

Priest displaced by Katrina

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NATCHEZ, Miss. — With his home, workplace and job washed away in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, the Rev. Brendan Murphy shared the pain and frustration felt by many thousands of others displaced by the Aug. 29 storm.

A Catholic priest who had arrived only two weeks before in Bay St. Louis to begin work at the historic St. Augustine Seminary and retreat center, Murphy, a member of the Society of the Divine Word, has found both refuge and purpose in a new life in Natchez.

His journey began in his hometown of Dublin, Ireland, and now has brought him to assist the Rev. David O'Connor, pastor of St. Mary Basilica and Assumption Catholic Church.

The Saturday before the Monday storm, Murphy traveled to a small Catholic church about 10 miles from St. Augustine, taking only what he needed for an overnight stay.

"The priest at this little church found himself in need. I went to take his place," Murphy said. "I didn't even preach about the storm. But I noticed all the infants were

kicking up. The parents said the children must feel the threat of the storm."

On Sunday, he prepared to return to St. Augustine.

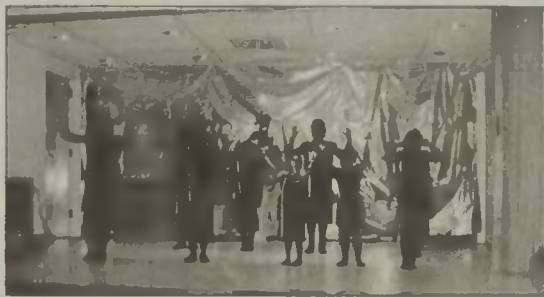
"The church secretary said, 'Wouldn't you want to stay,' but I set out," he said. "Then I realized I had the keys to the church. I turned back. I said, 'Lord, I'll take the cue. I'll stay.'"

Two other priests came to the small church to take shelter from the approaching storm.

"I saw partial roofs blowing away and sheets of metal blowing over," Murphy said.

Please see PRIEST/5B

PRAISE DANCIN'



The Greater Providence Baptist Church Praise Dancers entertain the crowd at First Mt. Zion Baptist Church during the Mecklenburg County General Baptist Association's honoring of youth ushers. Markiueves Brown, 14, won usher of the year.

Exhibit in tradition of church hats

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ABILENE, Texas — They can bestow dignity upon their wearers, add flair or sophistication to a moment and show respect to God.

That may be a lot to hang on a piece of felt, woven straw or bits of feathers and lace, but hats can handle it, much like the ladies who wear them.

For the women taking part in "Hats: Hallelujah!," a new exhibit at The Grace Museum, the adornments they wear upon their heads are more than simple hats. They are part of their heritage and their legacy, a dazzling statement about what it means to be churchgoing black women in Abilene.

Thirty-nine women from 16 black churches around Abi-

lene loaned more than 60 hats to "Hats: Hallelujah!"

The exhibit opened Saturday with a fancy tea and women in all sorts of finery. It speaks to the way they were raised and the things they find important — style, grace, and above all, a relationship with their Lord.

"I think wearing hats make you look more professional and dignified in God's house," said Willie Curtis, director of the Curtis-Starks Funeral Home.

The Bible passages 1 Corinthians 11:5-6 state: "And every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head — it is just as though her head were shaved. If a woman does not cover her

hair cut off, and if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut or shaved off, she should cover her head."

A member of Macedonia Baptist Church, Curtis always covers her head, whether with a scarf or tam for daily wear, or with one of her dress hats for church.

"I don't hardly go anywhere without hats on my head," she said.

Curtis started wearing hats as a little girl. "My mother was a seamstress, she made all my clothes," she said. "She trained me to wear hats."

Curtis has given away a number of her hats to younger women who can't afford one, but who have a desire to wear one.

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December, 2005 Newsletter - Part II
J.M. Little, Teacher

Now, what do we mean by the Simplicity in Christ? Knowing Christ as a Living Reality to your heart. Yes, Christ is a Living Reality to the heart of every believer. Some of you here are saying: "I'm saved, but I just don't know Christ as a Reality like Bro. Little is telling it." Friend, let me be true to your heart: Christ has never been Revealed to your heart. (Mt. 16:17, Gal. 1:15-16, Mt. 11:27) That is your whole trouble. Christ has not been revealed to your heart! You've made a profession, not realizing that you do not come to Christ by making a profession! Just as the Holy Spirit has to reveal to you that you are lost, so does the Holy Spirit reveal Christ to your heart. This is the simplicity in Christ that our great religious leaders have missed. And when you get away from the simplicity in Christ, you have to have something tangible to hold to! It may be a program, doctrine, person, holiday, or even the Bible itself. Paul went on to lament to the Galation churches: "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years." (Gal. 4:11) May I ask you at this time: "What tangible are you holding to?" Some of you, great multitudes, are holding to the Xmas Tree. You will talk about Xmas for hours and days and months. But you will not talk to me about Christ as a Living Reality to your hearts. It is because you do not know Him. And at this time of the year, you are making much of the Xmas Tree, not knowing that it is a heathen celebration. Hear thus saith the Lord, if you can: "HEAR ye the word which the LORD speaketh unto you O house of Israel: Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not." (Jeremiah 10:1-4)

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