

Robertson Misses the Mark on Celibacy

Pat Robertson, host of “The 700 Club,” had this to say yesterday about sex abuse by Catholic priests: “I’m not Catholic so I’m hardly one to advise the Church, but I do think the policy of celibacy leads to this kind of behavior, and one day they’re going to have to re-evaluate it.”

Studies tell us, however, that sexual abuse of minors is no more prevalent in the Catholic priesthood than in the overall population. What’s more, Hofstra University researcher Charol Shakeshaft found that public school employees have the nation’s highest rate of child sexual abuse. Last time we checked, no celibacy vow was required of public school employees.

Robertson’s argument is rendered even more off-base by the fact that the vast majority of Catholic priests—at least 98% of them—have never molested a minor. If celibacy caused men to molest kids, then why are most Catholic priests innocent of it?

Robertson’s “700 Club” co-host, Terry Meeuwsen, chimed in by claiming that priestly celibacy is “not spiritual.” Jesus and St. Paul – neither of whom were married, and both of whom extolled the virtues of celibacy for religious reasons – might disagree.