

Daniel Holihan

DCFS Says 13 Allegations are credible, but Archdiocese and State's Attorney "cooperate" to make sure no charges are filed

Cleric sent back to parishes where he spends more time with kids

At least 20 alleged victims

With a victim count numbering in the 20s, Daniel Holihan's history shows how "cooperation" between the Archdiocese and the State's Attorney's office allowed a child predator to escape prosecution and continue to access and abuse children.

The Archdiocese first reportedly learned about allegations against Holihan (called "Happy Hands Holihan" by kids) in 1986. Parishioners and a school principal wrote Cardinal Bernardin and the Vicar for Priests to complain. Parish boys also said that they witnessed the abuse.

Holihan was put on leave in 1990, but a rectory cook came forward and reported to the Archdiocese that she saw Holihan in bed with a boy and taking other boys to his room during the time he was supposed be on restriction. The Archdiocese went into crisis mode to make sure that the information did not become public.

After a police report and investigation, the State's attorney worked with the Archdiocese and did not pursue charges, saying that a trial will just re-traumatize the victims. Bishop Raymond Goedert claimed as a result that the big problem after the investigation will be helping the priest rebuild his reputation if DCFS "walks away."

DCFS did not "walk away" and found 13 allegations against Holihan to be credible ("indicated") but no charges were filed. As a result, Holihan is asked to resign from his parish, but it is just for show—he is quickly reassigned to another with little restrictions. Soon, more allegations caught up with Holihan and his restrictions were tightened. When told he cannot wear clerical garb, Holihan refused and continued to attend church events.

Instead of worrying about the risk to parish children, Goedert feared that victims' groups would learn about the problem and alert the media. Holihan's monitor refuses to sign his log sheets because the priest traveled unsupervised.

In a 2008 deposition, [Bishop Raymond Goedert](#) testified that Holihan considered the abuse (touching children's genitals and molesting them) to be showing "friendship and affection."

Holihan sought voluntary laicization because he did not want to go to a treatment facility. It is unknown whether or not he has been laicized.

TIMELINE OF DOCUMENTS – DANIEL M. HOLIHAN

1957 – Ordained

7/6/57 - Assistant Pastor, St. Patrick

6/30/65 – Assistant Pastor, St. Aloysius

- 1960's Fr. Holihan abuses boy at St. Aloysius; reported by victim in 2007. (AOC 002847)
- 1960's Fr. Holihan abuses another boy; reported to Archdiocese in 2002. (AOC 002965)
- 1960's Fr. Holihan abuses another boy; reported to Archdiocese in 2008. (AOC 002983)
- 1962-1963 Fr. Holihan abuses another boy; reported to Archdiocese in 2004. (AOC 002972)
- 1967 Fr. Holihan abuses a survivor, who reported to the Archdiocese in 2006. (AOC 002853)

5/31/68 – Assistant Pastor, St. Sylvester

- 1968-1969 Holihan abuses 6th grade boy at St. Sylvester School; reported in May 1994. (AOC 002636- AOC 002657; AOC 002946)
- 1968-1969 Holihan abuses 12-13 year old boy; reported to Archdiocese in 2002. (AOC 002942)
- 1968-1969 Holihan abuses boy St. Sylvester and elsewhere; reported in 1994. (AOC 002962)

6/20/69 – Assistant Pastor, St. Francis de Sales

- 1969 Holihan abuses a survivor, who reports to the Archdiocese in 1996. (AOC 002943- AOC 002944; AOC 002963)
- 5/14/71 Holihan recommended to as a Boy Scout leader. (AOC 003075)

6/13/73 – Assistant, St. Jane de Chantal

- 1978 Holihan abuses a survivor, who reports to the Archdiocese in 2008. (AOC 002956- AOC 002957; AOC 002960)

6/11/79 – Assistant, Our Lady of the Snows

1/1/81 – Pastor, Our Lady of the Snows

- 1982 Holihan abuses another boy; reported to Archdiocese in 2003. (AOC 002970)

- 1982-1986 Holihan abuses a survivor; reported to Archdiocese in 2004. (AOC 002941)
- 1983-1988 Holihan abuses a survivor; reported to Archdiocese in 2004. (AOC 002615)
- 1980's Holihan abuses a survivor; reported to Archdiocese in 2003. (AOC 002629)
- 1984 Holihan abuses another boy; reported to Archdiocese in 2003 (AOC 002967)
- 1984-1988 Holihan abuses another boy; reported to Archdiocese in 2004 (AOC 002971)
- 1985-1987 Holihan abuses another boy; reported to Archdiocese on 8/20/05. (AOC 002977)
- 1986-1987 Holihan abuses a survivor; reported to Archdiocese in 2005. (AOC 002945; AOC 002975)
- 7/16/86 Parishoner at Our Lady of the Snows expresses concern about rumors concerning Holihan's relationship with young boys. (AOC 002938)**
- 7/22/86 Former principal at Our Lady of the Snows reports that "there had been periodic rumors" about Holihan during her term in the parish. Fr. John Curran, a classmate and friend of Holihan's, also recalls that there were some rumors about Holihan years ago. (AOC 002938)**
- 7/23/86 Parishoner contacts Fr. Ventura concerning rumors Holihan's hugging and lifting up boys, and reports that there were rumors in his prior parish [St. Jane de Chantal] and that Holihan was known there as "Fr. Happy Hands." (AOC 002939)**
- 7/24/86 Parishoner writes letter to Cardinal Bernadin to report Fr. Holihan's inappropriate relationships with boys. (AOC 002858)**
- 7/23/86 Mrs. "A" reports her concerns about Holihan to the Vicar for Priests, Fr. Ventura. (AOC 002651; AOC 002938)
- 7/25/86 Mrs. "C" calls the Vicar for Priests to report that her son witnessed Holihan engage in misconduct with another boy in September 1985, and also learned that he engaged in misconduct with two altar boys, and that Holihan prefers boys over girls and does too much "rough-housing" with boys. (AOC 002652; AOC 002938)
- 8/15/86 Fr. Ventura, Vicar for Priests, asks Holihan to reflect on his behavior with children and Holihan agrees to modify his behavior. (AOC 002652)
- 1987-1988 Holihan abuses a survivor; Reported in 2005. (AOC 002851; AOC 002976)

- 1988-1990 Holihan abuses another boy; reported to Archdiocese in 2002. (AOC 002964)
- 1988-1991 Holihan abuses a survivor; reported to Archdiocese in 2003. (AOC 002630)
- 1989-1991 Holihan abuses another boy; reported to Archdiocese in 2003. (AOC 002968)
- 1990 Holihan molests six survivors at Our Lady of the Snows and elsewhere. (AOC 002886)
- 3/26/90 Vicar General, Fr. Roache, receives a call from the principal of Our Lady of the Snows School regarding allegations by six minors. (AOC 002653)
- 3/27/90 Holihan is placed on administrative leave, and stays at the rectory at Little Flower parish instead of Our Lady of the Snows. (AOC 002653)
- 4/4/90 Fr. Kinsella at Our Lady of the Snows contacts Fr. Geodert and reports that the cook at the rectory had, on at least two occasions over the past year reported that she had on one occasion walked in on Holihan while he was in bed with a young boy. Kinsella also reports that there have been “all kinds of rumors around the parish for the last ten years.” He has heard that Fr. Holihan is known as “Happy Hands Holihan.” Goedart notes that he is concerned that the cook may “blab and this could blow the whole thing up in our faces. (AOC 002928)**
- 4/8/90 Fr. Geodert speaks with Fr. Leo Kinsella at Our Lady of the Snows and asks him not to make any comments to anyone regarding Holihan case. “I told him that he should not make reference to the rumors that have been circulating for the last 10 years, etc., and especially say nothing at all about the comments made by the cook . . . I said all this to Leo as gently as I could and I think he understood what I was getting at.” (AOC 002927)**
- 5/4/90 Geodert learns that Holihan has been going to the mall with boys and is “astonished that Mark would take such risks at a time like this and put himself into such jeopardy. If the investigative team were to discover that Mark was at his sister’s, only a half a block away and was allowing minor children to come and go, it would only confirm them in their judgment that he had a problem.” (AOC 002915)
- 5/4/90 Attorneys for the Archdiocese write to the State’s Attorney to thank him again for his “cooperation with the Archdiocese in its efforts to minimize the negative impact on the parish of the accusations against Holihan.” (AOC 002913) The attorneys for the Archdiocese schedule victim interviews.
- 6/6/90 States Attorney uses his discretionary power and chooses not to indict Holihan. (AOC 002878; AOC 002912) The State’s Attorney explains to parents that it is

not worth it to charge Holihan and he does not want to negatively impact victims by prosecuting Holihan. (AOC 002919)

5/26/90 Fr. Goedert mentions to one of Holihan's supporters that he will write a scathing report to DCFS if it turns out that the allegations are deemed "not founded," "because this has always been a real problem for me - - namely the carrying on of an investigation, destroying a priest's reputation, and then deciding that there was not basis for the charges. DCFS just walks away, but no one is there to help the priest regain his reputation, etc." (AOC 002922)

6/7/90 DCFS investigates allegations made by 13 boys and makes an "indicated" finding for each allegation. (AOC 002653; AOC 002891- AOC 002910)

6/28/90 The Pastor at Our Lady of the Snows receives calls reporting that Fr. Holihan is "associating with High School kids at Chicago Ridge Mall." Goedert is concerned that Holihan is "putting the Church in a bad light, as it gives the appearance that we are not bothering to supervise his behavior." (AOC 002885; AOC 002887)

7/5/90 Fr. Goedert and Cardinal Bernadin ask Holihan to resign from Our Lady of the Snows because the "knowledge of the allegations and the 'indicated' decisions [by DCFS] was so public and wide-spread that it would be difficult, if not impossible, for Mark ever to minister effectively at our Lady of the Snows again." (AOC 002883)

7/10/90 Holihan is permitted to come and go from Our Lady of the Snows over a period of weeks while he moves out. Fr. Goedert and Cardinal Bernadin do not wish to call attention to this fact and ask that this fact be removed from a letter to parishioners written by Holihan. (AOC 002882)

7/10/90 Holihan resigns as Pastor of Our Lady of the Snows.

7/23/90 – Resident, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus

9/14/90 – Associate Pastor, St. Jerome

1991-1996 Fr. Godert, Vicar for Priests, allows Holihan to function as any other Associate Pastor, however, is not allowed to teach in the school. Fr. Goedert says it is ok for Holihan to hear closed-door confessions with kids, and Holihan prefers not to do so due to appearances. (AOC 003018; AOC 002645)

6/10/91 One of the women reported Holihan's misconduct in 1986 calls the Archdiocese to report that she observed Holihan driving with two unaccompanied minor boys in his car. At the time, Holihan appeared to be tickling or "horsing around" with one of the boys. The woman was upset particularly in light of the fact that some of the misconduct by Holihan in 1986 occurred in his car. (AOC 002874)

6/13/91 A nun aware of Holihan's situation is asked about Holihan's "condition" and responds that he thinks he is regressing. Holihan also asks to be returned to full ministry as an associate pastor and Goedert states that he thinks this is a possibility down the line. (AOC 002877) Holihan is apparently in "complete denial of the seriousness of his condition." (AOC 002878)

4/9/92 – Retired status

1992 – 2002 - Associate at Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Archdiocesan Offices

1992 – 2002 - St. Andrew's Home, Niles, IL (AOC 2636; 2639)

1/30/92 Archdiocese learns that Holihan is a confirmation sponsor and prayer partner for a male student attending St. Jerome school. The Vicar for Priests trusts Holihan to police himself in the matter and Holihan is permitted to continue to help the boy over the concerns of the principal and assistant principal. (AOC 2872, 2871)

1996-2002 Holihan kept in ministry at St. Mary of Vernon, in Indian Creek on the weekends. (AOC 002612; AOC 002637; AOC 002639; AOC 002641; AOC 002643)

1998 Holihan is permitted to conduct a baptism in Plainfield, IL.

3/14/02 Holihan has no on-site monitor at St. Andrew, but is allowed to travel and participate in ministry upon self-monitoring. (AOC 002636)

2002 – Holihan moves to St. Rock's Priory (AOC 002612)

5/10/03 Holihan does not observe the restrictions placed upon him, which require that he not wear clerical garb and present himself as a priest. (AOC 002612) Holihan appears at St. Richard's parish wearing a roman collar at a First Communion ceremony. Holihan then continues to wear priest garb, without the collar tab inserted, despite clearly being told not to do so. (AOC 002612; AOC 002618; AOC 002622)

7/19/03 Review board is concerned, for unstated reasons, about Fr. Wurst being Holihan's monitor.

7/22/03 Upon inquiry from Cardinal George, Bishop Goedert raises concerns about a proposed assignment for Holihan because he is worried that victims groups would find out and complain to the media. (AOC 002868)

2004 In communication to CDF, Cardinal Goerge states that "Father Holihan . . . has not cooperated with the restrictions which were (sic) placed upon him..." (AOC 002612)

- 7/22/05 Holihan no longer to represent himself as a priest and is strongly urged not to wear clerical garb. Cardinal George states that “for the good of society, Father Holihan should not be allowed activities which are not supervised carefully.” Holihan continues to owe obedience to the Cardinal and Pope, and is instructed to avoid actions that could bring further scandal upon the Church. (AOC 002610)
- 2006 Holihan reports that he worked at cafeteria at Holy Family Home (AOC 003006)
- 2006 – Resident- Little Sisters of the Poor of Palatine – St. Joseph’s Home (AOC 003054)
- 2006 Little Sisters does not need to report Holihan’s presence at the facility or sexual abuse history to state health facility regulators because Holihan was never actually prosecuted and convicted by civil authorities for his sexual abuse of children. (AOC 002852)
- 4/9/07 Holihan’s monitor is not comfortable signing Holihan’s daily log monitoring sheets. She does not know his whereabouts at all times and is concerned that he seems to travel a lot. (AOC 002604) It is agreed that Holihan will complete his own daily log sheets and send them to the Archdiocese (ie, self-monitor).
- 2008 Holihan and other priests under “monitoring” by a nun. According to an Archdiocese priest restriction compliance investigator, monitors of pedophile priests are ordinarily required to sign a “confidentiality agreement” regarding the monitoring arrangement. (AOC 003039)
- 8/15/08 Fr. Grace communicates to Holihan that he either goes to St. John Vianney, or he will face laicization. Holihan expresses his opinion that he cannot live the type of “confined life” that St. John Vianney would involve. Fr. Grace discusses whether and what type of separation package and financial assistance might be available to Holihan if he agrees to be laicized. (AOC 003001)
- 9/28/08 Holihan seeks voluntary laicization. He begins residing at his cottage at Wonder Lake [and elsewhere]. (AOC 002958)