

Wouldn't you be proud of Joseph?

We can't take all the credit for what Joseph has done. God controls Joseph, and all our students, and He gives them all the chance to earn graces. Joseph's parents have also been a key factor in his growing into a proud and successful adulthood.

Joseph began our Home Study Program (HSP) in 1981, as a ninth grader. This June he will graduate from the HSP. During those four years we feel that our educational program has encouraged Joseph to truly learn his traditional Roman Catholic Faith and to apply it to his daily life.

We didn't tell Joseph what to do, that was his idea. And that makes us even more proud of him and our HSP. We helped give him the education he needed and the incentive to use it. He did the rest.

The more "Joseph's" we can produce, the better the chances will be that we will see true peace in our time and the triumph of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. May God speed the arrival of that day.

Young Man of the Month JOSEPH BODAK



With remarkably unclouded vision and a focus as sharp as a laser beam, Joseph Bodak, a senior high school student, set his sights on doing something about the pornography readily visible and accessible to children. His singlehanded determination was all it took to shake up the town conscience of Scotia, New York on a subject which should be shaking up an entire nation.

Pornography was the last thing on Joe's mind last summer when, at the age of 17, he decided to become more independent and do his own shopping. Visiting supermarkets and other stores, he was soon confronted with displays of controversial skin magazines and paperback books, flaunting cheap nudity in areas accessible to children.

Then one day, Joe became angry about the displays. And in that single moment, all the years of moral guidance the teenager had received from his caring parents, Bessie and John Bodak, dramatically came to fruition. For Joe needed no Edmund Burke to remind him that "the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." He instinctively knew that something had to be done about the psychological assaults on

children and as he pointed out, that "things will get worse if left unchecked." He also knew that with rights go responsibilities.

So Joe Bodak took on that responsibility and set out on foot with a petition asking the Village Board of Trustees to protect children from damaging exposure to pornography. Ringing one doorbell after another, Joe approached 370 Scotians, and 350 unhesitatingly signed.

Joe's petitions resulted in a January 9th public hearing before the Board of Trustees on a proposed minors' display ordinance, similar to the one unanimously passed last June in Schenectady. Although the four-man Board failed to pass the bill, the moral victory remained Joe's. His appeal to Scotia's conscience motivated merchants to voluntarily cover skin magazines or place them behind counters. Arguments rallied by the majority at the hearing had raised consciousness to the fact that hardcore pornography is not only corrupting, but also illegal. His petition drive had become an expression of community standards, upon which obscenity laws are partially based. And Mayor John A. Ryan, who praised Joe's "noteworthy persistence," pledged publicly to support strict enforcement of the state's obscenity law.

And so Joe Bodak, singlehandedly, has placed the ball squarely in the court of Scotia's mayor and district attorney for protection of not only children, but also the entire community from the dehumanizing effects of pornography, through enforcement of the obscenity law. That's quite a victory, in itself.

In a telephone interview, Joe, now 18, tells how incredible peer pressure to view porn magazines begins as early as the 7th grade with no recognition that the distorting material is exploitive of sex. He expresses concern that too many lax parents aren't paying attention and that "too many priests and ministers are starting to lose the respect of their people by not being more active."

As for a future career, Joe is undecided but leans toward math and science with time left over for a little music in his life. He's a rusty trombonist. Politics? "I'd rather skip it," he says and then reflects, "But if we ended up with nothing but crooked politicians, well, as a last resort, I'd have to jump in."

Joseph Bodak, whose generation will be the fathers and mothers of tomorrow, is an inspiring example of the growing ranks of young Americans who are already jumping into the fray in protest of pornography. Joe's trombone may be rusty, but his mind is clear as a bell as he now jars the conscience of America with the question: What are you doing to protect innocent children from the perversions of "adult" pornography?

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