

# IF ONLY PRIESTS WERE TEACHERS

If priests were teachers, they would be afforded special protections under state law, insulated from changes in the statute of limitations, never be fired (meaning they would be kept in ministry), treated with kid gloves by the media, and generally be held unaccountable for misconduct.

Michael Goodwin, a columnist for the *New York Post*, recently cited documents showing that 7,300 teachers in New York City have been found deficient to teach but are protected by unions, at a cost of well over \$100,000 each in salary and benefits. Moreover, *there are some 500 teachers who have been convicted of criminal offenses, "including assault, sex crimes, kidnapping, burglary, prostitution and lewdness."* [Our emphasis.]

This is nothing new. We know from previous studies that approximately 10 percent of public school students nationwide have been sexually victimized by teachers and other staffers. Four years ago it was reported that the incidence of sexual abuse in New York State had tripled in recent years. Last year, we learned that New York City was laying out over \$40 million a year in salaries alone for teachers not to teach, many of whom were charged with sexual molestation. To top things off, New York City still has no background checks for new teachers (last year a former prostitute got tenure after her former status was disclosed).

Unlike the situation with priests accused of wrongdoing, these are not old accusations. But don't look for Jay Leno or "The View" girls to weigh in on this issue. It is obviously not the offense that gets them exercised, it's the status of the offender.