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**RELIGION**

## Fallen cleric acts to aid those addicted to porn

By Aaron Ogg  
Religion News Service  
Published February 23, 2007

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. -- When Justin VanAntwerp wasn't preaching the gospel, often he would look at images of naked women--sometimes five or six times a day.

"I became really good at lying and covering up my tracks," said the 29-year-old former pastor of First Baptist Church in Lawton, Mich. "I never once got caught, but on the inside I knew it wasn't right."

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VanAntwerp's 15-year battle with pornography addiction ultimately cost him his job and his marriage. He resigned his pastor position and confessed to his wife about a year and a half ago--only to have her leave "almost immediately."

The former pastor now considers it his responsibility to share his story and help others steer clear of the sin that destroyed his life.

Craig Gross, who is pastor of the online anti-porn ministry XXXChurch.com, said he hears new versions of VanAntwerp's story all too often. He defines porn as "any sexually explicit writing and/or picture intended to arouse sexual desire."

"I think we'll continue to see pastors lose jobs and lose marriages," said the California native, who now lives in Grand Rapids Township. "One of the things we always say is that porn will get you to do things you never thought you'd do."

Gross and co-founder Mike Foster gained national attention when they began frequenting porn conventions and handing out Bibles five years ago. A Web site soon followed.

The site has become a venue where those who struggle can learn more about their condition, share their experiences and find help. VanAntwerp's story is among those posted.

"I think whether you agree or disagree with what we do, people are finding out that this is an issue that needs to be talked about," Gross said.

There is also a free accountability program available for download called X3 Watch. It functions like spyware by keeping a record of "morally questionable" sites visited and e-mailing it to accountability partners specified by the user.

Though Foster resides in California, the duo still hosts a "Dirty Little Secrets" podcast together.

In addition the pastors have a traveling breakfast discussion group called "Porn and Pancakes."

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