



## Minute of Mercy

### ADMONISH THE SINNER

*To admonish the sinner is a spiritual work of mercy and requires authentic love. There are a few ground rules, so to speak, or a solid foundation that must be considered first before we approach someone to speak to them about a sinful path they may be following.*

*First, we must remember a previous spiritual work of mercy, that being to “Bear the wrongs of others.” This takes the virtue of patience, which will give rise to self-examination and prudence. We must learn our own failings and sinfulness and correct them before we can be justified in the admonishment of others. Remember Our Lord’s words, “You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.” (Matthew 7:5) This, of course, does not mean we are never to correct anyone. Again, patience, prudence, discernment and most certainly love are key prerequisites.*

*Second, when a situation arises that we feel needs to be addressed with correction, it must always be done with charity and without condemnation. Different people and situations call for different approaches. There are those rare times when “tough love” is a most effective approach. Even Jesus displayed righteous anger in the temple when sacrilege was present. But far and away, Jesus was always gentle and loving. One example of this was the woman caught in adultery. Jesus asked if anyone present was without sin, then they could throw the first stone. As we know, no one dared, as they all drifted away. Then Jesus asks her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” Her reply was “No.” Then Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin anymore.” (John 8:10-11)*

*Let us look to our Holy Father for guidance and example to admonish sinners with love and mercy. Pope Francis recognizes the overwhelming wounds in our modern times and the greater need is the medicine of mercy, not a scolding. He “admonishes the sinner” in a way that doesn’t break the broken reed (You Did It To Me, Fr. Michael Gaitley). Pope Francis likens the Church as that of “a field hospital after battle.” Pope Francis explains, “it is useless to ask a seriously injured person if he has high cholesterol and about the level of his blood sugars! You have to heal his wounds. Then we can talk about everything else. Heal the wounds, heal the wounds.” (“A Big Heart Open to God”, American Magazine, Fr. Antonio Spadaro, SJ)*

### Mercy in Action

*This week’s **Mercy in Action** is for all of St. Peter Parish to pray for those who suffer from any kind of addiction, in particular drugs or alcohol.*