

LAS VEGAS

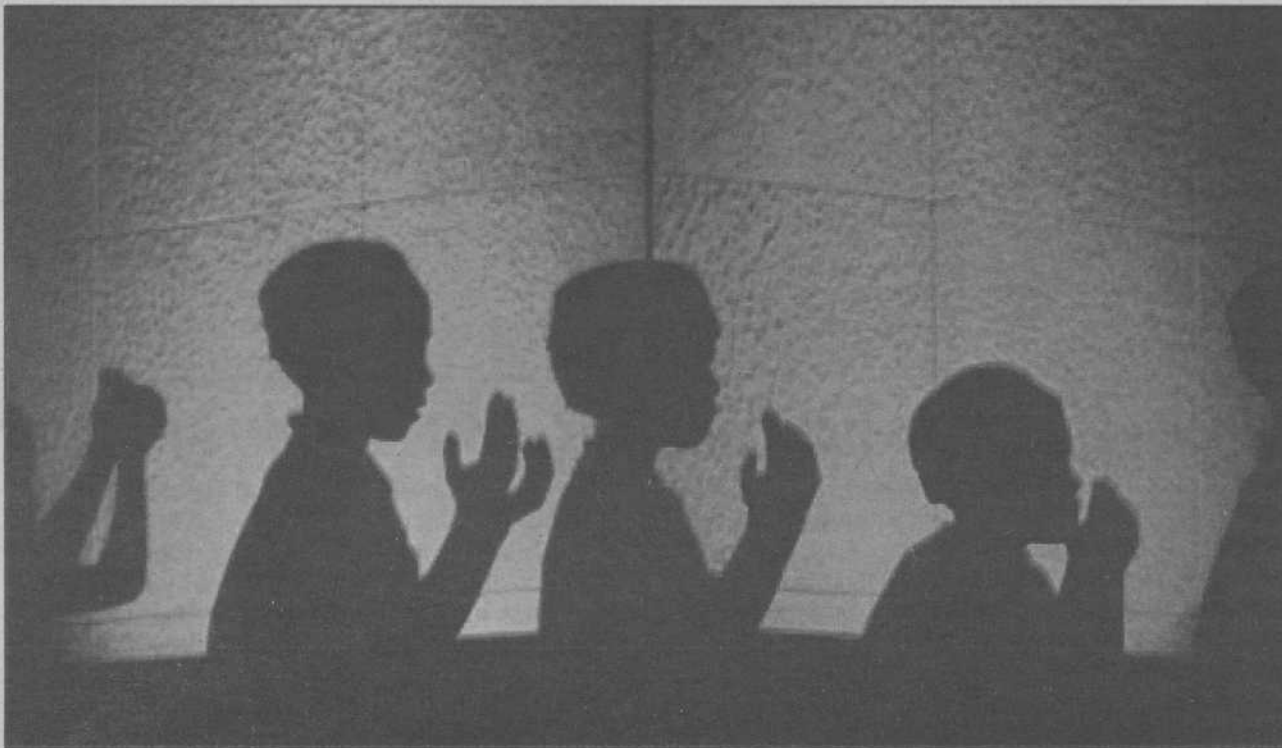
# Sentinel Voice

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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"



Young Malaysian Muslims are silhouetted as they recite a night prayer outside a mosque in Kuala Lumpur late November 13. Muslims in Malaysia will begin the fasting month of Ramadan either on November 16 or 17, depending on the first sighting of the new moon. Devotees refrain from eating, drinking and sexual activity from sunrise to sunset and will celebrate the end of holy month with the Eid-ul-Fitr festival.

## Muslims: Ramadan may be different

By Al Triche  
Sentinel-Voice

On Saturday, Muslims in America and around the world will begin Ramadan, the month on the Islamic lunar calendar during which

they abstain from food, drink and other sensual pleasures from dawn to dusk, the hours when human interaction is the greatest.

The fast during Ramadan is performed to learn disci-

pline, self-restraint and generosity, while obeying God's commandments. The end of Ramadan will be marked by communal prayers called "Eid-ul-Fitr," or Feast of the Fast-Breaking, on December

16.

"It's one of those things that binds together Muslims all over the world," explained Mustafa Yunus, a spokesman for the Islamic Center of Las Vegas. "The purpose is to gain piety. In that fasting period, you're looking for an even deeper relationship with Allah."

Demographers say Islam is one of the fastest growing religions in this country and around the world.

There are an estimated 1.2 billion Muslims worldwide, although no more than 20 percent of them live in the Arabic-speaking world, and some 7 million in America, where the Muslim community is made up of people from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds and national origins. There are almost 2,000 mosques, Islamic schools and Islamic centers in America.

Islam is both a religion and a complete way of life that follows principles rooted in "Five Pillars" of the faith.

The first expresses Islam's monotheistic faith and acknowledges its most prominent human figure, the second sets forth the principle of praying five times daily, and

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## Men's group to help kids academically

By Al Triche  
Sentinel-Voice

The local chapter of a national men's organization wants to help a West Las Vegas elementary school reclaim students who, though enrolled in special education programs, could actually succeed in mainstream class settings. A cooperative effort of 100 Black Men of America, Inc. and the federal government may provide that help.

Seven local chapters of 100 Black Men of America, including the one here in Las Vegas, have received grants from the U.S. Department of Education. The head of the Las Vegas Chapter says they will fund efforts toward "providing mentoring needs for special education students; working as advocates for the school district, parents and children in special ed programs, and working with children who are at-risk of going into special education programs."

"I've been with the hundred since 1986," said Larry Mosley, president of the local chapter who was involved with three other chapters of the organization before starting one here. A former member of the Baltimore Chapter, he is a charter member of chapters in Washington, D.C., and in Sacramento, where he is also a founding member.

"I founded the Las Vegas Chapter in September of 1998," Mosley recalled. "It was chartered in December of that year."

"We have a total of 44 members," he said, adding, "(Las Vegas) Mayor Oscar Goodman, and Clark County School District Superintendent Carlos Garcia and Assistant Superintendent Bradley Reitz are honorary members of the Las Vegas Chapter."

"With the help of Superintendent Garcia and Associate Superintendent Charlene Greene," Mosley explained, "Dr. Carol Foster, principal of Madison Elementary School, and the men of the hundred developed a mentoring program at Madison. We launched it in June of last year. We use the 100 Black Men of America's curriculum: 'Mentoring The 100 Way.'"

The Las Vegas Chapter's Mentoring Committee is co-chaired by Melvin Davis and Jherri Smyth.

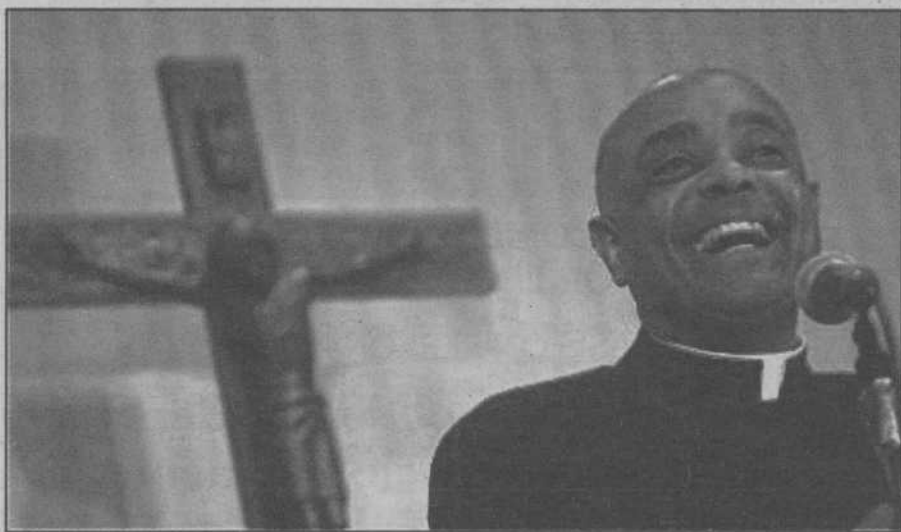
"Our ultimate objectives are prevention, intervention, and working to get those children who should not be in special education out of that category," said Mosley. "We have 25 children who are in the special ed category or are at-risk of being classified into special education."

Now a year-and-a-half old, the mentoring program has been introduced to minority students at a school on "the westside," where, it is hoped, children in special education will become fewer.

"It'll be a year in April. It's really a new program," said Dr. Carol Foster, principal at Madison Elementary. The situation program organizers want to improve, she said, is "labelling children as 'special education' who should not be in that category."

Focusing on "mainly fourth and fifth grade, the nine through eleven-year-olds," Foster says the program helps students at "a very sensitive time, especially for

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Bishop Wilton Gregory of Belleville, Ill., enjoys a light moment during a news conference, after becoming the first black president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington, Tuesday.

## Leader: Church welcomes diversity

WASHINGTON (AP) - The first black president of the nation's Roman Catholic bishops said Wednesday he hopes his historic election will be seen as evidence the church embraces its diverse membership.

Bishop Wilton Gregory, addressing the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops the day after he won the post, said he recognizes and welcomes the pride that

black Catholics feel in his new leadership role.

"I need nonetheless confess that I feel no great amazement that our conference would have chosen an African-American president," Gregory said. "While racism remains a sin that must be overcome, our church herself, remains a proud commu-

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