

Pornography Pandemic

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“If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one of your members than to have your whole body thrown into Gehenna.”
Matthew 5:28

The Pornography Pandemic is proof of a spiritual battle that is going on in our nation. Pornographic images are intentionally designed to enter through the human eye to trigger unbridled human lust to distort, deprave and destroy the human spirit, mind and body. It is Satan's counter offer to God's design for human sexuality. He is aided and abetted by unconscionable human profiteers who collaborate with the Evil One to prey on men, women and children destroying the very fabric of love in our families.

The pornography industry pollutes the Internet and uses our computers, ipads, mobile devices and adult television programming in hotels across the country to seduce the gullible into addiction. Before long addicts begin to live double lives frequenting adult bookstores, adult theaters and using phone sex lines, and ordering x-rated materials through the mail. Pornographic and suggestive imagery has been purposely spilled into our nightly television, billboards and advertisements infecting the innocent. We now live in a sexually saturated culture of death whose proponents openly conduct a war in the name of human rights to de-Christianize our country.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states, “*Pornography* consists in removing real or simulated sexual acts from the intimacy of the partners, in order to display them deliberately to third parties. It offends against chastity because it perverts the conjugal act, the intimate giving of spouses to each other. It does grave injury to the dignity of its participants (actors, vendors, the public), since each one becomes an object of base pleasure and illicit profit for others. It immerses all who are involved in the illusion of a fantasy world. It is a grave offense.”

Pornography addiction gets its foot in the door by repeated exposures to suggestive images. Soon after pornography enslaves the addict with insatiable and escalating cravings for visual perversion. This mental intoxication leads to escalation compelling the addict to look for more deviant hardcore pornography that would have disgusted him prior to his attachment. Now it excites and stimulates the addict with imagery to feed an unquenchable appetite. Eventually, the addict starts to become numb and enters into a stage of desensitization. Ultimately even the most graphic and degrading pornography doesn't excite anymore. Invariably the addict becomes desperate to feel the same high again but can't find it. At this point, many addicts make a dangerous leap and start acting out sexually. They move from pornographic images to enact the story lines and suggested pornographic scenarios in the real world raking havoc in the world.

In James 1:14-15 we are told “each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire conceives and brings forth sin, and when sin reaches maturity it gives birth to death.” Science agrees. Studies show addicts attempt to keep up with the physiological dopamine-adrenalin overload by over-stimulation with pornography. The net effect is that the brain will cripple and eventually incapacitate its dopamine receptors. In

due course the dopamine system is hijacked by pornography addiction and results in neuroplasticity (rewiring the brain). Spiritually our will power is deactivated by repetition, which turns on a form of hypnotic automation, which is like a plane being put on auto pilot.

Pornography destroys personal identity, families, communities and undermines and distorts a person's moral compass and ultimately separates us from communion with our God.

Abstinence and Chastity are keys to the recalibration of the dopamine/adrenalin system. When the overstimulation of the dopamine and adrenalin stops, the brain gradually restores the dopamine balance. Chastity means the successful integration of sexuality within the person and thus the inner unity of man in his bodily and spiritual being.

Using a Spirit, Mind and Body approach pornography addicts can regain impulse control. The spiritual practice of Abstinence and Chastity can help us minimize triggers, refute permissive thoughts and interrupt reaction formation behavioral sequences. Mentally Cognitive-behavioral therapy is highly recommended to assist patients in understanding the relationship between triggering events and the automatic response in one's thoughts, emotions and self-defeating behaviors. And physically cardio-vascular exercise helps in anchoring permissive thoughts in a deactivated position and helps to stabilize related depressions and anxieties. The temptation from the Evil One, "Just one more time" can be silenced by prayer, perseverance and holy purity.

St. Josemaria Escriva once issued this challenge which is still relevant today, "To defend his purity, Saint Francis of Assisi rolled in the snow, Saint Benedict threw himself into a thorn bush, Saint Bernard plunged into an icy pond . . . You . . . what have you done?" Its time to answer this question. One thing is spiritually certain: Holy Purity keeps God in the center of all our loves and all of our lives.

Resources

Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous
<http://www.slaa-sfeb.org/>

Sexual Addiction Psychotherapists:
<http://sexaddicthelp.com/Links/index.htm>

Fathers for Good: Initiative for men by the Knights of Columbus.
<http://www.fathersforgood.org/ffg/en/news/pornography/special.html>

Theology of the Body
<http://www.theologyofthebody.net/>

Chastity S.F.
<http://chastitysf.com/>