

Scourge of pornography must be combated

By Monsignor James P. Farmer

Pornography is an epidemic in the United States. It is wrecking the lives of teenage boys and adult men, and having a devastating effect on marriages.

Pornography is extremely addictive. Past recollections revived are very powerful. When a person is hooked on pornography, he or she seeks to feed this addiction on a daily basis.

Why has pornography become such a crisis in our society? There are many reasons. The most obvious is that each human being is vulnerable. Pornography preys upon human weakness. When we give in to our weaknesses, we sin.

The second reason why pornography is so rampant is because it is so available. Years ago, the pornography industry was a dirty, but largely invisible, business. Magazines which contained pornographic pictures were sold behind store counters. Certain sleazy shops were known to market this trash. Children were protected from this evil.

That is no longer the case. Computers have changed the way we live. While computers provide immediate access to information, they also provide immediate access to pornography. This constant availability overwhelms many people's ability to resist. Every child knows how to operate a computer. Every child is a potential victim of pornographic addiction.

In many cases, several members of the same family are addicted. They may be viewing pornography on different computers in the same house. They do not know that other family members are also having the same problem.

Many people have lost jobs because they have been caught viewing pornography at their place of employment. This includes people from all walks of life; this evil spares no one.

In life, what we do not control controls us. Pornography is a prime example of this. Millions of men are slaves to pornography.

“Everything is lawful for me” (1 Cor. 6:12-14)- but that does not mean that everything is good for me. “Everything is lawful for me” - but I will not let myself be enslaved by anything. “Food is for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will do away with them both in the end”- but the body is not for immorality; it is for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. God, who raised up the Lord, will raise us also by his power.

Proven Men Ministries is an organization which helps men who are addicted to pornography. Their research indicates that nearly 20 percent of men spend at least one hour a day viewing pornography on the Internet. Many who are addicted are experiencing deep despair. They have given up. They have no hope. They see pornography as a mountain.

With God there is always hope. The power of God is greater than the power of evil.

“Do not, therefore, let sin rule your mortal body and make you obey its lusts; no more shall you offer the members of your body to sin as weapons for evil. Rather, offer yourselves to God as men who have come back from the dead to life, and your bodies to God as weapons for justice. Sin will no longer have power over you; you are now under grace, not under the law.” (Rom 6:12)

This year, the Catholic Men’s Fellowship of Maryland will hold its annual conference March 24, at Immaculate Conception Parish in Towson. The focus of the day will be helping men kick the addiction to pornography.

Jesus said, “Amen, I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.” (Mt 17:20)

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