

Letter from Parish Priest to Parishioners

February 9, 2020

+ St. Apollonia of Alexandria

Dear friends,

There have been many occasions throughout the course of this year where so many of you have communicated your prayers and support for me as your pastor. I am constantly humbled by your expressions of love and gratitude. Thank you! It is now my turn to once again offer my support to you and your families.

As your pastor, I am available to guide you in the life of faith. I am available to celebrate the Sacraments, rejoice with you in happy times, and cry with you during the most difficult of times. I am also available to help you with anything that is keeping you or your families away from growing in the spiritual life and developing a deeper relationship with Christ and his Church. One issue that is becoming more and more difficult for individuals, marriages, children, and families as a whole is the struggle with pornography. Regrettably, pornography can impact both children and adults spiritually, emotionally, physically and relationally.

As you work hard to protect your families, I want to equip you with the appropriate tools to form, protect and guide your families on this specific issue. Thus, on [insert date] we will be celebrating the second annual Safe Haven Sunday with the theme "Equipping the Family: Having Critical Conversations." As you may recall, Safe Haven Sunday finds its inspiration in the U.S. Bishops document *Create in Me a Clean Heart*, wherein they 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 generations."

When a parent discovers his or her child or teenager has been looking at pornography, it can be alarming, hurtful, and even frightening. In the confusion of the moment, it is

important for parents to understand that these are not uncharted waters. In the back of the church, I will provide you with a full, step-by-step guide for Catholic parents on how to navigate this difficult situation.

Once again, this awareness weekend is meant to draw our attention as a parish community to the seriousness of the issues of pornography and to recommit ourselves to take steps to ensure our homes are safe havens for all. I encourage you to begin learning now by texting SAFEKIDS to 66866 to receive seven days of free emailed digital tips.

I look forward to celebrating our second annual Safe Haven Sunday with you next weekend!

Through the intercession of the Holy Family of Nazareth, intercessors of the home, and Saint Michael, I am,

[Insert signature]

[Insert name]