

STRENGTHENING HISPANIC MINISTRY ACROSS DENOMINATIONS: A CALL TO ACTION

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Pulpit & Pew
Research on Pastoral Leadership



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Photos throughout the report are from the opening convocation and working sessions of the Hispanic Pastoral Leadership Summit held at Duke University, October 1-3, 2003.

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FOREWORD

As is well known, Latinos are the largest and fastest growing minority group in the U.S. population, and the large majority of Latinos are Christian—Catholic and Protestant. When Pulpit & Pew undertook its national survey of clergy in 2001, it was evident that our random sample would not be of sufficient size to include enough Latino pastors to highlight some of the unique opportunities and challenges facing this particular group of clergy as they seek to minister to their growing constituency. To explore these particular issues in some depth, we asked Dr. Edwin Hernández, director of the Center for the Study of Latino Religion at the University of Notre Dame, to assist us. Dr. Hernández proposed that we combine research—survey and focus group data—with a conference that would bring together Catholic and Protestant Latino leaders from across the country. The conference—the National Summit of Hispanic Religious Leaders, held at Duke University in October 2003—not only featured an important keynote address by Dr. Justo González, but also gave participants opportunity to respond in depth to the report prepared by the conference organizers and researchers. The spirited participation of Catholics and Protestants of many denominations made the Summit an historic event, and the depth and quality of the discussion made it truly substantive, as participants joined to find common challenges and suggest common strategies.

This report contains a summary of a longer report prepared for the Summit, which Dr. Hernández and his colleagues hope to publish in full. It also includes reflections by some of the Summit participants. We are greatly indebted to Dr. Hernández and his co-authors, Dr. Milagros Peña, the Rev. Kenneth Davis, CSC, and Ms. Elizabeth Station, for making it available to a wider audience. It deserves wide study, especially by denominational leaders and theological educators.

In addition to my deep gratitude to Dr. Hernández and his colleagues and to all who participated in the Summit, I would like to thank my former colleague, Dr. Becky R. McMillan, who served as Pulpit & Pew’s primary liaison with the researchers and conference planners.

This report is one of a series of reports on pastoral leadership from Pulpit & Pew, an interdenominational research project at Duke Divinity School, with funding from Lilly Endowment, Inc. Its purpose is to provide credible research findings about Protestant and Catholic pastoral leadership today and the changes impacting it. Three sets of questions guide the various studies, including this one:

What is the state of pastoral leadership at the new century’s beginning, and what do current trends portend for the next generation?

What is “good ministry?” Can we describe it? How does it come into being? Do its characteristics vary by denominational tradition? By congregational context and size?

What can be done to help “good ministry” come into being more frequently, and how can it be nurtured and supported more directly by congregations, denominations, theological schools, and others concerned with the nurture and support of the church’s ministry?

I commend this report to you.

Jackson W. Carroll, Director
Pulpit & Pew
Williams Professor Emeritus of Religion and Society

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Organizing a national event like the historic 2003 summit of Hispanic religious leaders – described in these pages – takes a great deal of planning and coordination. First, I would like to thank Dr. Jackson W. Carroll, director, and Dr. Becky R. McMillan, associate director, of the Pulpit and Pew Project at Duke Divinity School. They co-organized the summit and provided strong support by sponsoring both the Latino Religious Leadership Project and the national conference. I commend them for their vision and interest in strengthening Latino pastoral ministry. I also appreciate the important support provided by Bob Wells, associate director of communications at Duke Divinity School (who assisted with the communications, news release and publication of working papers) and John James, project coordinator (who was responsible for conference logistics).

I am grateful to the members of the summit's organizing committee, including Dr. Justo González, who functioned as the convener and gave the keynote address that set the tone and vision for the conference. Perhaps no other person has done more to nurture Latino pastoral ministry than Dr. González. His involvement and message provided the context for a successful conference. In addition, special thanks go to my two research colleagues: Dr. Milagros Peña, who interviewed Latino pastors in seven regions of the country and wrote a chapter on "Hispanic Clergy and the Task of Good Ministry in Urban America," and the Rev. Dr. Ken Davis and Betsy Station, who helped to bring together and edit the collection of working papers. Their friendship and strong commitment to the project made all the organizational difficulties surmountable. I would also like to thank Barbara Walsh, who volunteered her time to help facilitate a very productive strategic planning process that led to the development of the six strategic initiatives. A key component of the summit's success was the worship experiences, which Sally Gomez-Kelly coordinated. Her

careful and thoughtful organization of the opening convocation and other worship experiences helped to create a spirit of unity and purpose.

Special thanks are due Maria Thompson, assistant program manager at the Center for the Study of Latino Religion at the University of Notre Dame, who provided strong support in coordinating all the details of the conference, especially keeping track of and following up with the invitees. Her attention to detail and commitment to the Center's mission helped make this event a success. I also appreciate the work of research assistants Jose Garcilazo and Marcia Valenzuela.

In addition, I would like to thank the researchers and summit participants who authored the many documents that went into this publication, including session proceedings, research papers and personal reflections. Special thanks go to Elizabeth Station for her editorial assistance in bringing their contributions together into a unified whole.

Finally, I would like to express thanks to Lilly Endowment Inc., whose funding helped to support the conference and partly underwrote research through the Pulpit and Pew Project. Further information is available at www.pulpitandpew.duke.edu/. I am also grateful to The Pew Charitable Trusts, who provided partial funding for the research papers and for the administration and coordination of this event.

The national, interdenominational summit of Hispanic religious leaders was an unprecedented historical event. The vision and energy of those present – and the relationships they built there – will provide a solid foundation for permanent new initiatives to strengthen Latino religious leadership and in so doing, to serve our country's growing Latino population.

Edwin I. Hernández

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

Currently numbering 38 million individuals, U.S. Latinos are the nation's largest and fastest-growing minority group. Both as established residents and new immigrants, Latinos are making major contributions to the country's economy and society. Hispanic membership is increasing in Christian congregations throughout the United States, posing major opportunities and challenges for the churches that serve them. Overall, the Hispanic community remains disproportionately affected by poverty, low education levels, poor health, and discrimination. Churches that seek to minister to community members in need often do so with limited financial resources and inadequate leadership.

The leadership issue is particularly dramatic. Only a tiny number of Latinos who are called to ministry have both the academic credentials and economic means needed for a seminary education. Consequently, in a nation that is 13 percent Hispanic, only 2.5 percent of students in accredited theological schools are Latino or Latina. Moreover, ordained clergy who do finish seminary often find that formal education prepared them little for the day-to-day reality of ministry in the *barrio*. Pastors serving poor congregations are usually underpaid, and many must hold second jobs to earn a living. Because Latino pastors typically cannot serve full-time, they rarely reach the highest ranks within their congregations and denominations. Women only rarely rise to leadership positions, despite their notable numbers and contributions in both Catholic and Protestant settings.



THE SUMMIT

Aware of this urgent need, a group of 33 Latino religious leaders gathered from October 1-3, 2003, to set an agenda for strengthening ministry to the growing U.S. Hispanic population. Duke University Divinity School hosted the leaders' three-day "summit" in collaboration with Pulpit & Pew and the Center for the Study of Latino Religion at the University of Notre Dame.

Culminating months of preparation, the summit was the first multi-denominational meeting aimed at enhancing the quality of Hispanic pastoral leadership in parishes, churches, and other faith communities across the U.S. Participants included Latino clergy, directors of Hispanic ministry programs, leaders of faith-based community organizations, and scholars from around the country – representing 19 denominations from Catholic to Pentecostal to mainline Protestant.

Leaders at the historic gathering set aside doctrinal differences and called for broad new efforts to address issues common to all Hispanic churches. By identifying shared challenges and opportunities, they hoped to create a joint action agenda leading to policies and practices that can strengthen Hispanic ministry in the United States across denominations.

The most pressing needs, the summit participants agreed, include:

1. Better opportunities for formal theological education,
2. Training for laity to assume leadership responsibilities,
3. Increased cultivation of second- and third-generation Latino youth,
4. Initiatives that would help church leaders to advocate for the social needs of their communities,
5. Programs to provide lay leaders and clergy with practical administrative skills, and
6. A permanent national dialogue on Hispanic pastoral leadership.

At the summit's end, participants appointed a broadly representative "continuation committee" to develop a

plan for advancing their recommendations. The nine-member committee met January 20-21, 2004, at the Louisville Institute, where they identified leadership development as the top strategic priority for strengthening Hispanic ministry across denominations.

IN THIS REPORT

The following pages aim to give readers a sense of both the spirit and content of the October 2003 summit, as well as a look at the reality that Hispanic churches face in the U.S. today. Accordingly, Part One examines the context in which Hispanic ministers work and the com-

mon challenges they confront, regardless of location or denomination. Part Two begins with an assessment of the opportunities and resources that Latino churches can deploy to meet those challenges. It then outlines the six strategic priorities for strengthening Hispanic ministry that summit participants identified, with special attention to the top priority – leadership development. Because solid research must serve as the foundation for any future reform efforts, Part Three summarizes recent, key research on Hispanic ministry and church leadership. The report concludes with Part Four, which contains a series of personal reflections by participants on the meaning and potential impact of the summit.



PART ONE: SHARED CONTEXT, COMMON CHALLENGES

Preoccupation with denomination divides and dominates much of the Christian press' coverage of Hispanics in the United States. Yet, couldn't Hispanic religious leaders accomplish more for all Latinos and Latinas by collaborating rather than competing?

Sí was the rousing response of the first multi-denominational summit of Hispanic religious leaders to this question. Miraculously, Pentecostals, Adventists, Catholics, Baptists and others ended their October 2003 meeting at Duke Divinity School with a shared strategy. Although not ignoring their differences, they committed themselves to a common action agenda.

"There is a real need for leadership development across all Hispanic or Latino churches," said Dr. Edwin I. Hernández, a summit convener and director of the Center for the Study of Latino Religion at the University of Notre Dame. "This group came together and successfully outlined a set of broad goals that will help mark a new path for Latino Christian communities in this country."

Participants discussed policies and practices that these sometimes competing churches can all follow, which will strengthen the distinct ministry of each. Such critical collaboration is possible because of both a shared context as well as common challenges.

THE CONTEXT

The context all U.S. Hispanics share is their adjectival survival; that is, those who are active in their churches bear a denominational noun modified by the adjective "Hispanic" or "Latino." Non-Hispanic whites never qualify their identity as Methodists or Presbyterians precisely because their culture is the norm for their denomination. But whether Lutheran or Evangelical, Catholic or Adventist, Hispanic Christians must live with this adjectival existence, and constantly explain and sometimes defend their distinctiveness within any given denomination. Summit participants agreed that their shared *Hispanidad* was as important a part of their self-identity as their distinct denominational loyalties.



Today, in both the marketplace and the polling place, this *Hispanidad* is not only recognized but appreciated. Neither marketer nor pollster would ever discourage Hispanics from trying their product or trusting their candidate by disparaging either the Spanish language or the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries. Instead, they spend millions annually to attract and retain Hispanic consumers and voters.

Yet while some Hispanics receive support from their denominations, many churches still act as if one has to be an English-speaker of pure European descent in order to receive a true welcome.

While Catholics may not be as overtly segregationist as some others, too often Spanish mass is still celebrated in the basement or at some unreasonable hour, for example. This is just one reason why Hispanic parishioners who occupy the same space (though seldom at the same time) as non-Hispanic Catholics often feel unwelcome. They are tolerated, but only as long as they don't inconvenience the real owners of the church.

Meanwhile Protestant Hispanics, while enjoying much more autonomy within their separate congregations, find it difficult to afford accredited seminaries or to move into positions of regional or national influence.

Both Catholics and Protestants publish glossy documents about their commitment to Hispanic ministry, which no doubt is sincere. At the same time, their behavior often evinces an ignorance that leaves Hispanic members feeling unimportant.

The following experiment illustrates the problem. Ask any Hispanic congregant in the United States when that country declared its independence. Most will be able to give the date if not the year. But ask your non-Hispanic congregant when the U.S. invaded Mexico or Puerto Rico, and most cannot guess even within a decade. Although both questions deal with American history, one refers to an event that is regularly glorified while the other is typically forgotten.

Too often, the experience of Hispanic co-congregants is simply deemed unimportant and therefore ignored. Yet Hispanic Christians' shared context of virtual invisibility has become a motivating reason for their newfound ability to cooperate in common cause. The summit's keynote speaker, the Rev. Dr. Justo González, said the meeting had accomplished much by helping people of widely different perspectives find common ground.

[F]ormal theological education and training are pressing needs in Hispanic ministry.

they had thought. People realized that Hispanics in other denominations face many of the same problems.”

“Horizons have been shattered,” said González. “Whatever their denomination, people discovered at this meeting that the commonality of issues they face is greater than

SIX COMMON CHALLENGES TO HISPANIC CHURCHES

Research undertaken prior to the summit (summarized in Part Three of this report) indicates the similar challenges that Hispanic religious leaders and their congregants face across denominations. These include the relative poverty and lack of education of the U.S. Hispanic population as a whole, inadequate training for Hispanic pastoral leaders, insufficient financial resources, poor communication, difficulties in retaining youth as active congregation members, and the tendency to lump all Latinos together as a single, uniform group – despite their diversity.

POVERTY

The first challenge – poverty and low education levels – relates intimately to all the others. The median family income for U.S. Latinos is between \$25,000 and \$35,000. Among full time workers in 2002, only 26.3

percent of Hispanics (but 53.8 percent of non-Hispanic whites) earned \$35,000 or more annually. Latinos are also more likely to be unemployed and underemployed and to earn less when they do hold jobs – a particularly distressing fact since Hispanic households tend to be larger than those of non-Hispanic whites. In short, the economic situation of the average Latino or Latina, including clergy and other religious leaders, is often precarious. If they are undocumented or particularly dark-skinned, their situation may be even more difficult.

In 2002, 34.4 percent of Hispanics were under 18 years of age, which is a significantly higher proportion than for non-Hispanic whites. But 43 percent have less than a high school diploma, compared to 11.3 percent of non-Hispanic whites.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Obviously, limited disposable income can restrict one's educational opportunities, which leads to the second challenge: inadequate training for pastoral leaders. According to summit participants, formal theological education and training are pressing needs in Hispanic ministry. Because of limited income, however, few would-be Latino/a pastors and lay leaders are able to pursue degrees that lead to leadership. As a result, Latino/a pastors are typically unable to serve full-time and rarely reach the highest ranks within their congregations and denominations. Also, since poor congregations find it more difficult to pay a full-time pastor, Hispanic religious leaders are often bivocational. They work part-time in their church and part-time elsewhere in order to earn a living. This can distract them from their pastoral responsibilities, as well as limit their service and availability to their congregation. In their absence, volunteers must do much more of the church's work.

Training at the most prestigious theological institutions is expensive, and even modest tuition may be difficult for persons who must balance one or more jobs, especially if they have family responsibilities or debt. Consequently, only a tiny number of Latino and Latina religious leaders possess both the academic credentials and economic means to enter accredited seminaries. In a nation that is 13 percent Hispanic, just 2.5 percent of students in institutions accredited by the Association of Theological Schools are Latino/a.

Even when Hispanics can gain access to seminaries and schools of theology, graduation remains econom-

ically difficult. Indifference or prejudice can exacerbate that difficulty, especially for Hispanic women.

Too often, a traditional seminary education ignores Hispanics' culture and dismisses their language. Moreover, it may fail to educate them in any practical way to lead Hispanic churches. Latino/a pastors of all denominations have reported that the seminary did not prepare them for the realities of ministry in the *barrio*, which often involves navigating secular social service agencies or negotiating community and business relationships. Yet a seminary credential – rather than practical savvy – is frequently needed for ordination, certification, and advancement to regional and national offices.

Any efforts to strengthen Hispanic pastoral leadership must take a number of other factors into account. Within the Hispanic community, there is no easy way to identify, prepare and deploy leadership. Women's leadership is seldom affirmed. Congregating current leaders is hard, because there is no system or database that lists these leaders. Latinos also lack a designated legislative group that has the resources and power to convene its pastoral leaders and help them navigate the political world. Many leaders lack informational resources that could help them understand their duties and better serve their communities. Multiple barriers prevent the integration of formal and informal training, of theological studies and community-based education.

Many Latinos, especially those in the first generation of family members to arrive in the United States, often believe pastoral leadership is the sole province of clergy, resulting in an ineffective and passive laity. "There has historically been a real dearth of leadership from the laity in Hispanic churches, whether Protestant or Catholic," according to Hernández. "We need to train more laity to assume leadership responsibilities and to understand the priesthood of all believers." Summit participants called for efforts to strengthen Hispanic lay leadership and to empower laity to "take ownership" of the church and its ministry – following biblical and historical models of leadership that involve clergy and laity in equally important, collaborative roles.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

In virtually all U.S. Christian churches, Hispanics are the most youthful and growing segment of the population. Yet virtually all denominations continue to

invest hugely disproportionate resources in those segments of their populations that are aged and shrinking. The research presented here and in previous, independent analyses indicates that when churches invest in their Hispanic members, those members in turn donate their time, talent, and treasure to the church. Nonetheless, most mainstream churches choose to devote their assets to white, non-Hispanic members.

Justo González has argued persuasively that Latino churches are usually the only stable institutions in the *barrio* that are owned and operated by Hispanic people themselves. Such churches are often the only safe port in stormy and unsafe urban neighborhoods. Working with very limited financial resources, Hispanic churches and their leaders are often called upon to mend the social safety net in various ways. As the authors of a recent paper on "Latino Good Ministry" note, "congregations that are heavily Latino/a are more likely than others to offer educational services that are not religious (e.g., ESL and immigration services)."



In areas of new Latino settlement, where the influx of immigrants is relatively recent, strong Hispanic-led responses are less common. Access to financial resources within mainstream churches thus becomes more critical. In Raleigh, North Carolina, for example, the Hispanic population grew up to seven times faster than in the rest of the country between 1990 and 2000. Both churches and social service agencies have struggled to meet the social, economic, and educational needs of this burgeoning population.

Hispanic churches desperately need financial resources, yet there is currently no structure in place to find the few resources that are available and necessary, either for community or leadership development. Ministers may not be allowed to fundraise to overcome financial resource problems, and those who can find it difficult to juggle fundraising with pastoral responsibilities, community-related efforts, and professional training.

COMMUNICATION

Their shared context and common challenges make networking among Latinos and Latinas essential. Even before the summit convened, research across denominations indicated that Hispanic pastors craved and created networks, and were forging links among themselves and with other nonprofit agencies. Years of common struggle and similar experiences that were simply not sufficiently shared or coordinated had already built up the mountain on which the summit met.

Throughout the summit, participants spoke of a need for improved cross-denominational communication and collaboration. Within the community, there is a competitive tendency between congregations of different denominations. Leaders seldom consider other denominations; non-denominational congregations are disconnected and there are inter-faith tensions. Generally, there are few channels of cross-fertilization or partnerships between church leaders, which can lead to a duplication of efforts. Compounding communications difficulties is the fact that Latinos often lack access to, or do not take full advantage of, available technology and have limited knowledge of the “system.”

Summit participants expressed the hope of developing an infrastructure for efficient communication

that might allow different organizations to operate at a national level. A necessary requirement for creating this infrastructure would be to determine the best method for communicating among denominations in a way that facilitates dialogue, breaks down barriers, and helps leaders to share progress. Establishing a national communications infrastructure would help organizations identify potential areas where they could work together to serve community needs; it would also increase support for new learning experiences.

YOUTH AND DIVERSITY

Demographically, the Latino population is young – and Hispanic congregations are youthful. Yet similar to many ethnic groups, young Latinos in the second and third generation after immigration are less likely to participate actively in churches. Given the competing demands on Latino pastors, little time and energy can be dedicated to ministries that specifically target youth. Not surprisingly, Hispanic churches of all denominations report difficulties in retaining the second generation and attracting young people to ministry.

A final challenge, related to that youthfulness, is the fact that members of the same Hispanic family (or congregation) may be at quite different levels of acculturation to U.S. society. Spanish as well as English may be spoken but in varying degrees by different congregants. Despite this enormous diversity, often all Hispanics are consolidated under a universal but equivocal label, even when doing so creates a Tower of Babel.

Latino and Latina congregants may also be from many different countries or belong to different (or mixed) races. Some may have legal documents that provide them relative security in the U.S., while others do not.

While there are differences by denomination among these variables, there are also very striking commonalities. Although theologically quite far apart, Pentecostals and Catholics share a very similar political, educational, and socioeconomic profile. A recent study conducted as part of Hispanic Churches in American Public Life research project, funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts, found remarkable similarities among Latinos across denominations.

PART TWO: SIX STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR STRENGTHENING HISPANIC MINISTRY

OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES

Virtually all the Hispanic pastors surveyed in a recent study indicated that their denominations were not investing resources in the Hispanic community commensurate with the population's numbers. Despite this almost universal situation, Hispanics remain among the most religious people in the country. And research also indicates that Hispanics of every denomination are very likely to give their time and money to churches where they feel a sense of ownership and display leadership.

As noted above, Hispanic churches help to mend the social safety net in various ways. Many offer direct services such as food pantries, clothing distribution, English classes, immigration counseling, tutoring, and youth programs. Others have created alliances with secular and religious agencies that may have the resources but not the personnel to assist Hispanics. Still others advocate for their constituents through education, voter registration, community organizing, and other strategies aimed at institutional change. Research indicates that these efforts have quite often been interdenominational and cross-ethnic; that is, alliances were formed between Hispanics and non-Hispanics to serve the needs of Latinos and Latinas of all faith traditions. This kind of collaboration was frequent and widespread. When it did not occur, it was mostly through a lack of know-how rather than indifference or ill will.

Hence, despite having less formal education, economic clout, practical experience, and political access than white, non-Hispanic congregations, Hispanic churches actually are making major contributions to U.S. society. They do so through direct service, cross-ethnic and interdenominational alliances, and advocacy.

Those tremendous resources result from a religiously inspired desire to serve. Latina/o religious leaders speak of a divine call as well as human mentors. Many have experienced conversions, but they have also had role models. And although they differ by doctrine, they exhibit remarkable similarity in their approaches to ministry.

For most Hispanics, ministerial leadership is both a professional and personal endeavor. It is professional because it requires both formal education and qualities such as honesty and integrity. And it is personal because it is expressed not only through purely spiritual means, but through an incarnational relationship to real people who need services that the church either provides directly or facilitates. Whether they are paid or (more likely) unpaid, whether full or part-time, whether Catholic or Protestant, Hispanic religious leaders express their spiritual calling through somatic service.

This shared scenario reflects both the common limitations and resources of Hispanic churches. Limitations are economic and educational; resources include a desire to serve and a willingness to network. Years of sharing limitations and resources made it possible to plan and carry out the first ecumenical Hispanic leadership summit at Duke in 2003. Those same commonalities will also make it possible for leaders to move forward.

The Rev. Dr. Justo González articulated many of these themes in his keynote address to summit participants, which we quote in detail here:

As we come to this consultation, many people are concerned that if we do not respond to the presence of Hispanics in our communities, our churches will lose ground. Some feel guilty that their churches have not been inclusive enough, and now wish to make amends. Most of us represent churches where people see the Latino presence in the United States, and also the growing ethnic and cultural multiplicity of the nation, as a challenge.

Committees are appointed to deal with the challenge. Strategies are developed to deal with the challenge. Resources are invested to deal with the challenge. All of this is an indication that, finally, and in some cases much against its will, the Church has begun to learn [that] to survive as a viable agent of mission, the Church must be bilingual ... For if we are to be in mission to the twenty-first century... [i]t will be necessary to move across the various cultural divides in our emerging society, and to witness to Christ in myriad different contexts.

But I submit to you that as Christians this is an insufficient way to look at what is happening around us. Indeed, we may see it as a challenge ... [W]e must see not just the pragmatic necessity of crossing cultural boundaries, but also and even more the evangelical necessity of giving witness to a hope that goes beyond all the hatreds that divide us today ... [I]n our growing need to be multicultural and cross-cultural we must also see a glimpse of the evangelical promise that they will come from the east and the west, and from the north and south, and sit at table with the Lord.

Today, as seldom before in the history of Christianity, God is giving us a renewed glimpse of John's vision of old, of a multitude that no one could count, out of every tribe, and nation, and people, and tongue ... We may be pragmatic and take it as a challenge. But I am convinced that God is calling us to be prophetic and take it as a vision and a promise. May God grant that we shall grasp the vision! May God grant that we may live the promise!

SIX STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Leaders gathered at the summit accepted the vision and promise that González articulated, and suspended their denominational differences in order to address the common challenges of their shared context. While discussion was wide-ranging, by the meeting's end participants had converged on six strategic priorities for strengthening Hispanic ministry. Specifically, they called for:

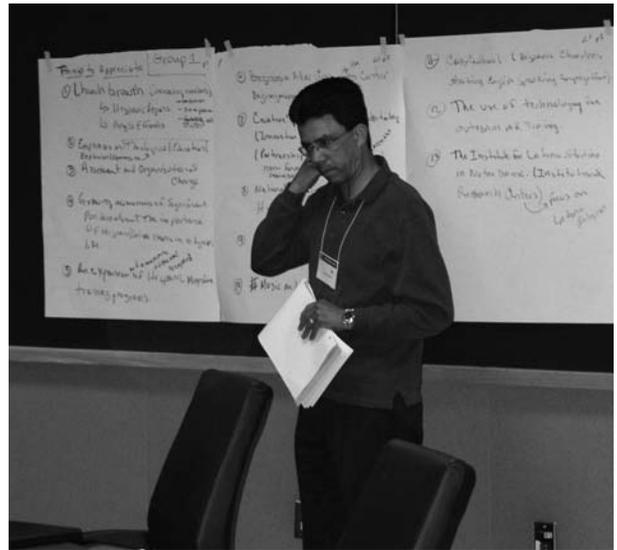
1. Better opportunities for formal theological education,
2. Training for laity to assume leadership responsibilities,
3. Increased cultivation of second- and third-generation Latino youth,
4. Initiatives that would help church leaders to advocate for the social needs of their communities and encourage community service,
5. Programs to provide lay leaders and clergy with practical administrative skills, and
6. A permanent, national, ecumenical dialogue on Hispanic pastoral leadership.

The following sections briefly share some of the thinking that informed the selection of these six priorities.

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Within the United States, the representation of Latinos in theological education is minimal and must be increased in order to develop effective leaders who understand the demands of the Latino community. The first step to changing the current situation will be to convene key stakeholders – such as national Hispanic leaders and presidents and deans from ATS institutions¹ — for dialogue on increasing the Latino presence in formal theological education. Discussion at the national, regional, and local levels will encourage faculty and administrators to be open to learning from the Latino community, and to make their institutions more relevant to Hispanic churches.

Once the foundation for an ongoing dialogue has been established, the Latino community, theological schools, and churches can work together to explore and test new models for theological education. Ideally, their collaboration will lead to the creation of new channels and programs, and provide persons trained in non-traditional ways with access to traditional education across denominations. Such work will also help to build new networks among churches, educational institutions, and community leaders, and an opportu-



1 ATS is the Association of Theological Schools, a membership organization of graduate schools in the U.S. and Canada that conduct post-baccalaureate professional and academic degree programs to educate persons for the practice of ministry and for teaching and research in the theological disciplines.

nity for stakeholders to speak in an interdenominational voice and present a cohesive front when dealing with community challenges.

Additional goals are to encourage the recognition of different expressions of core values underlying theological education, greater availability of scholarship support and other resources for Latino/a students, and recognition of different forms of expertise as qualifications for teaching. Successfully taking steps to increase Latino enrollment will generate an increase in the number of Latino students attending ATS accredited schools, which in turn will enrich both traditional and not-traditional educational institutions and programs. Eventually, Latinos must become an essential instrument through which theological educational institutions carry out their missions and goals.

THE ROLE OF LAITY

The role of laity in the twenty-first century has drastically changed and new strategies are needed to prepare leaders for work in this rapidly changing environment. The first step in addressing this shift is for key groups to provide a process for questioning power dynamics among clergy and laity. Such a process will help define the role of laity, with attention to such critical issues as the leadership of women. Once the roles of laity and clergy are redefined, different congregations and organizations can take steps to establish training programs that prepare laity for current and future challenges.

Clergy can also participate in training that draws upon biblical and other historical models of clergy and laity working together as different but equally important parts of the church. These training models will enable and empower the laity to become more assertive and “take ownership” of the church and its ministry while still maintaining an efficient working relationship with clergy. The combined efforts of clergy and laity will foster effective leadership and mobilize communities to address the challenges that Hispanics face.

YOUTH

The cultivation and development of Hispanic youth are essential to improving the quality of life for Latinos in the U.S. Currently, Hispanic youth need intensive learning and vocational discernment experi-

ences to renew their commitment to the church. One such idea for promoting youth leadership might be a summit of youth pastors. To provide these learning experiences, churches will need to tap into resources provided by foundations, denominations, and youth ministry associations. Initially, leaders must be identified who can develop grant proposals and identify funding resources to organize these efforts. This group should be responsible for identifying existing efforts in this area and undertaking a literature review to inform the design of effective training programs.

As the program evolves, a national research project will be needed to determine the needs of youth within the Hispanic community. In addition, resources and training for youth ministries must be permanently established. By implementing a successful strategy, different denominations can agree on the most efficient training programs. Hopefully, all of these efforts will result in the enhancement of youth spirituality and an increase in the number of Latinos committed to ministry. An emerging network of Hispanic youth ministries that develops a theory of faith from the Latino perspective will encourage excitement and participation among youth.

SOCIAL ADVOCACY AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Any effort to strengthen Hispanic ministry must help church leaders play a greater role in meeting and advocating for the social needs of their communities, whether these relate to education, employment, immigration, or providing health care for all members of the community. To increase community service in Hispanic churches, projects must address national social concerns and they must be more effective in doing so.

At the summit, leaders suggested that civic, political, and religious leaders work together on community projects that address social concerns. As a first step in this direction, it will be necessary to form a broad planning committee that represents stakeholders. This committee would be responsible for encouraging participation, identifying available resources, and bringing in non-profit organizations, foundations, and denominations to increase the effectiveness of programs. Focusing on projects that address national concerns will ensure cooperation within and across different groups; it will also produce an attitude change on holistic issues that can generate additional

investment in community service. Furthermore it will create awareness, support, and understanding of the impact of social issues on church and community.

The second step that will increase community service is developing a training program for first-generation pastors that addresses the social reality of Hispanic ministry in the U.S. Training topics would include gender issues, employee treatment, immigration, health care, and the educational and political systems. The program should aim to recruit clergy and laity who see the importance of community service, who can identify and inventory existing training models, and who can assess and implement good ideas. Focus groups of key constituents should be convened to assess the program's needs and design requirements. The ultimate goal is to create a cadre of ministers that is better informed about the cultural, political, and theological dimensions of ministry in the U.S., and about structural dynamics and access to systems.

*Eventually,
a national network
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to look at social dynamics
for Latinos in the U.S.*

The third step that will increase community service involves implementing grassroots training programs that help leaders run successful ministries.

Topics for this training program – aimed at local ministries, laity, and boards of directors of churches that are looking for new ministry opportunities – would include best practices and church and community skill sets. To ensure this program's success, collaboration must be established between organizations that can identify and inventory existing training models; they must also recruit members to identify all of those that need this program. As the program becomes established, participating organizations will be able generate a database of different denominations that lists their various service and outreach activities and facilitates collaboration across different organizations. This step will encourage churches and their leaders to develop community service programs that make them more effective partners and essential members of community networks.

Eventually, a national network could be established to look at social dynamics for Latinos in the U.S. and to generate awareness, involvement, and engagement in

community service programs. With the collaboration of all participating institutions, this network would provide a forum for discussion of cultural, political, and theological issues and encourage those not invested in community ministry to understand and engage in it. Integrating mission and theology, the network would raise awareness, increase collaboration across denominations, and foster the participation of a broader Latino faith community in the dialogue on societal issues. It would also contribute to the Latino community's acceptance of investing in community ministry and increase volunteerism in faith-based programs and secular service agencies.

PRACTICAL TRAINING

A servant-leader is mindful of human processes that affect the body, mind, and spirit and is aware of the discernment process of theological reflection. To improve servant leadership, lay and ordained leaders must not only have access to formal theological education but practical training in such key areas as marketing, fundraising, management, and conflict resolution, among others. Practical administrative skills make leaders more effective and empowered. Participation in training programs also encourages ecumenical networking that can build community and help current leaders to mentor and develop the next generation.

ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE

The sixth and final strategic priority defined at the summit was to create a permanent structure or structures for continuing the national discussion about Hispanic pastoral leadership. Participants agreed that this ecumenical dialogue must involve clergy, laity, theologians, national offices, foundations, and their constituencies – and a national audience must be developed for the dialogue. While a variety of strategies and timelines are possible for this process, summit leaders recommended that regional symposia be developed, and a national ecumenical Hispanic/Latino organization be created, within five years. The national organization would serve as a platform to discuss such topics as research, collaboration, ecumenical leadership, common doctrinal ground, outreach to second and third generation Hispanics, and the Internet.

MOVING FORWARD: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AS TOP PRIORITY

A summit without a succession plan would be a pinnacle without practicality. Thus, at the summit's conclusion a "continuation committee" was appointed² to advance the recommendations made at Duke. With the invitation and support of the Louisville Institute, the committee met on January 20-21, 2004, to select a top priority from among the six outlined at the summit and begin formulating a plan of action that would maintain the momentum initiated there. What emerged from the two-day discussion was a consensus that leadership development – encompassing formal theological education, practical training, and an enhanced role for laity – was the key to strengthening Hispanic ministry across denominations.

Churches committed to serving the Latino community face multiple, complex, and sometimes competing demands. Why focus on leadership as a priority? The committee agreed that strategic support for lay leaders and ordained clergy would in turn bolster Latino congregations, given the pivotal role that leaders play in nurturing faith communities. Moreover, they proposed that a national agenda for strengthening Hispanic religious leadership include three types of activities (noting important qualities for each):

- **Conversations.** Hispanic churches must continue to converse and collaborate across denominations, to draw attention to the leadership issue and coordinate a plan for action. This dialogue must include those responsible for Hispanic ministry programs, scholars, clergy, faith-based community leaders, and directors of seminaries, colleges, schools, and institutes around the country. The goal of such conversations, which would be both national and regional, would be to discover and promote best practices for fostering high-quality Latino church leadership. Special attention should be paid to the roles and concerns of women.
- **Research.** Recent studies of U.S. clergy provide scarce information on the unique aspirations, frustrations, needs, and contributions of Latino church leaders. While some data is available on Latinos who pursue seminary education, little is known about those who are trained in other ways. Essentially, the "ecology" of Latino ministry – which includes congregations, com-

munity networks, training centers, and leaders – has not been researched systematically. Any effort to strengthen Hispanic ministry must begin by addressing this gap, with studies that identify and disseminate data on the factors that help Latino church leaders to succeed.

- **Programs.** Existing programs to develop Latino church leaders – including formal theological education, informal training, and other efforts targeting current and future generations of leaders – are inadequate in number and quality. Seasoned leaders need opportunities to gain practical skills in areas like budgeting, conflict resolution, management, and fund-raising. Future leaders need financial and spiritual support to pursue theological education, with curricula that embrace the realities of Hispanic ministry. Efforts to design new programs and improve existing ones must involve a broad array of denominational agencies, to avoid duplication. Training programs and resource materials must draw on best practices and lessons learned in varied contexts; they should be flexible, relevant, inclusive, and accessible to a wide array of participants.



² The nine continuation committee members were Dr. Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, Rev. Daniel Cortes, Dr. Renata Furst, Dr. Edwin Hernández, Dr. Justo González, Dr. Pablo A. Jiménez, Rev. Norma Ramírez, Rev. Edward Rivera-Santiago, and Bishop Jaime Soto.

PART THREE: RECENT RESEARCH ON HISPANIC MINISTRY

Developing strategies for strengthening Hispanic ministry requires, as a first step, in-depth analysis of the actual resources and limitations of that ministry. Part Three summarizes five recent studies on Hispanic ministry, looking at leadership and community-serving activities in a wide array of congregations.

Whether they minister in Catholic, mainline Protestant, or Evangelical settings, Latino and Latina church leaders find themselves facing similar challenges. Although the needs and contexts may vary, the majority of Hispanic churches are providing services to the local Latino community or facilitating access to such services, a trend that will continue to have implications for church leadership. The country's growing Hispanic population is young, which means that attracting, serving and training a new generation of youth is a task that will increasingly absorb the energies of both Protestant and Catholic church leaders. Bringing more and better-trained women, lay people and clergy into Hispanic ministry will help meet the demand for leadership, but congregations are doing so with varying degrees of urgency and success. Over time, even tracking the numbers of new members and ministers will remain problematic, as new generations of Latinos undergo shifts in cultural identity, language use and religious practices that prevent their easy categorization.

Research shows that increasing Hispanic membership is not a simple task for any church. Developing effective, empowered Latino ministers will be an ongoing, formidable task – and one that will demand planning, resources and thoughtful attention to diverse denominational contexts and specific community needs. Yet research has provided, and will continue to provide, an essential foundation for practical action to strengthen Hispanic ministry. The studies summarized here constitute a major and very timely contribution to moving forward in this direction.

SUMMARY OF "HISPANIC CLERGY AND THE TASK OF GOOD MINISTRY IN URBAN AMERICA"

by *Milagros Peña, Edwin I. Hernández and Melissa Mauldin*

Demographic changes are transforming the U.S. cultural landscape in geographic areas that were once predominantly Euro-ethnic and African American. Such changes challenge social service agencies that are unprepared to serve a new population that predominantly speaks Spanish or knows little about the services available to them. In these contexts, Hispanic churches are playing leadership roles by either providing services themselves or by facilitating access to such services. Hispanic pastors and lay leaders who provide such "good ministry" shape their congregation's response to the needs of the community.

Our study of Hispanic pastoral and lay leaders in Catholic, mainline Protestant, and Pentecostal churches sought to capture the richness and diversity of this ministry and church leaders' contributions to the Hispanic community. Our goal was to ascertain the factors that support Hispanic church leaders and the challenges they face in serving Hispanic faith communities.

The study based its findings on two sources of data. First, in 2002 and 2003 a research team from the Center for the Study of Latino Religion at the University of Notre Dame held focus groups with pastors and lay leaders from diverse Christian faith traditions in seven U.S. cities. Second, we supplemented focus group findings with 883 responses from the PARAL³ National Survey of Leadership in Latino Parishes and Congregations.

One of the key tasks of the study was to ask Hispanic pastors and lay leaders to define the characteristics of "good ministry" in their own words. Many stated that providing leadership, "being real," and nurturing their congregations spiritually were important. But they also cited attention to social services as part of their role, a fact that may explain why heavily Latino/a congregations are more likely than others to offer community services

3 PARAL stands for Program for the Analysis of Religion Among Latinos, a national network of scholars. The survey was conducted in 2001 and 2002.

that are not religious (e.g., English language classes and immigration services). More than half of the leaders surveyed said their churches distributed food, clothing, and money in the community, for example. So while personal conversions and a calling may provide the origin for Latino/a religious leadership, effectiveness in response to real needs is also paramount.

Leaders' effectiveness is often limited by a lack of education and/or practical skills, however. This is especially true of Latina women, who are only half as likely as Latino men to hold an M.Div. degree. Thus although Latino/a pastors and lay leaders named other pastors and lay leaders as central to their vocation, many were ill-prepared by seminaries for the actual social service ministries that they link to their spiritual calling.

Moreover, these leaders need support networks and have created these both within and outside their communities. Collaboration with Latino/a and non-Latino/a churches and secular groups that are multicultural and cross-denominational empower their social ministry. Hispanic leaders identify such fellowship as well as support and mentoring from their own churches and congregations as being quite important, as Table 1 demonstrates.

Unfortunately, many Hispanic pastors and lay leaders confront barriers to building healthy communities. Among these is the fact that leaders' median family income (that is, the pastor's salary plus the earnings of

others contributing to household income) is just \$25,000 to \$34,999, as shown in Table 2 on page 16.

Interviews with pastors and lay leaders underscore the stress that low incomes put on their lives and the struggle to continue in ministry. To strengthen Latino religious leadership, incomes must increase. Yet many Hispanic churches and congregations are financially strained because they serve communities that cannot support their ministries.

Meanwhile, meager family incomes affect whether Hispanics will be in ministry full-time (69 percent of the PARAL survey respondents), part-time (28 percent) or not at all. This factor also influences whether pastors and lay leaders can pursue degrees that lead to ordination and to full-time ministry.

The PARAL data showed that overall, 77 percent of pastors and lay leaders were ordained while 22 percent were not. Not having formal credentials severely restricts Hispanic pastors and lay leaders. Moreover, as Table 3 illustrates, there is a gender gap in education and training that blocks Latinas from leadership positions within their churches and congregations, as well as in community work. Among Latino/a pastors, almost 86 percent of male pastors and lay leaders had received some type of seminary degree, while only 52.3 percent of Latina pastors and lay leaders did. In broader educational venues, the PARAL study found that Latino men and Latina women follow each other

TABLE 1: LEVELS OF DENOMINATIONAL SUPPORT FOR LATINO/A MINISTERS

DENOMINATIONAL SUPPORT FOR LATINOS

	VERY SUPPORTIVE	SOMEWHAT SUPPORTIVE	NO SPECIAL ATTENTION	NOT VERY SUPPORTIVE	NOT REPORTED
American Baptist	43.2%	33.0%	6.8%	17.0%	0.0%
Catholic	63.9%	27.8%	2.6%	2.8%	2.8%
Christian Reformed	63.6%	36.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Disciples of Christ	38.9%	50.0%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
Lutheran	40.0%	45.3%	0.0%	14.7%	0.0%
Methodist	46.2%	38.7%	3.4%	9.2%	2.5%
Presbyterian	34.4%	46.9%	0.0%	18.8%	0.0%
Seventh-day Adventist	75.0%	15.0%	0.0%	5.0%	5.0%
United Church of Christ	0.0%	66.7%	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%

Chi-Square = 103.940; p-value <.0001 · Note: Some cells with fewer than 30 cases. · Source: PARAL NSLLPC data

TABLE 2:
FAMILY INCOMES OF LATINO/A PASTORS AND LAY LEADERS

FAMILY INCOME	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
<\$5,000	18	2.0
\$5,000–\$9,999	39	4.4
\$10,000–\$14,999	111	12.6
\$15,000–\$24,999	209	23.7
\$25,000–\$34,999	141	16.0
\$35,000–\$49,999	133	15.1
\$50,000–\$74,999	100	11.3
\$75,000 +	39	4.4
Not reported	93	10.4
Total	883	100.0

Source: PARAL NSLLPC data

closely in educational attainment overall until they reach college and associate degree levels of education. Latina pastors and lay leaders were more likely than their Latino counterparts to have some college and associate degree, but Latino men were more likely than Latinas to graduate from college and with higher professional degrees.

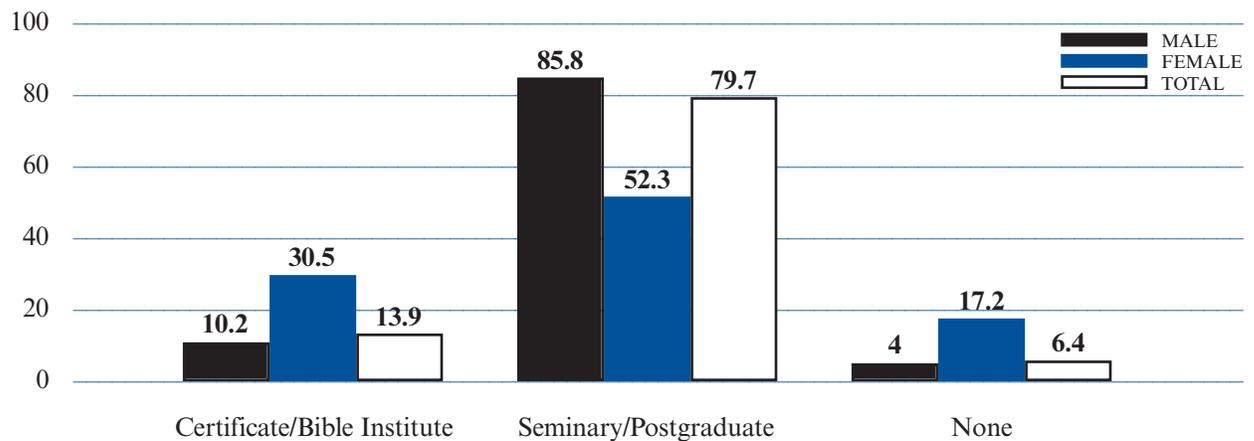
We should note that the PARAL sample of Latinos and Latinas was a highly educated group compared to the overall national educational levels for the Latino population. According to a U.S. Census report (2002), only 11.1

percent of Hispanics held bachelor's degrees or higher, and of those only 3 percent were advanced beyond the bachelor's degree. In other words, PARAL's random sample of Catholic and Mainline Protestant Latino/a pastors and lay leaders is a sample of a select group. Latinos and Latinas nationally have low educational attainments. The gender difference in our comparison of pastors and lay leaders is important because such religious-degree earning disparity is the overt reason some churches and congregations use for refusing women higher leadership positions.

When both men and women leaders lack a degree, they are less likely to be ordained, choose full-time ministry or achieve the highest ranks within their churches and congregations. At the same time, those with seminary training frequently mentioned how poorly their formal education had equipped them for the work they actually do. Participants in our study called for more practical seminary curricula to prepare them for the realities of Hispanic ministry.

Overall, the research overwhelmingly shows that Latino/a pastors and lay leaders are not just spiritual leaders in their communities – they are also civically engaged. Whether working with youth or confronting housing, health, language, or immigration challenges, Latino churches and congregations throughout the U.S. provide an invaluable and often unrecognized service to their communities. Yet our study shows that meeting those demands puts stress on even the most effective ministers, who need more support from their denominations in order to be empowered.

TABLE 3: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF LATINO/A PASTORS AND LAY LEADERS



Source: PARAL NSLLPC data

SUMMARY OF "HISPANIC CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP: KEY TO THE FUTURE"

by *Kenneth G. Davis, Andrew Hernández and Philip E. Lampe*⁴

By all accounts, the Hispanic population is the fastest-growing segment of the U.S. Catholic Church. Although the exact number of Latino Catholics is unknown, most analysts agree that Hispanics constitute roughly a third of all U.S. Catholics. From 1970 to 2000, the Latino Catholic population increased by a remarkable 264 percent. Moreover, the Latino Catholic church is a young church; a recent survey revealed that 41 percent of Catholics under age 30 are Hispanic.

The report summarized here provides a demographic snapshot of Hispanic Catholics as well as an overview of their attitudes toward and participation in the Church, and the qualities they look for in leaders. Among its conclusions is that because Hispanics are an increasingly important part of the U.S. Catholic Church – and U.S. society – Hispanic Catholic leadership development requires an immediate and significant investment, particularly among women, youth and young adults. Once formed, such leaders are very likely to contribute their talent and resources to the Church.

Without a doubt, U.S. Hispanics share many characteristics. The NCLL survey revealed, for example, that the overwhelming majority of Catholic and non-Catholic Hispanics earn less than \$40,000 annually. Lower educational attainment is a fact for Latinos in general. Generally, however, Hispanics (particularly recent immigrants) demonstrate faith and optimism despite their relatively poor socioeconomic status. And regardless of their denomination, 95 percent of Hispanics in three separate surveys indicated religion is an important part of their lives.

Despite these key commonalities, the Latino population is far from monolithic in its demographic and religious profile. Significant differences exist between Catholic and non-Catholic Hispanics in terms of class, language use, nativity and citizenship, for example. Latino Protestants have slightly higher levels of education and income, and are less likely than Catholics to live in predominantly Hispanic neighborhoods, work under Hispanic supervisors or speak only Spanish. While a majority of Hispanic



Protestants are U.S.-born, a majority of Catholics are foreign-born. Seventy-four percent of Protestants, but only 63 percent of Catholics, are U.S. citizens.

Significant religious differences also exist among Hispanics of various national origins. The number of Mexican Americans who identify themselves as Catholics ranges between 77 and 87

percent, Cuban Americans between 66 and 80 percent and Puerto Ricans between 65 and 70 percent.

Overall, Catholicism has declined among Hispanics in the United States, but the magnitude and causes of this decline are in question. In the early 1970s, an estimated 78 percent of Hispanic Americans were Catholic, but by the mid-1990s this figure had fallen to 67 percent. This represents a loss of approximately 5 percent per year. Approximately 74 percent of first-generation, 66 percent of second-generation, and 59 percent of third-generation Hispanics are now Catholic. Religious switching from the Catholic to Protestant churches is a noted trend among Latinos. Reasons for switching may have less to do with doctrinal issues and more to do with structural differences between Catholic and Protestant churches (the latter are smaller, for example, and there is greater opportunity for lay participation and leadership).

Data on religious participation and leadership also points to differences between Protestant and Catholic Hispanics. Although Hispanics place a greater importance on religion, have a more favorable attitude towards the Church, and attend services more frequently than non-Hispanic whites, they are less likely to register as members of a parish. Among Hispanics, Catholics are somewhat less likely than non-Catholics to be involved in church-related organizations, and when they are involved they are less likely to volunteer, attend meetings or hold office. Nevertheless, organizationally involved Catholics are just as likely as non-Catholics (89 versus 90 percent) to contribute financially to their churches.

⁴ Although this study was not conducted specifically for the Summit, it was included as part of the background reading. Originally published in the August 2002 issue of the *Journal of Hispanic-Latino Theology*, it is based on several data sources, including a 1999 survey by the National Community on Latino-a Leadership in collaboration with the National Catholic Council for Hispanic Ministry.

Altogether, Hispanics comprise one-third of the Catholic Church but only 5.4 percent of the Catholic clergy in the United States – striking evidence of the community’s under-representation among Church leadership. Not surprisingly, Hispanic Catholic lay leaders are more likely to be older, educated, and married with children living at home than the average Hispanic Catholic. Foreign-born Hispanics comprise 56 percent of all Hispanic Catholics, but account for nearly 70 percent of local church office holders. While female Hispanics constitute 56 percent of Hispanic Catholic membership, they comprise only 43 percent of church leaders. This percentage appears especially low in light of the large and significant role women play in the popular religious life of the Latino Catholic community.

Catholics and non-Catholics overwhelmingly indicated that the most important general qualities that they looked for in leaders were honesty, trustworthiness, and integrity. However, 55 percent of Catholics believe that Hispanic leaders represent their values better than non-Hispanic leaders, compared to 40 percent of mainline Protestants, 47 percent of Pentecostals, and 35 percent of nonaffiliated. Sixty-two percent of Catholics versus 64 percent of Pentecostals, 56 percent of nonaffiliated, and 53 percent of mainline Protestants believe that Hispanic leaders better reflect their views on important issues. Although the issue was not raised directly, it appears that the ethnicity of clergy and lay church leaders may be of even greater importance than their gender to the laity, especially among Catholics.

Given this strong preference for Hispanic leadership – and the growing presence of Latino church members – the Catholic Church needs decidedly more Hispanic priests and lay leaders. Such leaders will have a particularly important role in attracting and retaining Hispanic youth and young adults. So far, lack of investment and a failure to identify new sources of funds have impeded the creation of a cadre of professional leadership or ordained clergy among Hispanic Catholics – especially among women, youth and young adults. The evidence suggests that shifting resources commensurate with the percent of Hispanics in the Catholic Church toward Latino/a leadership development, however, could eventually

result in new sources of funding, since Hispanics do contribute financially to churches where they feel ownership and exercise leadership.

SUMMARY OF “LATINO/A CATHOLIC LEADERS IN THE UNITED STATES”

by Mark M. Gray and Mary L. Gautier

In 2003, the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA)⁵ estimated that 28 percent of the U.S. adult Catholic population was Latino/a. This figure, drawn from the results of the CARA Catholic Poll (CCP), was nine percentage points higher than survey estimates from a decade before.

Unfortunately, the proportions of Latinos and Latinas in Catholic Church leadership positions do not reflect the proportion of those in the Catholic population. To develop an understanding of the leadership challenges facing the Church – and to paint a portrait of the current state of Hispanic leadership and leadership formation – we analyzed data from a series of CARA Catholic Polls⁶ and from the Catholic Ministry Formation Directory. Our study provides a sense of the current numbers of lay ministers, deacons and priests both active and in formation; it gauges Latino attitudes toward leadership and looks at Latino parish life in the Catholic Church.

Recent CARA surveys estimate that 6 percent of lay ecclesial ministers, 10 percent of permanent deacons, and 2 percent of priests are Latino/a. Even taking into account the fact that those currently serving in ministry positions probably entered formation at a time when the percentage of Hispanic Catholics in the United States was much smaller, Latino/a leaders are still underrepresented in the proportion of Hispanic Catholics.

Despite this reality, there are no significant differences among Latino and non-Latino Catholics in their consideration of ever becoming a lay ecclesial minister (of adult men and women), religious sister or nun (of adult women), or permanent deacon (of men 35 years of age and older). However, adult Catholic Latino men are less likely than adult Catholic non-Latino men to say they have ever considered becoming a priest or religious brother (7 percent compared to 23

⁵ The Center is a national, non-profit research center with nearly 40 years of experience conducting social scientific studies of the Catholic Church. CARA was founded in 1964 and is affiliated with Georgetown University.

⁶ Specifically, we looked at a national random sample telephone survey of the adult Catholic population, data from CARA’s 2001 and 2002 priest polls, its 2001 deacon poll, and its 2002 lay ecclesial minister poll with respect to Latino leadership positions in the Church.

percent in 2003). But they are not less likely to say they have, or would encourage other men to become priests or religious brothers. In addition, adult Catholic Latino men are much less likely than their non-Latino counterparts to say they have ever known a Catholic priest on a personal basis outside of formal interactions at a school or in a church (47 percent compared to 61 percent).

As Table 4 illustrates, Latino/a lay ecclesial ministers are more likely than their non-Latino counterparts to be primarily involved with religious education of youth and adults. Nine out of ten of those surveyed said their primary work was in religious education. They are also more likely to be providing their ministry as unpaid volunteers (25 percent compared to 12 percent). Those Latino/a lay ecclesial ministers that are paid for their ministry work are more likely than their non-Latino counterparts to rely on that income as the primary revenue in their household.

As Table 5 shows, a number of other notable differences exist between Latino/a and non-Latino/a lay ecclesial ministers. Both are similarly likely to be vowed religious,

female, and to have earned at least a bachelor's degree. But in addition to being younger, Latino/a ministers are proportionately less likely than non-Latinos to have earned a graduate degree, to be married, to have attended Catholic schools, or to have been enrolled in ministry formation programs that lead to graduate ministry degrees or to certification by a diocese.

Deacons were also included in the study. Nearly nine in ten Latino deacons (88 percent) reported that they would be willing to serve as an administrator in a parish without a resident priest pastor. By comparison, about three in four non-Latino deacons say they would consider fulfilling this role (76 percent). In addition, Latino permanent deacons are more likely than non-Latino permanent deacons to be ordained within one year of becoming a candidate (8 percent compared to 1 percent). Latino and non-Latino deacons are similar in age, marital status, remuneration for their ministry, and the likelihood of having a secular job. But again, Latino deacons are less likely to have a college or graduate degree than non-Latinos. Interestingly, Latino deacons are more likely to serve the poor, and non-Latino deacons are more likely to serve the elderly.

TABLE 4: PRIMARY AREA OF MINISTRY FOR LATINO AND NON-LATINO LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTERS

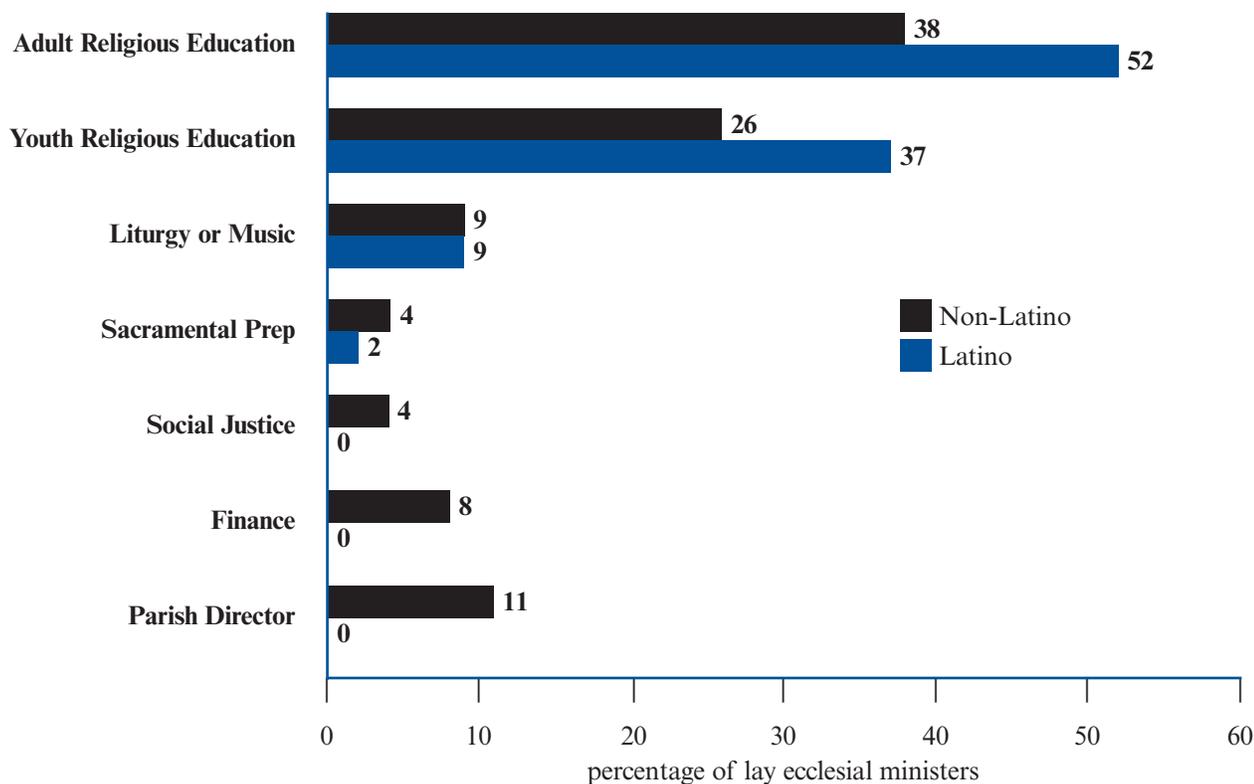


TABLE 5: PROFILES OF LATINO AND NON-LATINO LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTERS

	LATINO (%)	NON-LATINO (%)
Vowed religious	14	16
Married (lay persons only)	57	69
Female	82	81
Age		
18 to 29	9	6
30 to 49	51	33
50 or older	40	61
Highest Level of Schooling		
High school degree or less	6	7
Some college	12	15
Bachelor's degree	41	24
Graduate or professional school	41	54
Catholic Schooling		
Elementary/middle school	57	70
High school	37	53
College or university	60	67
Study in Ministry Formation Program		
Attended ministry formation program	76	85
Received financial assistance from a parish to attend	62	59
Received financial assistance from a diocese to attend	11	20
Attended before becoming a minister	41	50
Attended after becoming a minister	31	42
Has a graduate degree in ministry	29	36
Certified by a diocese for ministry	31	44

The Hispanic population is even more under-represented in the priesthood than in lay ministry or the diaconate, but there are indications that this is beginning to change. Only 2 to 3 percent of Catholic priests currently serving self-identify as Latino, for example – but among those ordained since 1991, 8 percent self-identify as Latino. In general, data indicates that Latino Catholic priests are younger and more recently ordained than non-Latino priests. More than half of Latino priests are younger than 45 years of age, compared to 15 percent of non-Latino priests. Because Latino priests are disproportionately younger, they are also more likely than

non-Latinos to have been ordained after 1990 (53 percent compared to 14 percent).

The incongruity between the percentage of Latinos in the Catholic population and the percentage of Latino priests cannot be directly attributed to any institutional or educational factors using the data analyzed in our study. The roots of the disparity appear to be most closely related to the low likelihood of consideration of priestly vocation among Latinos.

Tuition and the requirement of a college degree for entry into Catholic ministry formation programs may

**TABLE 6: PROFILES OF PARISHES BY PERCENTAGES OF PARISHIONERS IDENTIFIED AS LATINO
(NATIONAL PARISH INVENTORY)**

	PARISHES THAT ARE 28% OR MORE LATINO	PARISHES THAT ARE LESS THAN 28% LATINO
Masses		
Average number of weekend Masses	5	5
Average number of weekday Masses	6	6
Has at least one weekend Spanish Language Mass	70	13
Size of Parish		
Average seating capacity	519	528
Average number of registered households	1155	1083
Average number of registered parishioners	2959	2809
Average Attendance at all Masses on a typical October weekend	1407	1188
Average number of infant baptisms per year	129	32
Average number of funerals or memorial services per year	32	30
Parish Staff		
Average number of diocesan priests	1.6	1.5
Average number of religious priests	1.7	1.5
Average number of deacons	1.7	1.5
Average number of religious brothers	1.3	1.1
Average number of religious sisters	1.8	1.5
Average number of lay ecclesial ministers	4.8	4.9

be impeding some Latino/as who are interested in Church leadership positions. Nonetheless, the proportion of Latino/as enrolled in ministry formation programs in 2003 reflected the proportion of Latino/as in the Catholic population better than the proportion of those actually serving in ministry did. Twelve percent of those studying to be lay ecclesial ministers, 18 percent of those studying to be permanent deacons, and 17 percent of those in priestly formation programs are Latino/a.

To understand the development of Latino/a leadership in the Catholic Church, one must evaluate parish life among Latinos. Table 6 compares data gathered from parishes with greater or lesser Latino membership and shows both similarities and differences.

What emerges from the data we collected is a Catholic Church in transition. The Hispanic Catholic church is growing, as is the number of Latino/as preparing for ministry positions. Whether the Latino Church leader-

ship grows commensurately with the overall population will depend, at least partly, on formation requirements, cultural issues related to the consideration of vocations, and the availability of Latino leadership role models.

SUMMARY OF "HISPANIC MINISTRY IN FOURTEEN PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS"

by Adair Lummis

National Protestant denominational leaders are aware that the Hispanic population in the United States is increasing faster than any other ethnic group. Most desire a larger proportion of this population within their congregational membership. Some denominations have increased their national church attention to Hispanic ministry. In other denominations, however – particularly those that are in the midst of “restructur-

ing” or “downsizing” on the national level – the “ethnic desks” or offices for Hispanic ministry are threatened with loss of funds or staff, and even separate existence.

The paper summarized here examines major issues in Hispanic ministry, drawing comparisons across 14 Protestant denominations. Findings are based on material from denominational websites, interviews with national denominational leaders of Hispanic ministry, communication with individuals who keep statistics for their denominations, and materials provided by those interviewed.

Just how much has the Latino presence grown in Protestant denominations across the United States? Determining or estimating current numbers of Hispanic congregations, members, and clergy (at all levels) and making these figures available to national Hispanic officers is difficult for many reasons. Denominations generally have no way of

Hispanic pastors are recognized as the best recruiters of new Hispanic clergy.

knowing the ethnicity of members because they do not categorize people by ethnic or racial identity. Moreover, the tools for estimating Latino membership often fail

to catch second and third-generation Hispanics whose first language is not Spanish. Yet these numbers might help national offices in designing strategies for strengthening Hispanic ministry. Such information may help them take into account the diversity among Hispanic immigrants regarding country of origin, cultural mores, ways of speaking Spanish, preferred worship styles, and educational and economic backgrounds, for example.

Denominational position papers consistently report that Hispanics are the fastest growing ethnic minority in their membership, but most deplore the fact that they are able to get less than 1 percent of first and second generation Latinos into their congregations. Evangelical and Pentecostal denominations, which have drawn a substantial number of Hispanic immigrants, are a notable exception. The traditional, mainly Anglo denominations are trying to different degrees to design and implement policies and programs that would help them attract more Hispanic members, including teens and young adults.

The denominations studied here are just recently realizing the need to use very different approaches to reach teens and young adults among the offspring of

Latino immigrants in the United States. Second- and third-generation Hispanics are likely to differ from their first-generation parents and grandparents in many ways, but particularly in English or Spanish fluency, lifestyles, occupations, values, and religious affiliations (if any).

So far, the major thrust of these Protestant denominations has been to develop Spanish-speaking congregations and to find or educate bilingual, preferably Hispanic, clergy to lead them. Although most national denominational offices are unable to provide accurate information on the number of active Hispanic clergy, some patterns are apparent. Across denominations, for example, most of the Latino/Hispanic clergy are men. Although formal education requirements among denominations vary, the great majority of Latino/a clergy in 11 of 14 denominations do not hold master’s degrees. Few ordained Latino/a clergy hold M.Div. degrees, a fact which presents an obstacle to advancement.

Hispanic pastors are recognized as the best recruiters of new Hispanic clergy. Given this reality, traditional and historically Anglo denominations that hope to attract Hispanic members have two choices. They can insist that pastors have advanced degrees, knowing that this will net them fewer Latino/a clergy, or they can recruit and train lay leaders to be pastors of their current Hispanic congregations, putting them on an “alternate” leadership path requiring less formal education. The latter policy would create many more Hispanic pastors, congregations and members in a shorter time, but it would place most Hispanic clergy at a lower status in the denominational hierarchy than most of the Anglo clergy.

To varying degrees, the 14 denominations studied have an active strategy for Hispanic ministry on the national level. Those who have produced national strategy reports exhibit common concerns. Among these are difficulty in collecting accurate statistics on Hispanic congregations, members, and clergy; a need to take into account the diversity that exists among Hispanic immigrant members; and keen interest in finding the best ways to reach the second and third generation. Further concerns emerge when Hispanics switch denominations. New Latino/a church members often come from different faith backgrounds and worship traditions than what is core to the mainline, mainly Anglo, denominations. How can these denominations teach new members what is fundamental to

denominational identity, while finding ways to include their cultural preferences in worship?

Another set of concerns relates to education. For instance, relatively few members of Hispanic congregations have an education beyond high school. And while in the traditional, mainly Anglo, denominations most of the fully ordained clergy hold M.Div. degrees, a majority of the Latina/o pastors do not have graduate seminary education and are therefore likely to be ordained to restricted orders or certified as lay pastors. If this situation continues, what are the implications for continued recruitment of Latino/a clergy, and the expansion of Hispanic ministries in these denominations in the next five to 20 years? And within each denomination, how might support for a national Hispanic office influence Hispanic ministry over time?

Interestingly, although undeniable differences exist between Hispanic Protestant and Catholic ministry and ministerial leadership, there are also parallels. Both have difficulty obtaining and communicating accurate statistics, and attracting and retaining sufficient numbers of educated Hispanic clergy. Both seem to intuit that doing so would require more networking among Hispanics as well as significant financial support for education. Despite the important variations that all denominations exhibit, their similarities with respect to strengthening Hispanic ministry are many and striking.

SUMMARY OF "THE COMMUNITY SERVING ACTIVITIES OF HISPANIC PROTESTANT CONGREGATIONS"

by Amy L. Sherman

What are the main community-serving activities of Hispanic Protestant congregations? What range of services do they offer, what strength do they draw from their leaders, and with whom do they collaborate? Why do some congregations choose not to be active in outreach ministry? To find the answers to these and other questions, in 2002 and 2003, researchers from the Hudson Institute and the Urban Leadership Institute surveyed leaders from 468 predominantly Hispanic congregations – all Protestant and primarily Evangelical – around the United States. During the same period, they also gathered data through in-depth site visits and interviews at eight Hispanic congregations with community outreach initiatives.

Their study found that even modest-sized congregations are capable of conducting impressive social service programs. Approximately 73 percent of the Hispanic congregations surveyed offered social service programs for community residents. These Hispanic congregations offered 49 types of social services, ranging from short-term relief programs (e.g., food or clothing assistance) to longer-term, relational ministries (e.g., mentoring, tutoring, ESL, counseling, substance abuse recovery programs) and community development initiatives (e.g., affordable housing development, health care, church-sponsored schools). The most common social programs offered were counseling and food assistance. Table 7 lists common programs offered by the Hispanic congregations surveyed.

TABLE 7: TWELVE MOST COMMON TYPES OF SOCIAL SERVICE PROGRAMS OFFERED

SERVICE TYPE	# OF CHURCHES	% OF CHURCHES
1. Pastoral counseling	260	55.6%
2. Food assistance	247	52.8%
3. Family counseling	210	44.9%
4. Clothing assistance	192	41%
5. Referrals to other helping agencies	162	34.6%
6. Emergency financial assistance	128	27.4%
7. Aid to immigrants	93	19.9%
8. ESL classes	87	18.6%
9. Aid to prisoners & their families	77	16.5%
10. Tutoring programs	72	15.4%
11. Substance abuse rehab/counseling	56	12%
12. Parental training	50	10.7%

n = 468

Such findings fill a major gap in what is known about the community-serving activities of Hispanic congregations. While numerous books have been published on the community impact of African American congregations, so far there is no similar, seminal study of Latino churches. Until now, Hispanic churches have made up only a small part of the sample in national studies on congregational outreach.

Yet the data gathered for this study shows that Hispanic congregations are as frequently engaged in community serving activities as are the African-American churches

surveyed in Andrew Billingsley’s book, *Mighty Like a River*. Even modest-sized Hispanic congregations do community outreach; remarkably, half of the churches surveyed for this project had 130 or fewer regular adult attendees. Moreover, as Table 8 shows, over half of the churches offering community services work collaboratively with other local institutions.

TABLE 8: WITH WHOM DO HISPANIC CHURCHES PARTNER IN OUTREACH PROGRAMS?

PARTNER	NUMBER OF CHURCHES
Other churches	28
Police Department	24
Social service nonprofits	21
Schools	15
Courts/probation/parole	13
Local government	7
Hospitals	5
Food bank	5
Fire Department	3
After-school centers	1
Lawyers	1
Counseling centers	1
Emergency Personnel	1

Admittedly, a significant number of respondents (27 percent of those surveyed) indicated that their congregations were not involved in community service work. The most common reason pastors at such churches gave for their inactivity was lack of knowledge about how to start effective programs. Of these pastors, 55 percent indicated that they wanted to better serve the community but were uncertain about how to launch programs. Another 46 percent of the non-active group stated that their churches were too small and lacked resources for doing outreach programs. Only 8 percent said that their church was not involved in community outreach or service provision because they believed evangelism was more important.

Such findings would indicate that the support networks and theological training programs geared to Hispanic pastors and ministry candidates are insufficient. Indeed, most existing networks focus on fellowship, prayer and cooperative evangelism efforts – but relatively few

encourage or facilitate community ministry. And while research indicates that the single most important requirement for operating viable church-based compassion ministries is visionary, competent, dedicated leadership, less than half (10 of the 25 studied) of the Bible Institute/seminary educational programs geared to the Hispanic faith community offer significant training in church-based community ministry. Table 9 summarizes the content of those programs:

In every case study and every robust church-based community ministry program examined in our research, we found in huge measure that the program resulted from the work of one or two key leaders. Some of the leaders had been mentored – although rarely – by fellow Hispanics. A few had formal training or education that was relevant to the skills and knowledge they needed to launch their specific outreach ministries. The vast majority instinctively realized that they needed to connect to public institutions — the police, the court system, schools, and local or state government – to realize their visions. But almost without exception, these leaders felt isolated among their peers.

The data proves that far from being unaware of or unengaged in the life of their communities, Hispanic congregations do reach out to try to make a difference. To strengthen their efforts further, leaders from such congregations need better infrastructure and training opportunities. Efforts to build the capacity of community-serving Hispanic congregations – and to attract resources to such efforts – will continue to be critical in the future. Many Hispanic pastors are willing to increase their involvement in community outreach, but they need help to get started.



TABLE 9: COMMUNITY MINISTRY CONTENT OF HISPANIC TRAINING PROGRAMS

TRAINING PROGRAM	COMMUNITY MIN FOCUS?	COMMENTS
San Antonio Bible Education	Limited	leadership dev; creative VBS
Hispanic Bible School	Yes	“Hisp. Urban Issues & the Church”
Rio Grande Bible Institute	Limited	1 holistic ministry course at certificate program level
Hispanic Institute of Theology (Concordia Seminary)	Limited	“contextual leadership dev” church planting
Hispanic Baptist Theological School	Limited	“contextual evangelism,” Counseling
Seminario Bíblico del Sur de California	Limited	
Hispanic Ministries Program (McCormick Theological Seminary)	Unknown	
Instituto Teológico del Oeste	Unknown	
Ctr. For Urban Studies & Ethnic Leadership, Vanguard University	Yes	significant emphasis
Hispanic Ministries Program, Hartford Seminary	Yes	“Urban Ministry in Hisp Context” required hands-on experience in community
Centro Hispano de Estudios Teológicos	Yes	handful of courses
Atlantic International Bible Institute	No	
Instituto Ministerial Hispano	No	
Loyola Marymount	Limited	“Pastoral Care”, substance abuse, counseling
Word Bible School	No	
Goshen College	Yes	Supervised community ministry
Asbury Theological Seminary	Yes	handful of courses
Instituto Hispano at Loyola University	Limited	1 course
El Seminario Bíblico Fundamental de Sur de California	No	
Haggard Graduate School (Azusa Pacific University)	Yes	Concentration in Urban Ministry
Perkins School of Theology	Yes	“Christianity and Social Justice”, “Community organizing”
Oblate School of Theology	Limited	1 course in “Contemporary Issues in Hispanic Ministry”
Catholic University	Limited	“Church and Social Issues”
Houston College of Biblical Studies	Yes	significant emphasis
Interdenominational Training Institute	Yes	significant emphasis

PART FOUR: REFLECTIONS BY SUMMIT PARTICIPANTS

RENATA FURST

Ignatian Spirituality Centre, Montreal, Quebec

“...whoever plows should plow in hope, and whoever threshes should thresh in the hope of a share in the crop.”

A think tank, a prayer meeting, an ecumenical council, an air traffic control tower...all these images blended together barely convey the intense energy and activity that permeated the national gathering to develop strategies to strengthen Hispanic ministry. This gathering was a challenging, hope-filled, learning experience for everyone involved. Most of us arrived wondering what this meeting was for, and most left with a sense that the Spirit was moving our Hispanic communities towards something that has yet to be defined.

Our learning experience began several weeks in advance of the summit, as we read, analyzed and attempted to assimilate research that showed profound changes were taking place in the religious and social fabric of Hispanic/Latino communities. The mere fact that the 2000 U.S. census shows that Hispanics are becoming the largest and fastest growing minority group raises their profile, for better or for worse, in the surrounding culture. From these documents emerges the image of communities thirsting for support and spirituality, in the midst of a great need for leadership and theological education.

The gathering was also a learning experience on a more personal level. Diverse categories of persons—pastors, lay people, administrators with different denominational affiliations represented in the communities surveyed in the documents—were actually present at the gathering. This challenged all participants to accept both the “otherness” and similarity of those present.

One major challenge that the summit struggled with was identifying issues and problems shared across denominations, regions, and sub-cultures (Mexican American, Cuban, Puerto Rican etc.). After informal sharing, followed by a more structured exercise in group discernment, the gathering identified common challenges facing Hispanic pastoral leaders. For me,

three important issues emerged from these activities: (1) how to make theological education of a relatively high standard more accessible to pastors and lay people; (2) how to reach out to young adults from second- and third-generation immigrant families as they assimilate into the dominant culture; (3) how to understand faith development in Hispanic/Latino communities, and use this understanding to foster vocational awareness.

While defining problem areas was a complex and demanding task, exploring strategies to help Latino communities grow gave full rein to our capacity to hope. This step allowed us to turn over the ground—to “plow in hope.” It also gave concrete expression to participants’ growing sense that we could actually do something together. In other words, our hope increased because the experience fostered a sense of agency as individuals, and as a group.

In the midst of this active, hope-filled environment a few uncertainties also emerged: What was our status as a group in relation to our specific denominations? Should we be moving from an informal to a formal status? Would traditional denominational differences hinder the vision we were developing? How would we decide which projects to tackle and implement first? How would we coordinate fund-raising efforts? A committee was selected to move into the future with these concerns, and the fruit of our reflection. My personal hope is that in strengthening Hispanic ministry, we will also strengthen ministry in the wider Church, and that this will spill over positively into the lives of the “un-churched.”

ELIZABETH CONDE FRAZIER

Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, Cal.

Since 1982, I have been involved in denominational Hispanic ministry. The issues I first learned about and worked on then are the same issues we struggle with today. Yet one thing has changed: the life of the denomination has progressed as foreseen 20 years ago, so that the need for Hispanic ministers is now pressing upon us. The Hispanic population has indeed

grown and this, too, urges the denominations to respond to the needs and gifts of Hispanic ministry.

Another noticeable change comes from among us and that is the definition that effective ministry includes community transformation. Our own theologians and pastors have become much better at articulating the theological framework that supports this type of ministry now. New as well to this dialogue is its ecumenical nature. This ecumenism, the cadre of Hispanic scholars emerging, and the body of knowledge that they have generated have definitely become assets to the discussion.

Another asset in recent years has been the emergence of organizations such as Nueva Esperanza, AMEN, the Asociación para la Educación Teológica Hispana (AETH), the Hispanic Scholarship Program (HSP), and the Hispanic Theological Initiative (HTI). The support that these organizations have generated nationally, in a number of different dimensions, has had a positive impact on the work of the ministry. The resources of The Pew Charitable Trusts and Lilly Endowment Inc. – and the way these funding organizations have provided access to other means of support for the Hispanic community including the valuable research that has been generated – have all benefited the work of the ministry in the last 20 years.

I believe that if we can work on different issues at the same time, in a systemic way, further change may take place. Another factor I hope that we pay attention to is the empowerment of the lay leadership. This is where much untapped creativity and energy lie. Now is a pivotal time to contribute to an ongoing dialogue about forms of theological education and what constitutes effective ministry. The Hispanic voice is important in this dialogue. We need to bring our voice in yet another way to that table.

What did I gain from coming to the summit? Perspective. Indeed, Ecclesiastes says that there is nothing new under the sun, but I would add that there is always perspective. One always gains much wisdom in the company of many. I am always re-making the nature of my contributions as I meet and listen to others; I am renewed. Hope is always part of the equation when we come together.

What do I hope as we continue? My hope is that we will be able to continue the dialogue to the point of bringing about action and reflection. This sort of community building takes time, but the richness of the discussion, and the different aspects and gifts brought to it, will lead

us to strategize and then to take action. The action needs reflection as an integral component. We hope, we pray, we work: this has been our rhythm. May we also reflect.

ALICIA C. MARILL

Department of Theology, Barry University, Miami Shores, Fla.

“*Somos el cuerpo de Cristo*; We are the Body of Christ.” The voices of the group gathered in the Hispanic pastoral leadership summit, singing these words at our last prayer session, continue to evoke in me the experience at Duke University. It is one of those moments where the theological becomes a lived reality in a new way. Some 19 Christian denominations were represented in a group of 33 participants, who represented the Hispanic pastoral reality in the United States today. We spent long hours in a true *convivencia* – dreaming, imagining, sharing, challenging, and laboring to be faithful and effective in our ministries across the country.

From the invitational stage to the projective stage of strategizing and developing initiatives, we were led with gentle hands, a defined purpose, and an enchanting environment. The meeting was organized to make the most of the time available and to extract the wisdom of all of those present. It was impossible not to engage and participate, or to leave the place without having deepened relationships or made new friends. The research papers on Hispanic pastoral leadership were excellent, and provided a contextual basis for serious discussion of Hispanic ministry in the twenty-first century.

The challenge of the future will be: how can we communicate more and more that *Somos el Cuerpo de Cristo* (we are the Body of our Christ) in the congregations and institutions that we serve? The summit truly demonstrated all of which we as Hispanic pastoral leaders are capable. As a Cuban Catholic woman, my prayer is that somehow we continue to work and *luchar juntos* (struggle together).

JOSÉ DANIEL MONTAÑEZ

President of the Hispanic Institute of Ministry, Church of God (Cleveland), Dallas, Tex.

When I was invited to attend the Latino pastoral leadership summit, I was not sure what to expect, and even if it was going to be relevant for my work as president of a Bible Institute. I understood that the goal was “to develop strategies that will help to

strengthen Latino pastoral leadership throughout the United States.” I thought that since the mission of our school is to “serve God and the church, equipping men and women for the Christian ministry in a bilingual and multicultural setting,” and most of our graduates go directly into pastoral ministry, the summit could provide some resources and ideas in how better to serve the our Hispanic communities. Yet I never imagined the richness of thought, the profound and practical dialogue, and the quality of relationships that this gathering was to bring about.

I received my first impression about the depth of the dialogue and quality of the academic research for the summit when I read the papers assigned in preparation for the meeting. As former executive director of the Asociación para la Educación Teológica Hispana (AETH), I knew some of the participants in their roles as authors, educators, researchers, administrators, and advocates of Hispanic theological issues. What most deeply impressed and enriched me was their commitment to pastoral ministry. Together these scholars, the representatives from different denominations and traditions, and the students at Duke created an environment that allowed the Holy Spirit to move among us in powerful ways. With the opening convocation and the sermon of Dr. Justo L. González, the table was set for reflection, sharing, and serious discussion of the task at hand.

I felt privileged to have the opportunity to meet each person with whom I shared some time in this gathering. Devotional time was of special significance, and each working session was well focused and strategically placed to lead us to the common goal. I sincerely appreciated the importance given to Hispanic theological education as the strategies and plans were developed. The discussion led by the theological education group, of which I was a part, broadened my perspective, helped me to refine my vision, and provided some clear goals as I continue my ministry at the Bible Institute. After we discussed the “challenges” and “success factors” of our field, I believe the group came up with recommendations that are feasible and attainable as we continue to improve Hispanic theological education in relation to Latino pastoral ministry.

MARY MORENO

Community Consultant, San Antonio, Texas

My experience at the October 2003 summit held at Duke was invaluable to me for many different reasons.

I have been involved in church, community work, and community organizing for almost 40 years. Just when you are feeling overwhelmed by the complexity of issues that affect our Hispanic families, along comes “God’s crew” ready to roll up their sleeves and unfold “God’s plan” for us. For me, this interdenominational summit represented a hope and a vision that we do not have to work alone and that God is always putting people in our lives who will strengthen and inspire our journey and God’s mission.

This is what I saw: extremely busy people taking the time to gather around diverse issues because of their personal dedication to the needs of the Latino people and the church as a whole. I also saw the struggles that this ecumenical dialogue brought to the surface, especially when we shared our own beliefs and traditions (including our devotion to saints or to Our Lady of Guadalupe, for example). I witnessed an openness and willingness to look at the real issues and realities around us, including the fact that Hispanics of all denominations are leaving the church, the lack of faith development for the younger generations, and the opportunities and challenges for “Hispanic America” in the future.

This is what I felt: I felt privileged to be among individuals who were truly committed to the needs of the Hispanic people. There was a sense of “family” among the group members, even though most of us didn’t know each other prior to this summit. I credit the facilitators and the organizers for being able to bring about that kind of unity, which really helped link and energize our spirits.

This is what I hope: first, I sincerely hope that we remain committed to strengthening the foundation that was created around relationship building and friendships that were established, and that the follow-up becomes just as strong, if not stronger, than the summit session itself. I hope that we become creative in systemically building networks among ourselves for the purpose of mutual support and learning how to share resources. I hope that we place a high priority and value on developing ecumenical dialogues at the local level in order to bring down barriers and truly become “One Body in Christ.” Most importantly, I truly hope that informal pláticas (conversations) can surface at the grassroots level so that lay people and families can be the ones who initiate the planning and give direction to their own spiritual needs and the overall needs of their own children and to young

adults, adults, and the elderly. Through our own organizations, the local networks could become the foundation for a national network system.

FR. ESEQUIEL SÁNCHEZ

Director of the Office for Hispanic Catholics, Archdiocese of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

As a Roman Catholic Hispanic priest serving in the Archdiocese of Chicago as director of the Office for Hispanic Catholics, I am fully aware of the great challenges both clergy and lay ministers face in serving our Hispanic brothers and sisters in the United States. Participation in ecumenical encounters and studying theology in an ecumenical setting are not new to me. But the issues we discussed at the Duke summit – the role of Hispanic ministers in the life of the Church and the future leadership of Hispanics within the churches – were truly significant.

Each church has its own structure and resources. In the Roman Catholic Church, the structure of leadership in terms of evangelization, catechesis, and social outreach is quite diverse. However, hierarchical leadership is a reality, and Sacred Orders are reserved exclusively for men. Too often, the contributions of Hispanic religious and laywomen have been overlooked. At the summit, worshiping and sharing experiences in ministry with women pastors from other ecclesial communities and churches was wonderful and uplifting.

Our sessions at the summit were very good, but I sometimes felt that the agenda was being lost. Throughout, I felt a concern about what we should do next. Where did the group want to go with this experience? Would the summit bear some specific project? Were we supposed to catalyze change in our churches via this medium? I was not sure what was expected of us when we finished our meetings. Several good ideas emerged that might potentially be developed as proposals to help Hispanic religious leaders build leadership skills and make a greater impact in their communities. One suggestion was to develop a leadership program based on an experiential model of learning. This seemed like a good idea, because the more people are exposed to the forces that affect the life of a community, the better they can respond to or shape those forces.

For the benefit and development of our community,

Hispanic religious leaders **MUST** come together and find common ground from which to work. Listening to the participants, it seemed clear that Hispanics are becoming more and more secularized. Hispanics are leaving our churches to try their luck at facing life's greatest challenges on their own. Perhaps we pastors must work harder to express and demand a greater unity among all Christians. Perhaps "our issues" are not necessarily the same ones that the community struggles with.

As a Hispanic pastor I am always questioning my formation and education. Am I speaking in a language that the community can understand? Do I frame questions in a way that presents the message of Jesus as a viable proposal and answer? Am I an obstacle to communicating the message of Jesus in the life of my people? Is part of my role as a Hispanic religious leader to protect the Church even from itself? These were some of the questions I came – and was still left with – at the end of our gathering. In short, I ended up where I started, but the summit reminded me that I am not alone in asking difficult questions.

OTHER PARTICIPANTS' REMARKS

"For me personally, it was good to get together with colleagues from other denominations to speak about the status of Hispanic ministry ... I am very hopeful that something can be done to help our denominations respond to Hispanic population growth. The results of the summit should contribute to the process. Our denominations look to us to provide leadership on these issues."

"The richness of the dialogue among the Latino pastoral community will depend upon our listening to each voice represented in the diverse expressions of the body (church) of Christ ... Our efforts must include denominational leaders, bishops, academics, educators, professionals and ministries that focus on social issues, economic and community development. We must involve men and women of different backgrounds and experiences, veterans and young people – all of those who search for common denominators and bonds to unite our efforts."

"Why was the event meaningful? [Because it allowed me to see] in the commonalities of needs across traditions, an affirmation of our own 'hispanicness' and the reality of what we have in common as compared to what we have that is different."

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HISPANIC PASTORAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

October 1-3, 2003, Duke University

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* *Indicates members of the continuation committee that met in January 2004 at the Louisville Institute to follow up on summit recommendations.*

ABOUT PULPIT & PEW

Pulpit & Pew is a research initiative of the Duke Divinity School funded by Lilly Endowment, Inc., and aimed at strengthening the quality of pastoral leadership (clergy and lay) in churches across America. The goal of the research is to strengthen the quality of pastoral leaders, especially those in ordained ministry, through (1) understanding how changes in the social, cultural, economic, and religious context in recent years have affected ministry, (2) forming pastoral leaders with the capacity for continual learning and growth in response to these changes, and (3) identifying policies and practices that will support creative pastoral leadership and vital congregations as they respond to a changing environment.

Pulpit & Pew
Research on Pastoral Leadership

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF LATINO RELIGION

The Center for the Study of Latino Religion (CSLR) was founded in 2002 within the Institute for Latino Studies at the University of Notre Dame. Its mission is to serve as a national center and clearinghouse for ecumenically focused social-scientific study of the US Latino church, its leadership, and the interaction between religion and community. Highlighting the ways in which religion strengthens and improves the quality of public life, the Center examines the impact of religious beliefs, leaders, churches, and faith-based organizations on Latino urban communities.



