

Sympathize with youths, not priests

I am writing in response to a Nov. 21 letter concerning the Catholic Church and circling vulture lawyers.

Of course there will always be certain people looking to profit from others' pain and unfortunate experiences. But give me a break. "These individuals no longer afford the Catholic Church the dignity and sanctity due to the church instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ." What about the children who were allegedly hurt and abused by these priests — the very people they were taught to trust and look up to?

I was raised a Catholic, as are my children, but the days of not questioning the church for fear of angering God are over.

These people need to be held accountable for their actions. Not one day at the hand of God, but now, by our justice system.

For too long, people of the Catholic faith have been scared of rocking the boat, or actually questioning the church's beliefs. The only way to put a stop to these horrible, unfortunate acts is to stand up and speak up.

No one has crossed the line here except for the people responsible for these reprehensible acts.

MAUREEN STEELMAN
Absecon

In The Press, I read about the group of Catholic priests who allegedly molested young boys for sexual satisfaction, and that these men would "share" the children amongst them like pimps on the street. Now the Catholic Diocese is saying that possibly, after extensive "treatment," these same priests could be placed back within the church to worship and teach again. I am appalled that the Catholic Diocese would even consider such a notion!

If that criminal indecency were performed by someone other than a priest, they would be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, and I feel that these men should receive the same treatment.

Now I read in a Nov. 21 letter that one particular individual says that she feels "sorry" for these men and that we should pray for them and not prejudge them. Come on! Those children identified those priests and told their story, which was most likely a very painful memory for them to relive. Had this happened to one of her children, maybe she wouldn't be so sym-

pathetic toward these men.

I attended Catholic school for 12 years and now my two young sons are attending Catholic school. Yes, I admit that the celibacy rule may be too harsh, but why turn to young boys to satisfy a sexual urge? They knowingly took those vows of celibacy when they decided to become priests. Let them go and find other ways to fulfill their needs. Don't seduce young boys who are innocent to sex and ruin their lives forever.

I feel very strongly that if these men are allowed to teach and be placed back within the church after this so-called "treatment," I intend to take my children out of Catholic school for good. I always considered the Catholic school a safe environment. Now I question that consideration and my standing as a Catholic, should this idea go through.

MICHELE MATTHEWS
Villas