

COMMUNION

For more than 30 years as a Catholic priest, Father Paul Shanley moved among Massachusetts parishes, a Boston youth ministry, and a gay motel in Palm Springs, California. Everywhere he went, he allegedly created a special kind of hell for the boys, some as young as six, who have since accused him of rape and abuse. Now, as the 71-year-old Shanley faces trial, MAUREEN ORTH discovers the devastation left in his wake, finds evidence that his fellow clergy suspected him, and exposes the grotesque indifference of the Boston Archdiocese to anything but the threat of scandal





PREDATOR

Paul Shanley at his arraignment for child rape in Cambridge, Massachusetts, May 7.

Inset, alleged victim Greg Ford receiving first Communion from Shanley, 1985.

Last April, in the days before Father Paul Shanley was arrested and charged with raping a six-year-old boy in Massachusetts 19 years ago, he kept frantically telephoning a young man named Kevin English in Big Bear Lake, California. The two had known each other for 12 years, and, according to English, Shanley, 71, was desperate to keep the relationship secret in order to confine allegations of his long history of serial sexual abuse of male minors to his 30-year ministry in the Boston area. "Don't talk to anyone," English recalls him saying, "and don't believe these stories you are seeing about me. They are all a bunch of lies made up by the media." English broke his silence for *Vanity Fair* in late May.

Shanley and English met in 1990, after an evening Mass Shanley celebrated as a weekend-supply priest in Big Bear Lake, a Southern California ski resort. Shanley had been transferred to California from Boston as a "priest in good standing"; he was stationed in San Bernardino, an hour away. Shanley noticed the six-foot-four-inch, blond English during Mass and invited him to dinner. After learning that the 17-year-old virgin was recovering from a breakdown and confused about his sexuality, Father Shanley trotted out an old routine that had apparently worked in Massachusetts for three decades. He said he could help, English remembers, and took English back to the rectory with him. He would make it easy for the teenager to determine whether he was gay. He was willing to let English use his body for experimentation. "He did terrible things—perverted things," says English, now 30, who has suffered several breakdowns and undergone years of therapy. "I felt so guilty—I felt evil all over."

According to English, Father Paul wanted sex two or three times a day, and before long he was inviting Kevin down to Palm

Springs, where he lived during the week in a raucous gay motel he co-owned with another errant Boston priest, Jack White, an old seminary classmate who had been treated for cocaine addiction. Dale Lagace, Shanley's quiet, nondescript, nonclerical roommate since 1972, was usually a member of the party. English didn't know it, but this was an old pattern with Shanley. Back in Boston in 1976, when he was sharing an apartment with Lagace at 391 Beacon Street, he would allegedly propose three-way sex with Lagace to another of his teen sex partners, confiding, "Dale likes to dress up as a woman and have sex with me." That teenager is now one of more than a dozen victims pressing civil charges against the Archdiocese of Boston, claiming that Shanley sexually abused him beginning at age 15.

Poolside sex was English's first experience of the world outside the small town he had grown up in. "It was Sodom and Gomorrah," he says. Shanley and White would rent the actor Tony Curtis's old house in Palm Springs for overflow guests, and English and Shanley would spend weekends there and at the motel. English says Shanley encouraged him to have sex with as many partners as possible and to watch porn with him. "Sex is all he talked about—it's what drove his whole life," recalls English, who says he resisted Shanley's attempts to pimp him and his suggestions to "be a porn star."

The two priests had bought property in Palm Springs in 1988, while Shanley was still the pastor at the St. Jean l'Evangeliste parish in Newton, Massachusetts, where he now stands accused of assaulting four boys, including Greg Ford and Paul Busa, who both allege that, beginning in 1983, when they were six years old, and for six years after that, Shanley would pull them out of catechism classes and anally rape them.

Shanley had pleaded ill health before being transferred to California, and in the more than 1,700 pages of documents in his Boston Archdiocese file that the court has ordered to be made public, he constantly begs his superiors for more money, in one letter alone listing 33 ailments, from "urination problems" to "recurrent scalp growths." At one point in Palm Springs, he even got the archdiocese to pay \$4,200 for a hernia operation necessitated, he wrote, by doing "too many squats." (Shanley is still collecting a pension of more than \$1,000 per month.)

Although Shanley took allergy shots, English says, he always appeared fit. He drove

flashy cars, exercised regularly, and carried \$500 in cash in his wallet. "He played the game to the hilt to get more money out of the church," English says. "I don't know where all the money came from." According to Shanley's sister-in-law Estelle Shanley, the priest inherited money from his mother. Certainly he and White found the funds to travel to Thailand and Costa Rica, both infamous pedophile havens. They left as their forwarding address in Costa Rica the notorious Hotel Del Rey, in San José, the capital. Bruce Harris, director of Casa Alianza, a group working to curb child prostitution and trafficking, identifies the Del Rey as "the center for world prostitution in Costa Rica." In the bar, the Blue Marlin, which is listed on sex Web sites, Harris says, "people brag about all the nasty things done to under-age kids here."

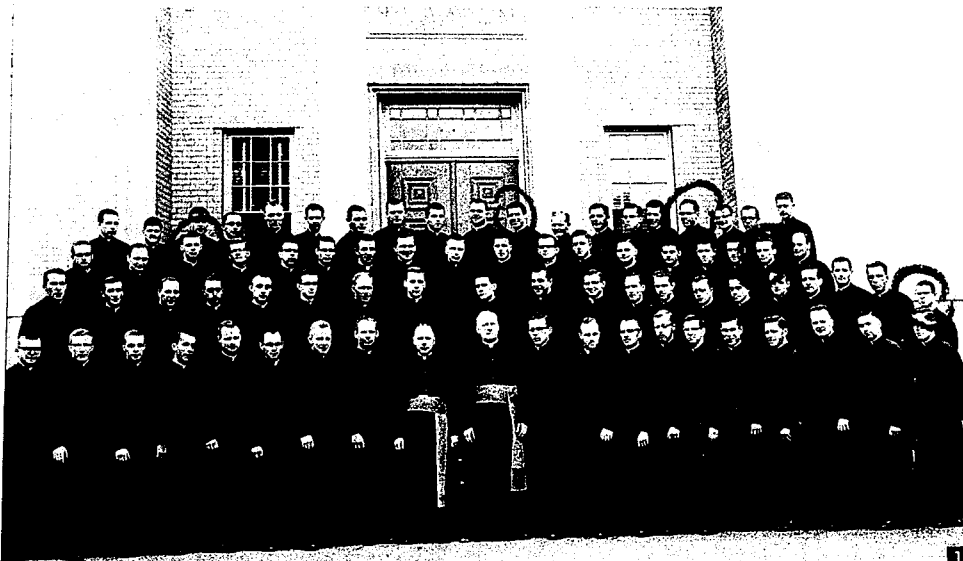
White's favorite pastime in Palm Springs, according to observers, was to drive in an old limousine down to the bus station. "His passion was young black Marines," says former Palm Springs hotel owner Jack Pray, and many would arrive from the nearby base in Twentynine Palms. Sometimes, say John Kendrick and Carter Proust, who bought a motel from White, he'd misjudge his prey and get beaten up. (White could not be reached for comment.) Shanley also reportedly cruised the station. White never made a secret of being a priest, but Shanley tended to hide it. "He called himself a 'recovering Catholic,'" says English, "and said it was a big mistake ever to have become a priest."

Paul Shanley's sexual history with children and teens allegedly began immediately after he was assigned to his first parish, in 1960. Daniel Brennan was 14, in the eighth grade at St. Patrick School in Stoneham, Massachusetts, when he first encountered the handsome, 29-year-old, newly ordained priest. Father Paul soon learned that Brennan had no father and a mother with a heart condition, and he called the boy in. "He asked me a few questions about why I was going to Communion and all, so I told him," says Brennan. "And then he asked me if he could check me for a hernia. So he pulled down my pants and fondled me. He told me to keep it a secret." Brennan, petrified, immediately related the incident to his girlfriend, who would later become his wife. A month later, Brennan says, Father Shanley did it

PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEVE HANSEN (2, 6); MARK LIPSON (5); SEVANS (3); JOHN SMITH (1)

"I was terrified of him, of his power. I was terrified of God. I thought he *was* God," says one Shanley accuser.

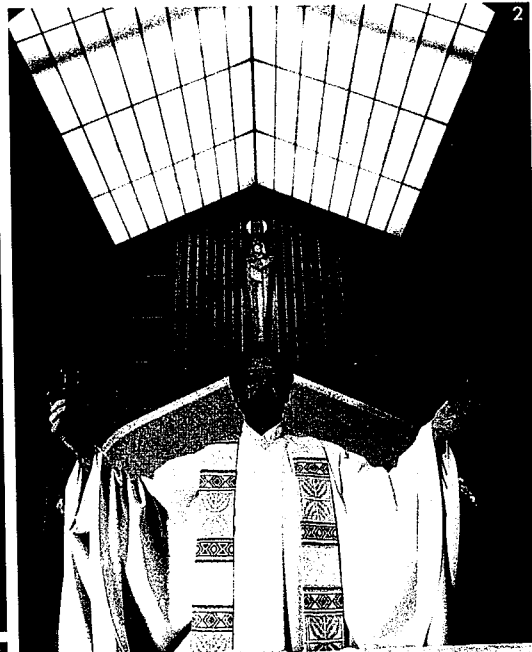
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SHATTERED TRUST

(1) The St. John's Seminary class of 1960. Circled, from left: John McCormack, Paul Shanley's longtime protector; Shanley; and three other priests accused of sexual misconduct, Joseph E. Birmingham, Bernard J. Lane, and Eugene M. O'Sullivan. (2) Shanley celebrating Mass, 1979. (3) Greg Ford, 24, who charges Shanley raped him when he was 6, with his father, his attorney Roderick MacLeish Jr., and his mother, April 6. (4) Cardinal Bernard Law and Shanley in Boston. (5) Kevin English, an alleged victim of Shanley's in California, photographed on June 6. (6) Shanley, center, at a "gay skating night," 1979.



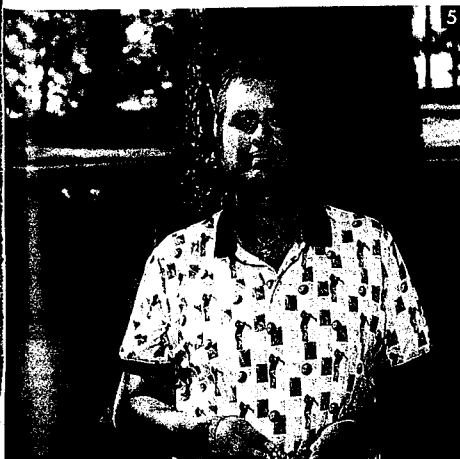
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again. "I was scared, but I was stupid," says Brennan. "I didn't know what he was looking for. My mother never told me anything about sex." It didn't take long, however, for most of the boys to catch on to Father Paul's tactics. He would pace the perimeter of the schoolyard in his cassock, former students recall, pretending to read his Breviary but eyeing the boys. He'd rub up against them, they say, and sometimes dismiss the nuns from classes so that he could pose questions about sex. Marie Brown, who had five older brothers in the school at the time, says, "They all knew to stay away from him. Some of their friends were having relations with him."

In 1961, according to a recently filed lawsuit, Dr. Peter Devlin, whose son, Bud, attended St. Patrick, arrived home one day to find Father Shanley rummaging in their attic. Shanley said he was looking for pornographic material, because Bud, age 12, was "a sexual deviant." The doctor told him to leave. Later that day Shanley allegedly molested Bud in the rectory, threatening the boy that, if he ever told, Shanley would destroy his father's reputation. Bud's subsequent downward spiral so alarmed his parents that they contacted the parish pastor, who promised something would be done, but nothing was. Mrs. Devlin wrote to Cardinal Richard Cushing, and a bishop friend of the family tried to intervene at the archdiocese. None of these complaints appears in Shanley's file. Finally the doctor contacted the Stoneham police chief, but the family did not press charges. The chief told no one, not even his lieutenant William O'Toole, whose 12-year-old grandson, Bill, was also allegedly molested by Shanley. The only person Bill confided in was his younger brother, Michael, and he made him swear not to tell. The abuse allegedly went on for a year and a half.

Four years ago Bill O'Toole died of AIDS, agonizing to the very end, according to Michael O'Toole, because Father Shanley had told him that if he revealed what had gone on between them "he would burn in hell and our parents would burn in hell. Bill said Rosary after Rosary after Rosary, hoping he wouldn't go to hell."

It is horrifying to see up close the psychic damage allegedly inflicted by Paul Shanley. I have spoken to nine accusers, whose ages at the time they claim they were abused ranged from 6 to 21. A number have become alcoholics, some have developed suicidal tendencies and post-traumatic stress, and one has undergone electroshock treatments. Some say deeply buried images of Shanley molesting them return through recovered memory. What is truly

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