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Mestizo Worship: A Pastoral Approach to Liturgical Ministry

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Mestizo Worship: A Pastoral Approach to Liturgical Ministry. By Virgilio P. Elizondo and Timothy M. Matovina. Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1998. Pages, vi + 106. Paper, \$9.95.

Misa, Mesa y Musa: Liturgy in the U.S. Hispanic Church, 2nd ed. Compiled and edited by Kenneth G. Davis, O.F.M., CONV. Schiller Park, Ill.: World Library Publications, 1997. Pages, viii + 131. Paper, \$6.50.

Both of these slim volumes are written in a very readable style by practitioners of pastoral care and liturgy and are intended for a like audience. However, they are also accessible to students of liturgy and ritual, as well as anyone interested in Hispanic/Latino culture generally. In addition, both books share the view that the official liturgy of the Catholic Church and the popular rituals of Hispanics can enrich each other, and therefore, should be integrated. This view stresses the need for openness on the part of the pastoral minister, who must acknowledge that worshiping and celebrating with the community one loves and serves is where one can best put popular faith and practice in dialogue with the church's official liturgical tradition.

A multivalent image, *mestizo* worship, characterizes both books. Liturgically, *mestizo* can mean worship that combines in a creative way often opposing elements. Historically, it can also mean the worship that emerges out of the interaction between pre-Columbian peoples and Iberian Catholicism. Pastorally, it can mean the enacted faith of a people who endure against all odds.

Mestizo Worship, by Elizondo and Matovina, is one result of their collaboration on the San Fernando Cathedral Study conducted by the Mexican American Cultural Center in San Antonio, Texas. Compiled from previously published work, *Mestizo Worship* serves as a superb introduction to each author's work, for example, Elizondo's *Galilean Journey, The Future is Mestizo*, and *Guadalupe*, as well as Matovina's *Tejano Religion and Ethnicity: San Antonio, 1821-1860*.

Elizondo and Matovina develop three major themes of *mestizo* worship. In "Foundational Faith Expressions," Elizondo describes the

annual celebrations of the Mexican American community as a "living Christian creed" (5) because they live out, celebrate, and pass on the faith. The advent ritual, *Las Posadas*, both symbolizes and reenacts issues of resistance and survival, identity and belonging, for Mexican Americans as they walk with Mary and Joseph in search of shelter. In accompanying Jesus to the Cross on Good Friday, *Las Siete Palabras*, and the *Pésame* (Condolences) *a la Virgen*, Mexican Americans rehearse their own struggle, suffering, and death. Resurrection and new creation are affirmed in the Fiesta of Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12 as she gives birth to a new race, the *mestizo*. Through these celebrations and symbolic reenactments, the people claim their belonging to a universal fellowship of Christians without losing to the dominant culture their deepest identity and rootedness as Mexican Americans.

Elizondo further develops the major theme of new creation in "Gaudalupe and the Two Conquests." Born of the clash between Spain and the indigenous peoples of New Spain in the first conquest in 1519, Our Lady of Guadalupe, *La Mestiza*, empowers today's Mexican Americans in their ongoing struggle for liberation, resulting from the second conquest of the War between Texaco and Mexico (1836) and the Mexican-American War (1846–1848). Matovina substantiates Elizondo's insights as he explores the turbulent context of mid-nineteenth century celebrations for Our Lady of Guadalupe in the settlement of San Antonio, and how these celebrations express the identity of the people during perilous times of social upheaval and war.

In the final section, "Celebrating the Sacred," Elizondo writes about the life of the Spirit in the heart that is central to *mestizo* worship. Matovina offers the reader two analyses of this Spirit, with practical suggestions, for integrating Mexican-American popular religion with traditional Catholic rites. He advocates adapting the procession of *Las Posadas* as a possible opening rite for the Mass, as well as integrating some updated Mexican-American family traditions into current wedding celebrations.

Misa, Mesa y Musa continues the theme of *mestizaje* in liturgy and ritual. Editor Kenneth G. Davis, O.F.M., conv., enlarges the scope of *mestizo* worship through the wide range of liturgical issues considered in these essays, as well as in the diverse selection of mostly Hispanic authors. Also included are a very helpful bibliography and a glossary of Spanish terms.

Among the twelve discerning essays in *Misa, Mesa y Musa* is Jaime Lara's on "The Liturgical Roots of Hispanic Popular Religiosity." He persuasively argues that some of today's Hispanic popular celebrations are rooted in the monastic liturgical practices first brought to the

new world by the mendicants. Arturo J. Pérez-Rodríguez echoes Elizondo's understanding of *mestizo* spirituality in "Signs of the Times, Toward a Hispanic Rite, Quízas," by pointing to the spirit at the heart of current Hispanic worship as evidence that there already exists an Hispanic rite of worship.

In "Presiding in Spanish as a Second Language," Kenneth G. Davis, O.F.M., conv., demonstrates how speech preparation by both presider and native speaker, as well as by the gathered assembly, enhances worship. As music and song are integral parts of Hispanic/Latino worship, this essay, "Crosscultural Music-Making" by Mary Frances Reza, is a welcome addition to this volume. After providing a brief history of the use of music in the church, she offers an illuminating case study of the challenges presented by an African-/Mexican-American wedding liturgy. Following this essay is Lorenzo R. Florián's "Spanish Phonetics for Church Musicians" that details specific pronunciations.

Like Matovina's ideas about integrating popular ritual with official liturgy, Raúl Gómez argues for "Celebrating the Quinceañera as a Symbol of Faith and Culture." He pays particular attention to the historical and cultural roots of the ceremony before addressing the liturgical and theological implications of its use in the context of eucharist.

Both *Mestizo Worship* and *Misa, Mesa y Musa* deserve a place on one's bookshelf alongside *Frontiers of Hispanic Theology in the United States*, edited by Allan Figueroa Deck, S.J., *The Faith of the People* by Orlando Espín, *Caminémos con Jesus: Toward a Hispanic/Latino Theology of Accompaniment* by Robert S. Goizueta, and *¡Alabadle! Hispanic Christian Worship*, edited by Justo L. González.

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