

# BAPTISTINE PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Bulletin

April 2017

## *Focus: Spiritual Works of Mercy - Admonishing the Sinner*

As we learn to practice this work of mercy— we need to keep in mind that God is endlessly patient with us. He understands us and waits for us. God does not tire of forgiving us if we are able to return to him with a contrite heart.

Keeping this in mind we can see how mercy moves us to learn how to admonish or caution others as Christians by looking inward to see our own faults and by opening ourselves to being cautioned by others. It moves us to be willing to speak for justice, self-giving love, and charity when we see injustice, selfishness and hate.

**Scripture:** “If your brother sins [against you], go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that ‘every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell the church. If he refuses to listen even to the church, then treat him as you would a Gentile or a tax collector. Amen, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. ”(Matthew 18:15-18)

**Reflection:** Jesus explains that we should first seek our “brother” or “sister” in private. Yet in today’s world too many of us skip to Facebook or other media and rebuke family friends, those in public office and never seek them out individually. One of the best ways to caution sinners, is to simply live convincingly ourselves. We teach people to live by the self-giving love of Jesus in his paschal mystery when we demonstrate its validity in practice.

### **Action:**

- When situations arise at work, school, home, or the parish in which it is possible to act selfishly– stop, think and act with mercy, and take the loving way out.
- In humility we must strive to create a culture that does not accept sin, while realizing that we all fall at times
- Don't judge, but guide others towards the path of salvation (see Mt 7:1-2)
- Maybe you have a family member who is using illegal drugs, a friend that is cheating on his or her spouse or a co-worker that drinks and drive. As Christians we have the duty to announce the good news but also to denounce sin, injustice and evil.

**Prayer:** Lord, give us the courage and humility to admonish sinners with grace and to accept correction ourselves, with the grace of seeing it as an act of love . We pray...

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