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Defending the indefensible

It's sad to see Jon McDonnell (Youth Views, July 20) defending the indefensible from such an ill-informed position.

A priest can be defrocked; deprived of the rank and function of priest, disallowed to wear a collar, representing in any manner he's a priest. The bishops decided against that zero-tolerance policy, leaving that decision to the discretion of the same bishops who enabled the sexual abuse of thousands of children. The fox still guards the hen house. In June 2001, the book "Betrayal" stated Cardinal Bernard Law admitted "17 years earlier he'd given Father (John) Geoghan a job as parochial vicar of an affluent suburban parish, despite having been notified just two months previously that Geoghan was alleged to have molested seven boys ... one just 4 years old." Law isn't incompetent. As a co-conspirator, he's a criminal. Boston authorities may file criminal charges against him.

I'm stunned McDonnell characterizes the responsibility of Catholic hierarchy to protect children from sexually abusing priests in terms that suggest they were mediating nothing more serious than some kind of playground dispute, excusing their willful engagement in criminal conspiratorial activities as "trying their level best to please both sides." Perhaps parental guidance could help this young man to understand this is about immoral criminal behavior not the mediation of a playground dispute. Instead of defending Law's behavior, McDonnell should be demanding accountability and change from his church and thanking God he's not one of those other children who is "directly involved in the issue."

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