

# If a Sister Who Has Been Frequently Corrected for Some Fault

by St. Benedict of Nursia

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*When a sister refuses to reform, a series of increasingly severe corrections should be applied, culminating in expulsion if necessary, to protect the community from her influence.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 13:24, Matthew 18:15, 1 Corinthians 5:13, 1 Corinthians 7:15, James 5:16

**Topics:** "Church Discipline", "Restorative Prayer"

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## Description

St. Benedict of Nursia emphasizes the importance of discipline and correction within the community, particularly when dealing with a sister who repeatedly fails to amend her ways. He advises escalating measures of correction, starting with exhortation and the Scriptures, then moving to excommunication and physical discipline if necessary. If all efforts fail, he suggests resorting to the powerful remedy of prayer for the sister's restoration. Ultimately, if the sister remains unhealed and disruptive, St. Benedict advocates for the drastic measure of expulsion to protect the community from contamination.

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## Transcript

If a sister who has been frequently corrected for some fault, and even excommunicated, does not amend, let a harsher correction be applied, that is, let the punishment of the rod be administered. But if she still does not reform or perhaps (which God forbid) even rises up in pride and wants to defend her conduct, then let the Abbess do what a wise physician would do.

Having used applications, the ointments of exhortation, the medicines of the Holy Scriptures, finally the cautery of excommunication and of the strokes of the rod, if she sees that her efforts are of no avail, let her apply a still greater remedy, her own prayers and those of all the others, that the Lord, who can do all things may restore health to the sister who is sick.

But if she is not healed even in this way, then let the Abbess use the knife of amputation, according to the Apostle's words, "Expel the evil one from your midst" (1 Cor. 5:13), and again, "If the faithless one departs, let her depart" (1 Cor. 7:15) lest one diseased sheep contaminate the whole flock.

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Source:

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