

Ex-altar boy sues over alleged sex abuse by priests

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ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — A 34-year-old Albuquerque man alleges in a lawsuit that he was sexually abused from 1987 to 1990 by three priests in Alamogordo, including one who died while serving a lengthy prison term in New Mexico.

Eran McManemy contends he was raped in 1990 by the Rev. David Holley at St. Jude's Catholic Church in Alamogordo, where McManemy served as an altar boy, according to the lawsuit.

McManemy also alleges that he was physically restrained during the rape by the Rev. Dan Barfield, who served as pastor of St. Jude's from about 1990 until his death in 2003. Holley did not hold an official post at St. Jude's at the time but had been invited by Barfield as a "guest" at the church, the lawsuit said.

The lawsuit, filed Monday in 1st Judicial District Court in Santa Fe, further alleges that McManemy was sexually and physically abused in the late 1980s by the Rev. Wilfred Diamond, who served as pastor of St. Jude's from 1981 to 1988.

Holley pleaded guilty in 1993 to sexually molesting eight boys in Alamogordo and was sentenced to 275 years in prison. Holley served as an assistant pastor at St. Jude's in the mid-1970s.

He died in prison in 2008 at age 81, a New Mexico Department of Corrections spokeswoman said.

The lawsuit also names the Diocese of Las Cruces and the Archdiocese of Santa Fe as defendants, alleging that the church hierarchy was aware that Holley had sexually abused boys since the 1960s and did nothing to prevent the attacks.

"In 30 years, nobody picked up the phone and called 911," said Merit Bennett, a Santa Fe attorney representing McManemy. As a result, Holley "has just ruined the lives of we don't know how many kids."

Phone messages left with the Diocese of Las Cruces on Wednesday were not returned.

The Rev. John Cannon, chancellor of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe said through a spokeswoman that, "to the best of our knowledge," none of the priests named in the lawsuit had worked for the archdiocese. Cannon declined further comment.

New Mexico court and prison records do not show that Barfield or Diamond ever faced criminal charges or lawsuits.

Holley was sent in 1971 by a Massachusetts diocese to the Servants of the Paraclete in Jemez Springs after he was accused of molesting boys, according to the lawsuit.

He served in a variety of parish churches in the Diocese of El Paso and as a chaplain at hospitals in Amarillo, Texas and Denver in the 1970s and 1980s, the lawsuit said.

The Servants of the Paraclete became notorious in the 1990s as a destination for pedophile priests at its treatment facility in Jemez Springs. Many of those priests were later assigned to parish churches throughout the region, giving them access to additional victims. The Servants closed the compound in 1995 after dozens of lawsuits were filed against the religious order and the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

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