

“Cold Case” on the Church

Catholic nuns in the 1960s who listened to Church teaching were cruel and showed little compassion for girls who got pregnant out of wedlock. Or so “The Good-Bye Room,” the March 4 episode of the CBS drama “Cold Case,” would lead viewers to believe.

In the show, a young pregnant girl named Hillary is sent to St. Mary’s Home for Unwed Mothers in 1964. Hillary is killed the day after she gives birth, and an investigation is launched into the home and the religious sisters who run it. Though not responsible for Hillary’s murder, the head of the home, Sister Margaret, sells illegitimate babies on the black market. She tells the pregnant girls they are not good people, and that they got pregnant because bad things happen to bad people.

When Sister Margaret is questioned in the present day about selling babies years ago, she blames her crimes on the Catholic Church. She claims, “The Church told us they were unfit mothers and would do it again if we did not reform them. I had to believe that to do what I did.”

The Catholic League wouldn’t object to the portrayal of a criminal nun, but when she is shown to turn to crime because she is motivated by what she is told by “the Church,” it’s a little too much. Add to that the fact that the show digs up the tired cliché about nuns hitting kids with rulers, and we have to ask CBS, is this what your network thinks of Catholicism?