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## Letter writer misses point of Catholic Church problems

To the editor:

Peggy Loonan is absolutely right in her criticism of the Catholic Church and its failure (through the bishops) to prevent the tragic sex abuse of innocent persons. There is tremendous sadness in the Catholic Church because of it.

However, Peggy missed the point when she implies that the Catholic Church has exerted its moral authority over the modern world. Moral authority over whom? Obviously, it has had no claim of moral authority over Ms. Loonan and has had little effective moral persuasion over its own members. Catholics are just as likely to use artificial contraceptives as non-Catholics. They see no harm in premarital sex or the practice of homosexuality and many Catholics are openly pro-abortion.

The problem in the church has not been too much moral authority but too little. The bishops have indeed failed but their failure lies as much in the lack of good moral and spiritual teaching as in the manner in which they handled moral failure when it occurred.

Had Loonan been more honest, she would have exposed the real problem in the church — the practice of homosexuality. With a little more research, Loonan would have discovered that 90 percent of the reported incidents of priestly misconduct involved the abuse of adolescent boys and young adult males. She would have learned that Catholic seminaries welcomed and coddled homosexual men. The consequences of this unfortunate action should easily have been foreseen.

Finally, if Loonan was saying that moral authority is equated with official church teaching, she missed the point. Official church teaching will continue to oppose the killing of the unborn, premarital sex, the practice of homosexuality, divorce and remarriage despite the existence of this present scandal.

Both cleric and Loonan have the right to either choose or reject what is good.

Official church teaching does not take away free will. It can only present "The Truth." It is up to the hierarchy and the laity to embrace it. If not, the sadness known as sin in the world will continue to be present and evident to all.

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