

# HATE SPEECH

Below is a small sample of some of the vitriol that has been directed towards Pope Benedict XVI and the Catholic Church over the past few months. All comments appear in their original form:

**Irene Monroe, Huffington Post, April 1:** "But when you have a pope more invested in doctrinal debates than personal suffering, and more invested in exerting his ecclesiastical power in defrocking dissident theologians than his priestly flock of sex predators, then it's easy to comprehend why the decades-long pleas and petitions from Catholic parishioners—worldwide—to Pope Benedict XVI to do something never made anything happen."

**Roseanne Barr, "Roseanne World Blog," April 3:** "I am starting to think that any parent who takes their kids to catholic churches from now on should lose custody. Taking your kid where you know sex offenders hang out is inexcusable!!!"

**Leonce Gaiter, Huffington Post, April 3:** "Now, with evidence that the current Pope enabled the rape of children by his priests through inaction, it is appropriate to examine the Church's suitability to dictate morality and spirituality to the rest of the world."

**Rosie O'Donnell, "Rosie O'Donnell Show," April 5:** "I mean, if there was an organization, let's just say the- you know, the- I don't want to say that, but the Boys' Club, or one of the- you know, had the history of child abuse- you know, child torture and rape that the Catholic Church has, would you ever give money to the Boys' Club or the Girls' Club?...I'm saying that, to support an organization that- at the top of the infrastructure, are people willing to ignore the mass child abuse and torture and sexual molestation of its own constituents. I mean, it's almost like when you read about-

you know, cults, Jonestown and all these cults- that they allow- you know, sexual perversity and sexual behavior.”

**Andy Ostroy, Huffington Post, April 7:** “The Church remains cavalier in its denial and arrogant defense of itself and of its failed self-policing mechanisms. It acts as if it’s above the law and shrouds itself in secrecy, and its predatory monsters are afforded leniency and forgiveness no other common criminal would receive.”

**Cindy Rodriguez, Huffington Post, April 9:** “The Church not only attracts sexual deviants, it protects them.”

**Derek Beres, Huffington Post, April 14:** “If only these men would put down the bible and pick up a biology book, they would understand that forcing any man into celibacy as theological mandate for righteousness is physically demeaning and emotionally damaging.”

**Michele Somerville, Huffington Post, April 26:** “The pimping of children and the readiness to sacrifice them on the altar of Vatican public relations, the fear and distrust of women, and the compulsory celibacy for priests—are all interrelated. They’re bundled in the twisted, deep-rooted tangle of the erotic pathology that burns within and radiates outward from the College of Cardinals, pitting the Church’s venality against the gentleness of the Christ in its people. The Vatican’s megalomaniacal dysfunctions and failures of imagination—which take the forms of misogyny, homophobia, anti-Semitism, and a readiness to victimize its most vulnerable—are inextricably bound; they are low-hanging fruit of the poisoned tree of the Vatican’s commitment to ruling by fear, when it should be guiding by love.”

**Christopher Hitchens, Newsweek, May 3:** “The case for bringing the head of the Catholic hierarchy within the orbit of law is easily enough made. All it involves is the ability to look at a naked emperor and ask the question ‘Why?’ Mentally remove

his papal vestments and imagine him in a suit, and Joseph Ratzinger becomes just a Bavarian bureaucrat who has failed in the only task he was ever set—that of damage control.”

**Alex Wilhelm, Huffington Post, May 5:** “It does not appear that there was a time that the Church was effective at preventing child abuse—this is a problem that reaches back to the earliest days of its formation and practice.”