

WORCESTER

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Effect of Holley plea uncertain

By George B. Griffin
Staff Reporter

WORCESTER — Lawyers and church officials are uncertain how Tuesday's guilty plea in New Mexico of David A. Holley on child rape charges will affect similar allegations here.

Holley, a former Roman Catholic priest of the Worcester diocese, pleaded guilty to molesting eight boys during the 1970s while he was in New Mexico for psychiatric treatment.

Holley served at parishes in the Worcester diocese from 1958 to 1969. In 1972, the Worcester diocese sent Holley to Jemez Springs, N.M., for treatment for pedophilia at a center run by the Servants of the Paraclete, a religious order.

While there, Holley served as a priest in New Mexico parishes, where the offenses he admitted to committing occurred.

In December, Bruce E. Pasternack, a New Mexico lawyer, filed a lawsuit against the Worcester diocese on behalf of two of Holley's alleged victims, saying that the diocese had an "affirmative duty" to warn the people of New Mexico of Holley's sexual problems.

Pasternack yesterday said he did not know what effect the criminal

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Accusers 'shocked' and pleased

By Kathleen A. Shaw
Staff Reporter

Two men who said they were molested by the Rev. David Holley when he was working as a priest in the Worcester Diocese yesterday said they were pleased that he pleaded guilty to molesting boys in New Mexico.

Thomas D. Sapauskas of Methuen said recently that he was molested by Holley when the priest was serving at Our Lady of Fatima Church, Worcester, about 1967. "I'd like to know how many children he got to," Sapauskas said yesterday.

Sapauskas, who is now represented by lawyer Mark J. McNally of North Andover, said he was sad to hear of sodomy allegations made by men in New Mexico. "I was lucky, I guess. I could have been sodomized," he said.

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conviction would have on the civil lawsuit against the Worcester diocese.

Monsignor Edmund T. Tinsley, vicar general of the Worcester diocese, said, "All that we would know is what we read in this morning's Telegram."

He noted the criminal and civil cases involving Holley were different, but could not say whether one would have an effect on the other.

James Reardon, lawyer for the diocese, declined comment "because it's pending in court."

Holley served locally at St. Philip's Church in Grafton, St. Denis Church, East Douglas, St. Mary of the Hills Church, Boylston, and Our Lady of Fatima Church, Worcester.

In the days following the filing of the lawsuit in New Mexico, some area men said they also had been sexually assaulted by Holley when they were boys in the 1960s in the Worcester area.

Boston lawyer Roderick J. MacLeish, whose law firm represents four people who have brought sexual assault allegations against Holley, said Holley's guilty

plea did not involve any of his clients.

Some of those people also have complained to District Attorney John J. Conte, alleging that Holley sexually assaulted them when they were children.

Conte has an "active investigation" into those complaints, a spokeswoman for the district attorney said.

MacLeish criticized what he said was a lack of support for sexual assault victims by the Worcester diocese.

"It's highly unfortunate that the Worcester diocese has done nothing," MacLeish said. "We have cases elsewhere in Massachusetts and around the country. But the Worcester diocese has done nothing for these alleged victims. This is a departure from every single one of the dioceses I have dealt with."

"There's no counseling that's being offered to these people. Originally, I thought Bishop (Timothy J.) Harrington was making positive overtures by setting up the hotline. But right now, there's no excuse for not offering assistance."

Accusers pleased with guilty plea

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William Schultz of Natick, who said he was molested by Holley at St. Mary of the Hills Church, Boylston, in the mid-1960s said of the court proceedings, "I was shocked that it all happened so fast and that he pleaded guilty," he said. Schultz, who is represented by lawyer Roderick MacLeish of Boston, said he believes the guilty plea in New Mexico bodes well for any future civil or criminal action in Massachusetts.

Holley was a priest of the Worcester Diocese until the late 1960s when he was sent by the diocese to Servants of the Paraclete in New Mexico for treatment of pedophilia, which is sexual attraction by an adult to children. The sexual abuse allegations to which Holley pleaded guilty happened while he was in that state.

Sapauskas said he was 14 and

used to play basketball in the parish gymnasium. "On our first encounter, Father Holley called me into the back room," he said. Other boys laughed and told the youth he was about to be surprised. He said Holley showed him Playboy and Penthouse magazines and asked if he had a girl friend or was having sex. "I was shocked. All I remember is saying, 'Isn't this a sin?' To this day I don't remember his answer," he said. Holley then fondled him. The following day Sapauskas said he was at one of the local soda shops that young people hung around in then and Holley threw him down two packs of cigarettes. "I felt like I was a cheap whore," he said.

Sapauskas said the other boys told him afterward that he knew that Holley was going to molest him because the same thing had happened to them.