

Pope Says Some Priests 'Violated' Rights of Children

February 08, 2010, 03:06 PM EST

By Flavia Krause-Jackson

Feb. 8 (Bloomberg) -- Pope Benedict XVI, poised to write an open letter to Irish Roman Catholics addressing sex-abuse scandals that have rocked the church, said some clergy violated the rights of children.

While the church's mission was to protect minors, "unfortunately, in different instances, certain of its members went against this commitment and violated rights," the pontiff said in a speech to members of the Pontifical Council for the Family that was posted on the Vatican Web site today. "The Church will continue to deplore and condemn such behavior"

Benedict has drawn fire for being too slow to respond to reports last year documenting widespread abuse of children by priests in Ireland and efforts by church authorities to cover up the crimes. The pope waited for more than two weeks to react officially to a November report that said the Irish hierarchy was more concerned with avoiding scandal than protecting children.

"These are more meaningless and self-serving words from the Vatican," Barbara Dorris, a director at the Chicago-based SNAP, Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, said in an e-mailed statement. "How many times does the Pope get to 'condemn' clergy sexual abuse while doing virtually nothing to stop it?"

A separate report published in Ireland in May said the rape and beating of children was "endemic" in church-run institutions from the 1930s. Four Irish bishops have tendered their resignations and church leaders have been summoned to Rome next week to discuss the scandals.

<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2010-02-08/pope-benedict-says-some-priests-violated-rights-of-children.html>