



CHURCHWORK

OUR VISION: The Diocese of Louisiana is one church, faithful to our Lord Jesus, united in mission, reaching out through service and proclamation to all for whom Christ died. We live in joyous expectation of God's transforming power, compassion and mercy in our lives. OUR MISSION: The Diocese of Louisiana is by grace, a vital community, reborn in the wake of tragedy, forging a new and prophetic environment of healing, trust and empowerment as servants of Jesus Christ.

St. Paul's, New Orleans, resurrects with determination and help



[Above] St. Paul's, New Orleans, lies under eight feet of water in Lakeview following Hurricane Katrina in August, 2005.



[Right] St. Paul's choir and congregation joyously sing on their first Sunday return to their church building, Aug. 27, 2006.

Ann M. Ball editor

St. Paul's, New Orleans, laid dormant for weeks after Katrina's storm surge burst through the 17th Street Canal dumping eight feet of Lake Pontchartrain into the church, its school and the new gymnasium. The first visitors inside the church saw a picture of desecration with molding, upended pews, prayer books and hymnals scattered in heaps at the choir steps and a grimy water line coating the beautiful marble angel font as mold crept up the stone and brick walls of the nave.

The church and surrounding Lakeview area homes were so completely devastated – along with the other 70 percent of New Orleans – that the early months following the storm seemed hopeless.

But the arrival of the Rev. Will Hood who came to serve as priest-in-charge began to change the tide. Initially, Hood said he "held parishioners' hands," to calm frayed nerves. Then he helped the parish find their vision. He gave them the compass they needed to move in the right direction to begin the recovery of the church and school. But they didn't do it alone.

One year later on Aug. 27, the congregation held its first Sunday worship in St. Paul's Church. Bishop Charles Jenkins, Canon Chad Jones and visiting Suffragan Bishop Nedi Rivera of Olympia (Washington) joined with Fr. Hood and the people of St. Paul's to celebrate their rebirth. More than 300 people filled every seat in the church and people stood along the aisles to be a part of the resurrection of their spiritual community.

The congregation acknowledged the outpouring of generosity to their parish with a booklet of the names of churches, individuals, families, corporations and foundations that made contributions to St. Paul's.

– Continued on page four

Grace, New Orleans, includes labyrinth in rebirth

Ann M. Ball, editor

With dedicated help from congregations across the country, Grace Church, New Orleans has made remarkable progress in restoring its church from the devastation of Katrina. Four feet of flood water filled every area – church, chapel, offices, day care center, parish hall, kitchen, sacristy, rectory – destroying everything: pews, flooring, wiring, the organ, vestments, furniture, appliances, children's tables, books and toys.

The congregation worshipped on the front sidewalk for several weeks until the chapel was cleaned and prepared to move inside for worship. Then work crews from all over tackled the monumental task of cleaning the cavernous modern nave of Grace.

"As a mid- to long-term solution, we decided to paint our concrete floor and include a labyrinth to provide a place of contemplation, comfort and transformation for people in our devastated city and Mid-City neighborhood," explained the Rev. Walter Baer, rector of Grace. "Our labyrinth is a 36-foot replica of the Medieval one in Chartres Cathedral. It was designed by Aimée Dominique and Anne Hollier of Lafayette."

"On June 10-11, the two women drew the outline of the labyrinth," Baer continued, "It was painted by members of the parish, with help from friends from Grace Church in New York City. The floor was sealed a few weeks later by parishioners and folks from Grace Church, Providence Rhode Island."

In preparation for the first anniversary of Katrina, the parish dedicated the labyrinth on Saturday, Aug. 26, at a 10 a.m. service.

The labyrinth is open before and after services and Monday - Thursday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturdays, 8 a.m. - noon and by appointment.



Labyrinth draws worshippers into the nave of Grace, New Orleans. [WALTER BAER PHOTO]

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KATRINA REFLECTIONS KATRINA REFLECTIONS

Christ Church Cathedral hosts Interfaith Liturgy of Remembrance for first anniversary of Katrina



Irvin Mayfield plays a Katrina reflection accompanied by Ronald Markham on piano.



[ABOVE] Shades of Praise Choir sing Gospel songs as the prelude for the Interfaith Liturgy at Christ Church Cathedral, New Orleans, on Aug. 27 remembering the first anniversary of Hurricane Katrina.



[RIGHT] Three great faith traditions are represented in the procession into Christ Church Cathedral for the Katrina Liturgy: (left to right) Imam Rafeeq Nu'man, Rabbi Edward Cohn, Elder John Pierre, Cathedral Dean David duPlantier, and Episcopal Bishop Charles Jenkins.

[EDITOR PHOTOS]



Katrina service held at St. Louis Cathedral, New Orleans

Ben Jenkins, public relations
Diocese of Louisiana

On the first anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, people from all walks of life packed into St. Louis Cathedral in Jackson Square for a prayer service for the city of New Orleans and the surrounding area. The gathering, a diverse group representing different faith traditions, economic backgrounds, ethnicities and political beliefs, met together to remember what they all share — lives affected by the worst disaster in U.S. history.

Before a standing-room-only crowd that overflowed into Jackson Square, the various clergy and political representatives took their respective parts in the service. Among the speakers were Governor Kathleen Blanco and Mayor Ray Nagin.

Archbishop Alfred Hughes of the Archdiocese of New Orleans opened the ceremony with a greeting, Bishop Garnett Henning of the African Methodist Episcopal Church read the opening prayer, Rabbi Robert Loewy, president of the Rabbinical Council of Greater



Bishop Jenkins at St. Louis Cathedral
[BEN JENKINS PHOTO]

New Orleans led the assembly in a prayer, and Dr. Mahmoud Sarmini, president of the Muslim Association of the West Bank gave a reading from the pages of the Qur'an.

Ann M. Ball, editor Churchwork
Diocese of Louisiana

Three great faith traditions came together Aug. 27 to lift up and commemorate the contributions of the faith community at Christ Church Cathedral, New Orleans, with a soul-inspiring blend of New Orleans music and interfaith prayers for the city's recovery and rebuilding. The cathedral was filled with people from far and near of every background.

The joyful voices of the Shades of Praise Choir filled the cathedral for the 4 p.m. Sunday service with selections of Gospel music as a prelude to the liturgy of remembrance, healing and hope titled, Come Forth and be Renewed.

Christ Church Cathedral's new organist, Jarrett Follette, also set the tone, selecting Copeland's moving "Fanfare for the Common Man" for the processional, accompanied by a brass orchestra and rumbling timpani.

The solemn procession, complete with incense, included Episcopal Bishop of Louisiana Charles Jenkins who was joined by Rabbi Edward Cohn of Temple Sinai; Imam Rafeeq Nu'Man, Masjidur Rahim of the Muslim community; Christ Church Cathedral Dean David duPlantier, Superintendent and Pastor the Rev. John Pierre of the Living Witness Church in Central City; all of New Orleans;

and visiting Episcopal Suffragan Bishop of Olympia (Washington) Nedi Rivera.

A litany was led by the cathedral's Christian Education Director Laurie Bailey and a young cathedral girl, Claiborne Beary.

Imam Nu'Man then gave a reading from the Qur'an.

Rabbi Cohn read the familiar words from Ecclesiastes, using a variation for some people's ears, "a time to rip, a time to sew."

Cathedral Choir Member Cedric Bridge's deep mellow voice chanted the 23rd Psalm. He was followed by Ronald Markham, CEO of the New Orleans Jazz Orchestra who read a lesson from the Book of Romans. Elder Pierre proclaimed the Gospel.

Bishop Jenkins then moved to the cathedral's north transept where two large palm trees stood. He was joined there by members of the board of the diocese's Jericho Road Episcopal Housing Initiative. Jericho Road is in partnership with Episcopal Relief and Development to build homes in the Central City neighborhood near the cathedral for low income New Orleanians to purchase. The bishop blessed the trees as a sign of the historic partnership and as a sign of renewal. "...let [these trees] remind us that life ever springs forth from death," the bishop intoned.

Jenkins announced that the offertory would be given to the Jericho Road Housing Initiative. The offertory anthem, 'Come Forth to be Renewed' was composed by Robert Powell for the 200th anniversary of the cathedral in 2005.

Imam Nu'Man then blessed the Elysian Trumpet. "We now dedicate the Elysian Trumpet as a source of joy, hope and renewal for the city of New Orleans, the State of Louisiana and our brothers and sisters throughout the region," the Imam proclaimed.

A work in progress, the trumpet is being crafted in gold by Dave Monette, renowned trumpet maker of Portland, Oregon. It is given in memory of Irvin Mayfield Sr. and all the who lost their lives in Hurricane Katrina.

The cathedral's 2006 Artist-in-Residence Irvin Mayfield Jr., then offered his trumpet reflections accompanied by Ronald Markham on the piano. Mayfield played soulful renditions of Go Down Moses and Amazing Grace, blending his unique style and passion to them which seemed to range from tearfully downtrodden to wailingly, breathtakingly raucous — raising all the same piece. It brought everyone to their feet for a standing ovation.

In his greeting to the worshippers, DuPlantier acknowledged his staff for their assistance with the service. He announced, "The roof of the Jericho Road houses have been built; will be lowered into place." The congregation responded with more ovations. DuPlantier reminded the gathering that another concert was planned for the 201st anniversary of the cathedral on Nov. 17 and Mayfield would again play as he did last November to a city star for the sounds of its homeland music.

Imam Nu'Man offered a closing prayer for the service. Rabbi Cohn was to offer a closing prayer also, but instead put his arm around Imam's shoulders and told the congregation that the words the Imam spoke were exactly what he would have said from his Jewish tradition. God's words had been spoken.

Bishop Jenkins then concluded the service with Aaron's blessing — an ancient Hebrew blessing — bringing the interfaith closing circle.

Bishop Charles Jenkins delivered one of three messages to the gathering. Drawing from the theme of Remembering, Reclaiming and Renewing, he stressed unification of the community through its rebuilding. (See the text of Bishop Jenkins message on page two.)

Amid traditional prayers read throughout the evening, prayers that were unique to New Orleans were incorporated into the service. In one prayer, led by the Rev. Dennis Hayes, vicar of Our Lady of Prompt Succor, Chalmette, imagery of food associated with New Orleans was used. "Like a good Gumbo, with shrimp and oysters, filé and okra — may we honor and respect the ingredients each person has to offer." Other similes used were the Mississippi River, the Brown Pelican (the state bird), the live oak tree and the fleur de lis.

The memorial service concluded the best way New Orleanians know how. After solemnly remembering the city that was, the congregation recessed in celebration at the rebirth of New Orleans onto the streets of the French Quarter to the tune of "When the Saints Go Marching In."

KATRINA REFLECTIONS KATRYNA REFLECTIONS

Diocesan-wide Eucharist celebrated on eve of hurricane's anniversary

Ann Ball, editor, Churchwork
Diocese of Louisiana

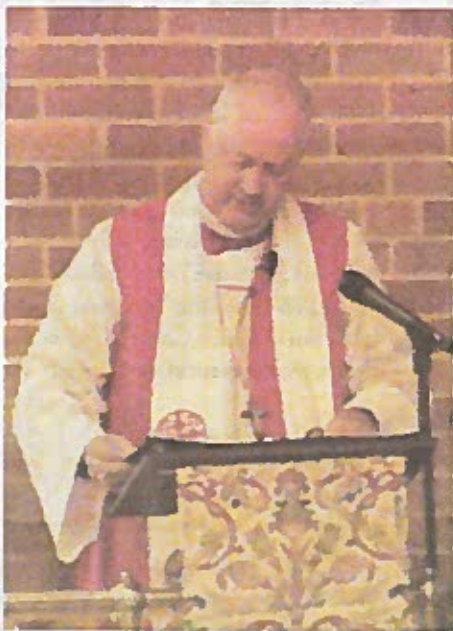
St. Paul's, New Orleans, served as the site for a diocesan-wide 7 p.m. Eucharist on the vigil of the first anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. The church, located not far from the now infamous 17th Street Canal in Lakeview, has made a remarkable comeback in its first year of rehabilitation following the ravages of the storm and flooding.

Five bishops, clergy from all over the diocese, St. Paul's choir and servers processed into the nave as daylight gave way to evening. Louisiana's Canon Chad Jones led the chanting of the Great Litany in procession.

Bishop Suffragan for Chaplaincies George Packard came to Louisiana to take part in the many anniversary observances along the Gulf Coast. Packard preached for the service. Bishop Duncan Gray of Mississippi and Suffragan Bishop Nedi Rivera of Olympia came in support of the diocese. Louisiana's Ninth Bishop James Brown and Tenth Bishop Charles Jenkins were present also. Bishop Jenkins celebrated the Eucharist.

Packard's trenchant sermon took the intricacies of pain from the early days of Katrina and posited them into the helping hands and hearts of the present and into the arms of God.

"A great city wiped clean of its culture" ... "640,000 homes destroyed" ... "This is a place that can joke down a storm - but not this time" ... "The last time I was here [at St. Paul's] I couldn't even describe the chaos" ... "The storm claimed things. Remembrance is profound in New Orleans." Packard stilled the



Bishop George Packard preaches for the diocesan Eucharist. [BEN JENKINS PHOTO]

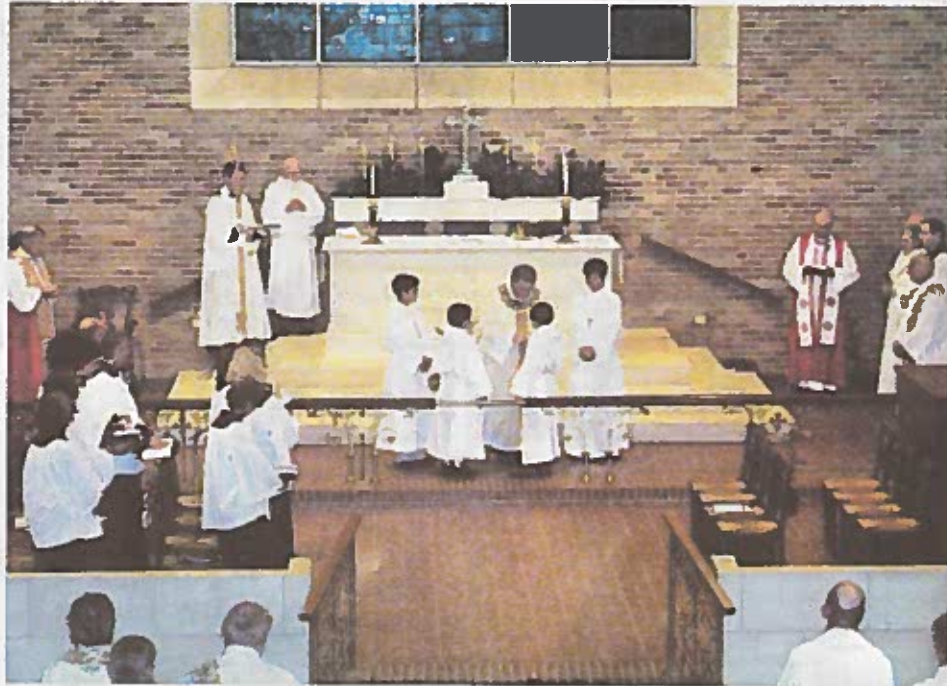
congregation with his own remembrances.

"But there are so many people rooting and praying for you this night," Packard continued. "This land is truly gifted...it is a spotlight moment."

"Jesus says 'I am the resurrection and the life, he who believes in me will have everlasting life,'" Packard continued, offering the hope of the Gospel.

In his closing remarks Packard told his listeners, "You will not be overcome. You will not be assailed...For God loves us and delights in us."

Following the sermon Bishop Charles



Bishop Charles Jenkins presents recognition pins to four of St. Paul's acolytes for their service to their church during the difficult year following Hurricane Katrina. [EDITOR PHOTO]

Jenkins welcomed the visiting bishops. "Bishop Packard has been a steady friend and presence among us. Bishop Gray has always been a friend and companion. When I needed someone to lean on, he has been there for me. And we welcome Bishop Rivera who has a special relationship with St. Paul's."

The bishop asked the congregation, "How many of you were on I-10 a year ago yesterday?" referring to those who exited the city by car, both east and west. "We remember the good hospitality we received in Baton Rouge for the evacuation."

At the Eucharist, the bishop said, "Let us remember those who have died and their families and those who have no one."

St. Paul's organist and choirmaster Dr. Jerry F. Davidson composed an anthem especially for this diocesan Katrina observance using the hymn text, *By Gracious Powers*.

By gracious powers so wonderfully sheltered, and confidently waiting come what may,

We know that God is with us night and morning, and never fails to greet us each new day.

Yet is this heart by its old foe tormented, still

evil days bring burdens hard to bear; O give our frightened souls the sure salvation, for which, O Lord you taught us to prepare.

And when this cup you give is filled to brimming with bitter suffering, hard to understand,

Yet when again in this same world you give us the joy we had, the brightness of your Sun we shall remember all the days we lived through, and our whole life shall then be yours alone.

— words by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

At the close of the service Bishop Jenkins presented recognition pins to the four young men who served as acolytes at this commemorative Eucharist: Andrew Holdiness, James Stanton Murray, Philip Thompson Murray and Robert Slichko.

The bishop acknowledged their work during a difficult year of hardship at St. Paul's.

"Thank you for your faithful service and good work," the bishop said as he attached the pins to the young men's vestments.

Following the service, members of St. Paul's hosted a reception in the school gym for the many visitors who came.

Grace, New Orleans, commemoration service remembers loved ones lost

Ben Jenkins, public relations
Diocese of Louisiana

Grace Church, New Orleans, in partnership with Volunteers of America, held a non-denominational service in remembrance of Hurricane Katrina and those who lost their lives in it. The congregation consisted of members of Grace Church, volunteers and employees of VOA and people from the Mid-City neighborhood around Grace Church, who gathered on Aug. 29, the anniversary of the worst natural disaster in this nation's history.

The brief service began with an introduction by Jim LeBlanc, president and CEO of Volunteers of America, followed by readings from members of VOA, Grace Episcopal Church and the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana.

A homily was given by the Rev. Walter Baer, rector of Grace, focusing on Psalm 137 which tells of the destruction of Jerusalem. Fr. Baer instructed those listening to think of Jerusalem as New Orleans when hearing the words of the Psalm, pointing out similarities when people wanted to "tear it down to its foundations" speaking of Jerusalem as people did of New Orleans and how the residents of Jerusalem feared worshiping God upon alien soil - as many New Orleanians had fears of having to move away.

The emotional apex of the service occurred when Baer invited those in attendance to light candles provided and place them in a base of sand in memory of those lost or affected by the storm.

"There are some who did not come back

and today we remember them," he said while lighting his candle and placing it in the sand. This ushered tears from the congregants as people slowly started to file toward the candles to commemorate their loved ones lost.

With Grace Church's centrally located site in Mid-City, Baer sees the church becoming a resource for all of the city to use in its rebuilding efforts.

"We envision Grace being a spiritual respite for the city with such things as our labyrinth and garden to sit in," he commented, on the future of Grace Church in New Orleans.

Baer is also eager to restart the church's child care service for the parents of the neighborhood as well as the Hispanic ministry that had been taking place before Hurricane Katrina's destruction to the area.



The Rev. Walter Baer (center) gives the blessing at the close of the Katrina Commemoration Service at Grace, New Orleans, Aug. 29. [BEN JENKINS PHOTOS]



During the service at Grace, New Orleans, on the first anniversary of the storm, Aug. 29, worshippers light candles in remembrance of loved ones who were lost due to Hurricane Katrina.

Jericho Road wins approval for New Orleans neighborhood development



Christ Church Cathedral Dean David duPlantier chats with New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin following the awarding of property sites for nonprofits to develop. [BEN JENKINS PHOTO]

Denise Estopinal
Jericho Road Episcopal Housing Initiative

New Orleans Mayor C. Ray Nagin announced on Aug. 6 that the Jericho Road Episcopal Housing Initiative's application to develop adjudicated properties in the Central City neighborhood has been accepted. Jericho Road is among 22 non-profit and for-profit developers winning approval for targeted neighborhood development.

Targeted Neighborhood Development seeks non-profit and for-profit developers interested in developing mixed income communities. This initiative is intended for developers with the capacity to achieve large scale redevelopment projects. The city has awarded Jericho Road 50 properties to develop.

Jericho Road's Executive Director Brad Powers and Board Member the Very Rev. David duPlantier, dean of Christ Church Cathedral, New Orleans, were present at the Central City

location for the mayor's announcement. "This is a joyful day for the Jericho Road Episcopal Housing Initiative. The extensive groundwork and preparation that we have accomplished in the recent months positions us to move quickly toward the vision articulated by Bishop Jenkins of creating not just houses but homes and neighborhoods to promote the return of our displaced brothers and sisters," Dean duPlantier said.

Jericho Road was formed in March as a partnership of the Diocese of Louisiana and the Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD). ERD provided the initial funding total of \$2.3 million which will be used for administrative management, property acquisition and construction.

The funding from ERD, combined with planned financing from the Whitney Community Development Corporation will result in an investment in the New Orleans Central City neighborhood of over \$20 million.



[ABOVE] The first house is in place at 2428 Philip St.



[RIGHT] A crane lifts one of the modular houses from a flatbed truck as workers on the ground direct the structure onto its foundation pilings and secure it in place at 2409 Philip St. [JOHN JOHNSON PHOTOS]

Jericho Road reaches milestone with first two modular homes set in place

The first of the Jericho Road's new modular homes were delivered to the Central City neighborhood of New Orleans on Aug. 29. This is the first step in the Jericho Road Episcopal Housing Initiative's plan to provide quality, affordable neighborhood housing for families and individuals in New Orleans.

The modular homes, located at 2409 and 2428 Philip Street near Freret Street are designed as traditional New Orleans three-bay, single shotgun homes. They were constructed by the Texas company, Oak Creek, and designed and installed for Jericho Road by American Renaissance Homes.

The construction occurred off-site and the

homes were trucked in and crane-lifted onto their foundations.

According to Brad Powers, executive director of Jericho Road, the transport of the homes with an escort of about ten state troopers, generated quite a stir of excitement and curiosity throughout the Central City neighborhood.

"After a few very tight turns, the houses were on our lots," said Powers. "The first house was raised 55-feet over the top of a tree and then gently put to rest on its foundation. The second house only required a 15-foot lift but then a 180-degree spin. It was an awesome site to see," he added.

The two modular houses are on the open

market and are selling for \$115,000. To qualify as a purchaser, a potential home buyer must make 80 percent or less of the area median income. Depending on the number of persons in the household, this can vary from approximately \$27,000 for a single individual up to \$50,000 for a large family.

"Jericho Road is in the process of acquiring property title to 50 lots in Central City and will add as many homes as property titles are cleared," Powers said. "We fully expect to have additional modular homes delivered later this fall."

Another exciting aspect of the affordable housing initiative is the purchase of slightly

damaged and empty housing stock in Central City. Jericho Road plans to renovate the homes and then sell them as affordable housing to working families and individuals.

Jericho Road is also exploring ways to assist home owners in Central City who have damaged homes and want to return to New Orleans but might not have the resources to accomplish that task alone.

This program, in the planning stages, will assist home owners renovate their houses and return home.

For more information about the Jericho Road Episcopal Housing Initiative, contact Brad Powers, (504) 377-1957.

Youth volunteers make a big difference to many New Orleans home owners

Matt Holt, Youth Mission director
Office of Disaster Response

The Office of Disaster Response's new Youth Mission Program has had a very successful summer. In conjunction with some local parishes, ODR hosted or worked with eleven different youth groups from various parts of the country including over 150 participants.

The groups traveled to New Orleans from as far away as California and New York and worked hard while they were here. They gutted homes in Gentilly, cleared yards and streets in Lakeview and supported the diocesan Mobile Respite Unit RV in the Lower Ninth Ward. Some also served meals at St. George's Dragon Café in uptown New Orleans. Many of the groups expressed a real desire to return here in the future and help continue the process of rebuilding the city.

The ODR is truly thankful for all of the gifts the young people brought to our recovery effort and grateful for the youthful energy that they infused into our various ministries. Many local people commented on how wonderful it was to see young smiling faces so willing to lend a helping hand.

As summer draws to a close, the Office of Disaster Response is eager to continue to involve youth volunteers in its efforts. There are many opportunities for local youth groups to serve on weekends or during certain school holidays. The Youth Mission Program thanks everyone in the diocese who has given support to this valuable program.

Anyone interested in learning more about the program may contact Youth Mission Coordinator Matt Holt at the Office of Disaster Response at 504.258.5707 or email mholt@edola.org.



A volunteer youth mission group from St. Alban's Cathedral School in Washington D. C. pauses from their labors at gutting a house in a New Orleans neighborhood this summer.