Catholicism and Latino Communities in Los Angeles:

A Congregation Divided

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The Latin American population explosion of the United States is quickly changing the face of American culture as well as giving power to a neglected and disrespected group of people. “According to the 2000 census, the Latino community has blossomed from 22.4 million persons in 1990 to 37 million in 2003. It has just surpassed the African American community as the largest minority group in the United States” (Espinosa et. al 11). The Latin American population is becoming impossible to ignore—especially in the dynamic city of Los Angeles. For decades, immigrants from Mexico and Central America have poured into metropolitan Los Angeles, attempting to escape the oppression and poor living conditions of their home countries. With them, these immigrants bring strong ties to their home communities—creating similar tightly-knit communities in the United States.

Religion is a very important factor in many of these communities—predominantly Catholicism. “Roman Catholicism is the single largest denomination in Southern California, with 3.6 million communicants in the archdiocese of Los Angeles. Approximately 60 percent of this membership is Latino” (Miller 278). These immigrants are constantly searching to integrate their customs and culture within this new land as well as find their own place in American society, often finding themselves in conflict with the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Can the religion of Los Angeles’ Latinos—with its fusion of indigenous Mexican and Central American (sometimes pagan) customs, and traditional Catholicism—be accepted and fostered by the Archdiocese? Is the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, the largest archdiocese in America (Jimenez 108), truly fulfilling its responsibility to its largest demographic?
In 1990 over one million Latinos lived in Los Angeles—80 percent of this Latino population was Mexican (Davis 16). Originally, the historic plaza of Los Angeles, located adjacent to Olvera Street, became the center of Mexican Los Angeles: “Before 1910, newly arrived Mexican immigrants were most likely to settle within a mile of the plaza...Just to the north (in present-day Chinatown) was Sonoratown, the largest Mexican concentration” (Allen and Turner 94). Many Mexicans began arriving around or after 1910, both because of economic problems in their home country as well as job opportunities afforded in the city. After 1910, the majority of the downtown Mexican settlements moved east of the Los Angeles River, leading to the creation of the largest Mexican barrio, the Eastside (Allen and Turner 94). Villa describes a population relocated and mistreated as a result of central city restructuring: “In the 1910’s and 20’s expansion of downtown railroad, warehouse facilities, and a new civic center complex...forced thousands of Mexicans to move... to relocate to the next ring of the city...this is when Lincoln Heights, Chavez Ravine and Boyle Heights were founded” (9).

Although the majority of Mexicans in Los Angeles continue to reside in East LA, large Mexican settlements exist in other areas as well. In the early 1900s, smaller settlements, or “colonias,” sprung up around railroad and interurban lines, which were primarily maintained by Mexican workers—these led to the present-day Mexican settlements in Pasadena, Santa Monica, Long Beach, and Watts (Allen and Turner 94). The correlation between industrial districts and the location of Mexican communities is prevalent; in fact, in recent years industrial areas closer to downtown have regained large Mexican populations. “The entire area between Downtown and Lynwood and
Willowbrook is home to more than 400,000 people of Mexican origin, a high proportion of whom are recent immigrants. As of 1990, the residents of this area outnumbered those of the traditional Eastside” (Allen and Turner 108). Mike Davis also mentions this population trend, calling the old Central Manufacturing District near downtown Los Angeles “Latino LA’s gravitational center” (44).

Americans hailing from Mexico, Central America, and other Latin American countries were, and still are, constantly struggling to find their identity within the larger American whole—to keep their individuality and ties to home and to become a part of their new culture. These identity issues are even present in the conflict over terminology—the words “Latino,” and “Hispanic” themselves. Mike Davis explains that the term “Hispanic” was originally created in the 1970s by the Nixon administration, and is used predominantly for census purposes (11-12). According to Suzanne Oboler and Rodolfo Acuna, the term “Hispanic” is generally adopted by “eurocentric Spanishsurname elites in opposition to grassroots identification with Latino.” The term “Latino” is generally more accepted in California and Texas than “Hispanic.” (Davis 12). For the purposes of this paper, I will use the term “Hispanic” when quoting directly from census or statistical data, “Latino” when referring to the general population of Mexican, Central American, Puerto Rican, or Cuban descent, and “Chicano” when referring specifically to Mexican Americans.

Tensions over Mexican American identity erupted in the 1950’s with a new movement for social change—many young people of the Los Angeles Mexican community began calling themselves “Chicanos” and taking a stand “por la raza.” The myth of Aztlan became very popular—the idea that the Aztecs originally migrated from
California to Mexico City—thus giving these young Chicanos a way to find their place within American society as well as physical claim to the land of California (Leon 14). Identifying themselves with their own name, their own history, their own claim upon American soil, these Chicanos began a struggle for equal rights and representation that still continues today.

The strength and unification of the Chicanos in the 1960s can still be seen in the immigrant communities of today. In the neighborhoods of East Los Angeles, a very complex and intriguing community of immigrants uses a variety of methods to cope with their difficult lives, lives filled with poverty, disrespect, and the absence of loved ones. The main focuses of these immigrant communities are their Hometown Associations, customs and festivals indigenous to their homelands, and strong religious ties. According to Zahn and Rabadan, “There are now over 170 Hometown Associations (HTA’s) from 18 Mexican states registered with the Mexican consulate, and many more informal HTA’s that have no contact with the consulate” (1). HTA’s allow new immigrants with little knowledge of American culture to both maintain connections to their heritage, and obtain jobs and housing (Zahn and Rabadan 3). Los Angeles HTA’s exist from the Mexican states of Zacatecas, Jalisco, Oaxaca, Nayarit, Sinaloa, and Durango (Zahn and Rabadan 8). Though these associations allow mainly for the integration of new immigrants into American culture, their main goal is to raise and send money back to their home states and their relatives.

Religion is another dominant factor in Chicano communities—in fact, much of the funding raised by the HTA’s is sent to rebuild churches in Mexican towns. A large number of Mexican Americans are Catholic, yet many conflicts exist between Chicanos
and Catholicism in America. Miller states, "Religious institutions, rather than merely incorporating people into the American mainstream, serve the dual functions of preserving national identities and aiding incorporation" (4). There is also a more negative view of the Catholic Church in particular, upheld by many members of the Chicano community—the idea that the Catholic Church has the main goal of simply assimilating the Chicanos into society, and is thus not truly catering to their individual needs. Miller states, "The traditional view of religion’s role for immigrants stressed the function of assimilation... while many researchers agree that a more appropriate model for today’s immigration may be that of segmented assimilation in which preservation of immigrants’ own values and promotion of national solidarity with the homeland are compatible with assimilation to American culture” (24-25). A good example of the detachment of Chicanos and the Catholic Church is the fact that the numerous HTA’s and community festivals, are hardly ever sponsored, or even condoned, by the Catholic parishes of Los Angeles—especially intriguing in that so many Mexican Americans are Catholic. This lack of acceptance may arise from the fact that many of the religious festivals the Chicanos celebrate are, in essence, non-Catholic.

Mexican immigrants brought a variety of religious customs with them to the United States, many of these customs and festivals have become publicly known and celebrated over past years. "Chicanos move with ease between Catholicism, evangelicalism, and Mexican curing and spiritualist traditions like curanderismo. These movements parallel the back and forth movements of people, bodies, between Mexico and the United States” (Leon 20). The venerated image of Chicano Catholicism is the Virgin of Guadalupe—the figure of a dark-skinned Mary, which, according to Leon,
serves to remind the Chicanos of their ancestral homes and is often used as a symbol of "la raza" and its social struggles (104). Medina and Cadena examine the interior of Dolores Mission Church in Boyle Heights, "The small, simple church building exhibits the communities' central icons—a Salvadoran cross of liberation, la Madre Dolorosa, and Mary with her child walking the streets of Los Angeles... A drawing of a homeless woman with a child dying of hunger shares the altar with popular heroes of justice Oscar Romero, Cesar Chavez, and Mother Teresa" (71). Along with this powerful religious imagery, the Chicanos of East Los Angeles put much religious importance upon the traditional Dia de los Muertos festival, or the Day of the Dead.

"The beat of the Aztec drums notifies the crowd that the procession is about to begin. Danzantes (Aztec dancers) wearing feather headdresses and beaded ceremonial clothing offer prayers of thanksgiving to the four cardinal directions with the scent of copal (holy incense) rising to the heavens" (Medina and Cadena 69). Thus begins the Dia de los Muertos procession through the streets of East Los Angeles. Originally, this customary honoring of the dead was practiced by the Nahua, the predominant cultural group in pre-conquest Mexico, as well as by the Spanish Christians to a smaller extent. The Nahua’s rituals focused upon offerings, music and dance, processions, and public rituals, while the Spanish customs included graveside meal offerings and masses for the dead (Medina and Cadena 74). Like the myth of Aztlan, Dia de los Muertos has become an integral part of Latino religious culture, regardless of its pagan origins.

Medina and Cadena explain, "Syncretism is the term most often used to describe the fusion of distinct religious systems into a new one... to make sense out of Christianity, the Indigenous peoples of Mesoamerica had to appropriate Christian rites and symbols in
a way that would enable them to maintain balance and harmony with their drastically changing world" (75). A collaboration for Dia de los Muertos in 1998 between Dolores Mission Church in Boyle Heights, and Aztlán Cultural Arts Foundation in Lincoln Heights marks the first time a Catholic parish worked with cultural institutions in southern California around a public ritual celebration for the dead (Medina and Cadena 93). In fact, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles has declared that no decorations other than flowers can be left on gravesites during Dia de los Muertos, gravesite marking being an important part of the ritual (Medina and Cadena 91). Parishes seem to be beginning to understand the importance of being open toward Chicano religious and cultural practices—besides Dolores Mission, the original Chicano church in the downtown plaza, La Placita, also embraces the culture by leading a night procession through Olvera Street during Dia de los Muertos (Medina and Cadena 91).

Central Americans also constitute an important part of the population of Los Angeles—predominantly Guatemalans and Salvadorans. This group also exhibits strong religious ties and community practices. Many are new immigrants, “Almost two-thirds of Guatemalan and Salvadoran immigrants arrived in this country during the ten years previous to the census (1990)” (Allen and Turner 110). And they are coming in large numbers, often gathering entire villages from their home countries in their new American communities. Mike Davis states, “Having long boasted of being Mexico’s second city, Los Angeles now also has a Salvadoran population equal to or greater than San Salvador” (7). According to Allen and Turner, the most important Central American area in Los Angeles is that just west of Downtown, known as Pico-Union. Many of the residents in
this area are able to travel by bus to their jobs serving the affluent residents of the Westside (110).

Central Americans in Los Angeles, like Chicanos, are experiencing conflicts with both identity and the Catholic Church. Unlike the Mexican population of Los Angeles, the Central American population includes entire Indian tribes. Nancy Wellmeier in “Santa Eulaia’s People in Exile: Maya Religion, Culture and Identity in Los Angeles,” attempts to illuminate a piece of this Central American Maya culture. Santa Eulaila is a Guatemalan village from which Maya-descended immigrants journeyed to escape violence and death:

Even before the outbreak of the worst violence in the 1980s, long years of government repression targeted labor union and cooperative leaders, catechists, church workers, and any one suspected of informing the indigenous people about their human rights. From 1981 through 1985, government troops systematically massacred entire village populations, ‘disappeared’ numerous church workers, and kidnapped, tortured, and brutally killed hundreds of indigenous leaders. (Wellmeier 103)

Maya immigrants generally work in Korean-owned factories in the central city and many live in downtown apartments (Wellmeier 104). These central Los Angeles Guatemalan immigrants have formed an association similar to the HTA’s of the Chicano population, FEMAQ’ or the Fraternidad Ewulense Maya Q’anjob’al. Wellmeier explains, “In 1986, a small group of Roman Catholic men from Santa Eulalia organized themselves in Los Angeles to accomplish three goals: to hold their traditional religious service in their own language, to collect and send funds to their home parish to help reconstruct the church
building that had been destroyed by fire, and to preserve their Maya culture” (100). This organization is of course more intertwined with their religious beliefs, and it even sponsors yearly visits from their Guatemalan pastor in the hopes that connections will be made within the community and the local Los Angeles Catholic clergy (Wellmeier 101).

Wellmeier describes the Maya religious practice as follows: “To be recognized as a leader among the Mays means to have visibly given one’s time, energy, skills, and even funds for the good of the community… The interesting thing is what happens when this production-oriented practice comes into contact with the very different, somewhat consumer oriented style of the U.S. Catholic parishes, even those which are sensitive to Latino/Hispanic traditions” (107). The Mayans feel uncomfortable in the churches they attend—without a Mass in their language (many speak neither Spanish nor English), or a way to relate to the liturgy. They also complain about the lack of personal relationship with clergy in the United States (Wellmeier 108). The Los Angeles Catholic Church may be slowly realizing the importance of Chicanos in the Catholic Church, but little is being done to recognize other Latino groups. “In Los Angeles, for example, Salvadorans, Guatemalans and Ecuadorians—as well as indigenous immigrants like Zapotecs, Yaquis, Kanjobals, and Mixtecs—struggle to defend their distinctive identities within a hegemonically Mexican/Chicano popular culture.” (Davis 20).

Although the Archdiocese of Los Angeles as a whole seems to be ignoring this need for change, a handful of churches located in Mexican and Central American communities are addressing the complexities of Latino identity and culture. Usually, the change in a particular outlook is due to the personal efforts of a remarkable priest, and not by mandate of the Archdiocese as a whole. La Placita in the downtown plaza is the
original community-oriented Catholic Church—Father Luis Olivares spoke out about injustice toward Chicanos, and provided a haven in his Church for the homeless, free medical services, and English classes. Father Olivares died in 1992, but his protege Father Greg Boyle continued Olivares’s work. At Dolores Mission Church in the Pico-Aliso housing development, Father Boyle began a job program for gang-members and works to better the community in his area (Leon 152).

Other churches have not only helped the community, but have also developed an involved charismatic (almost Pentecostal) approach to their Masses, drawing far more of the Latino population. St. Thomas the Apostle Church in Pico-Union, a Central American church, has traditional Masses, but also encourages the charismatic movement popular among its laypeople (Miller 14). Miller further states:

Although most of the persons in faith-based projects in Los Angeles are overworked and their programs underfunded, an enormous reservoir of hope and optimism seems to drive their response to people’s needs. These people’s lives are rooted in daily spiritual practice, liturgy, and worship that renew their vision, and they refuse to accept cynicism, despair, and inequality as appropriate conditions of the human community. (287)

Although these few small churches and dedicated priests have attempted to close the social gap between Latinos and the Catholic Church, it still exists. Because of the Archdiocese’s refusal to adopt a great deal of Latino culture, many have become either non-practicing, practice at home, or have changed religions altogether. Medina and Cadena discuss the fact that many Mexican Americans have become estranged from the Catholic Church partially because of the lack of native-born Mexican clergy, and
partially because of the attempt at assimilation (87). They are quick to mention that although “a significant social distance persists between Chicanos and the Catholic Church, many stated that they had an altar at home” (93). These lapsed Catholics are not turning their backs on religion, they are just choosing to leave the institution of the church. It is only in the exceptional examples of Dolores Mission, La Placita, and St. Thomas the Apostle, that a community-oriented welcoming atmosphere can be found within this Archdiocese governed by tradition.

Some Latino Catholics have only found comfort in the Protestant Churches of Los Angeles. Espinosa, Elizondo, and Miranda discovered that “more than one in four (26 percent) Catholics in our survey sample, representing approximately 6.6 million persons, reported having had a born-again experience with Jesus Christ, something most often associated with Evangelical or Pentecostal Protestantism” (14). Protestant Churches in the East Los Angeles community have made more of an effort toward community outreach as well as parishoner recruiting. Because of this, a growing number of Latinos are turning toward these more accepting and less traditional congregations. Leon states, “Scholarly interest in Latin American “born-again” conversion has been buttressed by the debate on the “failure” of the Catholic Church to serve the needs of the Latino masses,” continuing with, “Certainly there are escapist elements in Pentecostalism, just as there are modes of empowerment” (165).

Victory Outreach and its affiliate Alcance Victoria Ministries are examples of community oriented and philanthropically driven Pentecostal congregations in East Los Angeles. Located in the Pico-Aliso Housing Development in Boyle Heights, this church has begun a youth ministry targeted toward young gang members—similar to the work of
Father Boyle at Dolores Mission. This organization is called God’s Ministry Anointed Now Generation or GANG (Leon 167). Leon states, “Religion emerges as a strategy for survival” (3). In fact—religion has saved many of these former gang members’ lives. The success of this endeavor rests upon the idea of integrating religious tenets within the urban Chicano lives of these youths—not to try and mold them to fit a certain image, but to accept them for who they are.

Many of the former Catholics attending Mass at these churches feel that same degree of acceptance and understanding, “Most of the lapsed Catholics came to Alcance Victoria because they enjoyed the company of others, the feeling of belonging, the music, the message of security and control over life—at least symbolically (Leon 188). It is not only the Chicano population that has embraced this new wave of Pentecostalism, but also the Central American population. Leon states, “Over the past thirty years, the once impenetrable walls of Catholicism in Central and South America have been shaken by waves of evangelical conversion, and now nearly ten percent or more of the Latin American population identifies itself as evangelico with the percentage substantially higher in Brazil, Chile, and most of Central America” (164). Why are so many Los Angeles Latinos turning away from Catholicism? Mike Davis states that statistically, “Spanish-language Protestant denominations (especially Pentecostals) are running neck-to-neck with the Pope” (14). The Archdiocese of Los Angeles clearly needs to connect in a more personal way with these Latino communities.

The churches that are most successful in their integration with Latino communities are, in fact, of a different breed—not focused upon the structure itself, or the customs, but about simply celebrating the faith. Victory Outreach has moved from an
apartment, to a discotheque, to a painter’s union hall, and finally to a defunct movie theater (Leon 167). Regardless of the impermanence of its structure, people still flock to this church. Other community centers like the popular Self-Help Graphics and the Aztlan Cultural Arts Foundation are located in temporary or makeshift structures—Self-Help Graphics is located in a garage, and the Aztlan Arts Foundation in the former L.A. County Prison (Medina and Cadena 78). Both Catholic and Protestant Latinos practice their religions in their churches, in their communities, and in their own homes—it does not seem as if they are in need of expensive structures or elaborate services, but only a place to be allowed to practice their faiths and a attain strong connection with the fellow members of their congregations.

Religious history was made in 2002, when the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels opened in downtown Los Angeles. According to Larry Stammer of the Los Angeles Times, it is the first American cathedral to be built in thirty years and is the “mother church of the nation’s largest and most ethnically diverse Roman Catholic Archdiocese.” Cardinal Mahoney’s vision for a breathtakingly modern religious structure was realized by architect Rafael Moneo at the cost of 189.5 million dollars. Carlos Jimenez describes the Cathedral’s relevance to the Latino community:

Our Lady of the Angels is the cathedral church of the largest archdiocese in the United States, serving a multinational congregation of parishioners, the majority of whom consist of tens of thousands of native-born and immigrant Latinos. They rely on the cathedral to provide a place of spiritual restitution in the harsh and volatile city. (108)
Jimenez describes the spirituality of the architecture—the idea of the freeway being an important element, a kind of river, and the interior of the church becoming a serene sanctuary (111). The Cathedral is an amazing work of architecture, carefully intertwined with religious themes and its urban context. The materials used create a field of light and shadow—this rich texture of these materials and the experiential qualities of progression through the space are both crucial elements of the design. "The monumental volume of the interior reminds us of the power that architecture possesses to make evident the communal yet solitary longing of the spirit" (Jimenez 117).

Truly the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angeles is a work of art, yet does it connect with the Latino population of Los Angeles? Latinos have often been mentioned in discourse about the new cathedral—The Liturgical Press publication announcing the new cathedral is focused primarily upon the structure as a unifying place for all cultures and races—the message the Archdiocese is attempting to send is that this church is open to all and beneficial to the entire congregation of the city (Downey 4). Yet, the need and relevance of this new structure to the Latino community is clearly questionable. In fact, Stammer reports that "Demonstrators were on hand Monday to underscore their long-standing criticism of the $189.5 million cost of the cathedral and conference center in view of the ever-present needs of the poor and marginalized. One sign proclaimed, 'No Fat Cat Cathedral' (Los Angeles Times).

The Latin American population of Los Angeles has been plagued by poverty and poor living conditions for decades, yet the Archdiocese of Los Angeles has made no widespread effort to remedy the situation. Allen and Turner describe the Latino income bracket as follows:
Hispanic household incomes average less than 25,000 in traditional barrios in Wilmington, Long Beach, Ontario, and the older part of the Mexican eastside which comprises Boyle Heights and East Los Angeles... The lowest incomes of all are found in the industrial and warehousing area just east of Downtown. This zone is sometimes called "The Flats"... the poor people in this area are ethnically diverse, but Latinos are most numerous (116). (see also poverty map)

Furthermore, many of the successful programs in the small community Catholic churches of Boyle Heights, Pico-Union, and East Los Angeles, are in need of funding. In the 1960’s, Catolicos por la Raza fueled the unrest of the Latino community over the substantial funds of the Catholic Church and its refusal to help their communities—this led to a heated demonstration outside of the affluent Wilshire Blvd. Church of St. Basil which ended with police breaking up the protest and beating many of the Chicanos in the process (Leon 145). The Archdiocese just spent nearly 200 million dollars on one church building—it is a beautiful building, yet how much further could this 200 million have gone if it had been given to the poorer Latino Catholic churches of the Diocese?

It seems that what the Latino population truly needs is a physical church that will understand their interpretation of the Catholic religion and its importance within their communities. Medina and Cadena state, “The coexistence of Catholic and Mesoamerican symbols reflects an aspect of nepantla spirituality, a spirituality where diverse biological and cultural elements converge, at times in great tension and at other times in cohesion” (88). The Archdiocese makes a major effort at catering to this part of its congregation by holding masses in Spanish as well as by their sensitivity to ethnic diversity—such as in the design of the cathedral. A large portrait of the Virgin of Guadalupe is visible on a
major wall, and the illustrated tapestries clearly depict many of the “hero” saints of the Latino community. Yet, it is the individual churches such as Dolores Mission, La Placita, and St. Thomas the Apostle—though in small and unassuming structures that are usually not even built as churches—that truly make a difference in the lives and communities of the Latino population.

Latinos are leaving the Catholic Church as an institution—opting instead for prayer at home, community religious groups, and even Pentecostalism. Simply saying Mass in the language of the community is not going to truly affect it and bring its people together—and neither will a 200 million dollar new cathedral. Cardinal Mahoney stated about the cathedral, “Anyone who comes here should continue on their journey with a replenished spirit of respect for all other peoples—in a special way, rendering thanks for the gift of ethnic diversity in this great urban center. No traces of discrimination or racism are to be found in this space. God’s temple is a house for all peoples” (quoted in Stammer). Cardinal Mahoney’s intentions are good, but could this new and luxurious cathedral really be the answer to unifying the fragmented Catholic community of Los Angeles? Would the Latino community—accustomed to masses in the refurbished and simple buildings mentioned earlier—see the need for this expensive structure above the need to rehabilitate gang members, or the need to help immigrants from their home communities to find housing or food, or the need to celebrate their community festivals?

Medina and Cadena quoted a band called the Aztlan Underground, at the 1998 Dia de los Muertos festival, singing the following lyrics which exemplify strong Latino feelings of identity:

They gave us a lie
They taught us in their schools, in their media, in their churches.
They perfectly cloned us
It's the invasion of the body snatchers

Kill the materialist lust
Put the money aside
What is the history of the men on the money?
This is not going to keep you free.

We need to honor our ancestors
Don't forget where you came from
Stand up for your children
That's what it's all about.

So that they can see a strong brown man, a strong brown woman
And feel proud of who they are.
So we can finally stand up
And take the foot of the oppressor out of this land.

Over 60 percent of the Catholic population of the city, these Latinos have
nonetheless been systematically ignored throughout history, and are perhaps still being
ignored today. Although the Los Angeles Latino population is quickly rising, becoming
a more important demographic to the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, the Archdiocese does
not seem to accept their religious traditions as a valid part of the Catholic faith. The
Archdiocese of Los Angeles attempts to get involved with their Latino congregation, but
they simply are not addressing the situation on the personal level of the Latino
community. Instead of building a new cathedral, perhaps more community programs
could be funded, and the small influential community churches of East Los Angeles
could be expanded or repaired—maybe the Archdiocese could make a greater attempt to
understand the economic, social, and religious conflicts within the Latino community as
well as their particular customs and breed of Catholicism. Do the Latinos of Los Angeles
need a "place of spiritual restitution in the harsh and volatile city" (Jimenez 108), or do
they simply need their communities to become less harsh and volatile?
Bibliography


Our Lady Queen of the Angels
Guadalupe Sanctuary
St. Thomas the Apostle
Dolores Mission Church
Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels

Location Key—Churches mentioned in the paper

Map of Main Regions—Downtown, Pico-Union, Pico-Rivera, Boyle Heights, etc.

Los Angeles Mexican Population (1990)
Los Angeles Guatemalan Population (1990)

Los Angeles Salvadoran Population (1990)

Los Angeles Other Central American (Not Salvadoran or Guatemalan) Population (1990)
Los Angeles Cuban Population (1990)

Los Angeles Puerto Rican Population (1990)

Los Angeles Hispanic South American Population (1990)
Percent of Persons in Poverty (1990)

Maps cited from Allen and Turner (noted in bibliography)