



St. Mary's Church

Dear Parish Family,

I am always impressed by the love I see in the families of our parish and I give thanks to God for your many efforts that truly uphold the dignity of marriage and family life. Thank you!

As you work hard to create safe havens for your family, I wish to bring one particular issue to your attention. It's not easy to discuss, but it's important. That issue is pornography.

In November of 2015, the Bishops of the US released a pastoral response to pornography called "Create in Me a Clean Heart." The intentions for writing this document were: to offer healing and hope to those who have been wounded by pornography; to articulate the Catholic Church's response to the pastoral crisis brought about by the production and use of pornography; and to raise awareness of its pervasiveness and harms.

Why? Because pornography is hurting so many people, including marriages and families, singles, and children. Pornography use impacts the relationships of children with their parents, husbands with their wives (and vice versa), and most importantly, our relationship with our Lord.

In the formal statement, the bishops spoke directly to parents about being proactive about the issue of pornography in the life of the home with their children and together as a married couple to ensure the home keeps its status as a safe haven for all.

Thus, on Sunday March 9, we will be observing 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 gathering area, we have free resources for you to assist with striving for healthy and holy marriages and families, including how to talk to your children about internet dangers. But you don't have to wait. You can begin learning now by joining the Safe Digital Family Challenge to receive seven days of free digital tips to help create a safer digital environment for your family. To sign up, please simply text the word SECURE to 66866.

On the reverse of this letter, additional resources are listed to equip us in making our homes a Safe Haven. As ever, I am always available to assist you however I can. May we seek the intercession of the Holy Family, and the protection of Saint Michael!

In Christ,

Father John Maria

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14833 Kutztown Road, Kutztown, PA 19530



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Lumen Christi Commission

The Diocese of Allentown has established the Lumen Christi Commission to make resources available to families and individuals.

Visit their website:

<https://www.adlumenchristi.org>

Equipped

Limited copies of the booklet are available to help Catholic parents of children growing up in this sexualized culture.

You can download a digital copy here:

https://www.adlumenchristi.org/_files/ugd/7b6341_277cb804fff64384af1cad281f25634a.pdf

Integrity Restored

The mission of Integrity Restored is to help restore the integrity of individuals, spouses, and families that have been affected by pornography and pornography addiction. Integrity Restored provides education, training, encouragement, and resources to break free from pornography, heal relationships, and to assist parents in preventing and responding to pornography exposure which is so devastating in the lives of our children.

Check out their website at:

<https://integrityrestored.com/>

Covenant Eyes

Covenant Eyes exists to help people overcome pornography and be restored and transformed. Founded in 2000, Covenant Eyes pioneered the concept of Internet Accountability. Since then, they have walked with more than 1.7 million people on the journey to a porn-free life.

Check out their website to obtain tools for becoming free of pornography:

<https://www.covenanteyes.com>

For women, there is Arise: <https://www.covenanteyes.com/arise/>

For men, there is Strive: <https://www.strive21.com/>

For couples, there is Restored Vows: <https://start.covenanteyes.com/restored-vows/>

Professional Assistance

For local professionals who specialize in assisting folks break free, check out this site:

<https://www.adlumenchristi.org/services-7>

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