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## Hispanic Catholic Leadership: Key to the Future

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### *Introduction*

Much of the material for this article is the result of a collaborative effort. The National Community on Latino/a Leadership (NCLL)<sup>1</sup> conducted a survey of 2,662 Hispanic adults in the fall of 1999 commissioned by the National Catholic Council on Hispanic Ministry (NCCHM), an organization concerned with developing Hispanic leadership in a faith-based context.<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise noted, data presented here are based on that NCLL survey.<sup>3</sup>

First we present a general sociodemographic profile; second, data regarding identification with and attitude towards the Church (as well as the related matters of church attendance, membership and defections);

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Hernández was the lead investigator for NCLL; Adela Gallegos Flores represented NCCHM.

<sup>2</sup> The NCLL survey was a random-dial telephone interview of Hispanics 18 years of age and older in the states of California, Texas, New York, Florida and Illinois. Included was an oversample of Puerto Rican and Cuban American respondents which was appropriately weighted to yield a minimum of 500 responses for each group.

<sup>3</sup> With funding from the Lilly Endowment, NCCHM launched a six-year initiative in which it developed a training curriculum that integrates strategies for leadership development in education, civic participation, politics and community organization with the theological, spiritual and pastoral aspects of leadership. NCCHM piloted a model on a national scale in both English and Spanish. Later it produced a comprehensive program manual, *The Power to Serve: Latino/a Leadership for Church and Society*, to help institutions implement the successful model.

third, the degree of organizational participation and financial support; and fourth, perceived and desired characteristics of leaders. Each of these four sections concludes with suggested implications for theology and ministry. The most important conclusion is that because Hispanics are an increasingly important part of the Church in the United States (and society), Hispanic Catholic leadership development (especially among women, youth and young adults) requires an immediate and significant investment. Once formed, such leaders are very likely to contribute time, talent, and treasure to the Church.

#### *General Sociodemographic Profile*

The Hispanic population is the fastest growing segment of the U.S. Catholic Church (and the society as a whole). In 1950 there were approximately 2.3 million Hispanics in the United States. By 2000 this number had grown to 35.3 million, and according to Census Bureau projections, by 2050 there will be nearly 100 million Hispanics.<sup>4</sup> Currently one of every eight persons in the United States is Hispanic. There are an estimated 25 million Hispanic Catholics in the United States, which constitutes about 33 percent of all U.S. Catholics. From 1970 to 2000 the number of Hispanic Catholics increased by over 18 million, or 264 percent. This increase accounted for 86 percent of all growth in the U.S. Catholic Church during that period.

Forty-one percent of Hispanic adults are under age thirty-five, 30 percent are between thirty-five and forty, and 29 percent are fifty years and over.<sup>5</sup> Overall, Hispanics are younger than non-Hispanics, in part because of their higher birth rate and the large number of young immigrants. There is virtually no difference between the age structure of Hispanic Catholics and Hispanic non-Catholics.

A recent study by *Fe y Vida, La Red*, and the Southeast Pastoral Institute (SEPI) looks at similar data and concludes that 41 percent of Catholics under age 30 are Hispanic.<sup>6</sup> However, young Hispanics may

<sup>4</sup>U.S. Census Bureau. *Projections of the Resident Population by Age, Sex, Race and Hispanic Origin 1999-2100*. January 13, 2001.

<sup>5</sup>In 1999 the Louisville Institute told the nation's bishops: "Given the fact that the Latino population in this country is overwhelmingly young (approximately 50 percent are under the age of twenty-six and over 33 percent under the age of eighteen), the Church ignores Hispanic youth at its own peril." This is an even stronger case than that presented here.

<sup>6</sup>Assuming that 70 percent of the Hispanic population in the US is Catholic, and that 25 percent of the non-Hispanic White population is Catholic. Of course, if a greater percent of the Church were Hispanic, an even larger percent of young Catholics would be Hispanic.

be abandoning the Church. The Hispanic Churches in American Public Life Project (<http://www.hcapl.org/>) states that while 74 percent of immigrants are Catholic, only 66 percent of the second generation, and 59 percent of third and later generations remain Catholic.<sup>7</sup>

As with age, little difference exists between Hispanic Catholic and Hispanic non-Catholic marital status. Fifty-eight percent of both are married, 22 vs. 23 percent are single, 10 vs. 9 percent are either separated or divorced, 7 vs. 8 percent are widowed, and 3 percent of both Catholics and non-Catholics are cohabiting.

Most Hispanics live in large cities. In nine of the ten largest cities in the United States ethnic minorities now constitute a majority of the population, with Hispanics being the largest minority in seven of these cities. Overall, Hispanics accounted for 62 percent of the population increase in the nation's 100 largest cities between 1990 and 2000.<sup>8</sup>

Hispanic households tend to be larger than those of non-Hispanic whites. According to the Census Bureau, 78 percent of Hispanics have more than two people living in their households compared to 53 percent of non-Hispanic whites. In addition, Hispanics have a higher birth rate than non-Hispanics, which means more children are present. In 1996 the fertility rate for the general population was 2.03, while that of Hispanics was 3.0.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, according to the NCLL survey, 52 percent of Hispanic Catholics and 50 percent of Hispanic non-Catholics have children under the age of 18 living at home.

Households exist in neighborhoods. A neighborhood that is predominantly composed of one ethnic group constitutes what is termed an enclave, whereas one that is entirely composed of one ethnic group is usually termed a ghetto. Both of these are commonly referred to as a *barrio* if the residents are Hispanic. The type of neighborhood in which people live has important consequences. *Barrios*, for example, can be both functional and dysfunctional for their residents. Positively, they have a small town, *gemeinschaft* quality that provides a more personal,

<sup>7</sup>At press time these results were not final, and may constitute a pattern rather than a trend. See "Majority of Americans Identify Themselves as Third-generation Americans" Gallup Poll Analyses, July 10, 2001 ([www.gallup.com/poll/releases/pr01071b](http://www.gallup.com/poll/releases/pr01071b)); A. Dianne Schmidley, U.S. Census Bureau, *Current Population Reports, Series P23-206, Profile of the Foreign-Born Population in the United States 2000* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2001). These two studies report immigrant, first and second generation among Latinos as 47 percent, 26 percent, 27 percent and 39 percent, 29 percent, 32 percent respectively. If between 40 and 50 percent of Hispanics are immigrants, and Catholic identification is highest among immigrants, then this affects the Catholic Hispanic population as a whole.

<sup>8</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, January 13, 2001.

<sup>9</sup>Joseph McFalls, Jr., "Population: A Lively Introduction," *Population Bulletin* 53:3 (1998) 3-48.

friendly environment. This is particularly true for recently arrived immigrants who can make use of the barrio to reduce the culture shock inherent in international migration. According to one theory, barrios actually facilitate acculturation.<sup>10</sup> Negatively, barrios limit opportunities for residents by confining them to areas where access to better jobs, education, health care facilities, and personal security is less available.<sup>11</sup>

In an earlier study, the highest level of residential segregation between Hispanics and non-Hispanic whites was in the northeastern region of the United States while the least segregated was in the south.<sup>12</sup> Since 1990 many changes have occurred in the geographic distribution of the Hispanic population, which may have affected regional segregation patterns. Previously it was common to think of Mexican Americans in the southwest, Cuban Americans in Florida, and Puerto Ricans in the northeast. Today these and other Hispanics are located throughout the country. There are now twenty-one states where Hispanics are the largest minority.<sup>13</sup>

However, Hispanic Catholics and non-Catholics tend to live in different kinds of neighborhoods. Forty-three percent of Catholics live in barrios compared to 35 percent of non-Catholics. Only 15 percent of Catholics live in predominantly non-Hispanic white neighborhoods compared to 17 percent of non-Catholics.<sup>14</sup> The remaining Hispanics live in ethnically mixed neighborhoods.

Overall, Hispanics have less education than either non-Hispanic whites or Blacks. Among Hispanics, Mexican Americans have the least amount of education of the three major subgroups. In 1998, 87 percent of non-Hispanics over age of twenty-four had a high school degree compared to only 24 percent of Mexican Americans, 61 percent of Puerto Ricans and 66 percent of Cuban Americans. Although this relatively poor education is influenced by immigration, a recent study concluded that: "Even after disaggregating the immigrant population from those

<sup>10</sup> Barbara Ballis Lal, "Symbolic Interaction Theories," *American Behavioral Scientist* 38 (1995) 421-41.

<sup>11</sup> Anne Santiago and Margaret Wilder, "Residential Segregation and Links to Minority Poverty: The Case of Latinos in the United States," *Social Problems* 38 (1991) 492-515.

<sup>12</sup> Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton, "Trends in the Residential Segregation of Blacks, Hispanics and Asians: 1970-1980," *American Sociological Review* 52 (1987) 802-25.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2001.

<sup>14</sup> There is some evidence that interaction between Hispanics (specifically Mexican-Americans) and non-Hispanics affects leadership. See Carmen Estrada-Schaye, *Religious Values and Leadership in Mexican-Americans in Los Angeles* (Unpublished Ed.D diss., Pepperdine University, Malibu, Calif., 1995).

statistics, however, Latino/a [school] dropout rates remain twice those of the non-Hispanic population."<sup>15</sup> The picture for higher education is similar. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, while 27 percent of non-Hispanics had a college degree, only 8 percent of Mexican Americans, 11 percent of Puerto Ricans and 20 percent of Cuban Americans had received a degree.

According to the NCLL survey, Hispanic Catholics had less education than Hispanic non-Catholics. While 47 percent of Catholics had not completed high school, the corresponding figure for non-Catholics was only 39 percent. Meanwhile, 14 percent of Catholics had completed a college education compared to 17 percent of non-Catholics. The low educational attainment of Hispanics in general, and Catholics in particular, puts them at a distinct disadvantage in a credential-oriented society as revealed in the following statistics on employment and income.

The greatest occupational difference between Hispanics and non-Hispanics is in the percentages of professionals/managers and farmers/laborers. There is also a large difference in these same occupations between the subgroups of Hispanics. In 1998, 33 percent of non-Hispanics held professional or managerial positions compared to only 13 percent of Mexican Americans, 19 percent of Puerto Ricans and 25 percent of Cuban Americans (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1998).

The unemployment rate for Hispanics has historically been much higher than for non-Hispanics, and continues to be (U.S. Department of Labor, 2002). Among Hispanics there is some difference between Catholics and non-Catholics, according to the NCLL survey. Non-Catholics are slightly more likely to be employed, full or part-time, than Catholics (59 percent vs. 54 percent). Most of those who are unemployed are either students, house-spouses, retired or unable to work. Of those who are employed, 40 percent of Catholics and 33 percent of non-Catholics have a direct supervisor who is also Hispanic. When asked how important it is that their supervisor understands Hispanic culture, 76 percent of Catholics and 71 percent of non-Catholics said it is very important.

The median income of Hispanic families is below that of non-Hispanics. In 1998 Mexican American families earned 63 percent, Puerto Rican families 56 percent and Cuban American families 73 percent of the median income for non-Hispanic families. While overall, the Hispanic income as a proportion of non-Hispanic income was 0.63, the proportion of Hispanic males to non-Hispanic males was 0.58 while the proportion of Hispanic females to non-Hispanic females was 0.71

<sup>15</sup> Edwin Hernández and Kenneth G. Davis, *Reconstructing the Sacred Tower*. (Scranton, Penn.: The University of Scranton Press, forthcoming).

(U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1998). Thus, Hispanic females were experiencing less of a pay differential than males.

A comparison of the economic condition of the three main Hispanic subgroups to non-Hispanics in the United States for the year 1998 reveals that 9 percent of non-Hispanics were officially in poverty compared to 28 percent of Mexican Americans, 33 percent of Puerto Ricans and 13 percent of Cuban Americans.<sup>16</sup>

According to the NCLL survey, the overwhelming majority of Hispanics, Catholics and non-Catholics, earn less than \$40,000 a year. Based on annual family income, 79 percent of Catholics and 77 percent of non-Catholics are considered working class. These figures include 86 percent of foreign-born Hispanics. Only 16 percent of Catholics and 18 percent of non-Catholics are considered middle class, and approximately 5 percent of both are upper class. However, this is not how Hispanics perceive themselves. Only 45 percent actually perceive themselves as working class. Over half believe themselves middle class and 5 percent say they are upper class. Such perceptions are not uncommon. Immigrant Hispanics generally are more satisfied or optimistic about their economic situation than U.S.-born Hispanics perhaps because the former compare themselves to the previous situation in their homeland, whereas the latter compare themselves to fellow U.S. citizens.

NCLL survey respondents were queried about the probable future of the Hispanic community and their own ability to achieve the American Dream. In response, Catholics exhibited greater confidence in the future of the average Hispanic than did mainline Protestants (62 percent vs. 57 percent), or Pentecostals (42 percent). Only nondenominational Hispanics showed greater confidence, 67 percent. Catholics were the most optimistic (77 percent) when asked if the American Dream was attainable for the majority of Hispanics. In response to the same question, 74 percent of nonaffiliated, and 70 percent of mainline Protestants answered affirmatively.

When questioned concerning what the most important part of the American Dream was, the most common answer for Catholics (37 percent) was a better life for their children. Only 8 percent indicated financial success and security. Mainline Protestants more frequently indicated (29 percent) it was living up to their potential, compared to only 6 percent who said financial success and security. More Pentecostals (26 percent) said a better life for their children and 10 percent indicated financial success and security. Thus, financial success and security is the least important part of the American dream for most Hispanics.

<sup>16</sup> CPS Annual Demographic Survey, March Supplement, 1999.

The Census Bureau's 2000 population report found 12.8 million Hispanics were foreign-born, comprising 39 percent of all Hispanics. However, the NCLL survey, which was limited to Hispanic adults, found that 53 percent were foreign-born. Infants and the very young are less likely to immigrate, especially without proper documents, resulting in an overrepresentation of adults. Because the vast majority (86 percent) of foreign-born Hispanics are Catholic, over half (56 percent) of all Catholic adults are foreign-born. The opposite is true of Hispanic non-Catholics most of whom (55 percent) are U.S.-born.

As may be expected, a similar pattern is found regarding citizenship. Whereas 74 percent of Hispanic non-Catholics are U.S. citizens, only 63 percent of Hispanic Catholics are citizens. Almost six million Hispanic Catholic adults are not yet U.S. citizens. This deprives both the Hispanic community and the Catholic Church of a more effective voice in government.

NCLL survey participants were given the choice to participate in English or Spanish. Sixty-three percent of Catholics and 52 percent of non-Catholics selected Spanish. Forty-six percent of Catholics and 39 percent of non-Catholics indicated they speak only Spanish. Another 43 percent of Catholics said they are bilingual, speaking both English and Spanish. In the home, 63 percent of Catholics and 54 percent of non-Catholics indicated that Spanish is spoken most often. Only 21 percent of Catholics and 29 percent of non-Catholics said that English is spoken most often at home. Over 80 percent of those who spoke Spanish indicated they could also read it. Among U.S.-born Hispanics, 33 percent of mainline Protestants speak English exclusively compared to 21 percent of Evangelicals or nondenominationalists, and 24 percent of Catholics. However, 60 percent of Catholics are bilingual compared to 59 percent of Evangelicals and nondenominationalists, and 50 percent of mainline Protestants.

This demographic profile notes a pattern of class, language, nativity, and citizenship differences between Hispanic Catholics and non-Catholics. Protestants tend to have slightly higher levels of education and income, and are less likely to live in predominantly Hispanic neighborhoods or work under Hispanic supervisors or speak only Spanish. While a majority of Protestants are U.S.-born, a majority of Catholics are foreign-born. This can account for the fact that 74 percent of Protestants, but only 63 percent of Catholics, are U.S. citizens. It can also help explain the difference in language, education, income, and place of residence.

For Hispanics, the Catholic Church in the United States is still largely an immigrant church. This means that the Church and its leaders may be called upon for assistance in social and financial matters as well as

spiritual. It also means that Hispanic Catholics are different in this respect from other Catholics who are predominantly U.S.-born. According to earlier estimates only 15 percent of U.S. Catholics were first generation, 25 percent second generation, 40 percent third generation, and 20 percent fourth generation.<sup>17</sup> Previous studies<sup>18</sup> as well as the NCLL survey indicate that Hispanic mainline Protestants generally have higher-class status than members of Pentecostal or Evangelical churches. These latter Hispanics are more similar to Catholics in social class.

The differences based on place of birth are even greater. For U.S.-born Hispanics, 63 percent of mainline Protestants, 67 percent of Jehovah Witnesses or Mormons, and 75 percent of Evangelicals or non-denominationals have household incomes of less than \$40,000 annually compared to 70 percent of Catholics. For foreign-born Hispanics the percentages are 77 percent of Jehovah Witnesses or Mormons, 84 percent mainline Protestants, and 87 percent Evangelicals or non-denominationals, compared to 86 percent of Catholics. Interestingly, foreign-born Jehovah Witnesses and Mormons fare better than even mainline Protestants, perhaps because these communities tend to offer greater mutual support to their members than the other faith communities. Such differences have previously been noted.

What are the theological and pastoral implications of this socio-demographic profile? The most intriguing implication may be the faith and optimism of Hispanics (especially Catholics) despite their relatively poor socioeconomic situation. This data may support the assertion of Eduardo C. Fernández, S.J.: "what is the factor that accounts for the resiliency of U.S. Latinos? Again, their theologians are now beginning to explore an inherent world of meaning—a spirituality, one might say—that provides an unmistakable source of strength."<sup>19</sup> Of course, Fernández does not suggest that poverty creates optimism or that neglect promotes faith. Nonetheless, further theological investigation appears merited.

Pastors, of course, must attend to the exploding numbers of Catholic Hispanics, their increasing immigration, concentration in *barrios*, and poor income and educational levels. Publishers and others must consider the large numbers who prefer Spanish. However, the most

<sup>17</sup> Andrew Greeley, *The American Catholic: A Social Portrait* (New York: Basic Books, 1977) 38.

<sup>18</sup> See, for instance, Edwin Hernández, "Moving from the Cathedral to Storefront Churches: Understanding Religious Growth and Decline Among Latino Protestants," in *Protestantes/Protestants*, ed. David Maldonado (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999) 223.

<sup>19</sup> Eduardo Fernández, S.J., *La Cosecha: Harvesting Contemporary United States Hispanic Theology (1972–1998)* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2000) 28.

important pastoral implication may be the urgent need to provide ministry (especially through leadership development) to Hispanic, Catholic youth.

#### *Identification with and Attitude towards the Church*

There is some disagreement concerning the number of Catholics in the United States, as well as the number of Hispanic Catholics. This latter question has two aspects: what proportion of U.S. Catholics is Hispanic, and what proportion of U.S. Hispanics is Catholic. The Catholic population has usually been estimated at between 25 and 28 percent of the nation.<sup>20</sup> In an August 2000 Gallup Poll on religious preference, 27 percent of the respondents indicated they are Catholic. This means there are approximately 76 million Catholics in the United States. However, when the estimate is based on parish registration figures it appears that there are approximately 63 million Catholics, which constitutes 23 percent of the population. This number is obviously an under representation of the actuality since many people, including families, are unregistered at any given time, even though they are regular churchgoers.

To determine the number of Hispanic Catholics it is necessary to rely on survey data since official membership rolls do not identify membership by race or ethnicity. Some surveys are interested in determining the ethnicity of Catholics while others are interested in determining the religion of Hispanics. This makes comparisons and conclusions elusive especially since sampling frames and methodologies also differ among the various studies. Moreover, the results of some of the most ambitious studies are still not final. Therefore, the following is meant to be informative but not conclusive.<sup>21</sup>

A national study of adult Catholics conducted by the Catholic Pluralism Project in 1995 found that 16 percent of the respondents identified themselves as Hispanic.<sup>22</sup> The same results were obtained in a more recent study by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) Catholic Poll 2000. Based on these percentages, the number of Hispanic Catholics would range between 9,982,600, or 16 percent of the membership base Catholic population, and 12,157,600 of the 2000 general survey Catholic population estimates. These findings suggest Hispanic Catholics number between 10–12 million out of a total Hispanic

<sup>20</sup> Wade Clark Roof and William McKinney, *American Mainline Religion* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1987) 230.

<sup>21</sup> For example, the forthcoming National Survey on Leadership in Latino Parishes and Congregations.

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.thearda.com/arda.asp?Show=Home>.

population of over thirty-five million. This would mean that only one-third of all U.S. Hispanics are Catholic. However, a conclusion that only 33 percent of Hispanics are Catholic is contradicted by a number of larger, national surveys that report the percentage to be between 56–69 percent. The following are the surveys and their findings:

Citizen Participation Study (1989) .....	66%
General Social Survey, Roper Center (1990–1996) .....	67%
Voter News Exit Poll (1996) .....	66%
CARA Catholic Poll (2000) .....	56%
Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey-Seguro Seminar, Harvard University (2000) .....	69%

Most of these surveys were conducted in English, which means their findings probably underrepresent the true number since 46 percent of Catholic Hispanics and 39 percent of non-Catholics speak only Spanish. The largest national surveys, which are those with the smallest margins of error, find the percentage of Hispanics who are Catholic to be even greater, between 72–80 percent. The 1990 Latino/a National Political Survey (NLPS) of 2,817 Hispanics found that 73 percent of the respondents identified themselves as Catholics. Later the 1994 Hispanic PAC USA National Survey of 1,420 respondents reported the same results. More recently, the 1999 Kaiser/Harvard University National Latino/a Poll (HKF) of 2,417 respondents found the percentage of Hispanics saying they are Catholic to be 72 percent. Finally, the 2000 National Community for Latino/a Leadership Survey (NCLL) discovered that 80 percent of the respondents reported they are Catholic. Based on these larger, national surveys, the percent of Hispanics who are Catholic appears to be between 72–80 percent. Therefore, the number of Hispanic Catholics can be estimated to be 25 million, or one-third of all Catholics in the United States. This data also suggests the likelihood that as the United States becomes more Hispanic, it will also become more Catholic.

According to these same national surveys, between 12–16 percent of Hispanics identify themselves as Protestant, and between 7–19 percent indicate they are unaffiliated or have no religious preference. The findings of the NLPS, HKF and NCLL surveys show that although a majority of all Hispanics are Catholic, there is a difference between the three major Hispanic subgroups in the percentage of Catholics. The number of Mexican Americans who identify themselves as Catholics ranges between 77–87 percent, Cuban Americans between 66–80 percent

and Puerto Ricans between 65–70 percent. While Mexican Americans are the most Catholic, Puerto Ricans are the most Protestant, 21–22 percent, and also the most likely to be unaffiliated, 9–13 percent.

As previously mentioned, however, recent large-scale national surveys have found that between 72–80 percent of Hispanics identify themselves as Catholics. Even Survey America 2001 says that seventy percent of Latinos identify themselves as Catholic. All this would seem to confirm Hunt's analysis of the General Social Survey of Latino/a data sets that found little or no increases in the percentage of Hispanics who identify themselves as Protestant during the 1990s. However, it does seem that the percent of U.S. Hispanics who are Catholic did decline over most of the past century. Sociologist Meredith McGuire wrote that ". . . many Latinos do not find the Catholic church in the United States to be a strong source of belonging; indeed many have become Protestant, but many more simply do not identify with a Catholicism so foreign to their own cultural experience."<sup>23</sup> This assessment appears to be supported by a number of studies. One recent survey conducted in Los Angeles County found that 79 percent of Hispanic immigrants are Catholic compared to 63 percent of those born in the United States. In addition, although 89 percent of the immigrants said they were raised Catholic, only 79 percent still consider themselves Catholic. Among U.S.-born Hispanics, the percentages are 79 percent raised Catholic and 63 percent still Catholic. And as both groups aged they were less likely to consider themselves Catholic. While some converted to different religions, others just ceased to embrace any religion.<sup>24</sup> A similar picture is presented by Greeley who reports that 85 percent of Hispanics were raised Catholic, but only 67 percent continue to be Catholic.<sup>25</sup>

Some reasons for Hispanics religious switching may have less to do with doctrinal issues and more to do with structural differences between Catholic and Protestant churches. In general the latter are smaller, members are more likely to know each other, there is greater opportunity for lay participation, and the congregational rather than episcopal structure allows greater lay leadership.<sup>26</sup> It has also been suggested that

<sup>23</sup> Meredith McGuire, *Religion: The Social Context*, 4th ed. (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1997) 191.

<sup>24</sup> "Latinos Becoming Less Catholic," *America* 185: 6 (September 10, 2001) 5.

<sup>25</sup> Andrew Greeley, "Defection Among Hispanics," *America* (September 27, 1997) 12–13.

<sup>26</sup> Sidney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman and Henry E. Brady, *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995) 245.



some Hispanics see conversion as an aspect of assimilation or a means of possible upward mobility.<sup>27</sup>

While it appears certain there has been a decline in Catholicism among Hispanics in the United States, the magnitude of this decline is in question. Greeley reports that in the early 1970's, 78 percent of Hispanic Americans were Catholic but by the mid-1990's this figure had fallen to 67 percent. This represents a loss of approximately .5 percent per year. The previously mentioned *Fe y Vida* survey reported 74 percent of first generation, 66 percent second generation, and 59 percent third generation were Catholic. Meanwhile, a study reported by Hunt found that 83 percent of first generation Hispanics identified themselves as Catholics compared to 64 percent of third generation Hispanics. Differences between these studies are significant, although all three indicate a generational decline in identity with the Church. The questions, therefore, are not whether a decline occurred, but how large and why.

Whatever their denomination, ninety-five percent of Hispanics in three separate surveys, the NCLL, HKF and CBS, indicated religion is an important part of their lives, compared to 88 percent of the general population who participated in the Gallup 2000 survey. The NCLL survey also found that among Hispanics, 96 percent of Catholics compared to 89 percent of non-Catholics said it was important. Hispanics in general not only consider religion important, but they also have a favorable opinion of the Catholic Church.<sup>28</sup> The HKF survey found that 75 percent of Hispanics have a favorable opinion, including 54 percent who indicated very favorable. This is compared to 64 percent of the general public who expressed a favorable opinion, and 18 percent very favorable in the Gallup Poll. In the former survey, 19 percent of Hispanics indicated an unfavorable opinion, 8 percent very unfavorable, while in the latter poll 27 percent of the general public expressed an unfavorable opinion, and 8 percent very unfavorable.

This favorable attitude towards the Church includes its priests. Recent studies have shown that Hispanic Catholics prefer to consult priests with their problems rather than lay professionals. They seek clerical help not only for moral problems, but also depression, suicidal

<sup>27</sup> Both hypotheses in L. L. Hunt, "Religion, Gender, and the Hispanic Experience in the United States: Catholic/Protestant Differences in Religious Involvement, Social Status, and Gender-Role Attitudes," *Review of Religious Research* 43:2 (December 2001) 139-60.

<sup>28</sup> According to at least one published opinion, this does not seem to have been affected even by recent scandals. See Raymond Rodríguez, "Latino Catholics Retain Trust in Parish Priest," *Hispanic Link* 20:13 (March 25, 2002) 3. See also the commentary by Gregory Rodríguez, *Los Angeles Times*, April 7, 2002.

feelings, drug and alcohol abuse, job loss, and marital difficulties, whether or not the priest has special training in those areas. Non-Hispanic Catholics, however, are more concerned with consulting someone who has special training, whether priest or lay professional. Overall, 72 percent of Hispanics would talk to a trained or untrained priest rather than a trained lay professional compared to 57 percent of Non-Hispanics.<sup>29</sup>

However important religion is to them, and despite their generally favorable opinion of the Church, Hispanics are not the most likely to attend church services. African Americans have the highest rate of church attendance, although Hispanics have a higher rate than non-Hispanic whites. The 1989 Citizens Participation Study found 53 percent of Hispanics attended church regularly compared to 48 percent of non-Hispanic whites. The 2000 Social Community Benchmark study found 47 percent of Hispanics attended church weekly compared to 40 percent of non-Hispanic whites. In a recent survey of Hispanics conducted by the Tomas Rivers Policy Institute, 45 percent of the respondents indicated they attended church services at least once a week. Forty-three percent of all respondents attended services in Spanish, 27 percent attended services in English and 30 percent attended services in Spanish and/or English.

Finally, the NCLL survey reported that 41 percent of Hispanics attended church services at least once a week compared to 35 percent of the general public who answered the Gallup Poll.<sup>30</sup> It is likely, however, that a difference in attendance exists between the various nationality groups of Hispanics.<sup>31</sup>

Church attendance does not necessarily mean registration at a church. An analysis of an over sample of the 1999 Gallup Poll data found 54 percent of Hispanic Catholics were registered members of a

<sup>29</sup> Michael N. Kane and M. Williams, "Perceptions of South Florida Hispanic Anglo Catholics: From Whom Would They Seek Help?" *Journal of Religion and Health* 39:2 (Summer 2000) 107-21.

<sup>30</sup> Earlier studies of church attendance among U.S. Catholics by nationality indicated that Germans were the most active while Italians and Hispanics were among the least. See Andrew Greeley, "Ethnic Variations in Religious Commitment," in *The Religious Dimension: New Dimensions in Quantitative Research*, ed. Robert Wuthnow (New York: Academy Press, 1979) 113-34. Also Harold Abramson, *Ethnic Diversity in Catholic America* (New York: John Wiley, 1973).

<sup>31</sup> For instance, 41 percent of Mexican Americans attend Mass at least once a month while 47 percent report they never go. Among those born in Mexico, the corresponding percentages are 51 percent vs. 41 percent. See Rodolfo O. de la Garza et al., *Latino Voices: Mexican, Puerto Rican and Cuban Perspectives* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1992) tables 3.21 and 2.26.



local parish compared to 70 percent of non-Hispanic whites.<sup>32</sup> More recently, the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey 2000 found 46 percent of Hispanics were registered members compared to 67 percent of non-Hispanic whites and 71 percent of African Americans.<sup>33</sup>

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 often registered members of a parish. There are several reasons that may explain this behavior. First, approximately 46 percent of Hispanic Catholics speak only Spanish. Many of these probably hesitate to become registered members of any parish without Spanish-speaking ministers. Second, a large number of Hispanics are undocumented immigrants, and, as such, they might be reluctant to register their names and addresses.<sup>34</sup> Third, in some of the immigrants' homelands parish registration is not common, especially in small towns or ranchos. Finally, immigrants tend to be more mobile and do not stay or plan to stay in one place for an extended length of time. Many also plan to return home and therefore do not feel the need to register since they believe that they will only be in the United States temporarily.

The data reflects the great importance that religion holds for Catholic Hispanics, their generally positive opinion of the Church, and yet their relative lack of formal church registration and involvement. This may be explained by the way many Hispanics practice their faith, that is, a domestic or neighborhood expression of their own popular Catholicism. While popular Catholicism does not cause less church registration, it may be constitutive of how many Hispanics are Catholic, and that particular manifestation of Catholicism may not always include formal registration.<sup>35</sup> It would appear that theologians are quite correct

<sup>32</sup>William D'Antonio, "Latino Catholics: How Different?" *National Catholic Reporter*, October 29, 1999.

<sup>33</sup>One third of all Catholics in the United States are not registered in their local parishes. See Bryan Froehle and Mary L. Gautier, *The Catholic Church Today* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2000) 205.

<sup>34</sup>This situation may be even more pressing given popular opinion toward immigrants after the events of September 11, 2001.

<sup>35</sup>For studies on parish life and popular Catholicism among Hispanics see the following two dissertations: Thomas G. Kelliher Jr., *Hispanic Catholics and the Archdiocese of Chicago, 1923–1970* (Ph.D. diss., University of Notre Dame, 1996). Kelliher concludes, "Since Hispanic Catholicism was to a large extent a household religion and was not centered on parish life . . . by the end of the 1960s most Hispanics still displayed little interest in Chicago parish life." Roberto R. Treviño, *La Fe: Catholicism and Mexican Americans in Houston, 1911–1972* (Ph. D. diss., Stanford University, 1993). Treviño concludes, "They selectively participated in the institutional Church and clung to home and community-based religious practices."

to explore the importance of this peculiarly Hispanic way of being Catholic.<sup>36</sup>

Is the exodus of Hispanics from the Church slowing? If so, why? There has been a (albeit still inadequate) growth in the Church's ministry to Hispanics. Has this been successful in slowing the exodus? It is certainly worthy of the attention of pastors because identifying successful pastoral strategies means that they can be replicated.

#### *Degree of Organizational Participation and Financial Support*

An often-cited study by González and La Velle reports that the vast majority of Hispanics (88 percent) are not actively involved in parish activities, and most (60 percent) feel they are not encouraged to become involved.<sup>37</sup> However, two other studies published ten years apart found that one-fourth of Hispanics participate in church activities other than attending services. Although the study of the Barna Research Group in 1999 had no corresponding data regarding non-Hispanics, the earlier study of CPS in 1989 found that African Americans showed the greatest participation with 35 percent, followed by 27 percent of non-Hispanic whites. Hispanics are the least involved in non-liturgical church activities. But there is some evidence that Hispanics who become Protestants are more religiously involved than those who remain Catholic. This is particularly true for women.<sup>38</sup> However, such an increase in religious participation and zeal is not uncommon for converts to any faith and is a recognized part of the conversion experience. Hispanics who were raised Protestant were not found to show this same religious fervor.

The CPS and Barna studies also found that the same order found for attendance and participation exists in terms of financial support as church participation. While between 72–80 percent of African Americans financially support their church, and between 63–71 percent of non-Hispanic whites, only 57–61 percent of Hispanics support their churches. These studies, however, failed to distinguish between Catholics and non-Catholics.

The NCLL survey did distinguish between Catholics and non-Catholics and found that 23 percent of Catholics compared to 31 percent

<sup>36</sup>Orlando O. Espín, *The Faith of the People: Theological Reflections on Popular Catholicism* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1997) 2–5.

<sup>37</sup>*The Hispanic Catholic in the United States: A Socio-Cultural and Religious Profile* (New York: Northeast Catholic Pastoral Center for Hispanics, 1985) 127.

<sup>38</sup>"Religion, Gender, and the Hispanic Experience in the United States: Catholic/Protestant Differences in Religious Involvement, Social Status and Gender-Role Attitudes," *Review of Religious Research*, 43:2 (2001) 139–60.

of non-Catholics indicated they had donated either time or money to some club, organization or group within the last year. Of those who indicated organizational affiliation over the last year, 40 percent of Catholics and 44 percent of non-Catholics were actively involved in some aspect of the organizational life of a local church. Among Hispanics, not only are Catholics somewhat less likely than non-Catholics to be involved in church-related organizations, but also when they are involved they are less likely to volunteer, attend meetings or hold office. Fifty-nine percent of Catholics volunteer, 56 percent attend meetings and 17 percent hold office compared to 70 percent of non-Catholics who volunteer, 72 percent attend meetings and 21 percent hold office. Nevertheless, organizationally involved Catholics are just as likely as non-Catholics (89 vs. 90 percent) to contribute financially to their church.

Approximately three-fourths of adult Hispanics say a close personal relationship with God is a top priority, 85 percent say their faith is very important in their daily lives, 77 percent say that Mary as the Mother of God is very important to them, and 63 percent say they believe the Bible is totally accurate in its teaching. In addition, in an average week 81 percent pray, 33 percent read the Bible, and 15 percent participate in small groups for spiritual purposes.<sup>39</sup> Twenty-five percent describe themselves as “born again Christians.” No distinction was made between Catholics and non-Catholics, but it is probably safe to say that Catholics were underrepresented in this last category since this particular expression is decidedly more Protestant than Catholic.

This data presents interesting theological and pastoral questions. For instance, the data shows that Catholic Hispanics are now more likely to be immigrant with all the socioeconomic (education, income, politics) and cultural effect (differences in language, history, self-identity) that immigration entails. Should not the great numbers of Hispanic Catholics who are immigrants (further complicated by the events of September 11, 2001) both inform our pastoral practice and influence our theological reflection?

Another important issue is one that Allan Figueroa Deck identified in 1989, namely, the importance of small Christian communities among Hispanics.<sup>40</sup> Such very local church involvement is not only of pastoral import, but deserves the attention of ecclesiology. Moreover, since the

<sup>39</sup> A very important way that Catholic Hispanics participate in church is through the various small Christian communities. See Bernard J. Lee, *The Catholic Experience of Small Christian Communities* (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 2000) 54.

<sup>40</sup> *The Second Wave: Hispanic Ministry and the Evangelization of Cultures* (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press) 70–75. RENEW still appears to offer the most successful methodology in this respect.

present data seems to show that when Hispanics do participate in the local church they also donate, this would seem to influence both the practice and theology of stewardship. Ecclesiology and stewardship must both attend to the development of leaders. Leadership and a sense of ownership or belonging are also pastoral issues of great import.<sup>41</sup> That is why we now turn to the issue of leadership in the U.S. Hispanic Catholic Church.

#### *Perceived and Desired Characteristics of Leaders*

In 2000 there were 366 U.S. Catholic Bishops, of whom twenty-four were Hispanic.<sup>42</sup> This constitutes 7 percent of the total number. Most of these are auxiliary bishops serving dioceses with large Hispanic populations. There were also 1,818 Hispanic priests, or 4 percent of all U.S. priests. This translates into approximately 13,700 Hispanic Catholics for every Hispanic priest. In addition, there are 1,340 Hispanic permanent deacons which accounts for 11 percent of all such deacons. Altogether Hispanics comprise 5.4 percent of the Catholic clergy in the United States. Vowed religious in the U.S. are even less than 5 percent Hispanic. While these numbers represent a general improvement over the past, they also indicate a great under representation of the community that constitutes one-third of the entire U.S. Catholic Church.<sup>43</sup>

According to a report of the Bishops' Committee on Hispanic Affairs (November 1999), there were 6,545 Hispanics in lay ministry formation, constituting 21 percent of those in formation. There were also 1,040 Hispanic parish lay ecclesial ministers, or 4 percent of the total.<sup>44</sup> Historically, most Hispanic leaders in the Church have been lay.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>41</sup> See chapter one of Kenneth G. Davis and Yolanda Tarango, eds. *Building Bridges: The Pastoral Care of U.S. Hispanics* (Scranton, Penn.: University of Scranton Press, 2000).

<sup>42</sup> In January 2002 there were 25 active Hispanic bishops with 4 retired, (plus two deceased and one in Puerto Rico). (Telephone interview with Rosalva Castañeda of the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs, January 18, 2002).

<sup>43</sup> Comparing Catholic parishes that are at least 40 percent Hispanic with those that are Black, Asian, Native American or non-Hispanic white, it appears that the former, together with their Asian counterpart, have on average a greater number of priests, deacons and lay staff per parish, more Masses per week, as well as higher average numbers of parishioners participating in the sacraments. These differences are likely to be a function of the larger size of such parishes (Froehle and Gautier, *The Catholic Church Today*, 135, 144, 155).

<sup>44</sup> Froehle and Gautier, *The Catholic Church Today*, 33–35.

<sup>45</sup> Jay P. Dolan and Allan Figueroa Deck, eds. *Hispanic Catholic Culture in the U.S.: Issues and Concerns* (South Bend, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994).

A study by F. J. Woods of Hispanic leaders conducted in San Antonio in the 1940's described them as educated, bilingual, middle class *mestizos* who had lived in the United States longer than most and who were active in the church as well as social ethnic organizations.<sup>46</sup> The NCLL survey discovered some similarities as well as some important differences with these characteristics of Hispanic leaders.

Currently, leaders are still more likely to be older, educated, and married with children living at home than the average Hispanic Catholic. However, there are two important differences between the findings of these studies. Today most church leaders are immigrants and working class. Foreign-born Hispanics comprise 56 percent of all Hispanic Catholics, but account for nearly 70 percent of local church office holders. And 54 percent of those local church leaders come from households with incomes less than \$40,000 annually.

The NCLL survey also found that while female Hispanics constitute 56 percent of the Hispanic Church membership, they are only 43 percent of church leaders. This percentage appears quite low in light of the large and significant role women play in the popular religious life of the Hispanic community.<sup>47</sup> It is particularly so when the results of the survey reveal that more females agree (26 percent) with the statement that "women make better leaders than men" than agree (24 percent) that "men make better leaders than women." On the other hand, 30 percent of males believe that men were better leaders compared to 15 percent of females who agree. Overall, slightly more Hispanic Catholic males and females agree that men make better leaders (26 percent) than women (22 percent). Nevertheless, a majority of both sexes agree that there is no gender difference in leadership abilities.<sup>48</sup> Catholics were somewhat more egalitarian than non-Catholics.

The chapters by Moisés Sandoval (131–65) and Marina Herrera (166–205) are particularly pertinent. Note also that any account of U.S. Hispanic Catholic leadership must mention César Chávez. While we await a biography that adequately deals with his faith, see Mark Day's *Forty Acres: César Chávez and the Farm Workers* (New York: Praeger, 1971).

<sup>46</sup> Frances Jerome Woods, *Mexican Ethnic Leadership in San Antonio, Texas*. (New York: Arno Press, 1976) 63–89. Her definition of a leader is still helpful, namely, a person who "offers some solution to the problems of the ethnic group. He has not only an acceptable plan of action designed to meet these problems, but also an appreciable following" (5). For an excellent explanation of Hispanic Catholic leadership see Marcello Azevedo's "Hispanic Leaders: Faith and Culture in the New Millennium," *Chicago Studies* 36:3 (December 1997) 230–4.

<sup>47</sup> Anthony Stevens-Arroyo and Ana Maria Diaz-Stevens, eds., *An Enduring Flame: Studies on Latino Popular Religiosity* (New York: Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies, 1994) 25–26, 116, 175.

<sup>48</sup> Yet leadership may be exercised differently between men and women. At a April 13, 2002 conference at Notre Dame called *Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Catholic*

Most females and males believe that women are as good or better leaders than men. Overall, two-thirds of Hispanics indicate there is little difference between the leadership abilities of men and women. Hispanic Catholics are less likely than non-Catholics to believe that men are better leaders than women (26 percent vs. 32 percent) and more likely to agree that women are better leaders than men (22 percent vs. 19 percent). This more positive attitude towards female leadership on the part of Catholics might be traced to women's role in popular religion and Hispanic's high esteem for the Virgin Mary.

Woods also identified the following functions of Hispanic leaders:

- 1) help their group realize that injustices need not be accepted and that change is possible;
- 2) promote group integration within the system;
- 3) represent the group to itself and others;
- 4) build consensus;
- 5) negotiate and build coalitions between groups;
- 6) coordinate group efforts towards common goals;
- 7) identify and encourage new leaders.

Another recent study of Hispanic leaders indicated similar functions:

- 1) integrate foreign-born and U.S.-born Hispanics;
- 2) provide a bridge between Hispanic and non-Hispanic communities;
- 3) serve as role models;
- 4) reduce tension due to cultural differences.<sup>49</sup>

It is evident that the role of a leader is multi-dimensional. At the center of the role is the need to serve and represent his or her people. This may be problematic at times for Hispanic Catholic leaders, especially

*Heritage*, those who presented on "Latina Faith, Evangelization, and Leadership" (Antonia Castañeda, Ana María Díaz Stevens, Anita de Luna, and Anna María Padilla) noted that for women, leadership includes: (1) sacrifice as service to family and community; (2) formation of youth; (3) creation of social space to claim opportunities.

<sup>49</sup> Masaaki Harada, "Study Urges Strong Latino Leaders." *The Albert Lea Tribune*, January 8, 2002. See also Thomas W. Florek's D.Min. thesis *Constructing A Theological Methodology for a Lay Leadership Formation Situated in the Midwest Pastoral de Conjunto* (Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, 2001).

the clergy, if there is or appears to be a conflict of interests between Hispanics and non-Hispanics. Leaders may feel they have the dual role of serving and representing the Church while serving and representing *la raza*. This could result in role conflict. One study of Hispanic priests revealed that a majority (58 percent) was not satisfied with the Church's response to social problems in their communities. An even larger majority (84 percent) felt their fellow Hispanics lack an adequate voice in the decision-making of the Church, and also believed (82 percent) that Hispanics are discriminated against in the Church.<sup>50</sup>

The NCLL survey asked Hispanics to list the three most desirable qualities for leaders. Respondents, both Catholic and non-Catholic, overwhelmingly indicated the most important were honesty, trustworthiness, and integrity. Overall, 60 percent of respondents indicated that qualities associated with personal character were most important to them. This was followed by 10 percent who identified qualities associated with competence, such as intelligence, good communication skills and efficiency. Next, 8 percent selected qualities related to compassion and caring, and 6 percent to community service and respect for the community. There was virtually no difference between the preferences of Catholics and non-Catholics except concerning education, intelligence and experience. Catholics (8 percent) placed a greater value on these than did non-Catholics (4 percent).

There do appear to be some significant differences between Catholics and non-Catholics in the importance given to the ethnicity of a leader. A majority of Catholics (55 percent) 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 vs. 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. Similarly, 57 percent of Catholics compared to 56 percent of Pentecostals, 53 percent of mainline Protestants and 39 percent of nonaffiliated believe that Hispanic elected officials care more about them than non-Hispanic officials.

Given the importance that Catholic Hispanics place on the ethnicity of their leaders, it is worthwhile to note the leadership provided by Hispanic permanent deacons. *The Catholic Church Today* counts many more deacons in Hispanic churches than in either Black, Asian, Native American or non-Hispanic white churches. And a 1999 survey of the diaconate in the Hispanic community, based on information from 137

<sup>50</sup> Gilbert Cadena, "Chicano Clergy and the Emergence of Liberation Theology," *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Science* 11 (1989) 117-20.

of 180 dioceses, found 1400 incardinated Spanish-speaking deacons, most of whom came from Mexico or Puerto Rico. There were also 135 Hispanic candidates in deacon formation programs. Approximately 87 percent of both Hispanic deacons and deacon candidates were bilingual, while 8 percent spoke only Spanish. This language proficiency was reflected in the difference in the number of continuing formation programs which were conducted in English (63 percent) and in Spanish (11 percent). Fourteen percent of the dioceses reported having distinct formation programs for Hispanic deacon candidates. In answer to a question of how well received Hispanic deacons were by priests, 50 percent said well received by Hispanic priests and 60 percent by non-Hispanic white priests. The question "Does the local church perceive Hispanic/Latino deacons as ordained for the whole Church" elicited a 60 percent affirmative response.<sup>51</sup>

All the above data suggests helpful insights for theologians and pastors. U.S. Hispanic theology wrestles with *lo cotidiano*, the everyday, real life issues facing their community. These theologians apparently have generally been quite accurate in their assessment of *lo cotidiano*. In particular one might point to the continuing lack of female Church leadership despite Hispanic acceptance of it.<sup>52</sup>

Although the issue was not raised, it does appear from the preceding information that the ethnicity of the clergy and lay church leaders may be of even greater importance than gender to the laity, especially among Catholics. Undoubtedly, some non-Hispanics have made significant contributions, nonetheless, the work of Ana María Díaz-Stevens and Anthony Stevens-Arroyo demonstrate the noted desire of Hispanics to have leaders who are themselves Hispanic.<sup>53</sup> If this is so, it means that for the Church to meet the leadership desires of the Hispanic community, we need decidedly more Hispanic priests and lay leaders. Although this is a daunting task, other research has provided some insight.<sup>54</sup> It

<sup>51</sup> United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat for the Diaconate, November 2, 1999. Kindly provided to the authors by Enrique Alonso of the Asociación de Diáconos Hispanos.

<sup>52</sup> Among the most important leadership organizations for Hispanic women is Las Hermanas. See Lara Medina, *Las Hermanas: Chicana/Latina Religious-Political Activism, 1971-1997* (Ph.D. diss., Claremont Graduate University, 1998).

<sup>53</sup> *Recognizing the Latino Resurgence in U.S. Religion: The Emmaus Paradigm* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1998). See also Díaz-Stevens, *Oxcart Catholicism on Fifth Avenue* (South Bend, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993). Another classic but little known example of the influence of a non-Hispanic leader is contained in Sr. Mary Paul Valdez' *The History of the Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence* (San Antonio: The Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence, 1978).

<sup>54</sup> Hernández and Kenneth G. Davis, *Reconstructing the Sacred Tower I* (forthcoming).

may be that a leadership program directed towards females is needed, much like the diaconate program for males.

### Conclusion

The prediction made a decade and a half ago has proven very accurate: Hispanics:

have strong cultural and religious bonds, which will no doubt continue to shape the religious communities. Catholicism especially will be influenced by these newer immigrant streams and will continue to have distinct ethnic enclaves within it. The Spanish-speaking constituency will expand more rapidly than any other sector within American Catholicism. Thus it is reasonable to expect a gradual but significant shift in Catholic constituency and religious and spiritual life as these influences are assimilated in the years ahead.<sup>55</sup>

U.S. Hispanic theology has also largely been accurate in its assessment of the context of its own community. It has rightly emphasized the experience of diaspora (through conquest or immigration), popular religion (particularly devotion to Mary and the concept of fiesta), small Christian communities, and the need to negotiate the peculiar experience of U.S. Hispanics who live on cultural (including differences in race and levels of acculturation) borders. The data indicates that this theology that claims to be contextual has actually been true to its context.<sup>56</sup> Evaluating the Church's pastoral response to this context is more difficult, but certainly necessary. One can look at the response of the U.S. Church's hierarchy in its *National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry*.<sup>57</sup> The above data suggests that evaluation is needed particularly in the areas of youth ministry, leadership, immigration, and stewardship.<sup>58</sup>

While Hispanics, who comprise approximately one-third of all U.S. Catholics, are important to the future of the Church, young Hispanics are even more so. This is because they encompass 41 percent of all

<sup>55</sup> Roof and McKinney, *American Mainline Religion*, 15.

<sup>56</sup> Kenneth G. Davis and Jesús Castillo-Coronado (2001) "U.S. Hispanic Theologians: A Sketch of What They Are Doing," *Louvain Studies* 26 (2001) 3–26.

<sup>57</sup> National Conference of Catholic Bishops Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1987). Charles McCarthy privately compiled a helpful index.

<sup>58</sup> Small Christian communities referred to as "*comunidades eclesiales de base*" or "small ecclesial communities" receive attention (#19 27–29, 33, 37–38, 40–45, 47, 49–50, 61–63, 65, 70, 77–79, 84). Popular religion is only mentioned directly in #11 and spirituality is recognized (#16, 68, 84, 86, 94–96), but probably underdeveloped. Evaluation (#6, 43, 84–92) of pastoral practices is mentioned throughout, however, there is no authoritative plan for accountability.

Catholics under age thirty, and 44 percent of all Catholics under age ten. In the nation's two most populous states, California and Texas, over 70 percent of Catholics under age thirty are Hispanic. Census Bureau statistics indicate that between 1990 and 2000 the Hispanic population between ages fifteen and twenty-nine grew 54 percent while the non-Hispanic white population decreased by 11 percent. Meanwhile, the Hispanic population under age ten increased by 62 percent compared to a 10 percent decrease in the non-Hispanic white population. The Census Bureau reports that this trend will continue.

To meet the needs of this growing portion of the Church's population, some parishes in certain dioceses have established peer youth programs usually organized and directed by the members themselves, which may or may not include an adult advisor. Such advisors are either paid or volunteers. Unfortunately, few such programs exist, and only thirty-five dioceses have trained personnel to develop and coordinate them. In ten of these dioceses the coordinators are only part-time. Youth and young adult ministry does seem to receive some priority (#12, 34, 51, 53, 55–56, 64–66, 72, and 79). Nonetheless, there is an obvious and growing need to attend to Hispanic youth and young adults. The importance of leaders/leadership is evident in (#17, 24, 32–33, 58, 60, 68–69, 77–78, 84) as well as under some categories such as laity, women, diocesan personnel, priests, etc. Commentaries on leadership in this document stress the goal of communion.

Throughout the whole Pastoral Plan, the words "leader," and "pastoral ministers" and, at times, "pastoral agents" are easily interchanged. There is a slight emphasis on the use of the word "leader" when it refers to an organizational, administrative and advocacy service, and the use of the words "pastoral ministers" or "ministries" when it speaks of more ecclesial services. However, according to the model of a communitarian Church, both of them must be interpreted as true services to the community of brothers and sisters because the Lord did not come to be served but to serve.<sup>59</sup>

Relative inattention to immigration (#4, and 10–11 as well as mention of some countries of origin) probably reflects the difference between the percentage of U.S.-born vs. immigrant U.S. Hispanics between the 1980s and today. More attention probably needs to be focused here. The real challenge evident in the *National Pastoral Plan*, however, appears to be attention to stewardship. Not only is there virtually no mention of

<sup>59</sup> Mario Vizcaíno, Sch.P. "Christian Leadership as Service," in *Prophetic Vision: Pastoral Reflections on the National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry*, ed. Soledad Galeron et al. (Kansas City: Sheed and Ward, 1992) 347–8.

the issue, moreover, the repeated phrase "In accordance with . . . budget procedures of the respective entities involved" often meant that no special budget or fundraising efforts were directed toward implementing this otherwise fine document. Perhaps the best assessment to date concludes that it ". . . represents a huge advance toward a pastoral praxis . . . falls short of the best that we might hope for from the Church's ministry."<sup>60</sup>

This necessary yet still lacking shift of investment and the identification of new sources of funds has probably been one reason for the relatively tiny number of professional/clergy Hispanic leadership especially among women, youth and young adults. Some shift of those resources commensurate with the percent of Hispanics in the Catholic Church toward that leadership development could eventually result in new sources of funding since Hispanics apparently do contribute financially to churches in which they feel ownership and exercise leadership.<sup>61</sup> This may partly explain why Protestant Hispanics, with much greater leadership of the same ethnicity, also contribute much more to their churches.<sup>62</sup>

Hence the title of this article, "Hispanic Catholic Leadership: Key to the Future." The National Catholic Council for Hispanic Ministry (NCCHM) commissioned this study because of its mission to "[empower] . . . Hispanics in both church and society by identifying, convoking and developing leadership among its member organizations and their constituencies." Therefore, the most important observation from this article is that Hispanic Catholic leadership development (especially among women, youth and young adults) requires an immediate and significant investment, but once formed, such leaders are very likely in turn to contribute time, talent, and treasure to the Church.

<sup>60</sup>Michael E. Connors, *The National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry as a Strategy for Inculturation Among Mexican Americans*. (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1997) 333.

<sup>61</sup>Note that this is more than money. For instance, most seminarians in the U.S. are now required to study the Spanish language and Hispanic cultures. Is it not time that permanent deacons or at least professional lay ministers more often do the same?

<sup>62</sup>Lilya Wagner and Allan Figueroa Deck, eds. *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising* 24 (Summer 1999) 59–74. This special issue was devoted to Hispanic philanthropy.