

Panel: L.A. overlooked demographic changes

By R.W. Dellinger
Catholic News Service

LOS ANGELES — The failure to advance intercultural relations in Los Angeles after an immense demographic shift in the city's population led to last year's riots, said a panel of Loyola Marymount University professors March 27.

"One of the major reasons when we start thinking about why did the riots occur has to be with our inability to deal with the tremendous demographic shift," said panel moderator Fernando Guerra, associate professor of Chicano Studies and Political Science, in an interview with *The Tidings*, newspaper of the Los Angeles archdiocese.

"Many of our institutions talk about multiculturalism, whether they're governmental, business, educational or even religious. But yet the reality is they do very little in trying to mediate," he said.

Despite the institutional failures, Guerra said citizens have adopted what he calls "the myth of the multicultural city," believing that Los Angeles has successfully incorporated different peoples for decades.

The reality, Guerra observed, is very different.

The 1900 census revealed that Los Angeles was "one of the most white" cities in the nation, he said. Integration

did not occur until World War II's demand for labor drew African-Americans to the city. Large migrations of Latinos began during the 1950s and Asians did not begin showing up in big numbers in Southern California until 20 years later.

In 1960, Anglos comprised 82 percent of the population in Los Angeles County, he said, but in 1990, the figure dwindled to 41 percent, he said. Pockets of segregation were quickly formed also. In one area, Inglewood, a population that was 97 percent Anglo in 1960 changed to one of 8 percent Anglo, 59 percent African-American and 35 percent Latino 30 years later.

"This has been a tremendous demographic shift which has occurred in a short time," Guerra said. "And yet we have done nothing formally, really to incorporate these groups, foster intercultural relations. It's only now that we're beginning to address it."

John Davis, associate professor of sociology and chair of Afro-American Studies at Loyola Marymount, said that "our cultural mixture potentially represents our greatest strength. America can assume international leadership in this area because we are potentially an international nation."

David Boje, associate professor of management, focused on economic differences, saying there was "a Grand Canyon in this country between the haves and have-nots."

Researcher challenges numbers on sex abuse

NEW YORK (CNS) — Church researcher Father Philip J. Murnion has challenged Father Andrew M. Greeley's estimates that 2,000 to 4,000 U.S. priests have sexually abused minors over the past quarter century, leaving at least 100,000 victims.

"One case of sexual abuse by a priest is too many" but Father Greeley's figures "seriously exceed the likely number of cases," said Father Murnion, director of the National Pastoral Life Center in New York.

He argued that someone analyzing the same Chicago study used by Father Greeley could conclude that there have been slightly more than 1,000 clerical abusers of minors over the past 40 years and about 10,000 to 15,000 victims.

Father Greeley, a professor of sociology at the University of Chicago, made his estimates in an article in the March 20-27 issue of *America*, a national Catholic magazine.

Jesuit Father George W. Hunt, editor in chief of *America*, said Father Murnion's response would appear in the magazine's April 17 issue. Father Murnion released his critique to Catholic News Service as well. He said that in criticizing the numbers he was not challenging the other "major points" of Father Greeley's article. The article also analyzed the nature of clergy sexual abuse and its impact on the church, and it discussed what the

church has done or needs to do about the issue.

Father Murnion noted that the Chicago study covered 40 years, from 1951 to 1991, not the "quarter-century" asserted by Father Greeley.

Father Greeley said the 39 priests found to have been subjects of valid accusations represented 5 percent of Chicago's archdiocesan priest population during the period studied. Since not all cases are reported, he estimated that the actual number of abusers could be twice as high.

But Father Murnion said a total of 2,252 priests served the archdiocese during those four decades, so the 39 validated cases represented 1.7 percent of the priests. Nearly half the 39 cases uncovered involved priests who had since died or left the priesthood.

Father Murnion said that according to sociologist Richard A. Schoenherr, who conducted a massive demographic study of U.S. diocesan priests, there were 62,376 diocesan priests in the United States over the 40-year period cited, not the 40,000 that Father Greeley used for his estimates.

Taking 1.7 percent of 62,376, Father Murnion came up with a projection of 1,060 priests nationwide over the past 40 years who have sexually abused minors.

By Father Greeley's reckoning, an average of 50 victims per priest was a "conservative" estimate.

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