

# **Steps to Freedom for Parishioners Struggling with Sexual Integrity**

## **Who comes to you for help?**

- A college student ashamed of his pornography use. He knows God is calling him to stop.
- A woman sexting with men she doesn't know. Her husband found the texts on her phone.
- A married man has broken off an affair and told his wife. It's not the first affair.
- A wife who is distraught after discovering thousands of dollars her husband spent on pornography and massage parlors.
- An executive fired from his job for surfing hours of internet porn at work.

## **Emotionally embrace them**

*I am so sorry for the pain you are in. Thank you for having the courage to tell me so I can pray for you and support you in getting to a better place.*

Secrecy kept the person in bondage. Bringing it into the light with someone who does not shame them is the first step in breaking the power of the sin.

## **Explore the history of their struggle**

Sexual weakness or sexual addiction? The 4 C's

- 1) Can't control - pattern of out of control behavior
- 2) Consequences - severe consequences due to sexual behavior (relationships, work, health)
- 3) Can't stop - even in light of the consequences
- 4) Coping mechanism - sex used to self-medicate from difficult life or emotional circumstances

Online free screening test at [www.recoveryzone.com](http://www.recoveryzone.com)

The Sexual Addiction Screening Test (SAST)

## **Steps to freedom**

Handouts to give the struggler and the spouse

Books & online resources

Understanding that God hurts with them and is waiting with open arms no matter how ashamed they feel. The Dragon Parable.

Professional Counseling - to deal with compulsions and the roots of addiction

Support Groups - to have other people walk beside them on the healing journey

## **Difficult questions you will be asked**

From the struggling person:

- Is it possible to be freed from this? I've tried to quit dozens of times.
- How do I tell my spouse? Should I tell my spouse?

From the spouse:

- Do I have grounds to divorce?
- I don't want my spouse to touch me.
- How could my partner do this to me when we loved each other?

**Recovery Happens in Community**

**Community of faith**

**Community of recovery**

*Let us throw off everything that hinders  
and the sin that so easily entangles and run with perseverance the course marked out for us.  
Hebrews 12:1*