

# Steps to Move Past Sexual Sin

by Father Thomas J. Loya, STB, MA



## LEARN HOW TO SEE SACRAMENTALLY

I call this the “see-pray-and-pass-on” technique. We cannot avoid seeing things that are attractive and presented in sexual ways. It is all around us. So, we have to learn **how** to “see.” When we see someone attractive, even if they are dressed provocatively, we should train ourselves to turn that vision into prayer immediately. Thank God for making such beauty, and pray that God blesses that person. Pray for their salvation. Then turn our gaze and thoughts to other things.

Visit art museums or get books on art, especially books with a lot of Catholic art where the human body, even in its nakedness, was used as a motif in holy art. Learn to see the human body in its sacramentality, glory, and beauty.

## BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE *THEOLOGY OF THE BODY*

Personally, I love Pope Saint John Paul II’s teachings on the human person and sexuality, especially his books, “Love and Responsibility,” and the “Theology of the Body.”

## FEED YOURSELF ONLY ON THE BEST

Feed your mind, senses, and body only on the best things—culture, great music, art, healthy foods, books, and nature. The more that we feed ourselves on that which elevates our mind and soul, the more we lose our appetite for the banal and the pornified, which brings us to low existence levels.

## MEET YOUR HUMAN NEEDS

Come to know and meet your most legitimate needs as a person on all the levels of our existence: intellectually, spiritually, physically, emotionally, and psychologically.

Find out what makes you more genuinely alive—your truest and best version of yourself?

It is not possible to attain these needs entirely and always. But strive to meet these needs even in small ways. You cannot give what you do not have. The more fulfilled we are as persons in terms of legitimate needs (I do not mean selfish “wants”), the less vulnerable we are to the temptations of our fallen passions



## BE A GIFT TO OTHERS

Ask yourself in every moment, “How can I make a gift of myself to this person in this moment?” This is a way of “getting out of ourselves,” which is key in overcoming fallen passions. We are made by God to make a gift of ourselves. Lust and pornography are counterfeit ways to seek the fulfillment that can only be found in living the life of Christ.

## KNOW WHEN YOU ARE VULNERABLE

Come to know the most vulnerable times of your day (when sleeping, waking, being alone, etc.). Change your patterns during these times. Come to know what circumstances leave you most vulnerable—frustration, anger, disappointment, loneliness, etc. Through self-reflection, prayer, counseling, or spiritual direction, try to bring healing and better perspective to these vulnerable areas.

## BE A PERSON OF PRAYER

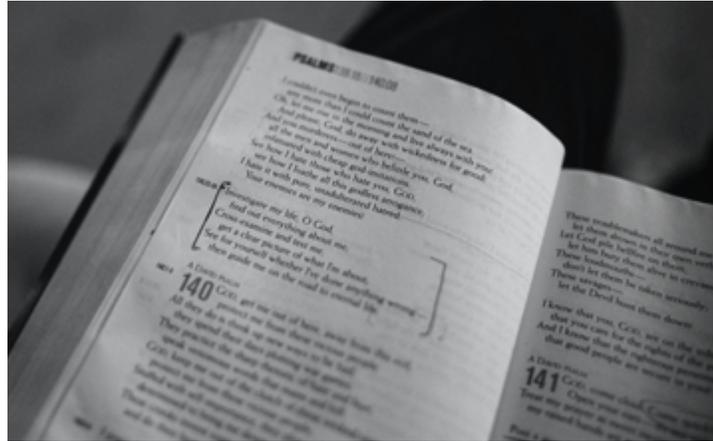
Pray, develop silence, and add Scripture and spiritual reading into your day-to-day routine.

## DO NOT RUN FROM YOUR SEXUALITY

Instead, run toward it, but with the Sacramental vision and understanding of it.

## TAKE ON THE TRADITIONS OF THE CHURCH

Have elements of monasticism and asceticism in the rhythm of your life. Observe the fasting periods of the Church. Practice saying “no” to yourself in little ways (skip dessert, read the Bible instead of looking at your iPhone or computer, etc.).



## SET GOALS FOR YOURSELF

Make manageable goals towards overcoming the power of our fallen passions. Then, gradually increase those goals.

## LIVE AND LOVE

God delights in you and wants you to have a full and good life. Get out there and live and love life!



**Father Loya** is the pastor of the Annunciation Byzantine Catholic Parish in Homer Glen, Illinois. He holds degrees in Fine Art, Theology, and Counseling. Fr. Loya is very dedicated to evangelization through media, where he is a regular guest speaker on several Catholic radio programs. His long-running radio program *Light of the East*. Fr. Loya is a conference speaker for the [Tabor Life Institute](#), where he has directed many retreats and has been a guest speaker at several international conventions. While studying for the priesthood in Rome, Fr. Loya was privileged to hear in person Saint Pope John Paul II deliver his monumental teaching on the human person now known as *The Theology of the Body*. Using his many gifts, talents, and life experience Fr. Loya uncovers the ageless beauty and genius of the Sacramental Worldview.