

# A Letter from Fr. Walsh

Dear Parishioner,

This year, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent, the United States Bishops have asked parishes to reflect on the subject of Pornography and its negative effects on individuals and on family life. Pornography is by no means a new moral issue. Until more recent times pornographic material was usually found on the bottom shelf in the rear of magazine stores. Since the advent of the Internet, pornography has become a multi-million dollar industry and is readily available on your computer screen with a few clicks of a button. In other words, you no longer need to go looking for pornography, it comes looking for you.



The present availability of pornography is hurting many people in today's society. Pornography use impacts the relationship of children with their parents, husbands with wives and vice versa, the pastor with his community. And most importantly, our relationship with the Lord.

In November of 2015 the United States Bishops released a pastoral response to pornography, called *Create in Me a Clean Heart*. Their intention in writing that document was to:

1. **To offer healing and hope to those wounded by pornography**
2. **To raise awareness of its pervasiveness and harm**
3. **To articulate the Catholic Church's response to the pastoral crisis brought about by the production and the use of pornography.**

In the formal statement, the Bishops speak directly to parents about being proactive in relation to the issue of pornography and how they ensure that their home keeps its' status as a safe haven for all. The Bishops state, *"the use of pornography by anyone in the home deprives the home of its role as a safe haven and has negative effects throughout a family's life and across the nations."*

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent we will be celebrating the first annual **Safe Haven Sunday** with the theme **"Equipping the Family, Safeguarding Children."** This awareness effort is meant to draw our attention as a community to the seriousness of the issue of pornography and to recommit ourselves to take steps to ensure our homes are safe havens for all.

In the courtyard there are resources for you to assist with this effort, including information on how to talk to your children on the danger of the internet.

I thank you for reading this brief letter and for your willingness to deepen your awareness of this contemporary moral issue and I pray that the Holy Family of Nazareth may direct us as we continue to grow in our understanding of our faith.

Fr. Walsh