

# Champion of justice

During this Black Catholic History Month, it is fitting to acknowledge a woman marked by faith and who is not afraid to allow God to use her in the ministry of social justice within the judicial arena.

Attorney Glendora C. Hughes is a parishioner of historic St. Francis Xavier Church in Baltimore City. Professionally, Hughes serves as the General Counsel for the Maryland Commission on Human Relations. In this role, Attorney Hughes continues the long march of equality for all of those who came before us. She has also used her genius, skills and faith within church movements, initiatives and conferences serving on archdiocesan boards, forums and dialogue sessions combating racism in the hope of forging strategies of inclusivity. In doing so, Hughes sought avenues to restore the dignity of God's people and gave voice where justice needed to be heard.

The Women's Law Center of Maryland acknowledged the significant contributions that Hughes has achieved in improving women's rights and during their recent Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony, they wrote ... "Glendora C. Hughes confronts difficult employment law and fair housing issues to improve the circumstances of disenfranchised Marylanders. She is responsible for the enforcement of the state's Commercial Non-Discrimination Policy, which prohibits businesses with state contracts from discriminating against women and minority-owned businesses. Hughes has participated in the writing of numerous laws and amendments that promote equality in employment and housing and is active in dozens of professional and nonprofit organizations that work to increase fairness and improve the well-being of Marylanders."

Additionally, Hughes is one of the co-founders of the Alliance of Black Women Attorneys. This organization has been in existence for more than 30 years. Along with other noted attorneys in Maryland, Hughes developed a network to enhance the professional development of African-American women attorneys. She has traveled throughout the country to provide legal education seminars and workshops and has participated in numerous community service projects in mentoring young people and providing scholarships for students in the Baltimore City School system, as well as supporting and encouraging women to seek judicial appointments.

In a similar vein, Hughes' participation in church activity champions fairness and equality. Fairness, equality and authentic inclusion of all of God's people on all church levels from the boardrooms of decision making to the choir halls of praise. She has served as vice president of the board of African American Catholic Ministries during its early days, trying to pursue and attend a place at church tables seated by African-Americans. Hughes was steadfast with other African- American elders in forging a relationship with The Catholic Review in securing the present Africentric page. She has contributed several articles discussing "racism: the elephant in the room."

Hughes has served on discussion panels and has provided insights on racism and privilege at social justice convocations and forums issued by the Murphy Initiative. She was a strong participant of "Encuentro: 2000," a national forum that celebrated and encouraged cultural diversity within the Catholic Church. Concerned about the health and welfare of inner city residents, Hughes serves as a leader on the board of Bon Secours Hospital.

Hughes and her family are lifetime members of historic St. Francis Xavier and she has been a faithful member of the Gospel choir for 30 years. She has served on numerous committees at her parish and has provided legal counseling, pro bono, to the pastors, parishioners and church organizations over the years.

Hughes has been a true blessing to those who know her and we congratulate her on her accomplishments and acknowledgements of her contributions to promote and encourage women and minority-owned businesses in her profession and church activities.

*Nina R. Harper is a member of St. Francis Xavier Church in Baltimore and acting president of the board of African American Catholic Ministries.*