

SLAMMING PRIESTS AND NUNS

It pains the Catholic League to learn of news reports involving the sexual indiscretion of a priest or nun. The league's position is to issue no comment on those in the media who fairly criticize the Church for not doing enough to check this (or any other) problem. But when criticism extends beyond allegedly culpable sources to the entire corpus of priests and nuns, then it is time for the league to act. Such a time recently came when a South Carolina newspaper, the *News and Press*, published an editorial that crossed the line.

The Darlington newspaper began its editorial commenting on the light sentence given to a Catholic priest charged with sexually abusing a 13-year-old boy. This was entirely legitimate. But then came the indefensible charge that celibacy is the putative cause of pedophilia. Worse still was the comment that sexual improprieties are standard fare for priests and nuns.

"This incident," the editorial said, "is but the latest over hundreds of years involving priests and nuns sworn to celibacy. There are unknown nameless, infants buried in convents all over the world." And we thought Maria Monk was dead.

The league wrote a letter to the publisher and the editor of the newspaper asking for an apology for this "malicious attack."