

# Special Appeal 2024



Dear Friend of Life

As we approach our 19th anniversary, I want to offer you my heartfelt thanks for your loyal support of the John Paul II Centre for Life. I also prayerfully entrust to you our brave plans to bring hope and healing to many more people

## Just how crucial is your help?

Thanks to your support of JP2's mission over the last 19 years:

- Many babies have been welcomed into their Mother's arms, who otherwise would not have been born
- Mothers, spurned by their partners, have found confidence and hope to move forward with their pregnancies and lives
- Families have received practical help to keep their children warm, safe and clothed
- Teens and adults have learned, through the Theology of the Body (TOB) courses, about the dignity and beauty of the human person and our sexuality, our capacity for self-giving love, and have passed this truth onto their own children
- Engaged couples have heard what Catholic marriage vows actually mean, and how they can build foundations for strong, loving marriages

- Married couples have grown in love and found help to work through difficulties
- Families grieving the loss of a baby have found much needed consolation
- Women who have chosen abortion have experienced God's forgiveness and healing

Yes, we are truly thankful for your help, and for God's grace which has changed lives for the better.

But there is more work to be done. Our mission is nothing less than to build a culture where life, marriage and family can thrive.

## Let me share with you one of the things that breaks my heart.

Pornography use and sexual addictions have taken hold of society, tearing apart marriages and destroying the capacity of even faith-filled people to truly love. Pornography uses another person as an object for one's own selfish sexual pleasure. It denies their human dignity. Victims are the vulnerable: children, babies, young women and men who are insecure. At work, at home, in our secondary schools (yes, even in our Catholic Colleges), people are trading pornographic images for their own erotic pleasure. Pope Saint John Paul II wrote that the opposite of love is not hate, but use. *God never created his children to use one another.*<sup>1</sup>

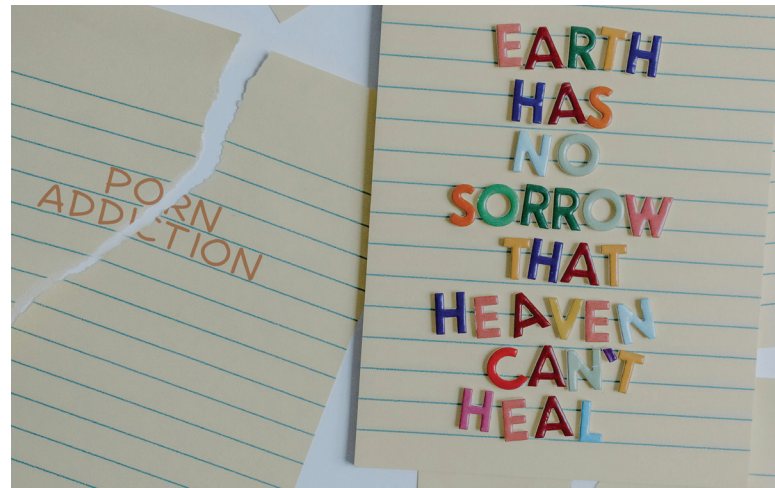
Pornography's effects on brain chemistry, along with its ability to ease emotional pain, are what make it highly addictive. Hardcore pornography, easily accessible on the internet, can have the same highly addictive effect on the brain as crack cocaine.<sup>2</sup> Once an image is seen, it cannot be unseen. Men especially, can become hooked through a single exposure, whether this was intentional or accidental.



We must expose pornography as a highly destructive force, safeguard families and marriages from the ravages of this plague, and help men and women harmed by it to find healing. Currently, families are forced to seek help from overseas experts, paying thousands of dollars in their desperate need for healing. I cannot sit by and not offer help.

## Here's what the John Paul II Centre for Life is planning for next year

- Small coaching groups for women who have been deeply wounded by their spouse's betrayal of their marriage through use of pornography, sexual chat-lines, etc
- Groups for men who want to break free from their sexual addictions
- Free phone/online counselling for youth who are starting to realise the great harm they have done to their own and others' mental and emotional health through sexting and porn use
- Experts to train priests throughout NZ in how to help men and women in the confessional, and face to face (already approved by the NZ Bishops' Conference)
- Workshops for parents, giving them tools to keep their children safe while using the internet and other resources
- Learning sessions for children, encompassing the beauty of the human person made in God's image, and how they can protect themselves from abuse
- All that – in addition to the other valuable services we offer, including marriage preparation and enrichment, support with painful life challenges such as infertility, adverse prenatal diagnosis, miscarriage, and post abortion healing



*You have trusted us in the past to work with pregnant mothers and women broken by abortion.*

*Will you now help us to restore people, marriages and families broken by pornography?*

This outreach could add as much as \$100,000 to our usual yearly budget. That is why I am turning to you for support. Please help us to build a life-giving, loving culture – heart by heart, person by person, where the dignity of men and women is esteemed and affirmed.

*Can we count on your prayer?*

*On your financial support?*

*Please give generously.*

Faithfully yours,

**Maria Schmetzer**  
Acting Director

### Footnotes

1. Theology of the Body, Love and Responsibility Pope Saint John Paul II
2. Integrity Restored, Peter Kleponis

*Special Appeal*  
2024