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Card. O?Brien?s apology is weak, SNAP says

Dennis Coday | Mar. 4, 2013 NCR Today
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The **apology of Scottish Cardinal Keith O'Brien** [1], who over the weekend admitted to improper sexual conduct with priests of his archdiocese, "is weak, vague, belated and thus hollow sounding," David Clohessy , executive director of the U.S.-based abuse survivor's group, SNAP said in a press statement released late March 3.

"Still, it's encouraging and healthy any time any corrupt Catholic official is publicly exposed and experiences any consequences ? however slight ? for abusing trust, hurting others and hiding misdeeds," the statement from Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests.

Clohessy and Barbara Dorris, SNAP's outreach director, are in Rome trying to ensure the cause of victims of clergy sexual abuse are not forgotten as church leaders gather ahead of the conclave that will choose the next pope.

Last week, after allegations of improper sexual contact surfaced from four men, O'Brien resigned as archbishop of Saint Andrews and Edinburgh in Scotland and announced that he would not attend the conclave electing the new pope.

"It would have been far better had church figures in Rome and in the UK publicly condemned or disciplined O'Brien. It's only a tiny step forward when wrongdoers essentially get to pick their own punishment," Clohessy's statement said.

Clohessy and Dorris passed out leaflets March 3 before an evening Mass at Basillica San Clemente, Via Di San Giovannni, which they believe is a neighborhood in which a number of priests who have been credibly accused of abusing minors either lived or worked in the last decade.

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