

LOS ANGELES ARCHDIOCESAN OFFICIALS TO LEAVE

LOS ANGELES (CNS) — Five top administrators of the Los Angeles Archdiocese will step down in January, the archdiocese announced.

The chancellor and the directors of administration, community services and education all announced they would leave at the same time as Cardinal Roger M. Mahony's chief of staff, Father Terrence Fleming, who is moderator of the curia.

OSUARY'S PURCHASE MAY HAVE BEEN ILLEGAL

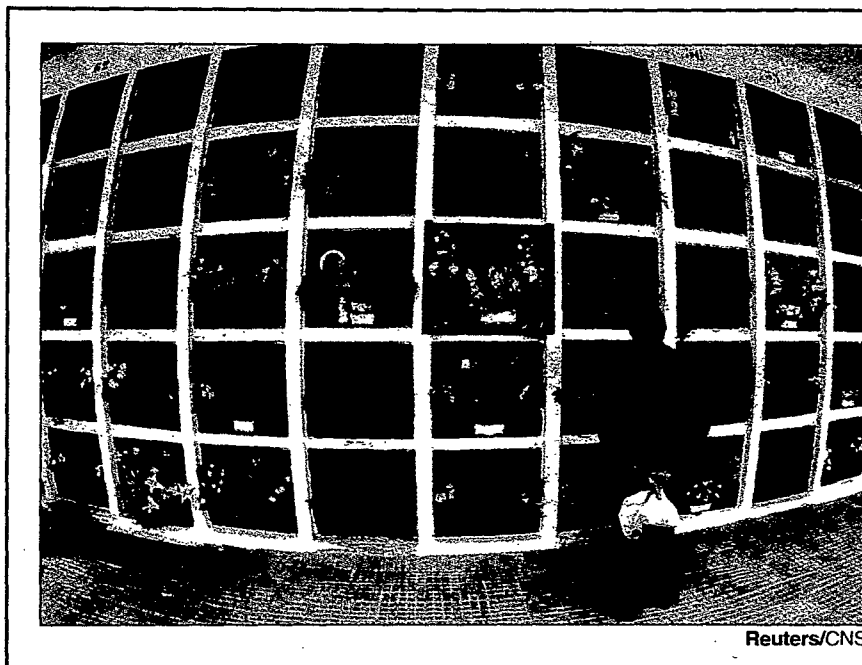
JERUSALEM (CNS) — The owner of the burial box, or ossuary, linked to the brother of Jesus was called in for questioning by Israeli police several hours before the announcement of the existence of the box was made Oct. 21.

Investigators at the Israeli Antiquities Authority suspect that Oded Golan, a 191 Aviv engineer, acquired the 2,000-year-old artifact illegally. According to the 1978 Israeli Antiquities Law, any artifact "discovered or found" in Israel after 1978 is state property. The magazine *Biblical Archaeology Review*, which announced the existence of the burial box, said it was purchased 15 years ago by a Jerusalem antiquities dealer. If the information is correct, the ossuary would then belong to the state.

POPE PRAYS FOR KIDS WHO DIED IN QUAKE

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope John Paul II offered special prayers for two dozen Italian children who died in an Oct. 31 earthquake as well as for the thousands of people whose lives were taken in violence over the past year.

With a sparse crowd huddled under umbrellas in St. Peter's Square Nov. 1, the pope offered prayers for the people of Sicily and of south-central Italy suffering the effects of a new eruption of the Mount Etna volcano and a series of earthquakes. "I want to express my profound spiritual closeness to the people struck by these tragic events, thinking especially of the children involved in the collapse of a school building in San Giuliano di Puglia," the pope said.



Reuters/CNS

All Saints observed

A man pauses in front of a vault at the Ciriego cemetery in Santander in northern Spain Nov. 1, the feast of All Saints. The feast emphasizes the bond between Christians already with God and those still on Earth.

Budget cuts concern leaders

Rob Cullivan/Catholic Courier

Bishop Matthew H. Clark joined other religious leaders Oct. 30 to express concern about a proposal to cut from the Monroe County budget millions of dollars in funding for social-service agencies, including Catholic Family Center.

The bishop made his concern known during a press conference in the Dugan Center at St. Mary Church in downtown Rochester. He was joined by Episcopal, Baptist, Muslim and Jewish leaders, who pointed to their respective religious traditions' calls for just treatment of the poor and marginalized.

Earlier this year, Monroe County Executive Jack Doyle announced that the county had to close a multi-million dollar spending gap this year, and address a projected revenue shortfall next year. In response, Doyle proposed to make cuts in many areas, including social-services funding. County legislators are scheduled to consider the budget proposal at their Nov. 12 meeting.

Doyle's proposed budget has engendered a furious debate in the county, in part, because the county executive repeatedly has said he will not propose any increase in property taxes to help close the gap. However, a bipartisan group of legislators recently proposed a compromise budget that calls for a property-tax hike to help restore more than \$10 million in funding to various services.

The bishop declined to take a position on raising taxes. However, he noted that the Catholic Church's social teaching calls on policy makers to discuss the "moral implications" of tax rates.

Among other denominational representatives at the press conference

was the Rev. Richard Myers, a Baptist minister representing the Greater Rochester Community of Churches, an ecumenical organization.

"We believe that the drastic cuts being proposed now are morally untenable," the Rev. Myers said. "They abandon many of our neighbors who are least able to defend themselves. The crisis in which we find ourselves should not be borne by those least able to bear it."

Episcopal Bishop Jack M. McKelvey also strongly denounced the morality of proposed cuts in funding for social services. "Difficult times ... are no excuse for balancing the budget on the backs of the poor," he said.

Bishop McKelvey added that raising taxes should not be taken "off the table."

According to a study by the Center for Governmental Research, around 25,000 people would be affected by Doyle's proposed cuts in county funding for 73 social-service agencies, including Catholic Family Center.

"In speaking out on the county budget, I wish first to emphasize that I am aware of the very difficult fiscal situation faced by the county, and I realize that some budget adjustments are necessary," the bishop said. "Nonetheless, I believe that in addition to the obvious economic dimension of the discussion, there is a moral dimension that deserves careful consideration."

In particular, Bishop Clark expressed concern over cuts in funding for homeless shelters and emergency housing. The bishop also expressed concern about a proposed \$9.7 million cut in day-care funding.

"The result may well be that the working poor will be unable to afford

safe day care for their children," the bishop said.

Bishop Clark laid out four principles in Catholic social teaching he said were "very pertinent" to the current budget discussions:

- The belief in the dignity of the human person: All people are sacred, made in the image and likeness of God.

- Community and the common good: People are both sacred and social, and when one suffers, all suffer.

- Rights and responsibilities: People have a fundamental right to food, shelter, health care, education and employment.

- A preferential option for the poor.

In a question-answer session following their presentations, the leaders were asked if any appeals had been made to the private sector to help close the gap in social-services funding. They deferred to Joseph Calabrese, president of United Way of Greater Rochester, who was in the audience, to answer the question.

Calabrese said it would be difficult for the private sector to plug the social-services funding gap, given that many companies and foundations have been affected by the current economic downturn.

"Companies don't have extra money," he said. "Foundations don't have extra money."

He added that he could not remember a proposed budget in Monroe County history that had been more divisive, and he called on legislators and Doyle to seek a bipartisan solution.

"The legislators and the county executive took an oath of office to represent all the citizens, not just the haves, but the have-nots as well," Calabrese said.