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## Priest gets 275 years in prison for molestation

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ALAMOGORDO, N.M. — A retired Roman Catholic priest was sentenced to a maximum 275 years in prison yesterday for molesting eight boys 20 years ago.

Father David A. Holley showed no emotion as Judge Robert M. Doughty 2d handed down the sentences that would require Father Holley to serve a minimum of 55 years in prison. Based on the minimum sentence, he could be eligible for parole in 18½ years.

He was immediately taken into custody by the Otero County Sheriff's Department and will be held until he can be transferred to a state prison.

Father Holley, 65, pleaded guilty March 23 to eight molestation counts, including charges of sexual assault, sodomy and aggravated sodomy, primarily involving oral and anal sex.

"These offenses are serious. . . . The position from which you committed these offenses shocked this court," Doughty said in sentencing Father Holley.

Father Holley had been sent to New Mexico for treatment after being accused of repeatedly molesting two altar boys in an East Douglas, Mass., parish in 1960.

Five of Father Holley's New Mexico victims testified during the hearing.

District Attorney Bert Atkins said he hoped the sentence would "send a very strong message to everyone out there who may be feeling they are capable of committing this act."

But Father Holley's lawyer, Robert McDowell, said the sentence would be punishment for more people than just Father Holley.

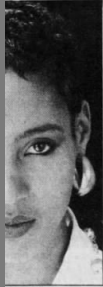
"My concern with that kind of sentence is that I think it inhibits other priests who are in David Holley's situation from coming forward and seeking help," McDowell said.

He said Father Holley "continued to maintain how remorseful and sad he is over what has happened in the past. But at the same time, he is willing to serve his sentence and he accepts it."

The offenses, involving boys aged 10 to 13, occurred from 1972 to 1974 while Father Holley served at St. Jude Mission Church in Alamo-gordo.

Before being sentenced, Father Holley told the judge he not seen his victims in more than 20 years.

"When they shared their pain, their embarrassment, their anguish, their suffering, I was able to identify with them," he said.



**PRISON**

**Harrison, 16**  
Miss Roxbury 1993

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**Sullivan, 83**  
worker, reporter

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