

MAY JESUS CHRIST BE PRAISED

February 4, 2018 – Fourth Sunday Ordinary Time

Spirituality Ponderings Pornography Part I

During the month of February, it has been my custom to focus my Spiritual Ponderings on relationships. Over the last year, I have come to believe that pornography has become the number one threat to our culture because it trains us to devalue human life. It is also the number one sin that I hear men and women confess in the Confessional. It is my hope that this series of reflections will help you or a love one overcome this sin and to grow in appreciation of the Church's teaching on Sex.

I have discovered that IntegrityRestored.com to be an amazing resource for this serious of reflections. I would like to reflect with you now on what Dr. Kleponis Ph.D., the founder of Integrity Restord.com, calls the 5 "A's" of Pornography.

A #1 - Affordable

One of the major problems with pornography is that there are many "free samples" out there. Trying a free sample of a drug or a pornographic image is not the same as trying a free sample at the supermarket. There is an inherent addictive quality to both drugs and pornography that leaves you desiring more. There is also some sort of chemical thing that goes on your body that requires you to have larger and larger doses of the drug or nastier images in order to reproduce the first high

from the free sample. So while there are websites that do not charge there are other ways in which a person addicted to pornography pays for his or her addiction.

A#2 - Available

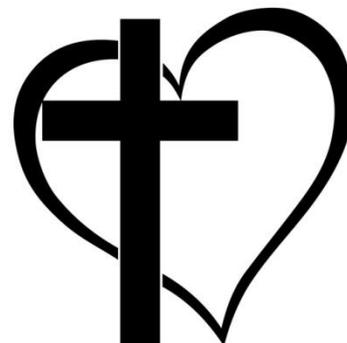
Pornography is so available. If you have a phone you are capable of looking at in appropriate images. One website that I used to use a lot for youth ministry encouraged users to report dead links or inappropriate links immediately to them so that they could disconnect them from their website. They explained that pornography websites are looking for former religious websites in order to turn them into pornography sites. Proof of this is simply that www.whitehouse.com is a pornography site and the official website for the White House is www.whitehouse.gov. I think it is safe to say that nudity in television shows and movies continues to increase also.

A#3 - Anonymous

For the most part pornography can be done in secret. The very fact that you would not view in front of others should be a good indicator that you should not be viewing the images at all.

A#4 - Accepted

Pornography is accepted by many in society but this does not mean it is right. Pornography turns a person into an object. In government and Hollywood right now there are many men



and women proclaiming that they were abused sexually by people in power. I would bet that many of these people had friends that supported their behavior at one time. They also probably have some sort of pornography addiction in their past that allowed them to stop thinking of people as people and start thinking of them as objects to be manipulated.

A#5 - Aggressive

Pornography packs a powerful punch to a person mind. It takes a lot of effort to avoid it and to fight the temptation to cave into it.

Prayer for Those Battling with Pornography

Heavenly Father, I have been living a fantasy. I hardly feel the prick of conscience anymore. I have become numb and dumbed down in my humanity. I repent of this addiction to pornography. It alienates me from those I love and it alienates me from You, my God. It's a lie, a trick of the devil. I receive the power of your blood that not only forgives me but cleanses

me. Please do forgive me.
Please cleanse me. Drive out my
sin. And help me to walk in the
light, to experience the blessing
of my sexuality under the
safeguard of your heavenly

standard. Give me
encouragement and
accountability. Set me free from
my chains. I receive Your Holy
Spirit's power to control my base
impulses and to become the

human being you have made
me to be, ruling over myself and
this world with you. Amen

Breaking Open the Word

February 4, 2018 Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time Lectionary: 74 Gospel MK 1:29-39

On leaving the synagogue Jesus entered the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John. Simon's mother-in-law lay sick with a fever. They immediately told him about her. He approached, grasped her hand, and helped her up. Then the fever left her and she waited on them. When it was evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were ill or possessed by demons. The whole town was gathered at the door. He cured many who were sick with various diseases, and he drove out many demons, not permitting them to speak because they knew him. Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed. Simon and those who were with him pursued him and on finding him said, "Everyone is looking for you." He told them, "Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come." So he went into their synagogues, preaching and driving out demons throughout the whole of Galilee.

Spiritual Reflection:

"There is no need for any special rank or position to do the work of an apostle. Do not feel uncomfortable on account of your position or that of others. Are you working for God or for status? You will, indeed, drink my cup, but as for sitting at my right hand or left, that is not mine to give—it is for those for whom it had been prepared by my Father" (Mt 20:23)" – Cardinal Francis Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan. Simon's mother-in-law does the work of an apostle after being cured.

Spiritual Questions:

1. Do you wait for a special position or title before you serve others?
2. Are you working for God or status?
3. How is Simon's Mother-in-law an example of what a true disciple should be?
4. How is Jesus able to reject the desire to become king?
5. Would you have let them carry you off and make you king?



Prayers for the Week

PRAYER OF SELF-ABANDONMENT

Father, I abandon myself into Your hands; Do with me whatever You will. Whatever You may do, I thank You. I am ready for all, I accept all. Let only Your will be done in me, And in all Your creatures. I wish no more than this, O Lord. Into Your hands I commend my spirit; I offer it to You, Lord, and so need to give myself, to surrender myself into Your hands, Without reserve and with boundless confidence, For You are my Father. Amen.

AN ACT OF ABANDONMENT (By Saint Francis De Sales)

O my God, I thank you and I praise you for accomplishing your holy and all-lovable will without any regard for mine. With my whole heart, in spite of my heart, do I receive this cross I feared so much! It is the cross of Your choice, the cross of Your love. I venerate it; nor for anything in the world would I wish that it had not come, since You willed it.

I keep it with gratitude and with joy, as I do everything that comes from Your hand; and I shall strive to carry it without letting it drag, with all the respect and all the affection which Your works deserve. Amen.

**AN ACT OF ABANDONMENT
TO DIVINE PROVIDENCE**

(By Saint Jane Frances De Chantal.)

O sovereign goodness of the sovereign Providence of my God! I abandon myself forever to Thy arms. Whether gentle or severe, lead me henceforth whither Thou wilt; I will not regard the way through which Thou wilt have me pass, but keep my eyes fixed upon Thee, my God, who guides me. My soul finds no rest without the arms and the bosom of this heavenly Providence, my true Mother, my strength and my rampart.

Therefore I resolve with Thy Divine assistance,

O my Savior, to follow Thy desires and Thy ordinances, without regarding or examining why Thou dost this rather than that; but I will blindly follow Thee according to Thy Divine will, without seeking my own inclinations. Hence I am determined to leave all to Thee, taking no part therein save by keeping myself in peace in Thy arms, desiring nothing except as Thou incite me to desire, to will, to wish. I offer Thee this desire, O my God, beseeching Thee to bless it; I undertake all it includes, relying on Thy goodness, liberality, and mercy, with entire confidence in Thee, distrust of myself, and knowledge of my infinite misery and infirmity. Amen!

Catholic Trivia

 <p>Last Week's Answers</p>	 <p>This Week's Questions</p>
<p>True or False</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Linus was the second Pope. TRUE The Emperor Constantine legalized Christianity. TRUE Philip was a brother of Andrew. FALSE Joseph's father was named Jacob. TRUE <p>-----</p> <p>Possible Answers to This Week's Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Archbishop Carlson Cardinal Burke (as a bishop) Bishop Rice Bishop Rivituso. 	<p>Identify the Coat of Arms</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div data-bbox="812 945 1071 1197">  <p>1. "Come, and you will see"</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1071 945 1331 1197">  <p>2.</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div data-bbox="812 1197 1071 1470">  <p>3.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1071 1197 1331 1470">  <p>4.</p> </div> </div>

Quotes of the Week

"Idolatry, then, is always polytheism, an aimless passing from one lord to another. Idolatry does not offer a journey but rather a plethora of paths leading nowhere and forming a vast labyrinth." — **Pope Francis**,

"And here the first word that I wish to say to you: joy! Do not be men and women of sadness: a Christian can never be sad! Never give way to discouragement! Ours

is not a joy born of having many possessions, but of having encountered a Person: Jesus, in our midst." — **Pope Francis**,

"Once man has lost the fundamental orientation which unifies his existence, he breaks down into the multiplicity of his desires; in refusing to await the time

of promise, his life-story disintegrates into a myriad of unconnected instants.” — **Pope Francis**

“We don't have to expect everything from those who govern us; that would be juvenile.” — **Pope Francis**

“Where there is truth, there is also light, but don't confuse light with the flash.” — **Pope Francis**

Pro-Life Corner

Pro-Life Quote: “When a man steals to satisfy hunger, we may safely conclude that there is something wrong in society. So when a woman destroys the life of her unborn child, it is an evidence that either by education or circumstances she has been greatly wronged.”—Mattie Brinkerhoff



Pro-Life Prayer for February: Prayer for the Unborn

Jesus, Impeccable Judge of human kind, Generous Allocator of all blessings, Thank you for the gift of life and the virtue of charity. Grant me the strength to model my life after You, Help me to refrain from any acts of judging others. Assist me so that I too may generously share with those in need. Erase from me any weaknesses of my human nature that prevent me from respecting human life in all its stages.

Allowing my soul to shine as the morning sun and be a beacon of your divine presence By Your grace may my charity towards others demonstrate a true respect for dignity of each human person. May Your name be forever praised. – Amen.

Saint Monica Society Prayer For February

Christmas Prayer for Fallen Away Catholics

Teach me, my Lord, to be sweet and gentle in all the events of life, in disappointments, in the thoughtlessness of those I trusted, in the unfaithfulness of those on whom I relied. May my example lead fallen away Catholics back to you.

Let me put myself aside, to think of the happiness of others, to hide my little pains and heartaches, so that I may be the only one to suffer from them. Teach me to profit by the suffering that comes across my path. May by example lead fallen away Catholics back to you.

Let me so use it that it may make me patient, not irritable. That it may make me broad in my forgiveness, not narrow, haughty and overbearing. May my example lead fallen away Catholics back to you.

May no one be less good for having come within my influence. No one less pure, less true, less kind, less noble for having been a fellow traveler in our journey toward Eternal Life. As I go my rounds from one distraction to another, let me whisper from time to time, a word of love to Thee. May my example lead fallen away Catholics back to you.

May my life be lived in the supernatural, full of power for good, and strong in its purpose of sanctity. May my example lead fallen away Catholics back to you. - Amen.

St. Monica Society

Please join us in praying a special prayer each month for Catholics who have fallen away from their faith.

Catholic Humor

Top 20 Catholic Pick Up Lines:

1. Let's get out of here. I know a much cozier little Catholic bookstore downtown.
2. I bet I can guess your confirmation name.
3. You've got stunning scapular-brown eyes.
4. Did you feel what I felt when we reached into the holy water font at the same time?
5. Confess here often?
6. God told me to come talk to you.
7. Catholics don't shake hands; Catholics gotta hug!
8. Did it hurt when you fell from Heaven?
9. Is it a sin that you stole my heart?
10. Wanna go to adoration together? My parish or yours?
11. How about you and me get some fish this Friday?
12. I like the black spot on your forehead.
13. God has used you to teach me what true love really is
14. Are you Saint Anthony, because you found my heart?
15. If I had a bead for every time I thought of you I would have a joyful mystery.
16. What are your plans for tonight? Feel like a Bible study?
17. The word says "Give drink to those who are thirsty, and feed the hungry", how about dinner?
18. How about a hug, sister?
19. God has used you to teach me what true love really is
20. ...So do you wanna like go to mass sometime?