

# L.A. Archdiocese ignores immigration law

By Virginia Gaglianone  
Special to Sentinel-Voice  
LOS ANGELES - The Los Angeles Archdiocese will ignore a proposed federal law that would require churches to ask immigrants for residency documents before administering help, Cardinal Roger Mahony has said.

"The church is not in a

position of negotiating the spiritual and the corporal works of mercy," Mahony said during a Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Angels marking the start of the 40-day season of Lent.

"We must be able to minister to people regardless of how they got here," he said.

Mahony was addressing an immigration bill being de-

bated this week in the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee.

The House of Representatives passed the border security bill in December that requires all personnel of churches and nonprofit organizations to verify the legal immigration status of every person served.

"If the law passes in its current form, it would

criminalize people who are here illegally," Mahony spokesman Tod Tamberg said. "Anybody who would knowingly assist [illegal immigrants] could be guilty of human trafficking. That's insulting to any charity, especially the church.

"This bill is saying 'here church, you fix [the immigration problem]. We'll

criminalize these things and you are the ones who will have to figure out how to deal with them,'" Tamberg added. "This is not our problem; this problem was created by poor policy to begin with, and we want to see that changed."

Mahony supports the Justice For Immigrants Campaign, a national Catholic public awareness effort that

provides education on immigration reform and supports proposals for a guest worker program, legalization of undocumented immigrants and more visas for migrants' families and refugees in this country.

"The Catholic Church is not in favor of open borders," Tamberg said. "What we are (See *Immigration*, Page 12)

## Katrina

(Continued from Page 1)  
said. "We have a reputation of delivering projects on time and within the budget. We've had the reputation for 28 years of being just a solid design firm."

Yet, for all its stellar reputation, the firm is still suffering. "We actually have not worked since the Friday before the hurricane," Washington said. "We were on the brink of signing some major contracts, [now] all of the work we had has been put on hold. We think that we've lost about \$1.5 million in fees because of contracts being cancelled or put on hold."

Part of the problem is that all of FEMA's \$1.8 billion clean up and rebuilding con-

tracts were pounced upon and divvied up among politically-connected fat cats such as Haliburton and its subsidiaries, Bechtel, Fluor and the Shaw Group, even before the flood waters receded. Washington said he even submitted an application to Shaw to work as a local architect, but has not received a response.

"All of the work that's being done right now in New Orleans in terms of the cleanup and construction is going to a lot of companies from out of town," Washington said. "You see people from all over the country that are coming here to participate in cleanup and rebuilding. I have not seen any significant involvement of Af-

rican-American firms."

Besides being deliberately cut out, Black firms have sustained significant damage to their infrastructure and severe depletion of human resources, which cripples their ability to compete with other firms, Washington said.

"[The hurricane] destroyed most Black businesses. I've been in contact with everybody from funeral homes to contractors, a lot of equipment is under water, they don't have the ability to get new equipment to participate in the rebuilding effort right now," Washington said. "It's hard to compete when you have to evacuate. A lot of the folks who own those

businesses had to evacuate and it's hard to get people to come back to work to restart the firm."

Washington's own employees have been scattered across the South and farther, he said, and he does not have the facilities to house them even if they did return. And the insurance adjustor has gone awol, so he cannot even depend on insurance compensation to repair the damage to his building. In the meantime, Washington said he is trying to come up with a plan to ensure the company's survival.

"I'm not earning cash, so I'm going to have to see if I can put some sort of loan package together to get some cash to resume operations, because certain bills are go-

ing to continue whether you are active or not—the telephone is still on, the electricity is on, the water is on; I have car insurance on the company vehicles, professional liability insurance — I still have my overhead that I have to find money to pay for even though we're not functioning," he said.

Watts said that rebuilding his marine repair business from the ground up is proving equally difficult, especially since boats are considered luxury items.

"To shut down totally is extreme, it's hard," Watts said. "Because of the hurricane, most people are not using the boats right now so we have to operate on what we have stashed away."

Despite the looming chal-

lenges, Watts said he is hopeful that his dream will be rebuilt.

"When I started, I trusted in God, and it seems simple that whenever I run into a problem or things slow down — and I talk to him straight up: 'Dear God, my parking lot is getting empty; I need some boats in here,' — [that] sometimes before the end of the week, I would get five, six boats in here."

In the meantime, Watts said he filed for unemployment. He also filed for insurance compensation and for FEMA assistance.

"And now, I wait."

This project is a cooperative effort between the National Newspaper Publishers Association and the Baltimore Afro.

## Xavier

(Continued from Page 3)  
insurance, according to Bell.

To date, Xavier has not received much government aid to help offset the \$35 million that has already been spent to rebuild the historically Black campus, and has had to borrow money to pay for repairs.

Preliminary figures indicate that nearly 3,000 students are currently enrolled and attending classes, which makes the fall enrollment 70 percent of the University's pre-Katrina high of more than 4,100. When campus reopened, more than 1,600 beds were available in the dormitories, Bell said.

Bell said that the repairs made in time between weeks after Katrina to Jan. 17, have been thorough and extensive. The ground floor of virtually every building on campus has been gutted and cleaned. Bell said that

just about every Xavier student is taking classes on campus.

Although there were no academic programs cut due to the storm, Xavier's faculty and student research capabilities have been hindered significantly. Several research labs received extensive equipment damage. Xavier's Center for Undergraduate Research was totally destroyed. Even worse Bell said that few of the surrounding neighborhoods have begun to restore their homes, said Bell.

"What happened to New Orleans and Xavier, represents the greatest disaster this country has ever had," said Francis. "That we were able to come back in such a short period of time is a credit to our staff and faculty, who put aside their personal losses and problems, to make this miracle happen."

Henry Hurst writes for Afro Newspapers.

## Expertise Student of the Month

Jocelyn Serrano fell in love with hair design early. "When I was 16, I used to watch my mom do hair, and that inspired me," Serrano said. She is a February graduate and opted to extend her education to ensure she was certified and able to service her future clients with a variety of cosmetology services. She now has the skills to do "hair, nails, facials and waxing" after completing many hours of training. She explained that it takes "1800 hours [to earn a] cosmetology [degree] and 1200 hours for the other degrees." Although she has invested the time to train, she's not in a rush to make major strides in the cosmetology field. Her plans are to rent a booth at a hair shop and take it, "one day at a time to get as far as I can," she explained. With the completion of her studies, she is optimistic. "It'll be a lot better for me and my kids. I'll have more time [and] more money."

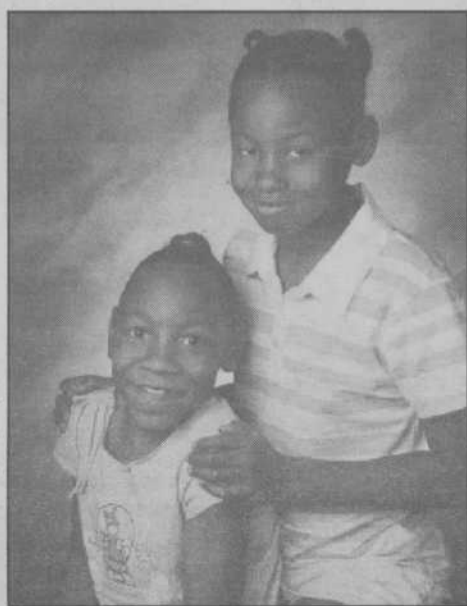


JOCELYN SERRANO

If you are looking for a reason to adopt foster children, here are two wonderful reasons.



For more information on adoption or foster care call Clark County Department of Family Services at 1-888-4-A-FAMILY. If you are interested in adopting this sibling group, please contact Wendy's Wonder Kids Recruiter Collette Smith at (702) 455-7286



- Pre-Registering for 2006 Classes
- Bi-Lingual (Spanish) Courses
- Excellent Placement Record - 92% Success Rate
- Financial Aid Available for Those Who Qualify
- Prepare for the Nevada State Exam

902 W. Owens | Las Vegas, NV 89106  
702-636-8686 | www.expertisebeauty.com



After graduating from the Expertise Cosmetology Institute, I immediately landed the perfect opportunity at Hot Headz Salon... Money's great and my schedule is MY SCHEDULE. Thanks, Expertise

—Ms. Kris, Las Vegas Class of 2002