

Restore Testimony

Fellow Men of OLM,

Our world has completely changed, it seems, overnight with the Covid-19 pandemic. This has forced us into a lockdown that keeps us from getting together with our friends, extended family, neighbors, and fellow parishioners at Our Lady of Mercy. As Father Mark mentioned in a homily recently, we are currently suffering from not being able to receive the Holy Eucharist along with our brothers and sisters. This suffering can affect us in so many ways- spiritually, emotionally and physically.

During this time of physical absence from the Lord's house, the devil can work overtime to try and shake us from our faith. As has been the case for some time now, one of the biggest tools the devil uses to pull us from God is pornography. This can be a constant struggle for so many Christians, and the struggle can be exacerbated when stuck in the house with limited ability to be in fellowship with others.

I know about this struggle firsthand. I was addicted to pornography for over 20 years. I know the feeling of waking up in the morning with this vice at the forefront of my mind, and knowing that it will not be far from my thoughts throughout the entire day. I know the feeling of thinking that I physically cannot function without pornography, and ultimately realizing that it has taken over every aspect of my life. It affected my friendships, my family life, and my overall happiness. Eventually, after so many years of struggling to overcome this full-blown addiction, I came to the conclusion that I would never shake this struggle, and would go to my grave unhappy due to the cloud under which I was constantly living.

Through the grace of God as well as the love and support of the men and women of Our Lady of Mercy, I have been free from pornography for over 2 years now. I can finally wake up in the morning with the confidence that, with God's direction and help, I can fight the good fight and stay on the path that the Lord has carved out for me. It took me 20 years to finally realize that this battle cannot be won alone- I needed God to take control, and also needed the support of others. Over the last 2 years, I have learned that I'm not on an island- there are others just like me that want to break free from this addiction, and have been able to lean on them for assistance. As soon as I brought this issue out into the open with others, including my family, I was able to start fighting back against the evil one and make real changes in my life. I have finally started to become the husband and father that God has expected of me all along. I want others to know that they can begin winning this battle as well.

We have recently begun a new ministry at OLM called Restore. During our weekly Restore meetings, we will discuss the battles we face on a daily basis, lean on each other for support and accountability, and share ideas as to how to strengthen our resolve to stay on God's path. All men are welcome, whether you have been free of pornography addiction for many years or struggle with it every single day. We understand that this can be a sensitive topic to discuss and have taken steps to ensure the privacy of anyone who may be joining us. Correspondence is done via email, and all participants are blind copied in any correspondence sent. You are welcome to share your contact information with any other men that may be in the group or can keep your information to yourself—whatever makes you comfortable and allows you to get the most out of the group.

If you are ready to start breaking free from the grips of pornography and want to Restore your life email us at Restore.olm@gmail.com to find out more information on when and where we meet.