



Honor Thy Children

Archdiocese of Louisville continuing education for the awareness and prevention of child abuse

PORNOGRAPHY A PRIORITY FOR U.S. CATHOLIC BISHOPS

Prevention starts with understanding

By Tommy O'Donnell

In their recent pastoral letter, "Create in Me a Clean Heart: A Pastoral Response to Pornography Use," the U.S.

Catholic bishops present authentic love as being rooted in generosity, and they explain how a society that knows

how to love authentically is built on chastity and mercy. The sin of pornography turns the user inward on the self. He or she pursues self-gratification rather than generous or self-giving actions. Those who are trapped by pornography start to lose their capacity for healthy human relationships of all kinds. Many even become addicted. In an increasingly individualistic and fragmented society, pornography use increases isolation between individuals and degrades communities. The bishops note that no one can avoid the ripple

effect of this sin: "We all suffer negative consequences from its distorted view of the human person and sexuality" (1). "The Church as a field hos-



pital is called to proclaim the truth of the human person in love" (19). Pornography clashes against this truth. As the bishops emphasize, pornography endangers souls and threatens the fabric of relationships. A society turned inward is a society that forgets how to love. A society that has forgotten how to love struggles to be able or willing to care for the most vulnerable among us: the hungry, the sick, the unborn, the elderly. Since pornography "promotes and even celebrates promiscuity and a

view of sexuality devoid of love or openness to new life," it is "implicated in contraception use and abortion" (9). As the bishops note, it also has links with

sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, which harm the dignity and lives of countless men, women,

and children around the world (11). Cultivating the virtue of chastity means learning to love others with a clean heart, one that refuses to objectify or use them in any way. It is "long and exacting work," but it is a powerful antidote to self-centeredness, individualism, and a throw-away society that objectifies and exploits others, especially the weak (5).

To all who are harmed by pornography, the bishops proclaim: "Jesus is with

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If you need support or someone to talk to:

- ☉ Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky or Indiana: 800.CHILDREN/800.422.4453 www.pcaky.org www.pcaain.org
- ☉ Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline 800.4.A.CHILD 800.422.4453 www.childhelp.org

Signs of Possible Sexual Abuse

- Unexplained pain, itching, redness or bleeding in the genital area
- Increased nightmares or bedwetting
- Withdrawn behavior
- Angry outbursts/mood swings
- Loss of appetite or difficulty swallowing
- Sudden/unexplained avoidance of certain people or places
- Sexual knowledge, language or behavior that is unusual for the child's age.

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HONOR THY CHILDREN TRAINING

Those employed or volunteering with youth must undergo a background check every 5 years as well as attend the "Honor Thy Children Training" that addresses child abuse, how to recognize it and how to report it. See your parish/school Safe Environment Coordinator if you have not sat-

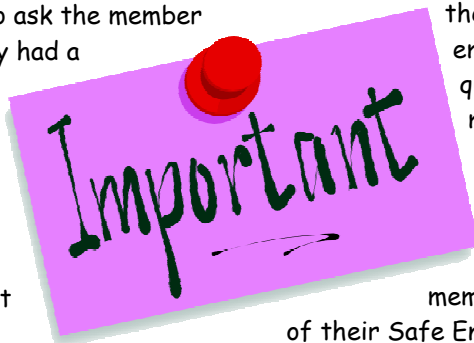
isfied either of these requirements. The "Honor Thy Children" training is a one time requirement and is normally completed within 30 days of beginning service. Each training session lasts 2 hours. The background check MUST be completed BEFORE any service/employment begins.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT COORDINATORS

Some friendly reminders for Safe Environment Coordinators.

Before submitting a background check, be sure to ask the member if they've already had a background check submitted via selection.com (this would be August 2014 and later).

If unsure contact Scott Fitzgerald (fitzgerald@archlou.org) or 502.471.2132 to check the status. We also no longer accept outside Safe Environment Trainings. Reason being is we have a Code of Conduct specific to the Archdiocese of Louisville that is reviewed in the training and the member ultimately signs off that they understand.



As always if you are filling out the background check form in it's entirety for a member (as opposed to them doing it via an email link) you are required to have the member sign a release form and you need to maintain this form on file.

Also remind your members to return a copy of their Safe Environment Completion Certificate to you after they complete the Safe Environment training. Should you have any questions or concerns don't hesitate to contact Scott Fitzgerald Coordinator of Safe Environment Services via email (fitzgerald@archlou.org) or by phone 50.471.2132.

PORNOGRAPHY (CONT...)

you, and the Church offers you love and support. Trust in and be led by the Holy Spirit. The Lord's mercy and forgiveness are abundant!" (26). We receive God's merciful gift of himself in Jesus Christ, the face of the Father's mercy. Jesus is "the way of freedom" who restores our ability to love with a clean heart (20).

As Pope Francis writes: "In mercy, we find proof of how God loves us.

He gives his entire self, always, freely, asking nothing in return. ... He comes to assist us in our weakness. And his help consists in helping us accept his presence and closeness to us. Day after day, touched by his compassion, we also can become compassionate towards others" (*Misericordiae Vultus*, 14). This Lent, may we turn outward, away from all selfishness and self-gratification. May we open ourselves

UPCOMING TRAININGS
A current list of trainings is always available at www.archlou.org/safe
All trainings are at 6:30p unless otherwise indicated.

2.25.16
St. Agnes

3.15.16
Holy Trinity-Louisville

3.21.16
Incarnation

5.25.16
Assumption High School
(10:00 a.m. start)

8.8.16
St. Gregory (Cox's Creek)

More trainings are being scheduled for both March and April and will be posted once confirmed.

Be sure to check archlou.org/safe for a complete list. Dates are subject to change and of course weather delays also effect training dates

to God's mercy. May we love others with a clean heart, caring first, not last, for the hungry and the sick, the unborn and the elderly, the afflicted and the doubtful-all those in need of love and mercy.
Be sure to read the words of mercy that the bishops offer to all people affected by pornography at www.usccb.org/cleanheart.

WHEN PARENTS ARGUE

When parents disagree, arguments can have lasting effects on children. Diana Divecha is a developmental psychologist in San Francisco who writes about children, teens, and cross-cultural family life. She recently wrote a piece about what happens to parents when kids fight and offers some good advice for resolving conflict.

"Children are like emotional Geiger counters," says E. Mark Cummings, psychologist at Notre Dame University, who, along with colleagues, has published hundreds of papers over twenty years on the subject. Kids pay close attention to their parents' emotions for information about how safe they are in the family, Cummings says. When parents are destructive, the collateral damage to kids can last a lifetime.

Here are some helpful tips for reducing conflict.

1. Lead with empathy: Open the dialog by first letting the other person know that you see them, you get them, and you can put yourself in their shoes.
2. Give your partner the benefit of the doubt: Assume the best inten-

tions and help yourself remember that you love each other by adding an endearment.

3. Remember that you're on the same team. Deal with issues by laying all the cards on the table and looking at them together to solve a dilemma



rather than digging in on opposing side then problem-solve with one another.

4. Constructive criticism only works when your partner can do something about what happened. If the deadline for soccer signup was already missed, remedy the current situation as best as possible and talk about how to do it better next time. Blaming won't fix anything that's already happened.
5. Anything that needs to be said can

be said with kindness. Disapproval, disappointment, exasperation—all can be handled better with kindness. Even if parents don't completely resolve the problem but find a partial solution, kids will do fine. In fact, their distress seems to go down in proportion to their parents' ability to resolve things constructively. "Compromise is best, but we have a whole lot of studies that show that kids benefit from any progress toward resolution," says Cummings. Both Cummings and family therapist Sheri Glucoft Wong agree that children can actually benefit from conflict—if parents manage it well. "Parents should model real life... at its best," says Sheri. "Let

them overhear how people work things out and negotiate and compromise."

However, both also agree that some content is best kept private. Discussions about sex or other tender issues are more respectfully conducted without an audience. Sheri encourages parents to get the help they need to learn to communicate better—from parenting programs, from books, or from a therapist.

ARE YOU IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP?

Domestic abuse often escalates from threats and verbal abuse to violence. No one should have to endure this kind of pain—and your first step to breaking free is recognizing that your situation is abusive. Once you acknowledge the reality of the abusive situation, then you can get the help you need. There are many



signs of an abusive relationship. The most telling sign is fear of your partner. If you feel like you have to walk on eggshells around your partner—Constantly watching what you say and do in order to avoid a blow-up—chances are your relationship is unhealthy and abusive. Other signs that you may be in an abusive relationship include a partner who belittles you or tries to control you, and

feelings of self-loathing, helplessness, and desperation.

To determine whether your relationship is abusive, answer the following questions. The more "yes" answers, the more likely it is that you're in an abusive relationship.

Do you: Feel afraid of your partner much of the time? Avoid certain topics out of fear of angering your partner? Believe that you deserve to be hurt or mistreated? Wonder if

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No child or adult should ever experience abuse by anyone, especially a church minister. We all have the right to be treated with dignity and to expect our church to reflect the goodness of God in all of its dealings.

We hope that this information is helpful to all in our communities who are working to prevent and respond to childhood sexual abuse. Please let us know if you need further assistance or information by calling or emailing our victim assistance coordinator, Ms. Martine Siegel, at 502/636-1044; victimassistance@archlou.org or the Chancery at 502/585-3291.

We must heed God's call to care for the most vulnerable among us and to continue our efforts toward wholeness and health in dealing with sexual abuse.

(...ARE YOU CONT) ARE YOU IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP

you're the one who is crazy? Feel emotionally numb or helpless?

Does your partner: humiliate or yell at you? Criticize you and put you down? Treat you so badly that you're embarrassed for your friends or family to see? Ignore or put down your opinions or accomplishments? Blame you for their own abusive behavior? See you as property or a sex object, rather than as a person?

Does your partner: Have a bad and unpredictable temper? Hurt you, or threaten to hurt or kill you?

Threaten to take your children away or harm them? Threaten to commit suicide if you leave? Force you to have sex? Destroy your belongings?

Does your partner: Act excessively jealous and possessive? Control

where you go or what you do? Keep you from seeing your friends or family? Limit your access to money, the phone, or the car? Constantly check up on you?

Domestic violence and abuse does not discriminate; it happens among heterosexual couples and in same-sex partnerships. It occurs within all age ranges, ethnic backgrounds, and economic levels. And while women are more commonly victimized, men are also abused—especially verbally and emotionally, although sometimes even physically as well. The bottom line is that abusive behavior is never acceptable, whether it's coming from a man, a woman, a teenager, or an older adult. You deserve to feel valued, respected, and safe.

Should you or someone you know experience an abusive relationship there is help available. Any potentially life threatening situations should be brought to the attention of law enforcement immediately. Should you have any questions please don't hesitate to reach out to Martine Siegel, Archdiocese Victim Assistance Coordinator at 502.636.1044 or via email msiegel@archlou.org.