

control. If we do, sooner or later, the demons will trick us and we will not be able to resist the urges of our body. Don't forget that in teenagers the sexual drive is much stronger than it is in older people.

Our first weapon should be prayer and this will be effective if we live a Church centred life. We need to say our prayers, keep the fasts, give money to the poor, go to confession and take Holy Communion regularly. If we think that we are getting carried away with any physical contact we should use prayer as a weapon and call on Christ and the Mother of God to help us.

### **What things are we not allowed to do?**

Today, sex education in British schools starts earlier and earlier, and gets more explicit as each year goes by. Children discuss things in class and watch videos that would have been too explicit for adults to watch in the cinema not many years ago. The message sent out by these official sex education lessons is that any type of sex is OK, no matter what you do, or how old you are, as long as pregnancy is avoided.

In Britain, this state sponsored attitude to sexual relations is one of the biggest dangers facing young Orthodox Christians. In this country, young Orthodox people don't suddenly decide to stop believing in God or join another religion. They are simply worn down by these outside pressures and end up in a relationship which they think, puts them beyond the help of the Church. They either think that the attitude of the Church to their relationship is too strict or they feel that because things have gone so far, it's too late to come back to the Church.

Instead of letting schools and governments decide what is right or wrong, we shall confront these issues head on bearing in mind the words of the Apostle Paul that it is a *'shame to speak of those things that are done by them in secret.'*

Even within marriage, the Church sets boundaries to help couples avoid fornication and unnatural sexual acts. You may find that some Orthodox youth groups discuss these matters quite openly, but this is not a good idea as it can open our minds to suggestions and a desire to experiment.