

Respect Life Respect Life Bulletin for Sunday, October 24, 2022

A Few Words About Pornography

Fifteen years ago, Charles Chaput, then archbishop of Denver, said of pornography:

Pornography is never “innocent entertainment,” no matter how private it might seem. It turns human beings into objects. It coarsens our appetites. It darkens our ability to see real human beauty. It creates impossible expectations about sexual intimacy. It kills enduring romance and friendship between the sexes. And ultimately it’s a lie and a cheat. Pornography is a cheap, quick, empty copy of the real thing — the real joy of sexual intimacy shared by a man and woman who have joined their lives in a loving marriage.

Using data from 2020, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops noted pornography’s deep infiltration through the internet:

A total of 4.2 million websites contain pornography. That is 12 percent (12%) of the total number of websites. There are 100,000 websites that offer child pornography.

Additional statistics confirm the pornography’s daily reach:

- Pornographic pages -- 420 million
- Daily pornographic search engine requests -- 68 million (25% of total search engine requests)
- Daily pornographic emails -- 2.5 billion (8% of total emails)
- Internet users who view porn -- 42.7%
- Received unwanted exposure to sexual material -- 34%
- Average daily pornographic emails/user -- 4.5 per Internet user
- Monthly Pornographic downloads (Peer-to- peer) -- 1.5 billion (35% of all downloads)
- Internet Pornography Sales -- \$4.9 billion

Pornography is a serious respect life issue. It offends human dignity. It’s an equal opportunity predator – painfully wounding adults, teens and preteens, men and women. It’s inherently social in that it inevitably hurts families, colleagues and others with whom the addicted have relationships. It’s a major public health crisis.

Significantly, the evil of pornography is little discussed, much less discredited in public by many in a position to challenge it. Certainly not by uber purveyors like mainstream media or those they support.

Some resources curated by USCCB (and viewable on its website, <https://www.usccb.org/topics/marriage-and-family-life-ministries/pornography>) include:

["Create in Me a Clean Heart: a Pastoral Response to Pornography - Abridged Version"](#)

["Pornography's Effects on Marriage and Hope for Married Couples" by Sam and Beth Meier](#)

["Raising Chaste Children in a Pornographic World" by Ryan Foley](#)

["The Role of Priests in Ministry to Those Who Struggle with Pornography" by Fr. David Songy](#)

["Wash Me Thoroughly': Healing from Pornography Use and Addiction" by Daniel Spadaro](#)