my mercilessness and ask the Lord for a just judgement.**

**Fr. Don Bosco Park**