

Letter to the editor

Feb 25/96

## What About the Truth?

This letter is in response to the letter written in December in the Standard Freeholder by A.D. MacDonell, on behalf of 11 former altarboys giving their full support to the innocence of the priest accused of sexual abuse. I can no longer sit idly by and say nothing about this.

I am completely disgusted with this letter. How can these former altarboys conclude that they are more qualified than anyone else to judge that these allegations are completely false? Just because of the mere fact that they were not victims, does not necessarily mean that there were not any victims. Research the facts on these kinds of incidents. There usually are more "untouched" people than there are victims. That is partly why they can get away with it for so long, before they are caught.

Take a professional thief for example. Just because he doesn't rob every house in a neighbourhood, does it mean he is not a thief? No! What does he do? He stakes out the neighbourhood and finds his most vulnerable victims (houses), which also pose the least risk of getting caught. Think about it!

Yes, everyone had a right to believe in what they believe, whether they are right or wrong. I am also a former altarboy of this priest in question. Although I am not a victim, I was the head altarboy at St. Columban's Church at the reported times of these incidents. I have been an avid Catholic all my life, until the past few years. I can no longer condone the insensitive way in that the church chooses to handle these cases. I feel that the Catholic Church is not living up to its responsibilities of upholding truth and

goodness to mankind, above all else. Instead the church seems to be more interested in covering up these continuous incidents of sexual abuse within itself. Why?

I think the public deserves the right to know the whole truth. This has not been the case after years of delays, for whatever the reasons, since the first victim came forth.

Yes, it is up to the courts to determine the final question of the guilt or innocence of this priest. But, we can ask for the truth! Put your emotions aside and demand to get the truth out. We owe it to the victims who have lost their childhood innocence. But, above all else, we especially owe it to all the children out there, because they deserve to keep their innocence intact. Think about it! IT IS TIME.

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