

## CHAPTER 12

# Ending the Porn Epidemic

“By rebuilding a culture founded on strong moral standards, we can heal the porn generation from within. Ultimately, our generation will not be led by the oversexed pop stars, the sex educators, the celebrities, or the blind followers of ‘live and let live’ — it will be led by those brave enough and dedicated enough to climb their way out of the morass, to return our country to the ultimate truth of its moral heritage — to a place that honors and cherishes all that once was good, and can be again.”

—Ben Shapiro

### How to end the porn epidemic

THOSE WHO WANT to change the world for the better often expect other people to do the work. Real transformation only happens if we play our part. If we are hooked on pornography, we will be unable to do the work God needs us to do, for we will be the blind leading the blind into a ditch.<sup>1</sup> We must first allow God to

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<sup>1</sup> cf. Mt 15:13–14.

transform us before we can build God's Kingdom on earth. We must let His will be done in us, which is to live a life of purity. It is in our purity that we have the power to love, which has the ability to change everything.

In titling this chapter "Ending the Porn Epidemic," I do not mean that we can get rid of all pornified images. Until Christ returns, there will always be those who will never "get" what beauty is and will try to peddle the counterfeit for profit to unsuspecting victims. What I do mean is that when we are set free from the power of pornography, the porn industry will have fewer customers to whom to peddle their drug. It is economics 101: supply and demand — the fewer people interested in porn, the smaller the market becomes. The goal of this entire project is to set people free so that pornified images no longer hold power over them. Acting from this freedom, they will then go to set the world ablaze with a pure, redeemed vision.

How can we begin to transform our culture with redeemed vision? Here are some very practical, nuts-and-bolts suggestions.

## **How we can all end the porn epidemic**

### **[1] NEVER, EVER, EVER, EVER seek out pornography**

We must never intentionally put ourselves in a place where we know we will be drawn to lust. Porn is a cheap counterfeit compared to the true beauty of real love and intimacy. Although pornography is everywhere and we can't help but see it, we should not pursue any of these images. There is far more satisfying beauty to discover.

## [2] Come to know the love of the Father

At the root of any compulsion is a hole in our heart we cannot fill on our own. That hole is meant for God alone — hence, the God-shaped hole. We must let God the Love to pray, Father love us. We must open our heart feel often during the day and be receptive to His love. All the need for prayer and take the pornographic images in the trouble to pray. If you want to world cannot compare with our Father's love for us. He wants to bring us close and tell us we are His own beloved sons or daughters. In order to receive of Himself. Ask and seek and your this, we must stop consuming heart will grow big enough to poison and drink freely of the love that can quench all our receive Him and keep desires. Knowing our Heavenly Him as your own. Father is the foundation for any —*St. Mother Teresa* “technique” to ending an attraction to lust. Without this love, we will continue to search and not be satisfied. It is a free gift He wants to give to us; we simply must say yes.

We do this primarily by entering into prayer. Remember: Prayer is not about talking much but loving much. The goal is to enter into a loving communion with God. If you are at the beginning of this process, take 10 minutes, and just be in His presence. You may want to use Scripture to allow Him to converse with you. When you speak, speak from the heart. If you are angry, be angry. If you are sad and lonely, be sad and lonely. Simply come as you are. He is God Almighty and desires not your masks but *everything*. Be not afraid; your Father has come to bring you home to His heart.

### **[3] Use sacred art to become free**

The key to breaking free from the power of porn is to learn the truth about the male and female body. As stated above, the perfect man is Jesus Christ and the perfect woman is His Blessed Mother, Mary. In meditating upon their bodies in art and bringing God into our gaze, we will begin to experience a transformation of our hearts and to see the truth about the human person. By getting into a regular habit of meditating on sacred art, we will form our minds and grow in our desire for true beauty. Study the history of art in the Catholic tradition. Purchase a book of sacred art — such as one of the Sistine Chapel — and use it for contemplation. Better yet, leave the book on your coffee table and use it to evangelize others.

### **[4] Follow the Vision Game Plan**

*(See Chapter 11 for more on this.)*

We must take what we learn in *Redeemed Vision* and share it with the world, for others need to know that a look of purity is not just possible but how we were created to see. Through 1) breathing, 2) really looking, 3) identifying, 4) making the image or person real, 5) praying, and 6) keeping our eyes moving, the power of lust cannot take hold, for lust is destroyed when confronted with reality. The counterfeits will cease to hold sway over our hearts and we will begin to see the light instead of the shadows put before our eyes.

### **[5] Immerse yourself in the Sacraments and sacramentals**

Catholicism is a physical, tangible religion, and it is through the senses that we come to encounter God. Because pornified images can hinder us from having a correct understanding of the body, Sacraments and sacramentals can assist us in redeeming our vision through encountering the divine.

## Sacraments

In the Sacraments, God comes to be with us. Following the principle of the Incarnation, in which God enters into our world as a human being in the Person of Jesus Christ, the Sacraments are gifts enabling us to enter into the life of God. The Sacraments give us the grace we need to not simply overcome the things we are struggling with, but to give us the ability to love in a supernatural way. We cannot be who we are supposed to be without His help.

This process of being infused with the power to love begins at Baptism, where original sin is wiped away and we become adopted sons and daughters of God. However, because Baptism does not eliminate our ability to sin, we still can choose against love. Every time we sin, we wound God, others, and ourselves.

This is why we need to go to Confession frequently, so we can be healed from our woundedness and repair the damage we have caused to our relationships. This is why we need to receive the Eucharist at least weekly, so we can enter into a one-flesh union with Our Bridegroom. This is why we need the Sacrament of Marriage, so we can have the grace to love our spouse as Christ loves the Church. As a good Father, God wants to give us everything we need, and the Good News is, this gift is free! All we have to do is open our hearts and receive. Allow Him to love you and He will set you free to love.

## Sacramentals

According to the *Catechism*, sacramentals “are sacred signs which bear a resemblance to the sacraments. They signify effects, particularly of a spiritual nature, which are obtained through the intercession of the Church. By them men are disposed to receive

the chief effect of the sacraments, and various occasions in life are rendered holy.”<sup>2</sup>

In layman’s terms, whereas the Seven Sacraments are instituted by Christ and work exactly as they signify — *ex opere operato* — sacramentals are mostly Church instituted and “work through the power and prayers of the Church (*ex opere operantis Ecclesiae*) and, subjectively, *ex opere operantis*, that is, through the pious disposition of the one using them.”<sup>3</sup> This means that whereas the Sacraments work regardless if a person performing them is holy or not,<sup>4</sup> the effectiveness of a sacramental depends on the disposition of its users. By using them piously, they can help prepare our souls to be available to be transformed more by the Sacraments.

Again, based on the principle of the Incarnation, sacramentals demonstrate that pretty much anything of the physical world can be used to bring about our sanctification. Any priest can say a prayer — there may be a particular prayer prayed, depending on the object — that “attaches” a prayer to an item. This means our use of things, such as crucifixes, metals, rosaries, water, and salt, when blessed by a priest, can help to drive away evil and assist us on the path to holiness.

Although they do not give the grace of the Holy Spirit in the way the Sacraments do, sacramentals certainly can assist us in the process of breaking attachments to sin and enabling us to receive more of what God desires to give us, namely Himself. Thus, especially when battling against temptations to lust, use

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2 CCC 1667.

3 “Introduction to Sacramentals” (*FishEaters.com*). <http://www.fisheaters.com/sacramentalsintro.html>. Accessed Aug 29, 2017.

4 For example, a priest can consecrate the Eucharist, regardless if he is holy or not.

these holy items as a means to draw closer to Christ. This means that you need to get these in your home, your car, your work, and anywhere you are in order to assist you in this battle.

### **[6] Behold The Man! Go to Eucharistic Adoration**

In every Catholic church in the world, Jesus Christ is physically present in the tabernacle. In some parishes, Eucharistic Adoration can also be found. Eucharistic Adoration is where Jesus is exposed to us. Whereas Adam and Eve were naked and without shame, Christ takes on our shame and reveals to us the meaning of our body: “This is my body which is given for you.”<sup>5</sup>

Go to Him and simply look. Look at your Lord and Savior and allow His loving gaze to penetrate your wounded heart and mind. Consciously bring to mind every pornified image and give them to Christ. Ask Him to show you what you are looking for in all of those false images and broken relationships, and to restore your mind with what is true, good, and beautiful.<sup>6</sup> Slowly and over time, He will begin to redeem you and give you His divine vision, so you can look upon others with His love. There will be healing, for yourself and for others.

Just as Jesus asked His disciples on the night of His Passion, “Could you not watch with me one hour?”<sup>7</sup> so He asks us to do the same. Although we do not have to go to Adoration for an hour, there is something powerful in giving Him an hour of our week — one hour in which the God of the universe gazes upon us and we meet His loving gaze. Pretty soon, the hour we thought was “so long” is over before we know it. We begin to change. We begin to

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5 Lk 22:19.

6 cf. Rom 12:2; Phil 4:8.

7 Mt 26:40.

become more of who we were created to be. We begin to see with purity, and with ever growing confidence begin to live this purity in our everyday life.

Venerable Fulton Sheen often commented that he would make a daily Holy Hour, but sometimes it would take him 58 minutes to get focused. Because he was faithful to his prayer, often the last two minutes of grace would make the 58 minutes of distraction completely worth it. Because we are also often very distracted and busy, taking the full hour in front of Our Lord can be a time of great peace so that we can re-center ourselves and be much more effective in the work God has given us to accomplish. If it was good enough for a modern-day saint and the source of his strength, perhaps we too should make it a priority to present ourselves in front of the Living Presence of God Incarnate.

### **[7] Get on the bead — pray the Rosary**

One of the most powerful prayers given to the Church is the Rosary, which has been described as the chain that binds Satan.<sup>8</sup>

Our Lady is the most beautiful woman ever created and there has never been a saint who did not have a devotion to her. In our world of impurity, which has lost its true vision of the feminine, Mary is a beacon of hope to those ensnared by the Evil One. In all of human history, there was only one woman who so profoundly said yes to the Father that she literally conceived God in her and bore Him forth to the world. It was because of her openness and radical willingness to receive the love of God in her body that she was able to be exceedingly fruitful. Her purity and virginity enabled her to bring God to us. Her “Yes” enabled Love to change the world.

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8 cf. Rv 20:1–2.



Mary is the perfect woman who wants to help us not simply view women — and men — through a different light, but wants to help us love with the purity our world so desperately needs.

She has the ability to guide us to true healing and freedom from shame. She gave us the Rosary and asked us to pray it frequently. It is through this instrument that we are able to meditate on the mysteries of the life of Christ and, in turn, begin to embody the virtues involved with each mystery.

Hear me and understand well, my son the least, that nothing should frighten or grieve you. Let not your heart be disturbed. Do not fear that sickness, nor any other sickness or anguish. Am I not here, who is your Mother? Are you not under my protection? Am I not your health? Are you not happily within my fold? What else do you wish? Do not grieve nor be disturbed by anything.

—*Our Lady of Guadalupe, speaking to St. Juan Diego*

I know in my own life that the intercession of Our Blessed Mother has been key to transforming my understanding of women and helping to heal my heart's wounds from the shame of pornography. In my darkest moments, she never abandoned me but comforted me as a mother does her son, all the while encouraging me to become the man I am called to be. I challenge those reading this to seek out the Mother of Our Lord, who will be of great help in attaining sexual integrity and to in becoming a witness to pure love.

## [8] Avoid getting B.L.H.A.S.T.T.E.D.

Everyone has their triggers, those things that set them off down the wrong path. A key rule in the spiritual life is to “know thyself.” We have to be aware of the moments when we’re

**B**ored  
**L**onely,  
**H**ungry,  
**A**ngry,  
**S**tressed,  
**T**ired,  
**T**urned on,  
 overly **E**motional,  
 and **D**epressed.<sup>9</sup>

I remember when I really began to deal with my compulsion to porn, I had a tremendous amount of **A**nger undergirding all my lust. I knew that I was **H**ungry for love, especially when I was physically **H**ungry. By giving into feelings of **B**oredom, I would become **T**urned on and begin searching for porn. Various **S**tressful situations would cause me to look for an unhealthy outlet for my **S**tress. This **S**tress would lead to erratic emotions — I would become overly **E**motional — often leading me into deep sadness and occasional **D**epression. It was only as I began to grow in my spiritual life that I began to deal with these elements. This awareness did not solve the problem, but it definitely was a major step toward addressing my fallen desires.

Whenever we feel B.L.H.A.S.T.T.E.D., we need to recognize what is happening and not get caught with our pants down — pun

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9 A modified version of the acronym used in *The Drug of the New Millennium* by Mark B. Kastleman.

By discovering their sexual triggers that initiate a compulsion or impulse, men can identify them before they progress to a point where they lose the ability to control their behavior. Short-circuiting the rituals breaks men out of their compulsive cycles and avoids situations that may make impulses more difficult to resist. Once a man finds out what triggers his patterns, he can organize his world to reduce the chances of returning to the old trough of porn and acting out.

—*William Struthers*

important to realize that we need to get together with others on a regular basis to continually nurture healthy friendships. It is another way to foster genuine intimacy.

Especially for those who have been involved with pornography, lust usually covers over deeper issues we have never dealt with before. Although lust is one of the most common sins, especially in our impure age, the good news is it is not the worst sin. For example, having malice and hatred toward our brothers and sisters

intended. First, we need to bring God into these situations and call on Him for the strength to make it through. It is not about putting God to the test to see how He will save us in moments of temptation; it is all about letting Him work in our weaknesses before the Evil One's voice deafens us to the voice of God. We need to remember that we are not helpless to temptation but "we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us."<sup>10</sup>

Because porn is incredibly isolating, it is also important to call upon friends to help us in our moment of need. This could be in the form of an accountability partner. Yet it is also

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<sup>10</sup> cf. Phil 4:13.

is much worse. As mentioned above, it was anger that under-girded my lust. After allowing God to heal much of my desire to lust, it has taken conscious effort to work on my struggles with anger. Like St. Paul who had his thorn in his side, it is our weaknesses — if we allow grace to operate — that can be the means of our sanctification. How well we achieve this is up to our willingness to respond to the grace that is readily available to us.

### **[9] Take care of your body**

One of the reasons why many people do not live their sexual desires in an integrated way is because they do not treat their bodies well. Some Christians view their bodies with disdain. When they experience sexual attraction tainted with lust, they begin to have suspicion of the body and the movements of their hearts. They may become trapped in the lie that the body is the cause of their problems, precisely because they have misused their sexuality and they feel ashamed about it.

As stated before, the problem is not the body in itself. The way we view and treat the body it is the main problem. God created our bodies and our sexual desires, thus they are good. The more we take care of our bodies, the better we are going to be able to live our sexual desire in a healthy way. As St. John Paul the Great taught, we must not cast the heart into a state of continual suspicion, but rather strive to keep these desires under control. Because we are body-soul

The “heart” has become a battlefield between love and concupiscence. The more concupiscence dominates the heart, the less the heart experiences the spousal meaning of the body, and the less sensitive it becomes to the gift of the person that expresses precisely this meaning in the reciprocal relations of man and woman.

—*TOB 32:3*

composite beings, we must not simply nurture our souls, but feed and maintain our bodies as well.

### **[10] Eat well**

There is a direct connection between food, anger, and sex. When we strengthen the virtue of temperance in one area of our life, it is naturally strengthened in others. If we practice saying no to binging on a whole bag of cookies, neurologically speaking that will help us to say no to porn.

In addition, what and how we eat can signify how we view ourselves. It is important to ask ourselves whether we are eating in a healthy way befitting a view of our bodies as gifts and temples of the Holy Spirit. If we are not eating in a healthy way, it may be a sign that we do not realize the giftedness and goodness of our bodies, and we need to seek that fundamental healing.

### **[11] Fast frequently —and pray!**

From the days of the early Church, members fasted on bread and water on Wednesdays and Fridays to enter into solidarity with the suffering Christ. Today, not many people fast and it is to their — and society's — detriment, for when we cannot control how and what we eat, it will be difficult to control anything else. A culture out of control with its food habits — take a look at the number of people who are obese or have an eating problem in America — will have problems of excess in other areas, and the proliferation of pornography is just another symptom of this lack of integration.

I recommend taking up a day or two of fasting per week. Certainly we can fast from other things than just food, but Scripture has a lot to say about fasting from food. Christ began His ministry by going out into the desert to pray and fast for 40 days. There He was confronted with three temptations relating

to “the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.”<sup>11</sup> In His fasting, He let go of His dependence on things of the world and demonstrated His total dependence upon His Heavenly Father. And His Heavenly Father heard His prayer and sent angels to minister to Him.<sup>12</sup>

If you have never fasted before, don’t worry: Start small. Do not begin by doing a 40 day fast, but cut out a meal or perhaps refrain from using salt. I recommend following the Church’s tradition — small t — of fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays. On a physical level, fasting is very good, for it helps to rid the body of deadly toxins, to bring healing to damaged organs, and to contribute to extending our life.<sup>13</sup> As a Christian, however, fasting is not done simply for its own sake — which is called “dieting” — but for the sake of Christ. We are to unite our sufferings to the cross of Christ, precisely to “complete what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his body.”<sup>14</sup> Although the physical sacrifice of Christ was perfect, what He does not have is our own sufferings. Offered for the sake of Christ, our sufferings can help lead to the redemption of all people united in the Body of Christ.

When we fast, it is essential to stay in an attitude of prayer, for fasting without prayer is not fasting — it’s dieting. As St. Paul tells us, when we are weak, we are strong.<sup>15</sup> In fasting, we physically humble ourselves so the Lord can exalt us,<sup>16</sup> and in

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11 cf. 1 Jn 2:16.

12 cf. Mt 4:11.

13 “The Health Benefits of Fasting” by Will Carroll (*Serendip Studio*, Jan 15, 2008).  
<http://serendip.brynmawr.edu/exchange/node/1834>. Accessed Aug 29, 2017.

14 Col 1:24.

15 2 Cor 12:10.

16 cf. Jas 4:10.

doing so, we will find a source of spiritual strength we never knew imaginable. A warning though: When we empty ourselves of the garbage of our culture, we open ourselves to greater temptation. We may find ourselves more, not less, moved to lust. Yet remember: God will never give us more than we can handle. With every prayer we pray when the pangs of hunger come in and temptations are posed to us, by responding to grace we will be able to overcome our lusts and begin to say yes to love.

For the guys reading this: The women you know — and do not know — are depending on our sacrifices. I highly recommend becoming an E5 Man — see [e5men.org](http://e5men.org). It is a free service, in which you sacrifice for countless women as a sign that you are striving to love as Christ loves the Church. These sacrifices will help prepare you either to make a gift of self in marriage or to continue to lay down your life for your Bride as a priest in a profound way. Ladies can sign up as well to become a direct recipient of the graces attained through these sacrifices.

For the men *and* the women reading this: If *anyone* in your life is involved with porn, let them know that you are praying for them, that you believe in them, and you love them too much to leave them in the septic tank. This is a huge encouragement — although the person being confronted may not feel this way at first.

This will send the clear message that you do not tolerate porn use, but that you will support them every step of the way should they seek to pursue a redeemed vision.

Consider St. Monica. For more than 17 years she watched as her son, Augustine, indulged himself in a world of debauchery, involving himself with two concubines and fathering a son out of

wedlock. In a veil of tears, Monica prayed, made sacrifices, and beseeched her son to come home to Christ. It was through her intercession that Augustine was given the grace to convert his life from paganism and Manichaeism to Jesus Christ and to become one of the greatest saints the world has ever known.

St. Monica's life is an example of someone who stood her ground and did not enable her son in his compulsions and false ideas about life, yet prayed fervently that God would make good of him. Likewise, you may truly have the opportunity to change the world by helping someone realize the redeemed vision and become who he or she is called to be.

### **[12] Work out**

Getting into a regular routine for working out was a huge key for me to deal with the stress that often brought on lustful temptation. This does not mean everyone needs to go completely nuts and do P90X all day, every day. It does mean that we need to get ourselves into a good routine of doing something physical at least 30 minutes a day. This gets the blood pumping, enabling us to think more clearly and preparing us to live our bodies as a gift. This also produces natural ways to stimulate endorphins and healthy neurotransmitters to compensate for the ones lost giving up porn.

### **[13] Get sleep**

Many of the times I found myself in trouble with temptation to lust was when it was late at night and I was tired, not thinking straight, and my desire for love quickly became a search for pornography online. So many times I would kick myself the day after, thinking, "If I only would have gone to bed, I would not have gotten myself into trouble."



So many Americans are overworked and are not getting enough sleep. There are exceptions to the rule, but most people need 7–8 hours of sleep a night. When we stay up that extra hour or two trying to get more things done, we end up stressed out, unable to unwind, and surfing the TV or Web trying to relax. This searching never gets us what we really

What replaces want — love. Instead, it is often a gateway into an addiction temptation, and when we are tired, it is often very difficult to walk away from it.

is healthy relation- Here's a practical suggestion: Set an ships with healthy alarm on your cell phone and when it goes people and living a off, you have 15 minutes to get to bed, no healthy life. excuses. When that alarm goes off, say a

—*Dr. Dennis* prayer and ask God to give you the strength  
*Frederick* to just go to bed and let all the things that

have to be done get done tomorrow. Obviously, this guideline is for those ordinary nights when you are home and you do not have a pressing project to complete. I still recommend, though, if you are out past your normal bedtime, after you get home, do not check for new e-mails or the latest sports score — “Don’t give the devil a chance to work on you.”<sup>17</sup> Simply go to bed. In the morning, you will be grateful you did.

**[14] Break out of your isolation chamber —  
put your gifts to the test in your community**

One of the lures of pornified images is that they prey on our lack of true intimacy with a false promise to give us what we are really seeking. In order to not fall into the pitfall of loneliness and

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<sup>17</sup> cf. Eph 4:27.

isolation, it is vital for us to get involved with the lives of others.<sup>18</sup> If porn is all about what makes us feel good, yet fails to give us what we are really looking for, the antidote to breaking the “me-first” mentality of our culture is to pour out our lives in service for others. The meaning of life is about making a sincere gift of ourselves. The more we think about ourselves, the more we will drive others away; but the more we empty ourselves for others, the more people we will find ourselves surrounded by.

This is not mere philanthropy, but serving others in response to the grace of Christ working in us. A Christian is to be about the business of building the Kingdom, of establishing a world of peace and justice. Thus we must move from serving ourselves to serving others. Although this is a life-long process, we must start today.

This means going to the Father and asking Him what our gifts are.<sup>19</sup> By entering into prayer on a regular basis, we begin to get a sense of our identity as well as our mission in life. This may mean we will discover our big Mission with a capital M — namely, our Vocation — to either marriage or celibacy for the Kingdom. The Father, through Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, wants to help us discover how we are called to image His Love on the earth.

However, before we discover our big-V Vocation, there are day-by-day missions we are called to embark upon. There are thousands of people being murdered daily through the act

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18 I am not talking about occasionally feeling lonely; I am married and there are times I feel lonely. What I mean here are regularly occurring bouts of loneliness some of us feel and we just cannot shake.

19 For more information on how to discern well your own individual gifts and charisms, see the Catherine of Siena Institute program entitled *Called & Gifted*, found at [www.siena.org](http://www.siena.org).

of abortion — and thousands of mothers and fathers who need assistance to choose life for their unborn child. There are those in your area who are hungry who need you to feed them. There are neighbors who are lonely who need someone to lean upon. We can probably think of millions of other ways we can be a gift to another. It is so important, in the process of being healed from an attachment to lust, to move from fantasy to reality. The more we engage the lives of people around us, moving away from mere virtual reality and into physical reality, the more we come to realize that loving real persons is much more satisfying than any false image of beauty.

## **How men can end the porn epidemic**

### **[1] Set up a No More Porn Tour — and carry it out**

One way men can take a visible stance against porn in their communities is by directly going after the pornography industry by protesting local Sexually Oriented Businesses — SOB — such as pornography shops or strip joints. This is much along the same tactics of the pro-life movement witnessing at abortion facilities. And I argue there is a direct connection between the two: If the trampling of a woman's value and the death of her child happens at an abortion facility, it is at porn shops and strip joints that these violations against a woman's dignity are advertised and promulgated. It is way past time for men to get in the battle in order to change our culture.

The King's Men,<sup>20</sup> a Catholic's Men group originating from Philadelphia, encourages men to combat an SOB in their

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20 See <http://thekingsmen.org> for more info.

community with a No More Porn Tour. This is where a group of men — mostly, although women are not excluded — head out to an SOB, stand on public property with various signs — such as “Real Men love Women,” “Porn is for Posers,” “Does your wife know?” “Do your children know?” etc. — and pass out fliers about the truth about porn and its effects, in order to witness to the community.

In doing so, we send the message that we are drawing a line in the sand and will no longer allow SOBs to conduct business as usual. This is done in a peaceful, prayerful manner to spark the consciousness of those in our neighborhood, to make them aware that porn is harming everyone, as well as to encourage the Christian community that something can be done to truly change the local environment.

At the first No More Porn Tour conducted in San Antonio, Texas, several men joined me on a Saturday morning at one of the largest SOBs in the area. What shocked me was that so many people came out to patronize the business between 10 a.m. and noon. As we were standing there with our signs, some people drove by and screamed “I love porn!” However, far more people honked their horns in support of our work. During that time we prayed Rosaries and offered up spontaneous prayers for all those coming to patronize the SOB.

At one point, a female employee came out to check out our signs and I was able to engage her in dialogue. I asked her why she was working there. In response — much like performers who get involved in porn because they feel trapped economically and believe it is the way out of their situation — she said it was because she needed the money to help her family.

I know good was done that day, for we were able to get the attention of a man who was leaving in a pick-up truck. His window was rolled down and I asked if he would accept one of our pamphlets, which he did. One look at him revealed the shame behind his eyes yet also gratitude for someone being there for him. Although I do not know exactly what happened to him afterward, it was because we were present that he was offered the opportunity to rethink what he was doing.

Another example of the effect of this type of campaign is when a men's household at a university I attended was successful in not only helping a woman to quit working at her SOB establishment, but was able to raise enough money to sustain her until she found other employment. We must be ready to get involved in others' lives, even if it means putting our money — literally — where our mouths are.

We must never believe any situation is hopeless; we simply need to have courage, do what is right, and stand our ground. Courage is not the absence of fear but doing what is right in spite of our fear. The more men stand up and speak out for the dignity of women, the more women will begin to believe there are good men in the world. Every step toward helping individuals realize their dignity and that of those around them will help to transform society and build bonds of communion among people, men and women alike.

Note: Learn what your local laws are regarding protesting. It may be a good idea to contact your local police and inform them that your group will be doing a peaceful protest outside an SOB on public property. Then if one of the workers of an SOB decides to call the cops they will have no grounds legally to complain, because you will know your rights and will have been playing by the rules.

And the police will know what is occurring and will hopefully come to the defense of your First Amendment rights.

## How women can help end the porn epidemic

### [1] Bring porn into the LIGHT

Ofentimes, women speak to one another about the reality of porn use in hushed tones and behind closed doors — especially when someone they love is involved. Perhaps this is because, historically, pornography has been seen as a “man’s issue” — something that a woman can’t fully understand.

However, we are faced by two realities today that *require* that women start talking publicly about porn. First, as we have discussed, more and more women themselves are becoming involved with pornography. Second, as Fr. Thomas Loya says,<sup>21</sup> you can assume that almost every man in your parish is hooked on porn.

Ladies, I beg of you: Please be encouraged to publicly address pornography. I know I’m speaking to a wide variety of women here: single young women who battle the effects of pornography in their schools, workplaces, relationships and homes; wives who know their husbands use pornography and wives who don’t; mothers whose children have discovered pornography; women who are battling their own compulsions to view, read, and even create porn.

The more we talk about this issue — the more *you* talk about this issue — *the more it will come into the light*. Luckily, there are a growing number of resources — including this book — that can be of use in bringing up the topic of pornography. Help give

other wives, mothers, daughters, and friends the permission, words, and even the opportunities to talk about it with their loved ones by sharing the best resources and information you can find — especially resources that focus on helping people to overcome pornography and live with a redeemed vision.

If a woman knows that a man in her life is involved with pornography, she should be encouraged to take action. Relationships are tough, and especially when a man's porn use is suspected by a woman — whether it's a son, brother, husband, or even father — it can be understandably difficult for her to find a way to broach the subject.

The pain and suffering of a wife whose husband is engaged in a pornography compulsion is not negligible — she will likely need support, encouragement, and prayers as she works through this issue with him. She should be encouraged to seek out professional help if needed, and should be assisted in finding her voice to be able to express how his porn use is affecting her.

Unmarried women who find out that their dates or boyfriends are into porn should be encouraged to not ignore the issue, but seek to have a frank conversation and reevaluate their relationship status as needed.

In all of these circumstances, bring the truth about porn — the statistics, the studies, the effects, and most of all the *hope for real healing* — to light, and engage those around you in the discussion as well.

**[2] If you are a mother who breastfeeds her children,  
take confidence!**

I know this may come as a shock to some men, but the breasts of women were not created for them to ogle. Breasts were not created to sell issues of *Maxim* or to be playthings. In truth, a woman breast-

feeding is doing quite possibly the most decent thing she can do with her breasts. Seen through the eyes of God, every woman's body reveals her great dignity: her calling to motherhood. Every woman, in her "feminine genius," is called to give life to others spiritually, but this is modeled after her gift of physical motherhood.

Physical motherhood reveals profoundly how a woman can make a gift of herself to the world. One of the consequences of the pornified culture is that motherhood has become viewed as a curse that diminishes a woman's freedom. According to society, her fulfillment is found in being independently successful AND as sexually "free" as a man. If an unwanted child is conceived from sexual union, she needs to get rid of "it," because "it" would be a hindrance to achieving her potential.

While it's true that it is not simply in physical motherhood that women can offer many profound gifts to the world, a mother accomplishes something no man can do: bear into the world a new human life. Motherhood is a vocation and a high calling, in which she has the ability to literally change the world through bearing children. Certainly, fathers are involved in the child's creation, and play an essential role in the care of the child when he or she is born, but without a mother, the child would literally never see the light of day. A woman creates space for another in a way no man ever can. As Christians, we need to restore this beautiful vision and witness to the greatness of a woman's dignity and of the gift of children.<sup>22</sup>

One of the best ways that mothers can help to reveal their great calling is to treat breastfeeding in public as normal. I firmly believe that this is one of the most important things women can

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22 My wife has written beautifully about this topic at <http://www.whogoesherway.com/yes-breasts-are-sexual>.



do to combat the porn epidemic. If we are going to tear out the roots of the porn epidemic and create a culture that respects and upholds the dignity of all women, we must normalize public breastfeeding.

How exactly will this change society? The problem in our culture is that when most men see a woman's breasts, they view them as simply ornamental. In truth, they are not merely beautiful, but functional as well. A woman's body and her breasts should inherently remind us of her call to motherhood. Yet when all we see are images of scantily-clad women in suggestive poses, we may forget or completely fail to recognize this truth.

Because of this, a woman who breastfeeds in public is often viewed as being "indecent." She is viewed, at best, as doing something imprudent and, at worst, immoral. She is told to cover up and go to the bathroom to breastfeed — because apparently everybody eats in the bathroom.

But breastfeeding women are fighting back. For example, in June 2006, Rebecca Cook<sup>23</sup> was visiting Victoria's Secret when her baby began to get fussy. When she asked if she could use a changing room to nurse, the employee responded that she would have to use their bathroom. Taking one look at the restroom, Rebecca found it unacceptable and disgusting. Rebecca was essentially forced to leave the store due to the need to take care of her child.

A week later, a group of about 20 breastfeeding moms came out and held a "nurse-in." These "lactivists" wanted to show to the world the true beauty of womanhood — and the true purpose of

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23 "Woman Fights For Breast-Feeding Rights" by Sean Alfano (*CBS News*, Jul 2, 2006). <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/07/02/national/main1773867.shtml>. Accessed Aug 29, 2017.

their breasts. Afterward, a spokesman for Victoria's Secret issued an apology, revealing they had a long-standing policy allowing for women to nurse in their store and that the policy had not been followed by that particular store employee.

The U.S. government has been trying to help mothers to be able to breastfeed in government buildings by implementing "appropriate" workplace accommodations for federal employees who are nursing mothers.<sup>24</sup> Yet just because there is a policy or a law does not mean people are going to abide by it. This is exactly one of the main points of *Redeemed Vision*: Laws can only go so far. We must work to change ourselves so we can start impacting the culture. Certainly it is not bad to work to change the laws, but the law does not solve the problem. There needs to be a change of heart.

It is encouraging to see a number of organizations and voices becoming more vocal about a woman's right to breastfeed in public. Slowly but surely, things are beginning to change. When more and more mothers begin to breastfeed in public — at the shopping mall, at the grocery store, at sporting events — men and women alike will be forced to deal with their preconceived notions about women and their breasts. If it becomes common enough, it will become a powerful counterpoint to the lie of the pornified vision that many have internalized.

To illustrate this, I provide two personal stories, the first from a negative perspective. When I was younger I stayed at a friend's house watching scrambled porn. Imagine my surprise when I came downstairs after a late night of viewing pornography

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24 "Obama orders breastfeeding policy for federal workplace" by Ed O'Keefe (*The Washington Post*, Dec 22, 2010). <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/12/21/AR2010122105385.html>. Accessed Aug 29, 2017.

to see his mom breastfeeding on the couch. I froze and became completely uncomfortable, both from the shame of what we had been doing and the fact that her breast was partially exposed. I was not moved to lust but to shock and horror. She did *that* in my presence? How *dare* she! I could not even look her in the eye because I was so uncomfortable. This was due to the fact that I was being programmed to only view women as objects of my own selfishness. My friend's mom was doing something entirely normal and decent, but I was so entrenched in the pornified vision that I balked at the Truth before my eyes.

Contrast this with the time I was blessed to travel to China to do missionary work in August of 2008. Part of our mission was to give a seminar on Theology of the Body in the basement of a home. During one of the breaks, a young mother began to breastfeed her child about 10 feet in front of me, with her breast fully exposed. Because breastfeeding in public is a common occurrence in China, this woman did not feel threatened by my presence. My first reaction was to look away, precisely because of past experiences. However, I had begun meditating upon images of *Maria Lactans* and decided to use the same way of looking in this real life situation.

What I viewed was nothing less than a miracle. Here was a woman who had given life to her child and was continuing to give her very flesh so her child could be nourished. I was transfixed by the whole scene, mother and child. What I experienced was a moment of true purity, of being able to really see a woman for who she is. I had no desire to lust but instead I was moved to genuflect. This woman's act was a means of profound healing for me, simply by doing what she did naturally — by breastfeeding her baby. Because she was there, I had the opportunity

to experience one of the most profound truths about woman. And it was truly beautiful.

Every breastfeeding mother has a very real, tangible way to fight against lust in our culture. A man who sees a woman breastfeeding has the opportunity to see the truth about the body: that the body is a sign and symbol of our call to be a gift. Telling women that they must cover up or breastfeed in private simply reinforces the lie that women's bodies are primarily objects of men's selfishness. Rather, it is in real women being welcomed to nourish their children in public in this most natural way that false images of pornographic lust lose their power. For all mothers, be not afraid: With your body, you proclaim to the world the true beauty of woman. The world needs your witness.

## How moms and dads can help their kids

*“We must educate ourselves and our children to understand that porn is for losers — a boring, wasteful and dead-end outlet for people too lazy to reap the ample rewards of healthy sexuality.”*

—Rabbi Shmuley Boteach and Pamela Anderson

From an eternal perspective, the Evil One hates the fact that we are made in the image of God. Children are most easily able to reveal this image through their purity and virginity because purity is the power to love. The earlier Satan can infect our kids with an impure attitude toward the body, the better chance they have of losing their sexual integrity. He will have a greater opportunity to draw them away from being a self-gift and toward being selfish — and thus hijacking their search for true happiness.

When it comes to our kids, we cannot afford to give up on the possibility of living with a redeemed vision. Every time I hear a Christian say it is irresponsible to suggest that men can see a woman's body and respond with love instead of lust, I wonder if they really hear what they are saying. Do they really mean to say that women are not persons with inherent dignity, who deserve respect? Do they really mean to say that a woman only deserves respect if her body is adequately hidden? Do they really mean to say that Christ's redemption holds no sway when it comes to the power of concupiscence?

Likewise, every time I hear a parent teach their young, impressionable children to evaluate whether or not to look at or away from a person based on what they are wearing or not wearing, I cringe. Most of the time, these are well-meaning parents who know how pervasive pornography is and want to keep their children from its grasp. But I don't think they realize that they are unwittingly setting the stage for their children to become porn's next victims. Instead of teaching their children a) that all persons have worth and deserve respect and b) that the respect due to them is not based on what they are wearing, they are teaching their children that simply to *see* a person wearing less clothing is to inherently disrespect them.

Prepubescent children may be content to believe that this is all wrapped up in the simple issue of privacy. And respect for privacy, of course, is not a bad thing. But as a child thus trained grows, instead of being equipped with the habit of respecting the person *no matter how they are dressed*, the child will find him or herself instead struggling to show respect to those who are not dressed in accordance with what their parents taught them was "modest." The natural progression of the logic of this lesson plays

nicely into the hands of pornographic marketing: Less/tighter/more revealing clothing = sex = lust. These children will be unpracticed in integrating respect for the exposed body with their awakening sexual desires. Furthermore, lacking any experiential knowledge that the naked human body is holy and just a normal part of being human, coupled with natural curiosity, they will have no defenses against slick pornographic imagery. They will be primed and ready to accept the twisted pornified vision of the body.

As the adage goes, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” Preventing something in advance is better than fixing it later on. If we are going to help our kids to not be enslaved by pornified images, we have to practice the fine art of prevention. Here are some helpful hints for how to do this:

**[1] If you are wading in the septic tank,  
it is time to find a new pool**

I remember an old drug PSA commercial from the 1980s depicting a father confronting his son with a box of pot, asking in a condemning tone, “Who taught you how to use this stuff?” His son fires back, “You. I learned it by watching you!” The scene fades out and the announcer says, “Parents who use drugs have children who use drugs.”

Based on my years of experience with clients, I can guarantee if you as a parent are involved with pornography, your kids will end up affected by it. Either they themselves will start looking at it, because they will discover your stash of porn mags or any sites you visit online, or they will fail to see how men and women are supposed to relate because they have not had the experience of witnessing Dad’s pure, loving gaze at their mother, or their mother’s genuine affection for their father. Instead, lust will

poison this primary relationship and somewhere in their hearts a seed of doubt about whether true love really exists will begin to fester.

The first step to helping your kids: Ditch the porn. If you are drinking from the septic tank, give it up for the fresh water Christ wants to give you. It is far more satisfying and your children will thank you for it.

**[2] Give your kids the greatest gift possible:  
a committed, loving, Sacramental Marriage**

So many husbands and wives, in trying to take care of their kids, often fail at giving their children the greatest gift: the witness of the love they have for each other as spouses.

[Your wife] is more than just a person of the flesh; she is a living child of the Lord. You need to look at her as Christ regards her — beautiful and precious. Treat her as though it is a privilege to know her and to be with her. Put your wife in her rightful place as the center of your universe and the *only* woman you love and desire.

—*Dr. Dennis  
Frederick*

The relationship between a father and mother is their children's first "school of love" — it is from their parents' marriage that children learn what love and commitment look like, through good times and bad. In order for our kids to receive the love they need and deserve, it is vital to make sure we get our priorities right in our marriage: God first, spouse second, kids next, and everyone else after that. This means that true care for children can't come at the expense of the spousal relationship, but must flow from it.

Children who don't receive this example from their parents are predisposed

to grow up less secure, less confident that true love is possible, and more likely to turn to the septic tank of our culture to fulfill their genuine search for intimacy.

Children who do watch their parents prioritize their relationship with God first, and then their relationship as spouses, will grow up with more tools in their kit. They will watch you receive “the Sacrament of the Bridegroom and of the Bride”<sup>25</sup> — the Eucharist — on a weekly basis. They will watch you turn to the Divine Bridegroom, Who will give you the grace to love your spouse rightly. They will watch you go to Confession in order to be healed, and, in turn, ask for and offer forgiveness to your spouse.

Men need to invest time in their partners to get to know them and love them holistically. This makes women feel more safe, protected, and secure in the relationship and, in turn, more responsive to intimacy. It’s not all about the physical aspects of the relationship. It’s about who you are as a total person and who you are on the inside, not just the outside.

—Dr. Dennis

As they watch you pray together, they will see you entrust your lives — in good times and bad — to the only One who *is capable* of fulfilling the deepest desires of our hearts, and they will be encouraged to enter into their own relationship with the One who can provide what pornography cannot — real love and intimacy. When your children see you “date” one another they will see that real connection is essential to relationships and that it takes work, but that it’s worth it.

Frederick

Remember: No one has a “perfect marriage.” It’s easy to become discouraged when your relationship doesn’t measure

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25 *Mulieris Dignitatem*. No. 26.



up to the latest BuzzFeed tips for a great marriage, or when your Facebook friends are posting picture-perfect moments from a recent night on the town and you can't remember the last time you got out of the house without kids. Just keep in mind that the more inspirational the Instagram post is, the messier the reality may be, and that your kids need to learn this lesson as much as you do — more importantly, they need to see that there is a way through the mess. My wife and I are extremely grateful that at various times, older couples have reached out to us in the midst of our struggles and have reassured us that they have been there, too. Kids don't need a carefully framed illusion that marriage is perfect — they need to see an example of how parents let love and fidelity guide them through the imperfections.

### **[3] Educate your kids in the Truth about the body and sexuality**

Far too many parents of the past failed to teach their kids the Truth about the body and sexuality and even fewer have instructed them about their dignity as beloved sons and daughters of God. The “sexual silence” of not discussing these important issues is frequently what enables lust to flourish. In many cases, when kids do not receive an appropriate education in these issues, when their feelings become eroticized, they end up acting out in ways that do not satisfy.

We must reverse this trend. Many parents feel inadequate in this task, essentially because they were never taught themselves. We must take confidence, for we DO have the tools to accomplish this mission. The Catholic Church teaches “*parents are the first and most important educators of their children, and they also possess a fundamental competency in this area: they are educa-*

*tors because they are parents.*”<sup>26</sup> This includes matters involving human sexuality. Parents have a God-given ability to teach their kids the Truth about sexuality just by the nature of being a father or mother. This education is so fundamental that we cannot leave this to religious education classes or to schools, especially in our age of widespread sexual confusion.

Although we need to “preach the Gospel without words,” at times our kids need to hear verbally, loud and clear, what the Truth is about love, sex, and the meaning of life. If they do not hear it from Mom and Dad, they will go looking elsewhere and most likely they will learn messages we don’t want them to hear. Do not worry if you do not know it all — start somewhere. Pick a topic and become knowledgeable, knowing full well there is always more to learn and a better way to say it. Your kids want to hear *something* from you, so do not worry if your message is not perfect at first. Over time and through research, you will become more comfortable with these subjects and you will be able to refine your approach.

What and how should you teach this? I recommend drawing from the Catholic Church’s vast wealth of knowledge about human sexuality, beginning with the document “The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality.”<sup>27</sup> Ground your discussion in the themes of St. John Paul the Great’s Theology of the Body, beginning with an

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26 “The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality: Guidelines for Education within the Family” by Alfonso Card. López Trujillo and Most Rev. Elio Sgreccia (The Pontifical Council for the Family, Dec 8, 1995). No. 23. [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/family/documents/rc\\_pc\\_family\\_doc\\_08121995\\_human-sexuality\\_en.html#](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/family/documents/rc_pc_family_doc_08121995_human-sexuality_en.html#). Accessed Aug 29, 2017.

27 Available at [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/family/documents/rc\\_pc\\_family\\_doc\\_08121995\\_human-sexuality\\_en.html#](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/family/documents/rc_pc_family_doc_08121995_human-sexuality_en.html#).

instruction about their creation as male and female. Teach that we have been created to be gifts to one another and only by doing this can we truly be joyful. Use the language of “gift” from the time they are young — even from when they are in the womb — helping them to put others first through service.

When your children approach puberty, the conversations you will have with them about the hormonal and physical changes they are going through will organically fit within the paradigm of making a sincere gift of self. They will be able to grasp more clearly that the sexual act is not about “getting off,” as pornography would make us believe, but instead is a profound way of expressing love with our spouse. Using this message is far removed from a fear-based “sex education” program and it will truly hit home with them.

In a spirit of prayer, do not be afraid to address their queries — they need *you* need to speak the Truth in love. If they do not hear it from you, they *will* go to someone else who will not know them as well as you do nor have their best interests at heart.

On a related note, remember that how you treat and speak about your body and the bodies of others will shape the way that your children will view their bodies. If you accept your body as a gift, care for it, and demand respect regardless of how you are dressed, your children will learn that the body is worthy of love and respect at all times and all stages of life and dress. If you criticize your body or others’ in front of your children or say things like, “Nobody needs to see *that*,” or, “Don’t pay attention to my [insert less-than-“flawless” body part here],” your children will learn that it is perfectly normal to judge people’s bodies according to how well they measure up — or don’t measure up

— to society’s standards. Likewise, take care in how you respond to nakedness in the home. If you react in horror or disgust — or even amusement or embarrassment — consider the message you are sending your children. You are telling them by your reaction that their bodies don’t deserve respect when they are not clothed. Is this really what you wish to convey?

It starts with knowing who you are and loving yourself, not

**[4] Talk to your kids about porn  
– effectively**

When the issue of pornography comes up — and it certainly will — you need to be prepared. If I would have known about how porn can affect my mind and my masculine development, and had I been shown God’s glorious plan for human sexuality, it may have given me a much clearer reason to steer clear of pornified images. Unfortunately, my mom was completely unaware of this information — but God writes straight with crooked lines.

looking at this person and that person and saying, “They look perfect, and they’re a lot thinner than me.” Every body type is different — that’s what makes you unique. What makes you special is you, and you are different from the next person. And that really begins at home.

—*Janet Jackson*

If you know your children have not been directly exposed to pornography, your primary goal should be keeping the lines of communication open. You can discuss with your children, generally, the difference between beautiful and ugly images. Matt Fradd of IntegrityRestored.com answered his son’s question about what pornography is by honing in on what a good picture is — a picture of a subject that is respectful and leaves the viewer

with nothing but positive feelings about the image and themselves.<sup>28</sup> In contrast, he told his son that if he ever encounters a picture that doesn't feel right, he should not be afraid to talk to his mom or dad about it — and that they will be proud of him for doing so.

That's the first step. In addition, Jenson A. Poyner of [protectyoungminds.org](http://protectyoungminds.org) recommends teaching kids the 5-point **CANDO Plan** when they encounter pornography (tweaked from Matt Fradd's summary):

- [1] **Close your eyes.** As soon as you see something that looks like pornography, close your eyes, shut the laptop, walk away.
- [2] **Alert a trusted adult.** Tell Mommy or Daddy or someone who cares for you about what you saw.
- [3] **Name it.** Teach your child to label what they saw: "That's pornography."
- [4] **Distract your mind** with something true, good, or beautiful if the image pops back up in your memory.
- [5] **Order your "thinking brain" to be in charge.** Remember why pornography is harmful.

This is a very gentle approach that, along with giving your kids the foundation of being able to see the body correctly, empowers them to listen to what their conscience is telling them through their feelings and to bring you into the discussion.

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28 "What I Told My 7-year-old When He Asked What Porn Was" by Matt Fradd (Aleteia.org, Sep 6, 2017). <http://aleteia.org/2017/09/06/what-i-told-my-7-year-old-when-he-asked-me-what-porn-was>. Accessed Sep 27, 2017.

In addition to the above tips, make sure to discuss the psychology of the human brain with your kids regarding how images can radically shape the way we perceive reality. Have age-appropriate discussions on how our brains are wired for intimacy and our hearts and bodies are made for real love. As the adage goes, “Knowledge is power.” Impart this wisdom to your kids so they may choose the real deal, avoid the counterfeits, and have the power to freely love.

### [5] Be aware of their technological habits

A friend who was a Genius at an Apple Store related how preteens and teens frequently came into his store, handed him their device, and demanded, “Fix this.” The

kids never made eye contact, and their “fix this” would inevitably be followed up by the phrase, “Is it done yet?”

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

—Proverbs 22:6

Although there are many good things to come from technology, we as parents have to be aware of how it can affect us and especially our children. Since the rational thinking part of a person’s brain does not fully develop until the mid 20s, children’s brains are radically susceptible to outside influences. I am not advocating that we get rid of all forms of technology. But we need to be person-centered and to be attentive to how technology can affect us and to use it appropriately — according to principles that guide us toward union and communion with other human beings.<sup>29</sup>

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29 A great resource to learn principles about how to use technology appropriately, based on solid Catholic principles, is *Infinite Bandwidth: Encountering Christ in the Media* by Eugene Gan (Emmaus Road Publishing, 2010).

Although becoming a technologically savvy person can have benefits, there are some major downsides, particularly for kids. Because of their still-developing brains, they may not always use the best judgment when using technology, especially because the medium can create a barrier between what is real and fantasy. Technological interfaces remove the human element from interpersonal interaction, which many see as a license to be rude, hateful, or inhuman. It may prevent children from realizing that the message or picture they post on Instagram has real consequences and affects a real, live person who receives that message or image.

Take the issue of sexting, for instance, where a naked or semi-naked image is sent by one phone or mobile device to another. Most often a girl — although some guys do this — is looking for love and thinks, “If he just gets a look at the ‘merchandise’ he will really want me.” She thinks that if she sends a naked picture to her soon-to-be ex-boyfriend he will really like her, only to realize the cold, hard reality when the image has been resent to her entire school — and beyond — because the guy never really loved her in the first place. Other kids may call her vile names and this can take a profound toll on her reputation and her psyche. Sadly, this traumatic and painful experience is not uncommon.

As one of the world’s leading brain scientists put it in an interview with *The New York Times*,<sup>30</sup> “The technology is rewiring our brains.” The report adds that “researchers compare the lure of digital stimulation less to that of drugs and alcohol than to food and sex, which are essential but counterproductive in excess.”

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30 “Attached to technology and paying a price” by Matt Richtel (*The New York Times*, Jun 6, 2010) <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/07/technology/07brain.html>. Accessed Aug 29, 2017.

Children today are watching many more screens — TV, mobile, and computer — than previous generations, and this exposure is not neutral, as it shapes the way they interact in everyday life. If what they see on a screen is only present for a few seconds, their brains — because of their plasticity — adapt to the exposure. What they are being taught is that a) life is about being entertained and b) if something does not entertain them, they can change the channel or go to another website to get their fix. In a certain sense, they are being primed and readied to be receptive to the pornographic mentality of viewing an image for a few moments before moving onto another titillating picture.

This “education” is problematic, because if our kids are being trained to have short attention spans, they will get the wrong idea about life. They will think love is merely equated to some sort of entertainment value or feeling and, when that feeling is gone, they should seek those “feelings” from someone else. It will be difficult for them to embrace the reality that real love is not based on feelings but often requires great sacrifice.

Furthermore, it takes time to develop relationships and for love to blossom. If a child is programmed to believe that life is all about being entertained and that they are entitled to get what they want immediately, they will be sadly disappointed. They will miss out on the deep truth that the meaning of life is not to obtain pleasure quickly but to give beauty slowly, as the saying goes. If screens and earplugs become ever-present realities — semi-permanent appendages of sorts — our kids will not be able to be “all there” when someone is really trying to be with them. They will find it increasingly difficult to take in and contemplate the people around them, accept them for who they are, love them as God has created them, and let intimacy develop in an organic way.



Increasing use of modern technology is a contributing factor to why our kids are becoming more and more eroticized in their actions. First, so much of the media is pornographic and our children are the first generation to grow up with continual exposure to pornographic images. Secondly, most kids have not been taught how to see properly, do not know how to process the images they see nor their feelings, and are not being taught the truth about the body and sexuality. Third, they are being programmed to believe that love is merely a good feeling, and when those erotic feelings rise up in their hearts, they are being taught that they should act out on them, either by themselves or with others. Because it is not real love, they will not be satisfied but instead will have an intimate encounter with the bitter pill of shame. As we know, shame cripples our ability to be intimate with others and can affect all of our experiences.

As Sr. Mary Timothy Prokes, author of *At the Interface: Theology and Virtual Reality*, teaches, “We’re trading real presence for virtual absence.” We have replaced the divine vision with the television and it is becoming more and more difficult for many people to tell the difference between what is real and what is fantasy. We see this especially with young girls who see *Cosmopolitan* at the checkout aisle and compare themselves with the models on the covers, even though the models are completely airbrushed and digitally manipulated. We see this in the boys who see the “hot” girls in advertising and Hollywood blockbusters and begin to judge the worth of girls in everyday life by how attractive they are through their pornified vision. If they are simply judging their own value and the value of others based on a fantasy in their heads, they will not be able to love, and everyone involved with them will be left empty.

Make no mistake: The pornography industry is pursuing our kids. From network executives who make it their mission to push the envelope to video phones streaming live pornography to the encouragement by teens' peers to get into sexting, there are so many land mines on the road to living a pure life. Because technology is not going away anytime soon, we as parents need to guide our children in their technological use. We need to help them grow up as healthy men and women who are able to engage society and technology as witnesses for Christ.

This means we need to be aware of what is going on in our kids' lives. We need to be on alert to what is occurring technologically and intervene when necessary. We are not called to be their friend, but their father or mother. Any complaints they may give us now will pay off dividends later. We must not be afraid to stand our ground.

Some practical suggestions:

- **Limit their — and your — technological use.**

There is much more to life than surfing the Internet, watching TV and movies, texting or playing video games for hours on end. So many of the gateways to porn could be prevented if children and teens were sent outside to play, encouraged to read books or to play a musical instrument or work with Dad and/or Mom on a project. Make sure they are spending more time unplugged than watching screens. This means we need to encourage them through our own behavior and get our own faces out of our iPhones and spend time with them. Less time spent in the virtual world and more time spent seeking the real presence of others will help them to form the habits

necessary to make good choices and be the persons they are created to be.

- **Pay attention to their cell phone use.** I would recommend, especially for young kids and preteens, if you allow them to have a phone, to get one with only calling abilities, without a camera or web-surfing capabilities. The purpose of them having a phone should be primarily to keep in contact with you. Having a phone is a privilege, not a requirement for growing up. And if you do allow them to have a cell phone, have them sign a contract similar to the one Janell Burley Hofmann ingeniously created for her son, to ensure that they understand that while technology is a gift, it needs to be used appropriately.<sup>31</sup>
- **Teach them how to use texting properly.** Texting should not be their primary mode of communication, for our communication should strive to communicate as much of the Truth of us as possible. Certainly, if we are in an emergency, we can text, but if we have the choice between calling and texting, make a call. Children need to learn how to develop solid interpersonal skills. This will not happen if they are programmed to communicate in pithy, non-grammatically correct statements.

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31 "To my 13-year-old, an iPhone contract from your mom, with love" by Janell Burley Hofmann (*Huffington Post*, Jan 23, 2014). [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/janell-burley-hofmann/iphone-contract-from-your-mom\\_b\\_2372493.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/janell-burley-hofmann/iphone-contract-from-your-mom_b_2372493.html). Accessed Aug 29, 2017.

- **Teach them what information is appropriate for public viewing and what is not.** Never should their cell phone number, home address, or social security number be accessible for public viewing. This includes any photos we would not show to family members. While they should not live in fear, they need to be sly as foxes when revealing themselves online, because identity theft is very real. Because we are their legal guardians, any negative consequences could radically affect us also.
- **Befriend them on any of their social networking sites.** You need to see what kind of things are posted on their pages, especially what they themselves are posting. I would not recommend critiquing anything publicly, because doing so could endanger the level of trust they have in you. However, when you notice something fishy, it's time to step in.

### **[6] Educate your kids in sacred art**

When we do not see — or know how to view — the human body correctly, the power of pornography will gain a foothold. When we have been trained to view the body as God has created it and, better yet, when we grow up in an atmosphere where the body is treated with dignity and respect, when the counterfeit is presented to us, the lie will be rejected, precisely because the Truth is far more beautiful.

This is why I highly recommend using sacred artwork to educate our children in the truth of the human body. Have paintings displayed in your home which reveal the human body in an

appropriate way. Discuss what this art means so your children can begin to articulate it themselves, as well as to discern between true visual art and the imitations our culture often produces. Expose your kids to all the arts — music, dance, painting, sculpture, etc. — and get them involved in each of these mediums. The more they can be drawn out of themselves, even if they do not have a natural gift for these mediums, the better they will recognize — and thus desire — true beauty.

It is important to have your kids see that they are creators of media, not simply users. They are made in God's image, called to be like Him, and thus should work to participate in making the world beautiful. Having your kids learn from a young age about art and allowing them to play with different mediums can have a very integrating effect.

As mentioned above, technology can hinder our ability to communicate fully and render us unable to build real bonds of community. In contrast, when a child uses clay or Play-Doh to make a figure, they have to touch something tangible. How they move an arm or leg in one way or another has real consequences in how the figurine will be used. They are able to see that what they do really matters in life — that reality is more than pixels on a screen. Although technology can be used to promote good skills and mentalities — video games can increase hand-eye coordination, for example — it's always artificial and easier than in real life. Unlike simply viewing a show and being receptive, they are bringing their own self into the clay, interacting with what is presented before them. This especially helps to draw their true personalities out, which, if carefully guided by their parents, can help them develop into the persons God desires them to be.

Again, it is vital that your children become involved in the arts on a regular basis. Because pornography is primarily a fantasy, the more you as a parent can help them get in touch with physical realities, the more this will help them stay grounded in the world. By educating them in the true principles of beauty — see Chapter 10 — they will become adept at seeking out what is true, good, and beautiful.

### **[7] Have dinner together as a family regularly**

The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University has discovered some amazing facts about the importance of families eating together:

Thousands of American teens and their parents [were surveyed] to identify factors that increase or decrease the likelihood of teen substance abuse. Its surveys have consistently found that the more often children have dinners with their parents, the less likely they are to smoke, drink or use drugs, and that parental engagement fostered around the dinner table is one of the most potent tools to help parents raise healthy, drug-free children. Simply put: frequent family dinners make a difference.<sup>32</sup>

This should be common sense, but in a culture that has lost common sense, this bears repeating: The family that eats together keeps together. This directly applies to families whom eat together at least five to seven meals a week. From a faith perspective, it makes sense because everything Jesus did of importance was centered around meals. He was striving to show

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32 “Whatever happened to dinner?” by Melodie Davis (*MennoMedia*). <http://www.heraldpress.com/titles/whateverhappenedtodinner/benefits.html>. Accessed Aug 29, 2017.

others that while physical nourishment is important, what is more important is spiritual nourishment. Just as the Eucharist is the “source and summit of the Christian life,”<sup>33</sup> binding the Church together, so dinnertime assists the family in becoming a cohesive unit.

As discussed in *Redeemed Vision*, in order to break a compulsion, the brain needs to be rewired in order to change one’s actions. Parents can help their kids nourish healthy brain activity and intimacy, and thus form good habits, by spending quality time with them. Family meals are one practical way to help fill this need. It is a time when we are able to check in with them, talk about what is going on with their lives and build the intimacy for which they are looking.

“Yes, but we are too busy. Both my wife and I work and frequently my kids have extra curricular activities going on.” If we are married, we must remember our primary vocation is to marriage and family life. This may require a radical reorientation of one’s priorities, perhaps cutting down on some hours at the office or dropping one — or more — after-school activities. Because there are so many forces trying to pull apart our families, we are going to have to sacrifice to keep them intact. Whatever we have to do to have frequent family meals, we need make it happen. It is much easier to be proactive than to deal with a crisis.

This should not be an “all-Mom” task. If it is a family meal, the whole family should help out with all aspects of the meal: Deciding what to eat, food preparation, cooking, setting the table, and cleaning up afterward. Yes, it is challenging to do this regularly, especially if we are not in the habit, but it is during all of

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33 CCC 1324.

the preparation and execution of a meal that your family will have the opportunity to bond together.

When eating together, make sure it is an uninterrupted family experience. This means not watching a movie or television show, getting rid of the iPhone, and not answering calls — except for extreme emergencies. By forming your kids to be in the moment, recognizing family meals as essential, the message will be communicated that your kids are not just provided for but loved, and distractions will be less tempting to them.

Most importantly, surround your mealtime with prayer. The father needs to be the spiritual head of the home; thus his leading in prayer from the heart is crucial to helping guide the family to the heart of our Heavenly Father. And at the close of the meal, the whole family can pray a prayer together again. By praying as a family, God will bless your time and your kids will see how faith and family go together hand-in-hand.

**[8] Plan weekly “one-on-one” sessions  
with each child for at least 20 minutes**

So many kids get themselves into trouble with porn because their parents are not involved regularly with their lives. I think back on my own life and believe that if my dad would have been present, there is a good chance that I would not have fallen as hard into pornography as I did.

As a parent, you have the opportunity to do what my father never did. Both parents, but especially fathers, should plan weekly get-togethers with their kids individually — alone. Oftentimes parents are so busy that their kids do not get the attention they deserve. If children are not receiving healthy attention, inevitably they are going to seek unhealthy attention elsewhere.



Every week, schedule a regular time that you are sure to be able to spend with your sons and daughters individually. It does not matter what you do as long as it gives you the opportunity to grow with your son or daughter. As this intimacy develops, naturally they will open up about all aspects of their lives.

This can be really difficult if we have not been in the practice of spending quality time with them. Simply schedule the time and, even if they object for the first few times, it will get easier. By establishing a foundation of quality time, when difficult topics come up, especially involving matters regarding sexuality, they will want to come to you to discuss these things because you have earned their trust.

### **[9] Conduct family service project days**

If the me-centered culture is causing our sons and daughters to become enclosed in on themselves, the antidote is to draw them out. The meaning of our lives is to make a gift of ourselves. Thus our duty as parents is to help our kids learn how to be a gift.

Enter into prayer, asking God how your family's gifts can best serve your community. Then plan projects to help put those gifts to work. Feed the homeless, witness at an abortion facility or get involved in a project at your parish. The more our kids are oriented toward others, the easier it will be for them to translate that concept to their sexuality.

## **What parishes can do to end the porn epidemic**

### **[1] If you are clergy and have a compulsion to view pornography, GET HELP**

One of the reasons why we have not heard much about pornography from the pulpit is because of the great number of priests<sup>34</sup> who struggle with the same compulsion as many of those in the congregation.

Thus if you're a member of the clergy and this is one of your struggles, get help. You have been given your vocation as a gift to the people of God, and sometimes He chooses the most broken to lead His flock. This does not mean He wants you to remain in your brokenness, but desires to set you free to love so that you can be a witness to the power of redemption. Please get the help you need to close this doorway to the Evil One, so you can be even more effective in your ministry.

### **[2] If you are a priest, preach and teach on these issues — regularly**

Catholics have received very poor catechesis over — at least — the past half century. Although the laity do have a responsibility to seek the Truth, when the Magisterium is producing gems they do not hear about — especially with the legacy St. John Paul

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34 It is frequently estimated that 50% of clergy — Catholic and otherwise — have a compulsion to view pornography. See <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/57.percent.of.pastors.and.64.of.youth.pastors.in.u.s.struggle.with.porn.addiction.survey.shows/78178.htm>. Accessed Sep 26, 2017.

the Great left behind — the majority of the blame for this crisis of Truth falls squarely on the shoulders of the clergy.

Like most in my generation, I grew up with pretty poor religious education. It was not until I entered graduate school that I heard the full Truth about what the Church taught. And I was angry. I learned that we are “called to participate in divine life”<sup>35</sup> and that every baptized Christian is to receive the fullness of the Faith in “all its rigor and vigor.”<sup>36</sup> Because the Truth is to be preached “in season and out of season,”<sup>37</sup> I felt as though I had been cheated out of what was due to me.

But how are men to call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher?

The truth is a vast majority of families —*Romans 10:14* are being decimated by pornography. Most Catholic men believe they will be saddled with this for the rest of their lives. It is one of the most prominent sins confessed by men — and an increasing number of women — yet like most issues involving sexuality, there is silence coming from the pulpit. All the while, porn is destroying our ability to see beauty and is chewing families up and spitting them out.

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35 cf. 2 Pt 1:4.

36 Apostolic Exhortation *Catechesi Tradendae* by John Paul II (*Libreria Editrice Vaticana*, Oct 16, 1979). No. 30. [http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_exh\\_16101979\\_catechesi-tradendae.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_16101979_catechesi-tradendae.html). Accessed Aug 29, 2017.

37 2 Tm 4:2.

“The night is far gone, the day is at hand.”<sup>38</sup> It is time for bishops and priests to man up and begin a regular assault. Preach monthly on this issue of pornography and the possibility of redemption until we begin to really make headway in ending its grip on men, women, and families. It is time for the Bride of Christ to be awakened from her slumber and for those *in persona Christi*, our priests, to help her hear the Truth proclaimed.

If you are a layperson, give your parish priest a copy of *Redeemed Vision*, as well as other materials to assist him in becoming educated on this issue. Encourage him to be courageous in speaking out, as families need to hear his voice on this issue.

If you are a member of the clergy, I beg you, dear pastors, be faithful to your vocation! Faithfully preach the truth in spite of your fear, for I promise there are those in your congregation who want to know that they can be set free. Even if you cannot always preach directly about pornography due to young children present in the pews, I plead with you to find ways to alert your flock to the severity of this problem, as well as the promise of hope and healing we have in Christ.

My people  
are destroyed for  
lack of knowledge;  
because you have  
rejected knowledge,  
I reject you from  
being a priest  
to me.

Like Paul Revere, sound the alarm, and make your parish aware of how debilitating porn is — while providing real solutions — so there can be real transformation of the members of your parish. As St. John Paul the Great taught, BE NOT AFRAID! Your flock is dying to hear this message of hope.

—Hosea 4:6

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38 Rom 13:12.

### **[3] Introduce sacred art that proclaims the truth of the human body**

As *Redeemed Vision* makes clear, sacred art is the antithesis of pornography and one of the keys to finding freedom from the power of pornified images. One of the reasons why porn has been able to flourish is because our churches have, by and large, abandoned the rich artistic heritage of the Catholic Church. In addition, the Church has left its post as a patron of the arts; thus vast areas of artistic expression in the modern world lack the beautiful truths the Church teaches and upholds. If we are made for beauty but do not have clear images to reveal beauty to us, we will go to the counterfeits to try to fill this thirst.

I highly recommend that parishes begin installing images of sacred art, especially images of *Maria Lactans*. Have a dedication ceremony during which parishioners are catechized on the meaning of the piece, helping them to understand the true meaning of the body and sexuality. In a certain sense, seeing is believing, and by having one — or more — of these images installed in a prominent place, our parishes can become even more of an oasis from the septic tanks of the world.

### **[4] Host events to catechize on the meaning of the body and sexuality**

If the porn epidemic is caused by a crisis of not understanding the true meaning of the human body and seeing it appropriately, the long-term solution will come through the rediscovery of the Church's beautiful vision of man and woman. Sadly, few Catholics are aware of what the Church actually teaches about the body and sexuality, even though many resources are available.

Set up study groups in your parish to target these issues. Meet weekly to study Theology of the Body. Bring in speakers

who specialize on marriage and family topics to help to evangelize at a retreat or a parish mission. Whatever you choose to do, invite fellow parishioners on a regular basis to learn about beauty, as they need to become learned in this message in order to begin reclaiming the public square with the love of Christ.

## **How to end the porn epidemic in the public square**

It cannot be understated that if we merely lived out the truth of our bodies and sexuality in our individual homes and families, we could radically transform the world. As Benedict XVI has taught, the family is the foundation of civilization. However, our faith is not meant to be kept only in church or in our families, but is meant to be shared with the whole world. It is only Christ Who ultimately has the power to transform the world, yet because we are His hands and feet,<sup>39</sup> we must go out to the world and spread this Good News. We must enter the public arena and share the message that He alone has the ability to fulfill all of our desires.

Just as Jesus came to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable, we must do the same. This requires getting out of our comfort zones. We must go to those areas of our communities promulgating the septic tank and work to transform them.

Here are some practical suggestions for how to do this:

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39 cf. 1 Cor 12.

**[1] Set up a No More Porn Tour  
— and carry it out**

See the section above, “How men can end the porn epidemic.”

**[2] Attend community and  
school board meetings**

I have a confession: Until I had a child, I did not really pay attention to these kinds of things, but instead focused on myself. In preparation for my first daughter’s impending birth, my mindset began to change. I started caring about what school district we were living in, who the mayor was, and who my neighbors were. I knew I was responsible for this little one who could not defend herself, as well as called to protect my wife and any other children who would come from our union.

You don’t have to wait to have a child or even get married to get involved. It is vitally important that Christians become intimately concerned with the affairs of their community, working to make our local communities more filled with the presence of Christ. We need to be aware of what is going on in our neighborhoods.

If there is a porn shop in your area, go to the next community meeting and inquire as to what is being done to get it removed. Come prepared with information on how having one of these SOB’s affects individuals, families, and other businesses. Let them know how pornography is plaguing the community and that it is not merely a matter of “freedom of expression” but the equivalent of pilfering drugs. Bring others with you to start making some noise, forcing your community leaders to act — remember, governmental officials on the local and national level are supposed to be working for you too, not just for the SOB owner.

If Christians do not speak up for the Truth, who is going to?

### **[3] Write letters to the editor of your local newspaper**

If there is an article promoting something pornographic, write your editor to express your disagreement. By doing this, you make the wider community aware that this kind of promotion is unacceptable. Make the letter pithy — no more than 200 words — and back up your statements with hard facts. Be charitable but firm and you just might see it make print.

### **[4] Befriend a porn star**

Jesus taught us not to hate our enemies but to pray for them.<sup>40</sup> Those in the pornography industry are not our enemies — lust is. So many of those involved do not realize how lost they are, but they truly desire what everyone needs: love. Those misusing their bodies and sexuality have been looking for God, and it is in and through our bodies we need to reveal Him.

For those who live near a hub of the pornographic industry, find a way to make contact with one of these lost daughters or sons of the Most High and befriend her or him. You may be surprised to find that it's more common than you think to run into people who work in the industry. You may discover — as I once did — that someone in your neighborhood performs

You are the  
light of the world.

A city set on a hill cannot  
be hid. Nor do men light  
a lamp and put it under a  
bushel, but on a stand, and  
it gives light to all in the  
house. Let your light so  
shine before men, that  
they may see your good  
works and give glory to  
your Father who  
is in heaven.

—*Matthew*

**5: 14–16**

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40 cf. Mt 5:44.



at a local gentleman's club, or you may hear through the grapevine that a young person in your church is performing in videos online.

Remember, Jesus did not wait for sinners to come to Him, but He went to them. He did not come for the righteous but for sinners.<sup>41</sup> Because we are His Body, we must do the same. Granted, not everyone is equipped to take the step of personally ministering to a porn star. But every Christian is called to be an instrument of God's love to their neighbor — whether that comes in the form of prayer, being neighborly and sharing the abundance of grace in one's life, or directly reaching out to people entrenched in the porn industry.

Their deepest question is "Where is God?" Through our very presence, they will come to know that God is real and walking among them. From there, you can bring them to the One Who can quench their deepest thirst and give them a life truly worth living.

### **[5] Write handwritten letters to your elected officials to challenge the laws**

If you have ever received a handwritten letter in the mail, you knew the person who wrote to you cared enough to take the time to write, and you most likely read every word carefully.

Your local leaders are elected by you and are supposed to be working for you. They receive many requests, thus if you want to really get their attention, write it by hand. If your handwriting is not the most legible, have one of your friends write it.

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41 cf. Lk 5:32.

Be respectful and express clearly your opposition to pornography, sex trafficking, and other related issues. Ask what their plans are to get rid of sexually explicit material on the Internet and to shut down pornography stores. State plainly that there is nothing “adult” about porn, but that it is radically affecting families, and that children are becoming hooked younger and younger. Provide research showing why it is not in the best interest of your community.

Do not be discouraged if you are only met by silence. Regularly send a different letter with the clear expectation of a punctual reply. When you get one, make sure to follow up promptly, encouraging your elected official to take charge on this issue. Who knows — you may just change our nation and the world with your persistence.

#### **[6] Challenge TV executives and movie producers to create quality entertainment**

In a certain sense, the power is in your hands to determine what shows up in movies and on television. The bottom line for these executives is the bottom line — money. If they know a certain trend is going to be profitable, they are going to make more of it. If pornified images are going to attract viewers, then they are all about lowering our viewing standards.

When you know some pornified show or movie is to be released, send the television or production companies an e-mail. Let others know via social networking. Make it absolutely clear that what is being distributed is unacceptable and that you are going to let others know to not support their product.

Equally important, contact their advertisers and make it known if they do not drop their support for these profligate shows or movies, you will stop purchasing their product — make

sure if you make this statement you make good on your promise. For every e-mail like yours, there are at least three other people who feel the same way. The more messages like this they receive, the more they will begin to sit up and pay attention. If you don't know where to begin, plug in to organizations like Parents Television Council and the American Family Association,<sup>42</sup> which have a long history of holding executives' and advertisers' feet to the fire when it comes to objectionable material in the media.

On the other hand, when entertainment striving to promote true beauty comes around, make sure to support it financially. This does not mean it has to be explicitly Christian, like Mel Gibson's *Passion of the Christ*. However, if it is a quality movie, get groups of your friends and family members to go on the opening weekend, for how well it cashes in on that weekend will determine how long it will play in theaters over the next couple of months.<sup>43</sup> After seeing such a movie — or if it is a TV event — contact the producers to thank them for their promotion of such work. Doing so lets them know that the public likes their product and will encourage them to create more uplifting films and programs.

## The endgame

If my suggestions for how to end the porn epidemic seem broader than you might expect, it is because the problem of pornography can only be resolved by healing the human person.

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42 See <http://w2.parentstv.org> and <http://www.afa.net>.

43 Catholic News Service provides excellent reviews of films, especially demonstrating how well they help uphold Catholic morality. See more at <http://www.catholicnews.com/movies.htm>.

In my work with Freedom Coaching I have found time and time again that the attraction to pornography goes hand in hand with deep relational wounds and a damaged understanding of one's own dignity and worth.

That said, with this book, I am not interested in simply the immediate healing of individuals. I am interested in the long game — the transformation of our culture. When we change the way we view the body, we change the way we talk about the body. We change the way we treat the body. We change the way we train future generations to encounter the body. This is a big deal.

Pornography isn't going anywhere in the next 5, 10, 15 years. If anything, it is encroaching more and more upon our homes and our day-to-day realities. Our children and their peers are technology natives, and the Internet is one big pornified playground. The way to combat this reality is not to passively accept porn's power and content ourselves with filters, modesty guidelines, and surveillance, but to combat it at its root: We must seek the healing of our own vision and teach our children how to see the body correctly. We must believe that redeemed vision is possible, and live it.

# Redeemed Vision

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Setting the Blind Free  
from the Pornified Culture

Steve Pokorny