

Su Futuro, Nuestro Futuro
**A Report on a Consultation
on Hispanic/Latino
Pastoral Concerns
at the
University of Notre Dame**

TO CELEBRATE THE RICHES OF A
MULTICULTURAL CHURCH
AND TO ADDRESS ITS PASTORAL CHALLENGES



CONVENED BY
THE INSTITUTE FOR CHURCH LIFE
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

OCTOBER 27-28, 1998

SU FUTURO, NUESTRO FUTURO

A REPORT ON A CONSULTATION ON HISPANIC/LATINO PASTORAL CONCERNS

Convened by the Institute for Church Life
of the University of Notre Dame

Conscious of the growing importance of Catholics of Hispanic/Latino background in the dioceses of the United States, the University of Notre Dame has undertaken a number of recent initiatives to focus upon the contributions of these communities and to address their needs for leadership formation. In concert with other initiatives undertaken by the academic departments of the University, Notre Dame's Institute for Church Life set out to explore the chief pastoral concerns of Hispanic/Latino American Catholics and of their ecclesial leaders. The Institute was privileged to secure the cooperation of the principal pastoral leaders working with and animating these communities. This report is a summary of that consultation and of its major recommendations.

We chose the words "Su Futuro, Nuestro Futuro—Your Future is Our Future" as the title for this report. This phrase reflects the principal thing that we found in our consultation, namely, that the faith and ecclesial life of all North American Catholics is and will be increasingly bound up with the life of our Catholic Hispanic/Latino peoples. There is so much that Anglos have to learn from the domestic piety, popular religiosity, and expressiveness of the Catholic Latin world. We hope that the details of this report will make that clear. First, however, the report will describe the University's initiative in developing new academic programs to address these concerns.

Notre Dame's Program in Latino Studies

Notre Dame has recently initiated a new Program in Latino Studies. It will be guided by several wide-ranging and foundational questions surrounding the cultural, spiritual, and social identity of the growing body of Hispanic and Latino citizens in our country. Such questions will include investigation of the social and political backgrounds of these groups, their power as a voting block, their influence in contemporary American society, and their contributions to the changing religious, political, social, intellectual, and artistic face of the nation. In other words, the program's intellectual focus will be to address the important but complex question, "what does it mean to be part of the Hispanic/Latino community in the United States?"

Notre Dame's Program in Latino Studies will offer our students an opportunity to study with leading scholars concerning the ideas and issues which inform them about their cultural and historical heritage. In addition to studying about their past, students will examine the many aspects of their current place in the country's social fabric and their place on the world stage. Such study will include concentrated efforts to link classroom learning with community activity so

that the knowledge gained will be relevant to their social and professional needs. This is a design for effective leadership formation. Put succinctly, the Program in Latino Studies will empower students with tools that will allow them to continue their education long after they have graduated and that will facilitate their development as the next generation of educators, professional and lay, who will have a solid grasp of their past, an understanding of their present, and a clear vision of their future.

Against the background of Notre Dame's wider interest in Latino Studies, the consultation on Hispanic/Latino pastoral concerns, convened by the Institute for Church Life, sought to focus upon the possibilities and special needs of dioceses and parishes that are recipients of the gifts and challenges of a new wave of Spanish-speaking and Latin cultured peoples.



The Notre Dame Pastoral Concerns Consultation

On October 27-28, 1998, the Notre Dame Institute for Church Life (ICL) convened a national consultation on Hispanic/Latino Pastoral Concerns on the University campus. Nearly twenty Hispanic/Latino pastoral leaders, including Bishops Tamayo and Zavala and representatives from the Mexican American Cultural Center, the Southeast Pastoral Institute, the Instituto de Liturgia Hispana and other national and regional programs, participated with leaders from the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic University and ICL to explore the reality of Hispanic/Latino life in the U.S.

The stated goals of the consultation were:

- To prioritize 5 or 10 pressing pastoral concerns among Hispanic/Latino Catholics regarding church life and ministry.
- To identify and examine the contributions of the national, regional and local organizations already responding to Hispanic/Latino pastoral concerns, and to clarify the scope of the contributions.
- To creatively imagine initiatives, actions and strategies appropriate for the Institute for Church Life to respond to unaddressed pastoral needs and important positive opportunities related to Hispanic/Latino pastoral life and ministry.
- To draw from the consultation group recommendations for specific actions to move the Institute for Church Life into action to address these needs and opportunities.

This consultation was one important result of a mission planning process

completed in September, 1998, by the Institute for Church Life of the University of Notre Dame, with its constituent Centers (the Center for Pastoral Liturgy, the Center for Social Concerns, and Retreats International). In addition to exploring this potential new pastoral focus for the Institute, the Institute's colleagues have undertaken two additional pastoral consultations planned for this year, one on Spirituality and one on Asian Catholic Pastoral Concerns.

The Mission of the Institute for Church Life is as follows:

The Institute for Church Life (ICL) of the University of Notre Dame is a creative partnership of Centers and resources committed to the process of transforming the church and society in light of the Gospel. ICL develops and supports leadership and programs for spirituality, liturgy, ministry and social concerns.

The Institute for Church Life fulfills part of its mission by assisting the national Church to better understand the opportunities and challenges it faces regarding its pastoral future. Thus, this consultation was intended to guide programs of the University, the Institute, and various other agencies within the Church in the United States. Framed within the categories and vision of the NCCB publication, *Hispanic Ministry: Three Major Documents* (1995), the ICL consultation served as a significant teaching/learning moment for all participants. Each person's vision and experience contributed to the serious dialogue and to the overall outcome.

This Report will cover the content of the consultation within the following framework:

- I. Pastoral Realities: Issues and Gaps
- II. Priority Pastoral Concerns
- III. Current Responses
- IV. Potential University and ICL Initiatives
- V. Priority Recommendations for Action
- VI. Nexts Steps

I. Pastoral Realities: Issues and Gaps

The consultation at Notre Dame took great care to create a record of the views and concerns of the participants at each step along the way. In an early part of our conversations together, we asked the question what are the key issues and pastoral realities facing the U.S. Church relative to Hispanic/Latino life and ministry? What are the gaps in addressing these? The group surfaced fourteen principal issues that arose in table conversation and that were subsequently brought to plenary discussion. Those fourteen issues are reorganized here in analytic fashion.

ISSUE 1:

SOLIDARITY IN THE HISPANIC/LATINO COMMUNITIES

a. Efforts need to be made for *regular and supportive cooperation* among the major agencies serving the pastoral needs of Hispanics/Latinos in the U.S. : the Mexican American Cultural Center, the Southeast Pastoral Institute, the Northeast Hispanic Catholic Center, Inc., the Instituto de Liturgia Hispana, Disciples in Mission, the NCCB Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs, diocesan offices of Hispanic Ministry, the Tepeyac Institute and other Centers and Catholic Universities.

b. Attention needs to be given to *the immigration process*: assure advocacy for those whose access to entry into the U.S. is threatened. Additionally, there are problems relating to the integration of new arrivals who can often find themselves in tension with U.S. born Hispanics/Latinos.

c. In many places, there is *competition among ethnic groups* and minorities for attention from dioceses, the clergy, and the institutions of the Catholic world. In some dioceses there are tensions between Mexican American, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Central American and Latin American Hispanics.

d. *Political participation* by U.S. Hispanics/Latinos is growing (as seen in the last Presidential election). However, much needs to be done to familiarize Hispanics/Latinos (both native-born and immigrants) with their political rights and responsibilities.

e. Solidarity questions also touch upon *self-esteem*. Latin pride is a reality that is part of the rich blessing of the Hispanic/Latino cultural world but a difficulty for youth, especially those introduced into Anglo institutions. No one should feel alienated or ashamed as a result of processes designed to include new members in diocesan, parochial, or educational structures.

f. Following the *National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry*, the NCCB and diocesan offices have a *responsibility to foster solidarity* among the Hispanic/Latino peoples coming from different origins and cultural traditions within a diocese.

ISSUE 2:

RESEARCH AND THE INTERPRETATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

a. *New knowledge is needed* about Catholic pastoral realities. There is a great tendency to do national data surveys and leave out the Hispanic/Latino peoples because data is difficult to collect. Many Hispanics/Latinos are more mobile than other segments of the population and not permanently established. In addition, language difficulties complicate data collection. We have reached a point, however, at which it is simply unacceptable to ignore Hispanic/Latino data.

b. *Monitoring the data collection of the Hispanic/Latino world* is important: the US Census Bureau (and other groups, both national and local) makes on-going data reports accessible. This is vitally important material that needs to be brought into discussion when pastoral planning and policy making are being carried out.

c. *Data about parish affiliation and church attendance* among Hispanics/Latinos needs to be improved. Pastors need to become aware of the vital importance of records that indicate these data.

d. Data relative to *secondary and higher education* among Hispanics/Latinos is also of vital importance. Probably multiple agencies will be needed to monitor and provide data of this kind.

ISSUE 3:

EDUCATION AND EDUCATIONAL PROCESSES

a. Hispanic/Latino youth have the *highest high school drop out rate* of any ethnic group in the U.S.

b. *Structures for personal support for young scholars* (mentoring, peer support, etc.) are extremely important. Data needs to be shared on success stories relative to good mentoring processes.

c. In higher education, more *proactive efforts and strategies* needs to be found for the entry of Hispanics/Latinos into colleges, universities, and graduate programs.

ISSUE 4:

LEADERSHIP/MINISTRY FORMATION

a. Structures for *ministry training* for Hispanics/Latinos are needed at every level--for seminarians, priests, deacons, lay ministers, for lay leaders in the workplace, and for all sorts of Catholic pastoral responsibilities.

b. The potential for Hispanic/Latino *deacons for church leadership* is vast. In Chicago there are 900 diocesan priests (12 Hispanic/Latino), but there are 140 deacons.

c. A key question *concerns alternative ways of training pastorally suitable candidates for priesthood*. Is there another formula apart from the higher education seminary model? Both dioceses and religious orders are finding that candidates with strong pastoral leadership abilities frequently lack the standard academic preparation for a graduate school type seminary training.

d. *Women* in the Hispanic/Latino world *function as teachers in the home*. How can they be better trained to make the most of their potential?

e. Increasingly U.S. dioceses are *importing priests* from Latin America to minister to North American Latinos. Priests are being brought in from Africa, the Indian Subcontinent, and elsewhere, to supply for a growing shortage of priests here. The impact of these pastoral decisions upon the healthy growth of U.S. multiculturalism needs to be carefully monitored.

**ISSUE 5:
HISPANIC YOUTH**

a. *The median age of U.S. Hispanics is 26, nine years younger than that of American society as a whole.*

b. *Most Catholic parishes have no idea where Hispanic/Latino youth are or how to contact them. These young people are a priority resource for the Church, and “success” models must be developed and promoted.*

c. *The church needs to send out an alert: calling for mentors, scholarship support, and quality educational opportunities for talented Hispanic/Latino youth.*

**ISSUE 6:
ECUMENICAL REALITIES**

a. *Pentecostal and Evangelical grass-roots churches have a knack for welcoming poor Hispanics/Latinos into neighborhood communities. What can be learned from them about identifying and addressing the felt pastoral needs of the people?*

b. *Ordained and lay Protestant ministers are also successfully attracting Hispanics/Latinos to their communities. What can be learned from these ministers?*

c. *What can be learned from ecumenical success stories with Hispanics/Latinos--whether in terms of social programs, Bible study, community building, or other forms of education?*

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II. Priority Pastoral Concerns

Consultation participants next identified their priority pastoral concerns regarding Hispanic/Latino life. The consultation periodically paused in the midst of extended conversation and reflective discussions to summarize and prioritize the ideas and values identified by the participants. Such summaries were

collected both on newsprint and on reaction sheets. From a much longer list, participants then chose their “Top Eleven” list. These results are listed next:

- Addressing the needs of Hispanic youth,
- Enhancing educational and parochial opportunities for Hispanic/Latino Catholics,
- Lay leadership formation,
- Addressing the needs for appropriate and high quality liturgical life and parish worship,
- Strengthening regional pastoral centers,
- Developing adequate research on the Hispanic/Latino reality of the U.S. Catholic Church,
- Advocacy for Hispanic/Latino inclusion in U.S. church and society,
- More just and/or equitable resource allocation,
- Empowering grassroots action,
- Addressing questions of social justice (including employment, education, health care, housing, etc.),
- The use of technology to enhance communication and education.

You will find more analysis and specific recommendations for addressing these priority pastoral concerns in the sections that follow.



III. Current Responses

Participants were asked to indicate national, regional and local efforts in Hispanic/Latino pastoral life and ministry that represents success stories. Here is a listing of those by regional groupings:

The Southwest

The Mexican American Cultural Center
Assumption Seminary

Our Lady of the Lake College, San Antonio
Oblate School of Theology, San Antonio

The Southeast

Barry College, Miami
The Southeast Pastoral Institute

The Northeast

The NCCB Office of Hispanic Affairs
The Northeast Hispanic Catholic Center, Inc.
El Instituto de Liturgia Hispana
Boston University
The National Theological Scholarship Fund

The Midwest

Catholic Theological Union, Chicago
Mundelein Seminary, Chicago
Loyola University, Chicago
Casa Jesus, Chicago
Via Crucis, Chicago
Esperanza Familiar, Chicago

California

Jesuit School of Theology, Berkeley: Instituto Hispano
Loyola Marymount, Los Angeles

Other National Initiatives

Diocesan Offices of Hispanic Ministry
Discipulos Misioneros (Disciples in Mission)
Small Christian Communities (Buena Vista and others)

We are eager to add to this list, to acknowledge the contribution of successful pastoral initiatives and to celebrate the wisdom of those who have learned how to make a difference for the good in the local church.

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IV. Possible University and ICL Initiatives

Consultation participants were invited to identify specific actions that either the University of Notre Dame administration or the Institute for Church Life could take in response to the pressing concerns or challenges identified earlier in this report. What follows is a summary of their input by category. This section focuses on the dreams or possibilities, lifted up as brainstorming by the consultation participants. A following section will focus on a smaller listing of priorities. All of the suggestions deserve further consideration.

a. Initiatives For Hispanic Youth

1. Could Notre Dame and other Catholic universities host week or month-long summer institutes for Hispanic/Latino youth?
2. Could the Institute host a national consultation for Hispanic/Latino youth ministers?

b. Initiatives For Enhancing Education/Parish Opportunities

1. Could Notre Dame set a goal of doubling the enrollment of and financial aid to Hispanic/Latino students at the undergraduate level?
2. Can Notre Dame identify, challenge and support twenty Hispanic/Latino pastoral leaders for research and study at the doctoral level? Could ICL create opportunities for leadership at the University and the Institute?
3. Can Notre Dame commit itself to increasing numbers of faculty qualified to address the special needs of Hispanic/Latino students?
4. Can Notre Dame explore the feasibility of establishing degree programs beyond the campus or a “university without walls”?
5. Can Notre Dame establish a Hispanic/Latino Study Center in South Bend?
6. Could Notre Dame establish a Hispanic/Latino Study Center in Texas or somewhere else in the Southwest?
7. Could Notre Dame, in collaboration with other universities, convene a think tank on the needs and challenges of Hispanic/Latino students?
8. Can Notre Dame develop a pilot program to orient new Hispanic/Latino students to the University and to Hispanic Ministry here, and also provide a peer buddy system?

c. Initiatives For Lay Leadership Formation

1. Can the Institute create a Center for Hispanic/Latino Pastoral concerns with emphasis on education, formation, research and leadership development?
2. Can the Institute provide leadership in a national effort to rethink and restructure ministry training in ways that combine significant life experience and essential academic requirements for certification or degrees? In other words can life experience, especially effective service in pastoral ministry, be made to count in the pastoral formation curriculum?

3. Could the Institute, in collaboration with MACC, SEPI, and others, examine possibilities for sponsoring a ministry formation program for church leadership that would link spirituality, culture and ministry studies?

4. Could the Institute develop a leadership formation program for Hispanic lay ministers and market the program to dioceses and other training centers?

5. Can the Institute convene on a regular basis an Hispanic Vocations Institute to strategize, publicize, and promote Hispanic/Latino vocations to priesthood and all other forms of ministerial leadership and dedicated Christian life? What can the University contribute to the urgent agenda of recruiting and fostering Hispanic vocations?

6. Can the Institute co-sponsor a leadership seminar or pastoral round table every two years focusing on Hispanic/Latino Catholic life? This program might be held on occasion at MACC or SEPI.

d. Initiatives for Liturgical Life and Worship

1. Can the Center for Pastoral Liturgy and the Institute sponsor a liturgical conference specifically geared to worship in a Hispanic/Latino context?

2. Could the Institute co-sponsor programs, including mobile teams and satellite centers, with the Instituto de Liturgia Hispana?

3. Can the Institute expand its services in the area of worship to train more Anglo and Hispanic/Latino priests and deacons to minister more effectively in multicultural settings, and to train more lay people to be effective preachers and presiders?

e. Initiatives for Strengthening Regional Pastoral Centers

1. Can the Institute convene existing Hispanic/Latino regional centers (MACC, SEPI, et al.) every two years to explore one or more of the most pressing pastoral concerns?

2. Can Notre Dame and the Institute link with existing Centers to make it possible for many more Hispanic/Latino lay ministers to obtain degrees?

3. Could the Institute co-sponsor with regional Centers a national Center for pastoral initiatives with Hispanic/Latino youth?

f. Initiatives for Research

1. Can the Institute establish a Center for Hispanic/Latino issues to bring together multi-generational, multi-disciplined thinkers, to advance needed research on U.S. Catholic Hispanic/Latino realities, to host conferences directed at Hispanic Catholic issues, e.g., sects, religiosity, families, etc.?

2. Could the Institute collaborate with other units at Notre Dame to examine what Protestant and Evangelical Churches are doing to increase participation by Hispanic and Latino people in Sunday worship and parish life?

3. Could the Institute focus on one or two gifts of Hispanic culture (e.g. an economy based on needs) and identify implications for the entire American culture? In other words, can Institute research address the cultural strengths of Hispanic/Latino Catholics and explore their contribution to the national church?

g. Initiatives for Advocacy and Inclusion in Church and Society

1. Can the Institute develop a program to work with bishops and dioceses on the transformation needed to foster greater involvement and participation by Hispanic and Latino Catholics?

2. Can the Institute promote the importance of valuing and affirming the gifts of all cultures, and help shift the attitude toward Hispanics and Latinos from being viewed as a problem to an asset for the Church?

h. Initiatives For More Just/Equitable Resource Allocation

1. Could the Institute compare/study what resources are being applied by the Church to Hispanics as compared with resources for other immigrants at the turn of the century?

2. Could Notre Dame significantly increase the financial aid available to qualified Hispanic/Latino applicants?

i. Initiatives For Empowering Grassroots Action

1. Can Notre Dame use the resources of its alumni/ae to recruit new Hispanic/Latino students, to help affirm an attitude of welcoming Hispanics/Latinos as blessings rather than problems, and to assist graduates with employment opportunities in business, education, politics, and church?

j. Initiatives for Social Justice

1. Can the Institute identify thirty parish partners to create together social justice ministry immersion experiences for Hispanic/Latino young people?

2. Can the Center for Social Concerns network with social concerns departments of other Catholic universities to identify and execute programs for experiential learning in Catholic educational and parochial settings?

k. Initiatives for Use of Technology

1. Could Notre Dame commit to implementing distance learning for pastoral leaders in areas where graduate training programs are not available?
2. Could the Institute and Golden Dome Productions create multi media outreach and formation guides for Hispanic/Latino leadership groups?
3. Could the Institute cooperate with existing regional centers for Hispanic/Latino ministry in the development of satellite programming to make resources for pastoral development more available?

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V. Priority Recommendations

After Consultation participants dreamed of the many possible initiatives Notre Dame and the Institute for Church Life might consider in response to the pastoral concerns they had identified, the next task was to name priority recommendations. What follows is the result of this work.

First Action Priority

Strong and effective outreach to Hispanic/Latino youth was the most pressing concern of consultation participants, as noted earlier in this report. The recommendation for action is that the University and the Institute both consider concrete actions to respond to the needs of Hispanic/Latino youth. These responses could include invitations to campus, outreach activities, immersion experiences, study centers, and parish partnering programs to develop relationships with youth.

Second Action Priority

Consultation participants recommended that the Institute for Church Life seriously consider the formation of a Center for Hispanic/Latino Pastoral Concerns to coordinate the many possible avenues of services suggested in the previous section in the areas of education, formation, research, worship and advocacy on behalf of Hispanic/Latino Catholics. They also recommended networking or partnering with existing regional centers like the Mexican American Cultural Center (MACC) and the Southeast Pastoral Institute (SEPI) in whatever programs might benefit from the pooling of resources, experience, and credibility.

Third Action Priority

Consultation participants strongly recommended that Notre Dame consider action steps to make the University more accessible, hospitable and affordable to Hispanic/Latino students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. In addition, participants recommended that Notre Dame consider greater uses of technology and the valuing of significant life experiences as part of a

holistic approach to educational accessibility, while being careful not to compromise educational quality.

VI. Next Steps

1. Participate in *Encuentro 2000*.
2. Encourage all seminarians to do a semester at one of the Hispanic/Latino regional Centers.
3. Connect Notre Dame students with Hispanic/Latino centers through visits, immersion experiences or internships.
4. Develop relationships with High School Counselors in identifying capable Hispanic/Latino youth who can be recruited by Notre Dame and other Catholic universities.
5. Collect pastoral plans from the 23 dioceses in the Southeast with pastoral plans for Hispanic Ministry.
6. Assist with development of a federation of pastoral institutes.
7. Provide opportunities for Notre Dame faculty and staff to link in exchanges with Hispanic/Latino institutes.
8. Network with HIPS (Hispanics in Philanthropy and Service), San Francisco.
9. ICL can network with diocesan directors for Hispanic/Latino ministry and their pastoral plans.
10. Utilize the apostolic exhortation of Pope John Paul II concluding the Synod for the Americas encouraging diocesan and national responses to the needs of Hispanic/Latino peoples in North America.