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# Ratzigner and the Calif. priest (part II)

Dennis Coday | Apr. 9, 2010 NCR Today

Here is more from The Associated Press story that I blogged on earlier

> **LOS ANGELES** -- The future Pope Benedict XVI resisted pleas to defrock a California priest with a record of sexually molesting children, citing concerns including "the good of the universal church," according to a 1985 letter bearing his signature.
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> The [Oakland, Calif.] diocese recommended removing [Stephen] Kiesle (KEEZ'-lee) from the priesthood in 1981, the year Ratzinger was appointed to head the Vatican office which shared responsibility for disciplining abusive priests.
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> The case then languished for four years at the Vatican before Ratzinger finally wrote to Oakland Bishop John Cummins. It was two more years before Kiesle was removed.
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> In the November 1985 letter, Ratzinger says the arguments for removing Kiesle are of "grave significance" but added that such actions required very careful review and more time. He also urged the bishop to provide Kiesle with "as much paternal care as possible" while awaiting the decision ?
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> But the future pope also noted that any decision to defrock Kiesle must take into account the "good of the universal church" and the "detriment that granting the dispensation can provoke within the community of Christ's faithful, particularly considering the young age." Kiesle was 38 at the time.

Read the full account here: Future pope stalled pedophile case [1]

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[1] http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/04/09/AR2010040903109.html