

# **P E R S P E C T I V A S**

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**Renata Furst-Lambert, editor**

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**Zaida Maldonado Pérez, associate editor**

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## CONTENTS

The Impact of Pluralism on Trends in Latin American and U.S. Latino Religions and Society <i>Gastón Espinosa</i>	9
A Spirituality for a Multicultural Ministry <i>Elizabeth Conde-Frazier</i>	57
Response to Elizabeth Conde-Frazier <i>Gabriel Salguero</i>	83
U.S. Hispanic/Latino Identity and Protestant Experience: A Brief Introduction for the Seminarian <i>Zaida Maldonado Pérez</i>	93

## PERSPECTIVAS: OCCASIONAL PAPERS

EDITOR

Renata Furst

*Faculté de Théologie de l'Université de Montréal, Canada*

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Zaida Maldonado Pérez

*Asbury Theological Seminary*

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*Editorial correspondence* should be addressed to The Hispanic Theological Initiative, 12 Library Place, Princeton, NJ 08540.

*Subscriptions* should be made to The Hispanic Theological Initiative at the above address or email us at [www.HTIprogram.org](http://www.HTIprogram.org).

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In 1998 the Hispanic Theological Initiative (HTI) initiated the publication of *Perspectivas: Occasional Papers* to support its efforts in highlighting Latino scholarship in theology and religion and to provide a resource that will stimulate further dialogue and research. The scant number of journals dedicated to featuring the contributions of Latino scholars in theology and religion makes the creation of *Perspectivas* a welcome presence.

Past and present publications feature the work of HTI mentors, awardees and HTI Regional Conference speakers. The present publication is the seventh in the series.

*Perspectivas* is sent to seminaries throughout the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico, theology departments in universities and other institutions. We continue to be happy to accommodate requests from faculty and/or students for additional copies and/or copies of back issues when available.

We trust you will find the present articles engaging and insightful. We welcome comments and responses to any of the articles.

Joanne Rodríguez  
Director, HTI

## FROM THE EDITOR

“Who do you say that I am?” (Matthew 16: 15) Jesus’ question to his disciples resonates in a new way for Hispanic/Latino communities today. The 2002 U.S. Census has shown that Hispanics have become the largest and fastest growing minority in the U.S. But does this really tell us who we are? Just as Jesus was called John the Baptist, Elijah or one of the prophets by the people of his time, the Census may only capture a partial image of who we are.

In this issue of *Perspectivas* scholars explore the image of Hispanic communities that emerges from the Census data, and the impact that this will have on theology, spirituality and theological education. In *The Impact of Pluralism on Trends in Latin American and U.S. Latino Religions and Society*, Gastón Espinosa compares the practical and theological challenges of Hispanic communities in the U.S. and Latin America. He charts a trend towards denominational pluralism that crosses borders, and follows immigrants, as they become part of the social fabric of North America. Inspired by the census data, Elizabeth Conde-Frazier formulates a spirituality of inclusiveness for multicultural ministry. Gabriel Salguero responds to her proposal by adding the idea that multicultural worship moves beyond numbering people and actually counts their views, desires and uniqueness. Zaida Maldonado Pérez reflects on U.S. Hispanic/Latino identity and

Protestant experience. In her article she attempts to help “seminary students to work with and, on behalf of, the Latinos they will inevitably encounter in their ministerial journeys.”

When Simon Peter correctly identifies Jesus, he receives a blessing: “Blessed are you...for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven.” (Matthew 16: 16-7). In the same way, as scholars, pastors and grass roots communities continually reflect upon “who we are,” our identity will become a source of blessing for ourselves and the surrounding cultures. We hope this reflection on the meaning and identity of Hispanic/Latino communities will enrich the pastoral and theological practice of all our readers.

## **The Impact of Pluralism on Trends in Latin American and U.S. Latino Religions and Society**

Gastón Espinosa

Gastón Espinosa is the Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Faculty Fellow at Northwestern University. A former awardee of the Hispanic Theological Initiative, he holds a Ph.D. from the University of California at Santa Barbara. Espinosa is co-editing and co-authoring (with Virgilio Elizondo and Jesse Miranda) *Latino Religions and Civic Activism in the United States*, and *Latino Religions and Politics in American Public Life*. He recently managed the \$1.3 million Hispanic Churches and American Public Life research project on Latino religions and politics. The Generations Center of Princeton University named him one of the nation’s outstanding one hundred men of color.

“**W**e Preach the Truth” pastor Pedro Romo thundered to his emotionally spent audience one hot Friday night in southern California. “We will take you to the Truth...because we have the Light!” Romo, like so many other Latin American evangelists, offers “Truth” and “Light” in what he believes is a hopelessly confusing and dark world. He sells *his church* as the one that offers the wayward traveler and desert immigrant hope in this life and in the life to come. Refusing to be bound by any creed other than his own, he holds up his church as the Ark that contains the remnant of God’s faithful. As he stated in an interview, he was not Pentecostal, Evangelical, Mainline Protestant, or Catholic, he was simply a “Christian.”<sup>1</sup>

After attending his service and interviewing Romo, I walked away with the distinct impression that he did not want to be bound by any walls that might tarnish his image and standing in the Latino community. By eschewing traditional denominationalism and the con-

finer of religious orthodoxy (he taught that God created the world on the third day) he could create his own distinctive yet inclusive message that would enable him to cast his evangelistic and marketing net much broader than many of his religious colleagues.<sup>2</sup>

Romo’s story is not unique. His aggressive inroads into the Latino community in the United States represent a trend towards denominational pluralism that is challenging the Roman Catholic Church’s historic dominance of the Latino religious marketplace not only in the U.S. but throughout the Americas. Or is it? Although David Martin, Richard Stoll, Christian Lalive d’Epinay, Elizabeth Brusco, John Burdick, R. Andrew Chestnut, Edward L. Cleary, O.P., and Phillip Berryman have all documented the growth of Pentecostal and Evangelical Protestantism in Latin America, a number of other scholars like Walter Altmann, T.E. Evans, Kurt Bowen, Anne Motley Hallum, Paul Jeffrey, and Brian H. Smith have noted that Pentecostal growth is either beginning to taper off, or has remained relatively flat over the past decade in some countries.<sup>3</sup>

In fact, it is my contention that all of the discussion over Anglo-American missionary-sponsored Pentecostal growth has obscured eight trends in Latin American religions and society in the Americas:

- (1) the growth of Roman Catholicism
- (2) the Pentecostalization of Latin American Catholicism
- (3) the growth of the Pentecostal movement
- (4) Pentecostal switching to Mainline and Evangelical Protestantism
- (5) the indigenization of Latin American Pentecostalism
- (6) the growth of alternative Christian traditions (e.g., Mormonism and Jehovah’s Witness), Spiritism, and world religions
- (7) the Latin American Evangelization of the United States
- (8) the growth of Catholic and Protestant ecumenical cooperation.

The above trends are based on a comparison of the statistical findings from the Hispanic Churches in American Public Life

national survey and the statistical findings from the World Christian Encyclopedia database created by David Barrett and Todd M. Johnson at the Center for the Study of World Christianity in South Hamilton, Massachusetts. These are two of the largest data sets available on U.S. Latino and Latin American religions. These findings confirm the growth of Pentecostal and Evangelical Christianity noted by David Martin, Richard Stoll, R. Andrew Chestnut, Kurt Bowen, Brian H. Smith, and others. However, they also challenge, complicate, and expand our understanding of the region by spotlighting the growth of indigenous Pentecostal traditions, the growth of the transnational Catholic Charismatic movement, the growth of alternative Christian and non-Christian traditions, Pentecostal switching to Mainline and Evangelical Protestantism, and the Latin American evangelization of the U.S. All of these trends, along with the others noted above, are contributing to a number of major developments in Latin American and U.S. society. In Latin America they are contributing to the separation of church and state, the disestablishment of Roman Catholicism, the democratization of Latin America, and the revitalization of Roman Catholicism. This process is not taking place evenly throughout Latin America and instead is being shaped by key historical, political, sociological, and religious factors unique to each country. Although some of this is well-documented, what is less well-documented is the impact these trends are having on the U.S., where they may be contributing to the re-Christianization of society and to the de-Europeanization, heterodoxization, and re-Catholicization of segments of American Christianity.

### **Methodology**

This essay compares these trends in Latin America to those among Latinos in the United States. In hemispheric and regional analyses, the U.S. Latino community has artificially been cut off from the rest of Latin America for much too long. In addition to

the biological and hereditary ties that U.S. Latinos have to Latin America, there are also historical, cultural, social, and religious ties. What happens in Latin American religions and society has a direct impact on Latinos and many Anglo-Americans in the U.S. and vice versa. The best example of this may be the enormous impact that Gustavo Gutiérrez’s Catholic liberation theology has had on the study of U.S. and Latino religions.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, the Pentecostal movement is having an enormous impact on Protestantism and the Catholic Charismatic movement in Latin America.

The findings in this essay are based on the *World Christian Encyclopedia* database at the Center for the Study of World Christianity directed by Todd M. Johnson and David Barrett, the Hispanic Churches in American Public Life national survey (www.hcapl.org), and recent historical, political science, anthropological, and sociological scholarship on Latin American religions.<sup>5</sup> The *World Christian Encyclopedia* database is the largest, most comprehensive, and most sophisticated statistical analysis of global Christianity in the world. The database has drawn upon 10 million surveys and denominational assessments on six continents, including Latin America. It is widely hailed as the most reliable source for statistics on Latin American and world Christianity.

Likewise, the Hispanic Churches in American Public Life (HCAPL) national survey has generated one of the largest ecumenical and non-sectarian nationally representative random sample Hispanic-framed data sets in the United States. The survey is part of the much larger HCAPL research project (www.hcapl.org) directed by Virgilio Elizondo of the University of Notre Dame, Jesse Miranda of Vanguard University, and Gastón Espinosa of Northwestern University. This three-year study was funded by a \$1.3 million grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts (www.pewtrusts.com). It was conducted in cooperation with the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute

(www.trpi.org), one of the premier Latino policy and survey research institutes in the U.S. The U.S. Latino findings presented in this essay are based on a random sample bilingual Hispanic-framed telephone survey of 2,060 Latino adults that cut across all class, occupation, gender, generation, country of origin, political affiliation, and religious boundaries.<sup>6</sup>

**Trend # 1 – Growth of Roman Catholicism**

Despite the recent flurry of literature on the growth of Pentecostal and Evangelical traditions in Latin America, Roman Catholicism is growing numerically throughout Latin America and the Latino community in the United States. The number of Latin American Catholics has increased from 392 million people in 1990 to 453 million in 2000. This number is expected to increase to over 589 million by 2025. Thus far from seeing any numerical decline in the number of Latin American Catholics, demographers and scholars are actually seeing an overall increase. In addition to the overall numerical increase in numbers, David Barrett, George Kurian, and Todd M. Johnson found that the percentage of *baptized* Catholics in Latin America has remained relatively stable over the past century. It has gone from 90 percent in 1900 to 88.4 percent in 1970 down to 87.2 percent in 2000. This number will decrease to 84.8 percent by 2025. This rather remarkable story of relative consistency has gone largely overlooked by the media and the academy.<sup>7</sup>

**TABLE I**

**Religious Affiliation in Latin America in A.D. 2000 and A.D. 2025**

Item	Number 2000	Percent 2000	Number 2025	Percent 2025
Population	519,000,000	100%	695,000,000	100%
Christian	476,000,000	92%	639,000,000	85%
Roman Catholic	453,000,000	87%	589,000,000	84.8%

The Hispanic Churches in American Public Life national survey also found that the actual raw numbers of Catholics in the U.S. has increased to an all-time high of 25 million (40 percent of all U.S. Catholics) while at the same time the percentage of Latino Catholics has appeared to remain around the 70 percent mark for the last decade.<sup>8</sup>

There are five reasons why the number of Roman Catholics in Latin America has increased and remained between 88 and 87 percent over the past thirty years. The first reason is the high Catholic birthrate. Latin American and U.S. Latino Catholics are simply having more children than most of their non-Catholic counterparts. Second, a small but significant number of Latin American and U.S. Latino converts to Pentecostalism have returned back to Catholicism. Sigmund, Evans, Bowen, Hallum, and Smith point out that although there is a relatively high rate of conversion out of Catholicism in Latin America, some return to Catholicism. For example, although Pentecostalism grew at a rate of 8.9 percent in Costa Rica, another 8.1 percent no longer remain Pentecostal. In Mexico, Kurt Bowen found that only 57 percent of second generation Pentecostals remained Pentecostal.<sup>9</sup> Some return to Catholicism, others to Evangelical bodies, still others chose to embrace more than one religious tradition simultaneously, but most decide to embrace no particular religion at all. Similarly in the United States, the HCAPL national survey found that approximately 700,000 U.S. Latinos have recently converted to or returned back to Catholicism. The third reason for overall Catholic growth is the renewed emphasis on evangelization. Pope John Paul II has encouraged Latin American evangelization and renewal. Two official Catholic evangelization projects, Lumen 2000 and Evangelization 2000, are aimed at keeping Catholics in the fold and reaching out to those that have left or are inactive. They are going about this process by sponsoring diocesan and parish-based television and radio programs, spiritual formation groups, and

women's and youth ministry programs.<sup>10</sup>

The fourth reason is that the *World Christian Encyclopedia* database records the number and percentage of baptized Catholics. It does not record the number of Latin Americans that were baptized Catholic but later converted out of Catholicism to Pentecostalism, some other non-Catholic tradition, or to hybrid or multiple traditions. In light of this fact, the actual percentage and raw number of Latin American Catholics is lower than the numbers above indicate and as shown in Table I. The HCAPL survey, on the other hand, did not ask whether or not the respondent was baptized Catholic, but rather what religious tradition they presently identified with.

*Trend # 2 – Pentecostalization of Latin American Catholicism*

One of the most important trends taking place today in Latin American religions is the growth of the Catholic Charismatic movement. Despite this fact, very little has been written about this trend. Aside from a few exceptions, most discussions of the Catholic Charismatic movement are limited to short references in books on Latin American popular Catholicism or Protestantism. With the notable exception of R. Andrew Chestnut, most scholars have treated this trend as largely peripheral to the study of Latin American Catholicism. This may be an important oversight because it represents one of the largest and fastest growing grassroots movements in Latin America.<sup>11</sup>

The Latino Protestant and Catholic Pentecostal/Charismatic movement has grown from just a handful of Mexicans at the Azusa Street Revival in 1906 to more than 150 million men, women, and children throughout Latin America (141 million) and the United States (9 million) in 2000. Today 27 percent of all Latin Americans are either Protestant or Catholic Pentecostal/Charismatic Christian. Consistent with this finding, the Hispanic Churches in American Public Life national survey found that 28



percent (9.2 million) of all U.S. Latinos are also either Protestant Pentecostal/Charismatic (3.8 million) or Catholic Charismatic (5.4 million). This is in turn consistent with the finding that Pentecostals, Charismatics, and Neocharismatics make up 27.7 percent of all Christians around the world. As surprising as it may seem to some, research indicates that there are actually more Latino Catholic Charismatics than Protestant Pentecostals in Latin America and in the U.S.<sup>12</sup>

**TABLE II**

**Religious Affiliation in Latin America in A.D. 2000 and A.D. 2025**

Item	Number 2000	Percent 2000	Number 2025	Percent 2025
Population	519,000,000	100%	695,000,000	100%
Christian	476,000,000	92%	639,000,000	85%
Roman Catholic	453,000,000	87%	589,000,000	84.8%
Protestant	89,000,000	17%	144,000,000	
Catholic Charismatic	75,000,000	14.5%		
Protestant Pentecostal	66,000,000	12.7%		
Pentecostal/Charismatic	141,000,000	27%	205,000,000	

It is important to emphasize that the global Catholic Charismatic movement traces its roots back to the United States and to Bogotá, Colombia. The movement’s four primary origins are: (1) the U.S.-based Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) in 1967, (2) a Bogotá, Colombia, based Catholic Charismatic prayer group in 1967, (3) the U.S.-based Charisma in Missions Catholic Evangelization and Renewal Society in 1972, and (4) Latin American Catholics who defected to Pentecostalism and then later returned to Catholicism over the past century.<sup>13</sup>

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal began at Duquesne University, USA, in 1967 after two lay instructors in the department of theology named Ralph Keifer and Patrick Bourgeois became interested in the Pentecostal movement after reading John Sherrill’s

*They Speak with Other Tongues* (1964) and Assemblies of God evangelist David Wilkerson’s *The Cross and the Switchblade* (1963), which presciently depicted the conversion of an impoverished Latino named Nicky Cruz to Pentecostalism. Keifer became so curious about the Pentecostal movement that he began attending a Charismatic prayer group held in the home of a Presbyterian laywoman. A short while later, he received the baptism with the Holy Spirit.<sup>14</sup> Keifer took his newfound experience back to Duquesne University, where he had his students read Wilkerson and Sherrill in his theology classes. In February, Keifer and Bourgeois organized a weeklong prayer meeting where they encouraged their students to reflect on the first four chapters in the book of Acts. Over the weekend, a number of Catholic students received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Shortly thereafter, Keifer, Bourgeois, and their students organized the first Catholic Charismatic prayer group at Duquesne University. This series of events helped birth the Catholic Charismatic renewal movement in the U.S.<sup>15</sup> The renewal spread to other Catholic universities such as the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana. There the movement began to take shape. Ralph Martin and Stephen Cook, two recent graduates of Notre Dame, quickly became leaders of the fledgling movement. By late 1967, the movement was attracting the attention of major national Catholic weeklies such as *The National Catholic Reporter* and *Our Sunday Visitor*. The first nationwide Catholic Charismatic convention took place at the University of Notre Dame on April 7–9, 1967. By the early 1970s, the Catholic Charismatic movement attracted the support of national and international Catholic leaders like Father Kilian McDonnell and Belgian Cardinal, Leon Joseph Suenens.<sup>16</sup>

Little is known about the Catholic Charismatic prayer group that began in Colombia. However, we do know that the Charisma in Missions renewal and evangelization society was organized by two former Assemblies of God missionaries to Colombia named

Glenn and Marilyn Kramer in the Los Angeles area in 1972. They first began evangelizing and spreading the Pentecostal message in Colombia in 1967 before they returned to the United States. After receiving a pastoral blessing from Cardinal Timothy Manning in 1982 they opened up the Charisma in Missions headquarters in East Los Angeles. They brought some of the evangelistic strategies and spirituality they practiced in the Assemblies of God into the Catholic Charismatic movement. They also spread their version of the Catholic Charismatic movement throughout the U.S., Mexico, Colombia, and Central and South America by organizing prayer groups, conferences, and selling workbooks and an estimated 2 million cassette tapes in Spanish.<sup>17</sup> From these two origins and others the Catholic Charismatic movement quickly spread to Puerto Rico (1969), Venezuela (1969), Mexico (1971), Brazil (1971), Argentina (1972), Chile (1972), Guatemala (1972), El Salvador (1977), and throughout the rest of Spanish-speaking Latin America by 1977. Vatican II, the *Cursillo* movement, and the theology of liberation movements all helped pave the way for the Catholic Charismatic movement because of their emphases on spiritual renewal, lay leadership, and faith-based empowerment. R. Andrew Chestnut has argued that the Catholic Charismatic Movement has surpassed the Liberation Theology movement as the largest and most vibrant grass roots Catholic movement in Latin America today.<sup>18</sup>

The Latin American Catholic Charismatic movement has since grown from just a handful of followers in 1967 to more than 75 million in 2000.<sup>19</sup> In fact, the vast majority of the world's 119 million Catholic Charismatics are located in Latin America south of the U.S. border, where they participate in an estimated 102,873 weekly prayers groups and are supported (although not necessarily directed) by more than 2,000 priests, 100 bishops, and tens of thousands of lay leaders. The movement has witnessed uneven growth throughout Latin America and the U.S. over the past thir-

ty-six years. It has experienced the largest numerical growth in Brazil (35 million), Colombia (11 million), Mexico (9 million), the U.S. (5.4 million), Argentina (5 million), Venezuela (3 million), Chile (1.6 million), and Ecuador (1.2 million).<sup>20</sup>

Many scholars are surprised to hear that there are more Catholic Charismatics than Protestant Pentecostals in Mexico. In fact, 9.2 million of Mexico's 13.5 million Pentecostal/Charismatic Christians are Roman Catholic. The movement has grown very rapidly since it began in Mexico City in June 1971. Although, as Chestnut points out, some clerics are critical or ambivalent about the movement, it has garnered strong support from more than 700 priests and 53 bishops. It is largely the small but growing institutional support that has enabled it to hold national services like the one conducted at the Azteca Stadium in Mexico City that attracted 71,000 participants. The movement has also witnessed notable growth on the island of Puerto Rico, where it has also grown from a handful of people in 1969 to over 215,000 people (one third of which were under the age of 25) attending 850 weekly prayer meetings by 1997. There is little reason to doubt that the immigration of Catholic Charismatics from Mexico and Puerto Rico has not contributed to the growth of the movement among U.S. Latinos, which now numbers 5.4 million participants. The Latino Catholic Charismatic movement is thus one of the largest overlooked popular grass roots religious movements in the U.S.<sup>21</sup>

In South America, Brazil, Colombia, and Argentina have witnessed significant Catholic Charismatic growth over the past thirty-six years. In Argentina, the number has reached 5 million. The movement has grown rapidly since it began in 1972, and by the mid-1990s there were more than 100,000 adults attending some 3,000 weekly Charismatic prayer groups throughout Argentina. They are supported by an estimated 500 priests, five bishops, and thousands of lay leaders. In 1996, a national Catholic Charismatic renewal meeting attracted 70,000 participants. The Charismatic

renewal movement began five years earlier in Colombia, where the movement has grown from a single prayer group in 1967 to 11 million people. There are an estimated 10,000 prayer groups throughout the country. In 1994 they held the 5th National Leaders Congress in Bogotá that attracted 1,400 Catholic Charismatic leaders.<sup>22</sup>

Despite the fact that Colombia is one of the two origins of the Latin American Catholic movement, the country that has witnessed the most notable numerical growth is Brazil. The movement has grown from a small prayer group in 1971 to more than 35 million affiliates in 2000. Together with Pentecostal and Charismatic Protestants, there are 76 million Pentecostal/Charismatic Christians in Brazil. In fact, 15 percent of all Pentecostal/Charismatic Christians in the world today are located in Brazil. The Brazilian Catholic Charismatic movement sponsors 60,000 weekly prayer groups and is supported by over 500 priests, five bishops, and thousands of lay leaders. In São Paulo, a recent annual renewal event attracted 120,000 participants. Whether or not it (and other Protestant Pentecostal movements) will have long-term generational staying power and the ability to keep practitioners from becoming “post-charismatic” is uncertain, although I am skeptical given their overemphasis on strict moralism, emotionalism, and the unusually high level of involvement it requires of its participants. Despite this fact, it may have staying power as 60 percent of Catholic Charismatic attendees are 25 years of age or younger.<sup>23</sup>

Although the Catholic Charismatic movement is an outgrowth of the Protestant Pentecostal movement, it would be inaccurate to conclude that it has simply brought Protestant Pentecostalism wholesale into Latin American Catholicism. Nothing could be further from the truth. They have reinvented and rearticulated their Charismatic beliefs in light of traditional Catholic teachings and encyclicals on spiritual renewal. Precisely because they have been accused of being too lay driven and of serving as a Trojan Horse

for Protestantism, Catholic Charismatics have been very careful to emphasize that they are faithful Catholics that wholly support the doctrines, discipline, and hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church. In fact, many see themselves as the new vanguard for Catholic evangelization and renewal. Despite this fact, the hierarchy has stressed that the Charismatic renewal must remain under clerical control and should avoid interacting with Pentecostals and other Charismatic Protestants.<sup>24</sup>

### *Trend # 3 – Growth of the Pentecostal Movement*

Despite varying levels of apostasy, fragmentation, and competition, the Protestant Pentecostal/Charismatic movement is still growing rapidly throughout various parts of Latin America. There are 63 million Protestant Pentecostal/Charismatic Christians in Latin America, which make up the majority of Latin America’s 89 million Protestants. Nearly 40 percent of all Pentecostals around the world live in Latin America. Today, 17 percent of all Latin Americans are Protestant, largely Pentecostal. The Catholic Church estimates that 8,000–10,000 Catholics convert to Protestantism every day throughout Latin America. On any given Sunday in Latin America, scholars now report that there may be more Protestants than Catholics attending church. Furthermore, as early as 2010 scholars predict that one in three Latin Americans may be Protestant or non-Catholic, largely Pentecostal or Evangelical.<sup>25</sup>

**TABLE III**  
**Latin American and U.S. Latino Catholic and Protestant Affiliates**  
**by Number and Percent of Country/Group**

Country	National Population	Number/Percent Catholic	Number/Percent Protestant	Number/Percent Prot. Pentecostal	Number/Percent Pentecostal & Charismatic
Brazil	170,400,000	104,000,000 61%	50,000,000 29%	41,000,000 24%	76,000,000 45%
Chile	15,000,000	8,600,000 57%	4,100,000 27%	3,700,000 24%	5,400,000 35%
Guatemala	11,400,000	7,600,000 67%	2,800,000 25%	1,900,000 17%	2,800,000 25%
El Salvador	6,300,000	4,500,000 71%	1,400,000 22%	1,100,000 17%	1,500,000 24%
Puerto Rico	3,900,000	2,700,000 69%	867,000 22%	617,000 16%	1,100,000 28%
United States	35,000,000	25,000,000 70%	7,000,000 20%	3,800,000 11%	9,200,000 28%
Nicaragua	5,000,000	3,800,000 76%	950,000 19%	606,000 12%	822,000 16%
Panama	2,900,000	1,800,000 62%	520,000 18%	381,000 12%	580,000 20%
Honduras	6,400,000	4,700,000 73%	1,100,000 18%	692,000 11%	1,200,000 18%
Argentina	37,000,000	28,500,000 77%	4,700,000 13%	3,900,000 11%	9,000,000 24%
Venezuela	24,000,000	20,500,000 85%	1,800,000 7.4%	1,350,000 6%	4,500,000 19%
Mexico	99,000,000	84,000,000 85%	7,100,000 7.2%	4,300,000 4%	13,500,000 14%
Colombia	42,000,000	38,300,000 91%	1,900,000 5%	1,300,000 3%	12,300,000 29%

As with the Catholic Charismatic movement, Pentecostal growth in Latin America has been uneven. Mexico, for example, has one of the lowest percentages of Protestantism in all of Latin America. Despite this fact, there are 7 million Protestants (out of a national population of 99 million) in Mexico, the second largest number in Latin America after Brazil. However, it is worth noting that despite their low percentage the 1990 Mexican Census found that 76 percent of all non-Catholics were Evangelical and that they have experienced the largest growth in Tabasco and Chiapas, where they make up 17 and 15 percent of the population respectively. Mexican Pentecostals are served by more than 166 Pentecostal denominations of which approximately 159 are completely independent and indigenous. Despite the large number of converts to Protestantism, only 7 percent of the country is Protestant. This modest level of growth has been shaped by the strength of popular Catholicism, especially devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe, recent evangelization efforts, the perception that Protestantism is somehow tied to American imperialism, and, most importantly, to high apostasy rates. Kurt Bowen argues in *Evangelism and Apostasy: The Evolution and Impact of Evangelicals in Modern Mexico* that the annual Evangelical growth (which includes Mainline Protestants) rate has dropped to 7.4 percent and that 43 percent of second generation Evangelicals (most of which are Pentecostal) were no longer part of the Evangelical world. Furthermore, many of these apostates did not embrace any religion. Most identified themselves as “*nada*” or “nothing.” The single most important factor that shaped “defection” from Pentecostal and Evangelical traditions was mixed marriages with Catholics. A surprising 93 percent of second generation male Evangelicals and 49 percent of second generation female Evangelicals married to a Catholic left their tradition and practice no particular religion at all. Despite the high rates of apostasy, Evangelicals are growing at a rate 4.5 times faster than the Catholic population in Mexico.<sup>26</sup>

Mexican Pentecostals and Protestants are contributing to the growth of Latino Protestantism in the United States. Scholars found that 15 percent of all Mexican immigrants that arrive in the U.S. are Protestant or Other Christian. They are contributing to the growth of the 7 million Latino Protestants in the U.S. This finding indicates that not all Protestant growth in the U.S. is due to Catholic defections on this side of the border as Andrew Greeley and several others have implied. However, the HCAPL national survey findings also challenge the perception that the percentage of U.S. Latino Catholics has remained the same over the past decade. Although Greeley found over a decade ago that the U.S. Latino Catholic population was 70 percent, he based this percentage on the General Social Survey, which surveyed English-speaking Latinos only. Since all survey research indicates that English-speaking Latinos are more likely to be second or third generation and Protestant, the actual percentage of Latinos that were Catholic in Greeley's 1988 GSS survey would have probably been 3 to 5 percentage points higher if Spanish-speaking only Latinos had been included in the survey. Thus there has been decline in the overall percentage but not in the raw number of Latino Catholics in the U.S. The HCAPL survey confirmed this finding. For although 700,000 Latinos indicated that they "recently converted" or returned back to Catholicism from another non-Catholic denomination or no religious tradition, the same survey also found that over 3 million Latinos recently converted out from Catholicism. Thus for every one Latino that has returned to Catholic Church, four have left it. Furthermore, a clear majority of Latinos (57 percent) that "recently converted" from Catholicism to Protestantism were second or third generation U.S. citizens. The exact percentage of first generation immigrants that converted out of Catholicism to Protestantism, another non-Catholic tradition, multiple traditions, or to no religion at all after they arrived in the U.S. is uncertain.<sup>27</sup>

Not all countries in Latin America have experienced Mexico's low Protestant growth rate. Protestants make up 29 percent (50 million) of all Brazilians, 27 percent (4 million) of all Chileans, 25 percent (2.8 million) of all Guatemalans, 22 percent (1.4 million) of all El Salvadorians, 22 percent of all Puerto Ricans (867,000), 20 percent (7 million) of all U.S. Latinos, 19 percent (950,000) of all Nicaraguans, and 18 percent of all Hondurans (1.1 million) and all Panamanians (520,000). Rev. Pedro Romo in southern California reflects this trend as he was first converted to Pentecostalism in his native Guatemala before moving to the U.S. as a missionary. He is not an anomaly. Brazil has witnessed the most dramatic numerical growth going from 12.8 percent (12.3 million) of the national population in 1970 to 50 million in 2000. The largest Protestant denomination in Brazil (and Latin America) is the Assemblies of God, which reportedly has over 20 million affiliates. Scholars now claim in Brazil that there are twice as many Assemblies of God congregations (85,000) as Catholic congregations (35,598). Between 1992 and 1994, an estimated 300,000 people in Rio de Janeiro converted to Pentecostalism. The numerically largest Latino *Protestant* denomination in the United States, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, and the Dominican Republic is Pentecostal, often the Assemblies of God or an independent indigenous Pentecostal tradition.<sup>28</sup>

*Trend # 4 – Pentecostal Switching to Mainline and Evangelical Protestantism*

Mainline Protestantism, especially in its more theologically and morally progressive manifestations, has not attracted a significant numerical following in Latin America. By 1950, after almost 100 years of evangelism, Mainline Protestants made up less than one percent of Latin America. Its appeal has been primarily among the highly educated. Despite this fact, there is a small but notice-

able trend of middle-class Pentecostals joining Mainline and non-Charismatic Evangelical Protestant denominations both in Latin America and in the United States. This appears to be due to the fact that Mainline Protestant churches are increasingly adopting Pentecostal/Charismatic music, spirituality, and theology. Mainline and Evangelical Protestantism have been particularly attractive to intellectually curious Pentecostal college and seminary students looking for a more theologically and/or morally flexible tradition that offers an historic, progressive, rationalistic, orderly, and rich liturgical approach to Christianity. This is especially true for second and third generation Pentecostals attending Mainline Protestant or interdenominational seminaries in the United States.

There are a large number of Latino Mainline and Evangelical Protestant scholars and leaders today in the U.S. and in Latin America that were either raised or converted into Pentecostalism and then left to join a Mainline or non-Charismatic Evangelical Protestant tradition. In most cases, they have brought their beliefs in the charismatic gifts and born-again experience along with them into their adopted tradition. In fact, there is in fact a long tradition of second and third generation Pentecostals embracing other forms of Protestantism. This helps to explain why the HCAPL national survey found that 43 percent (666,000) of all Latino Mainline Protestants self-identify as “born-again” Christian and 21 percent (330,000) self-identify as both “born-again” and Pentecostal, Charismatic or “spirit-filled.” Furthermore, in a recent study on Latino leadership, Edwin I. Hernández and Patricia Rodríguez found that almost one third of all U.S. Latinos surveyed with a Pentecostal background are now affiliated with a mainline or non-Pentecostal evangelical denomination. It may be fair to hypothesize that Mainline and Evangelical-led Protestant seminaries, institutes, and programs may be one of the most important vehicles for attracting Pentecostals and Charismatics.<sup>29</sup>

*Trend # 5 – Indigenization of Latin American Pentecostalism*

Rev. Pedro Romo’s theology and message has been shaped by the fact that he is part of an indigenous Pentecostal denomination from Guatemala. His story reflects the growth of independent indigenous Pentecostalism in Latin America. In fact, it is precisely the growth of the largely overlooked independent and indigenous Pentecostal denominations that helps explain the rapid growth of Pentecostalism throughout Latin America and the United States. There are three major reasons why this process took place so early in Latin American Pentecostalism. First, many early Pentecostal missionaries like Henry C. Ball (1896–1989), who was the Superintendent of the Assemblies of God work in Latin America in the 1940s, pushed for self-supporting, self-propagating, and self-governing indigenous churches. Second, indigenous “independent” U.S. Latino Pentecostal preachers from the Azusa Street Revival like Abundio L. López, A.C. Valdez, Brígido Pérez, Luís López, and Juan Martínez Navarro began conducting evangelistic work along the U.S.-Mexico border around 1906. By the 1916 (if not sooner), new independent indigenous U.S. Latino movements like what later became the Apostolic Assembly of the Faith in Christ Jesus conducted evangelistic work in Mexico. In 1923, Francisco Olazábal’s East Los Angeles-based Latin American Council of Christian Churches and after 1939 Carlos Sepúlveda’s New York City-based Assembly of Christian Churches began conducting extensive evangelistic work in Mexico, the Latin Caribbean, and Central and South America. Third, Pentecostal churches and districts went through a number of schisms and fragmented into new independent and indigenous denominations (or *concilios*-councils), which in turn did the same.<sup>30</sup>

The chronic fragmentation of the Pentecostal movement in Latin America is one of the primary reasons why the movement has been able to adapt and spread throughout Latin America over the past 100 years. In fact, the vast majority of Latin American

Pentecostals are part of independent (36 million) rather than classical (29 million) Pentecostal denominations. Most scholars have overlooked the rapid growth of independent Pentecostalism. The vast majority of Latin America’s 1,991 Pentecostal denominations and councils are independent (1,767) rather than tied to classical (224) Pentecostal bodies with historic ties to the U.S. This fragmentation thesis hypothesizes that Pentecostal leaders invoke direct unmediated experiences with God as a pretext or basis for splitting off from an existing denomination to form another in an effort to restore Christianity back to its Apostolic roots described in the book of Acts. This may help explain the rapid growth of independent Pentecostalism throughout the Americas.<sup>31</sup>

**TABLE IV**  
**Latin American and U.S. Latino Catholic Charismatic and Protestant Pentecostal Affiliates**  
**and Percent of Country**

Country	Catholic Charismatic	Protestant Pentecostal	Classic Pentecostal	Independent Pentecostal	All Pentecostals & Charismatics	Pentecostal Denominations
Brazil	35,000,000 21%	41,000,000 24%	21,000,000 12%	20,000,000 12%	76,000,000 45%	414 – 10 / 404
Chile	1,600,000 11%	3,700,000 24%	71,000 1%	3,600,000 24%	5,400,000 35%	189 – 6 / 183
Guatemala	850,000 8%	1,900,000 17%	790,000 7%	1,100,000 10%	2,800,000 25%	57 – 7 / 50
El Salvador	397,000 6%	1,100,000 18%	400,000 6%	690,000 11%	1,500,000 24%	
Puerto Rico	490,000 13%	620,000 16%	290,000 8%	325,000 8%	1,100,000 29%	63 – 6 / 57
United States	5,400,000 15%	3,800,000 12%			9,200,000 27%	150 – estimate
Nicaragua	220,000 4%	610,000 12%	310,000 6%	300,000 8%	822,000 16%	
Panama	200,000 7%	380,000 13%	300,000 10%	86,000 3%	580,000 20%	
Honduras	480,000 8%	690,000 11%	450,000 7%	240,000 4%	1,200,000 17%	
Argentina	5,000,000 13%	3,900,000 11%	1,700,000 5%	2,200,000 6%	9,000,000 24%	95 – 8 / 87
Venezuela	3,200,000 13%	1,400,000 6%	620,000 3%	740,000 3%	4,500,000 19%	
Mexico	9,200,000 9%	4,300,000 5%	1,000,000 1%	3,300,000 3%	13,500,000 14%	166 – 7 / 159
Colombia	10,900,000 26%	1,300,000 3%	410,000 1%	910,000 2%	12,300,000 29%	100 – 9 / 91

A good example of this fragmentation thesis is found in the story of Francisco Olazábal (1886–1937). After leading a schism in H.C. Ball’s Mexican Assemblies of God work in Houston, Texas, in 1922, he founded the Latin American Council of Christian Churches in March 1923. This was probably the first legally incorporated independent and indigenous Latino Pentecostal denomination in the United States. His movement quickly spread throughout the U.S. and then to Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Chile, Spain, and Venezuela during the 1920s and 1930s. After Olazábal’s death in 1937, his denomination went through a number of schisms and fragmented into new indigenous Pentecostal denominations both in the U.S. and in Latin America that in turn did the same.<sup>32</sup>

Contrary to popular perception, one of the first Latin American countries to indigenize the Pentecostal message was Mexico. Although the Pentecostal movement in Mexico was shaped by Anglo-American and Swedish Pentecostal missionaries like Clarissa Nuzum, George and Carrie Judd Montgomery, H.C. and Sunshine Ball, Alice E. Luce, and Axel and Ester Andersson, the first Pentecostal evangelists to spread the movement to Mexico and organize a church were independent Latino Pentecostals from the United States. After attending the fabled Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles in 1906, Mexicans like Abundio L. and Rosa López, A.C. Valdez, Brígido Pérez, Luis López, and Juan Martínez Navarro spread Pentecostalism to Mexicans living along the U.S.-Mexico border between 1906 and 1909. Furthermore, Romanita Carbajal de Valenzuela left the Spanish Apostolic Faith Mission in Los Angeles to spread the Pentecostal message in her hometown of Villa Aldama, Chihuahua, Mexico, in 1914, where she converted a Methodist pastor named Ruben Ortega to Pentecostalism and helped plant the first known Pentecostal church in Mexico. The independent and indigenous work received a shot in the arm when Francisco Olazábal returned to his homeland in the 1920s

and 1930s to hold large evangelistic campaigns in Mexico City, Mazatlán, and other parts of Mexico. Not long after the Mexican Revolution simmered down, in 1930 the Mexican government required that all foreign denominations hand over the leadership of their movements to Mexican nationals. This led to the nationalization and indigenization of almost all Anglo-American and Swedish-controlled Pentecostal and Protestant denominations in Mexico. Subsequently it led to a number of internal struggles for control of the new denominations and to denominational fragmentation that birthed a number of new independent and indigenous denominations. Today there are more than 159 independent and completely indigenous Pentecostal denominations in Mexico that have absolutely no administrative, financial, or emotional ties to the United States. They serve more than 4.3 million Protestant Pentecostals in Mexico.<sup>33</sup>

A similar indigenization process took place in Puerto Rico. Although an Anglo-American woman was probably the first person to preach the Pentecostal message in Puerto Rico in 1909, the first person to plant a lasting Pentecostal work on the island was Juan León Lugo (1890–1984). After being converted to the Pentecostal movement by some Puerto Ricans who were themselves converted by Azusa Street Revival (1906–1909) participants that stopped off in the Hawaiian Islands, he took the Pentecostal message to California (1913) and New York City (1916) before taking it on to his native Puerto Rico in August 1916. He spread the Pentecostal message throughout the island and incorporated his work in 1922 as the Pentecostal Church of God in cooperation with the Assemblies of God. In 1931, he helped pioneer the Pentecostal work among the Puerto Rican Diaspora living in New York City. That same year Francisco Olazábal arrived in Spanish Harlem. At the invitation of some of his converts in New York City, in 1934 and in 1936 he conducted two large-scale evangelistic healing campaigns in Puerto Rico. Thousands were converted.



His campaign broke the monopoly that Juan Lugo and the Assemblies of God enjoyed over the Pentecostal work on the island. His campaign also led to the creation of a number of indigenous Pentecostal bodies. Twenty years later in 1957 the Pentecostal Church of God split off from the Assemblies of God in the U.S. because their leaders believed they were being discriminated against. The Pentecostal Church of God is now the largest Protestant denomination on the island, followed by the Seventh-day Adventists, the Assemblies of God, and the Jehovah’s Witnesses. Today there are 63 Pentecostal denominations in Puerto Rico, 57 of which are independent bodies. In 2000, more than 1.1 million Puerto Ricans (28% of the population) on the island were part of the Protestant and Catholic Pentecostal/Charismatic movement, 867,000 of which were Protestant.<sup>34</sup>

Despite the growth of independent Pentecostal denominations in Mexico and Puerto Rico, the country that has experienced the most rapid independent Pentecostal growth is Brazil. Today there are 50 million Protestants in Brazil, the vast majority of which are Pentecostal or Charismatic. They make up almost one third (29%) of all Brazilians today. Although the Assemblies of God is the largest Protestant body with approximately 20 million affiliates, the next five largest Protestant denominations (with 1.8 million adherents or more) in Brazil are independent and indigenous Pentecostal denominations like the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, the God is Love Pentecostal Church, the Cornerstone Gospel Church, Brazil for Christ, and the Christian Congregation of Brazil. Furthermore, there are another 400 independent and indigenous Pentecostal denominations operating in Brazil.<sup>35</sup>

Although Guatemala has not seen the same level of Pentecostal growth as Brazil, it has, nonetheless, contributed to the country having one of the highest percentages of Protestants in Latin

America and has also given birth to a number of indigenous Pentecostal denominations as well. In 2000, Protestants made up 25 percent of the population. Furthermore, 1.9 million of the nation’s 2.8 million Protestant and Catholic Pentecostal/Charismatics were Protestant. The Pentecostal movement has seen steady growth since it first arrived around 1916. Today there are approximately 50 independent Pentecostal denominations in Guatemala, including Rev. Pedro Romo’s denomination, Iglesia de Cristo, Llamada Final. Independent groups like Iglesia de Cristo have been particularly successful among the Mayan Indians and working class Ladinos or mestizos in large cities. Eight out of the ten largest Protestant denominations in Guatemala are Pentecostal, including the top six, most of which are independent.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, the HCAPL national survey found that four of the ten largest Protestant traditions among U.S. Latinos are Pentecostal and three of these are independent and indigenous bodies.<sup>37</sup> The fragmentation and indigenization process taking place in Guatemala helps explain why there are more indigenous than classic Pentecostals in Latin America and the U.S. today.

*Trend # 6 – Growth of Alternative Christian Traditions, Spiritism, and World Religions*

Although the growth of the Pentecostal movement is well documented, very little has been written about the growth of other alternative Christian movements in Latin America like Mormonism and the Jehovah’s Witnesses. This is unfortunate because they represent two of the most vibrant and fastest growing religious traditions in Latin America. Today there are 6.6 million alternative Christians in Latin America, the vast majority of which are Mormon or Jehovah’s Witness. Unlike the Pentecostals, the Mormons and the Jehovah’s Witnesses began evangelistic work in Latin America in the late nineteenth century. The

Mormons began evangelistic work in Mexico around 1879, where they have grown from 112,000 people in 1970 to more than 570,000 in 1995. The Jehovah’s Witnesses have been even more successful. After beginning evangelistic work in Latin America around 1893, they have grown from 100,000 adherents in 1970 to more than 1.2 million in 1995. By 1995, there were almost two million Mormons and Jehovah’s Witnesses in Mexico alone. They have also experienced significant growth throughout Latin America and are in the top ten largest non-Catholic Christian Latino traditions in Mexico, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, and among U.S. Latinos. In fact, there are more than one million Latino Jehovah’s Witnesses and Mormons in the U.S. In 2000, the Jehovah’s Witnesses was the largest Latino non-Catholic Christian (though by self-definition not Protestant) denomination in Mexico, Cuba, and the U.S.<sup>38</sup>

In addition to the growth of alternative Christian traditions, Latin America has also witnessed the growth of metaphysical and world religion traditions. Spiritism, Spiritualism, Kardecism, Santería, Brujería, Macumba, Candomblé, Chango, Umbanda, and other spirit-traditions have grown from just a little over 257,000 in 1900 to 4.5 million in 1970 to more than 12 million in 2000, especially in countries like Brazil where they number more than 8 million. Part of this growth in Brazil is due to the fact that after Vatican II, the Brazilian Catholic Church opposed Spiritism. This prompted many metaphysical practitioners to leave the Catholic Church. Despite this attempt to expunge Spiritism and other metaphysical traditions from their ranks, an estimated 30 percent (60 million) of all Brazilian Catholics maintain ties to these traditions.<sup>39</sup>

Similarly, practitioners of non-Christian religions like Islam, Judaism, Bahai, Hinduism, Chinese folk religions, Shintoism, Confucianism, new religionists, native American, and other religious traditions have grown from 3.9 million in 1970 to 7.3 million

in 2000. These numbers are not evenly distributed throughout Latin America, as a disproportionately large number of Muslims (721,000) and Jews (490,000) live in Argentina. Another 360,000 Jews live in nearby Brazil. Together practitioners of metaphysical and world religions number over 19 million throughout Latin America. This number is projected to grow to 26 million by 2025.<sup>40</sup>

*Trend # 7 – Latin American Evangelization of U.S. Latinos*

One of the most important results of the rapid growth of the Pentecostal movement in Latin America is the decision of a growing number of independent and indigenous Pentecostal bodies to send missionaries to evangelize Latino citizens and immigrants in the United States. At 37 million, the U.S. Latino population is the fourth largest Spanish-speaking “country” or population in the Americas. This has not been lost on mission-minded Latin American Pentecostal denominations and leaders like Rev. Pedro Romo who want to set up churches in the U.S. Although there is no official count of how many independent and indigenous denominations in Mexico, Puerto Rico and the rest of Latin America have sent missionaries to the U.S. mainland, I would estimate this number to be well over 150. Among independent Latin American Pentecostals, it is a status symbol to say that you have missionaries and churches in the largest and most powerful country on earth.

In addition to the aggressive evangelistic work of leaders like Rev. Pedro Romo and Iglesia de Cristo, Llamada Final, perhaps the best example of this “back to the future” phenomenon of Latin American Pentecostals returning back to the United States to spread Pentecostalism is the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God. The second largest Protestant body in Brazil after the Assemblies of God, the Universal Church has grown from the preaching of Edir Macedo (1944–present) in a largely empty funeral parlor in 1977 to more than 4 million people in 2000. He

came to the U.S. in 1986 to personally initiate the work. Since then, the Church has planted at least twenty-five mother churches and a number of preaching points in most of the major Spanish-speaking barrios in the U.S. Most of these churches serve as the basis for planting new churches throughout a given metropolitan area. There are at least two Universal Church bishops residing in the U.S. that oversee the work. The Universal Church is also targeting English-speaking Anglo and African-Americans. In addition, they publish, *¡PARE de Sufrir!* (Stop Suffering!) which has a U.S. circulation of 50,000. The Universal Church is exporting its “high octane” version of Pentecostalism to the U.S., with evangelistic crusades, divine healing services, and public exorcisms. They also use the latest technology and radio and television to spread their message.<sup>41</sup>

Not nearly as sophisticated yet no less determined, are the hundreds of missionaries from Mexico’s Light of the World Church, Puerto Rico’s Pentecostal Church of God, MI., and Guatemala’s Church of Christ, Final Call, and ELIM, traditions. They and other independent Pentecostal denominations are aggressively competing for the heart and soul of the Latino community along with Anglo-American and native U.S. Latino Pentecostal denominations like the Hispanic Districts of the Assemblies of God, the Assembly of Christian Churches, the Apostolic Assembly of the Faith in Christ Jesus, Victory Outreach International, and other Pentecostal traditions. These new Latin American imports are theologically and socially diverse. For although the Light of the World Church requires men and women to sit on different sides of the aisles and for women to wear a veil and refrain from cutting their hair and wearing cosmetics, jewelry or pants, the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God uses skits, music, radio, and television to reach young and old alike. Comportment does not seem to be a major issue for them. Furthermore, although some foreign imports like the Light of the World and the Apostolic Church of the Faith in Christ Jesus are non-Trinitarian and Oneness in theology, others

like the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God and ELIM are Trinitarian. The long-term impact of these bodies on U.S. Latino Pentecostalism and Christianity are uncertain, although it would seem reasonable to suggest that they will reinforce traditional Latin American values and morality in American Christianity.<sup>42</sup>

Another important development is the influence that Latin American Pentecostalism is having on Anglo-American Pentecostalism. Perhaps the best example of this is the fact that the founders of the Toronto Blessing Revival in Canada trace their spiritual genealogy back to the Pentecostal revival in Argentina. The Toronto Blessing, the longest such revival in North American history, has in turn helped give birth to the Brownsville and Pensacola revivals in Florida.<sup>43</sup> These revivals have had a direct impact on American and Canadian Pentecostal subcultures. In many respects, we are witnessing a back-to-the-future phenomenon with Latin American Pentecostal evangelists and teachers going on speaking tours in Anglo-American Pentecostal churches across the U.S. and Canada. The four most famous Argentine evangelists that have ministered in the U.S. are Carlos Annacondia, Claudio Friedzon, Alberto Mottessi, and Omar Cabrera. Their enormous churches and revival services, which have drawn up to 60,000 people in Argentina, have been closely followed in American Pentecostal circles and have received major multi-page coverage in the most important interdenominational Pentecostal magazine in the United States, *Charisma*. The attention that Annacondia, Friedzon, Mottessi, and Cabrera have received through their speaking tours, books, videos, and revivals in Latin America and in the U.S. has prompted a growing number of American Pentecostal leaders to adopt their strategies and even to travel to Latin America to visit their churches in order to bring back to the U.S. new methods and strategies for their own ministries.<sup>44</sup> American and Canadian Pentecostal leaders are also following similar revival movements in Brazil and Guatemala.<sup>45</sup>

**Trend # 8 – Catholic–Pentecostal Cooperation**

The growth of Roman Catholicism and Pentecostalism is prompting leaders in both traditions to find creative ways to work together on common causes. This is an incredibly difficult task because of the deep animosity that exists between Pentecostal Protestants and Catholics in Latin America. This animosity is difficult to overcome when Pentecostals accuse the Pope of being the “Antichrist” and Catholics of practicing “idolatry” because they “worship” the Virgin Mary and the saints. Still others insult Catholic leaders by claiming that the devil runs “rampant” in Catholic convents and monasteries, where nuns have abortions and priests spread homosexuality. Similarly Pope John Paul II’s statement at the conference of Latin American bishops in 1992 that Pentecostals and other “sects” were “rapacious wolves” and “pseudo-spiritual movements” devouring Latin American Catholics and “causing division and discord in our communities” has also deeply offended Pentecostals throughout Latin America. Furthermore, Girolamo Prigione, the Vatican representative to Mexico, said that the “Protestant sects . . . divide . . . families and denationalize the country, sow confusion, and originate strife.” This is why he “condemned” them. He concluded by saying that, “the sects, like flies, need to be thrown out.”<sup>46</sup>

Despite the real hostility that exists between Latino Protestants and Catholics in the Americas, there is a small but growing trend toward ecumenical/interdenominational cooperation. Brian H. Smith notes that Pentecostals and Catholics have joined forces on moral issues in a number of Latin American countries to promote family values, oppose any measures to legalize abortion or homosexual marriage, fight corruption and military dictatorships, and champion human rights and social justice. In Costa Rica, for example, a number of Catholic and Pentecostal ministers joined forces in 1993 to oppose a legislative proposal that would instruct high school students on how to have safe sex outside of marriage.

Similarly in Chile in 1995, some Catholics and Pentecostals worked together to oppose a new law that would grant equal rights to gays and lesbians. In Central America, some Pentecostals collaborated with Catholic Christian Base communities to aid those attacked by Right Wing militias. In Brazil, Bishop Manoel de Mello of the Brazil For Christ denomination praised Catholic bishops for speaking out against human rights violations and sharply criticized Evangelicals for remaining silent. There are also other examples of Catholic and Protestant scholars working together in seminary education and in writing church histories. Smith argues that there are three possible future scenarios for Catholic-Pentecostal interaction: (1) mutually reinforcing flight from the world whereby they focus on inward spirituality and neglect social responsibilities; (2) conflicting religio-political agendas whereby Catholics would support existing government structures while Pentecostals would defend free-market capitalism and political democracy; and (3) prophetic social catalyst moving in tandem for moral reform and social and political change. He is cautiously optimistic that they may move down this third path. The transdenominational and transnational Pentecostal/Charismatic movement may be one of the most important ecumenical bridges available today. However, anti-Catholic bigotry and mandates from the Catholic hierarchy that Catholic Charismatics should not invite Protestant Pentecostals to speak at Catholic Charismatic Church-sponsored events undermine this potentially important ecumenical/interdenominational bridge in Catholic-Pentecostal relations.<sup>47</sup>

This movement towards ecumenical/interdenominational cooperation between Latino Pentecostals and Catholics is moving ahead at a much faster pace in the United States. A number of seminary programs, institutes, and conferences have brought Latino Catholics, Mainline Protestants, Evangelicals, and Pentecostals together for seminary training and networking

opportunities. The best example of this kind of cooperation is the Hispanic Summer Program, which brings together Catholic, Mainline Protestant, Evangelical, and Pentecostal seminary faculty and students for intensive seminars and workshops. This kind of joint cooperation is also evident in programs like the now defunct Hispanic Fund for Theological Education (FTE) and The Pew Charitable Trusts funded Hispanic Theological Initiative (HTI). The goal of the HTI is to provide scholarships, grants, mentorship, and guidance for seminary, doctoral, and post-doctoral students from Catholic, Mainline Protestant, Evangelical, Pentecostal, and other religious backgrounds.

Another example of Pentecostal-Catholic cooperation was the recent Pew Charitable Trusts funded Hispanic Churches in American Public Life (HCAPL) research project. The HCAPL project was directed by Jesse Miranda, a Pentecostal, and Virgilio Elizondo, a Roman Catholic. It was an ecumenical and non-sectarian study that sought to examine the impact of religion on political, civic, and social engagement among U.S. Latinos.<sup>48</sup> It is important to note that The Pew Charitable Trusts first approached Jesse Miranda about directing the study himself. However, in an effort to build bridges with the Latino Catholic community he informed the Trusts that he would not accept the project unless they brought on a Latino Catholic leader like Virgilio Elizondo to co-direct the project. The Pew Charitable Trusts agreed. Miranda and Elizondo agreed to work together to address the social, political, and civic needs of the Latino community without having to set aside or “water-down” their deep theological convictions. So although they disagree profoundly on a number of theological positions, they have agreed to work together for the sake of the larger Latino community on social and civic issues and have, as a result, developed a strong friendship.

### **Impact of these Trends on Latin American Religions and Society**

These eight trends are transforming Latin American society in at least four major ways. First, the growth of Pentecostalism, alternative Christian, metaphysical and world religions are contributing to denominational and religious pluralism. By mid-2000, the number of non-Catholic Christians or Pentecostals, Evangelicals, Mainline Protestants, Anglicans, Orthodox, Mormons and Jehovah’s Witnesses had grown to 96 million throughout Latin America south of the U.S. border and 104 million, if we include U.S. Latinos. Another 38 million Latin Americans practice a world religion other than Christianity (e.g., Judaism, Bahai, Hindu, Buddhist, Chinese folk religions, Shintoists, and Spiritism, Native American traditions) or are non-religious or atheist. In total, there are 139 million Latin Americans out of 519 million south of the U.S. border that no longer identify primarily as Roman Catholic. By 2025, the number of Catholics is expected to grow to 606 million and the number of non-Catholics is expected to grow to 213 million or more than 30 percent of Latin America.<sup>49</sup>

Second, the growth of non-Catholic traditions in Latin America has prompted a growing number of religious, lay, and political leaders to call for religious tolerance and the separation of church and state. In places like the Dominican Republic, the government recognizes canon law, has used public tax money to help finance the construction of cathedrals, and teaches the religious and moral principles of Catholicism in its public schools. In Colombia, where the Constitution guarantees freedom of religion, the Catholic Church is given a privileged status and Catholicism is taught in all public schools. It was only after Pentecostals, Protestants, and Jews pushed for religious toleration that the government decided to grant tax-exempt status to Protestant churches and Jewish synagogues in Colombia in 1975. In Argentina and Chile, Protestants and Jews have also demanded that they be afforded the same kinds of rights and financial

subsidies for their traditions and institutions that are given to their Catholic counterparts.<sup>50</sup>

This trend in pushing for the separation of church and state has been particularly acute in countries with large and growing Protestant populations like Guatemala and El Salvador, where Catholicism has official state sponsorship. Protestant growth has translated into political power. In 1974 General Ernesto Geisel, a Protestant, became president of Brazil, and in 1982 General Efraín Ríos Montt, a member of an independent indigenous Pentecostal denomination, became president of Guatemala after a coup d'etat. In 1990, Jorge Serrano Elías, a former Catholic Charismatic who converted to an indigenous Pentecostal denomination, was the first Protestant to be democratically elected president of a Latin American country— Guatemala. In fact, between 1980 and 1994, twenty-four Evangelical political parties were created in eleven Latin American countries. These parties pushed for the separation of church and state and for removing all special privileges afforded the Catholic Church that were not also extended to Protestants.<sup>51</sup>

The growing number of non-Catholic religious minorities calling for religious tolerance, pluralism, and the separation of church and state are contributing to the disestablishment of Catholicism as the defining cultural ethos throughout a small but growing number of communities Latin America. In some countries, Protestants are calling for an end to government support, special status, legal privileges, financial subsidies for Catholic schools, and for the secularization of marriage.<sup>52</sup>

Third, the growth of Pentecostal, Evangelical, and other non-Catholic traditions is contributing to the democratization of Latin America. Although to be sure, some Pentecostals and Evangelicals have supported military dictators like Efraín Ríos Montt, a surprising number have been outspokenly critical of military dictatorships, Right Wing military regimes, and government repression.

Furthermore, a small number have also been sympathetic to leftist causes. Brian H. Smith has argued that while some Protestant politicians came to power as a result of a coup d'état, they have been no more likely to support dictators and the CIA than their Catholic counterparts. In fact, the growth Pentecostal groups have contributed to a growing emphasis on freedom of religion, freedom of thought, and freedom of conscience. Given the fact that they are a religious minority, many Protestants have emphasized the need for open and corruption-free elections in order to guarantee religious toleration and to change the legal system so that Protestants, as well as Catholics benefit from state subsidies and protection.

The growth of religious pluralism, the push for the separation of church and state, and the democratization of Latin American society are all contributing to the revitalization of Latin American Catholicism by making it more competitive and sensitive to the needs of poor and working class Catholics and non-Catholics. Although the *Cursillo*, Liberation theology, and the Christian Base Communities movements have all made the Catholic hierarchy and parish priests more sensitive to the needs of Latin American Catholics, the fear of apostasy and defections has brought this issue into sharper focus and given it a certain urgency.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, many Catholic bishops and priests are adopting some of the tactics, strategies, and spirituality of their Pentecostal and Protestant counterparts. This is most evident in the Catholic Charismatic renewal that is sweeping through Latin America.

### **Impact of these Trends on U.S. Latino Religions and Society**

These trends and developments in Latin American religions are contributing to six important developments in American and Latino religions in the United States. First, the massive level of immigration from Latin America may be contributing to the re-Christianization of American religions. The Latino population has

grown by 58 percent between 1990 and 2000, from 22.4 million to 35.4 million. In 2003, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that the Latino population increased to 37 million and officially surpassed the African-American community as the nation's largest racial-ethnic minority. In fact by 2000, half (16.1 million) of the nation's 31.1 million foreign-born residents were from Latin America, where Christians made up 92 percent of the population. This is in contrast to the United States where only 85 percent of the population (some say 76 percent) self-identifies with Christianity. Furthermore, 50 percent (8 million) of all Latin American immigrants in the U.S. come from Mexico, where 95 percent of the population self-identifies as Christian. If U.S. Latino fertility, assimilation, and immigration rates from countries like Mexico remain at their present levels, there is good reason to believe that the overall number and percentage of Christians in American society may actually increase in the twenty-first century. Thus rather than seeing a secularization of American religion and culture, Latinos may actually contribute to a re-Christianization of American society, albeit with a more experiential and hybrid Latin American flair. This would seem to indirectly problematize the findings in Diana Eck's pathbreaking book, *A New Religious America: How a "Christian Nation" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation*, where she may underestimate the seismic and profound changes that Latin American immigration to the U.S. will have on the complexion, texture, and future of American religions. Far from being less Christian, the influx of millions of largely theologically, morally, and socially conservative Catholic, Evangelical, and Pentecostal Latin American immigrants and other Christian immigrants from Europe, Asia, and Africa may contribute to an increase in the overall number and percentage of Christians in the U.S. in the twenty-first century. Thus while the raw number of practitioners of world religions may increase, their percentage of American society may actually decrease. This could have pro-

found political, social, cultural, and religious ramifications on how the country deals with religious pluralism. Only time will tell what will actually happen. In fact, we are just as likely to see what Phillip Jenkins in his book, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, calls the re-evangelization of the formerly Christian northern hemisphere by the hitherto scorned, poor, and marginalized Christian southern hemisphere. As we have seen in this essay, this has already begun.<sup>54</sup>

The second development is related to the first. The high levels of immigration from Latin America are contributing to the growth of American Catholicism and the Catholicization of American society. Today Latinos make up almost 40 percent of the U.S. Catholic Church. There are 25 million Latino Catholics in the United States, thus making them more numerous than all Anglo-American Mainline Protestants (22 million) combined.<sup>55</sup> Although it is true that the HCAPL survey found that almost 2 million second and third generation Latinos living in the United States have "recently converted" from Catholicism to Protestantism and non-Catholic traditions or no religion at all over the past thirty years, it is also true that the actual raw number of Latino Catholics in the U.S. has increased. This is largely the result of high Catholic birthrates and massive levels of immigration from Mexico and Latin America.<sup>56</sup>

Both of these developments are contributing to a third development that Steve Warner calls the "de-Europeanization" of American Christianity. He argues that the significant levels of immigration from Latin America and other Catholic countries and regions are de-Europeanizing American Christianity. He found that at least two-thirds of all immigrants to the United States after 1965 are Christians from countries like Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Haiti, Guatemala, the Philippines, El Salvador, Poland, Russia, and Ireland. Furthermore, immigrants from ostensibly Buddhist, Muslim, and Hindu-influenced countries

like Korea, Vietnam, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, and India are mostly (e.g., Korea) or disproportionately (e.g., India) Christian. This is also the case for a growing number of African immigrants from Ethiopia, Egypt, Ghana, and the Congo.<sup>57</sup>

The fifth important development for theologians and trend watchers is the heterodoxization of Latino Christianity in the Americas. Although it is well known that a small but growing number of U.S. Latinos are embracing non-Christian religions like Islam or Judaism, most scholars have overlooked the fact that alternative Christians like the Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons are also growing both in Latin America and in the U.S. The Jehovah's Witnesses are the largest non-Catholic Latino "Christian" tradition (by self-definition) in Mexico, Cuba, and the U.S. Furthermore, the Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons are two of the top ten largest non-Catholic Christian traditions in many countries throughout Latin America. In fact, there are more Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons in the U.S. than all Latino Baptists combined. In addition, there are a growing number of Oneness or Jesus Only and other non-Trinitarian theologically "heterodox" Pentecostal denominations making large numbers of converts throughout Latin America and the U.S. An example of this is Rev. Pedro Romo, whose supposedly "heterodox" message places him outside the confines of historic Protestant and Pentecostal Christianity. In fact, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Apostolic Assembly, and other Oneness and Apostle-centered Pentecostals were in the top ten largest Latino non-Catholic Christian traditions in many countries like Mexico, Chile, Colombia, Argentina, and the U.S.<sup>58</sup>

The sixth and final impact these trends may have on American society is the Latinization of American politics. As the 2000 Florida Presidential Election results indicated, Latinos can and will continue to make a difference in American politics. The massive waves of immigration from Latin America may pull the

extreme right and left in the U.S. toward the center on key moral, church-state, and social issues. Although nationwide Latinos hold conservative positions on abortion, same sex marriage, ordination of gays and lesbians, prayer in school, school vouchers, the teaching of creation and evolution in public schools, and charitable choice, a majority of Latino Catholics, Mainline Protestants, Evangelicals, and Pentecostals who tend to vote democratic, oppose the death penalty, support affirmative action, and would like the government to provide social services like welfare to illegal aliens. This hybrid political and racial-ethnic space may enable Latinos to not only serve as one of the new power brokers in electoral politics (provided that they register and actually vote) but also enable them to help bridge and move the nation beyond the black-white racial divide that has vexed the nation throughout its tumultuous history.<sup>59</sup>

### **Conclusion**

What can we conclude about the present trends in Latin American religions and their subsequent impact on U.S. Latino and American religions? First, it is clear that almost all of the major religious traditions in Latin America and in the U.S. are growing numerically, Catholic, Pentecostal, alternative Christian, metaphysical, and world religion. Second, some segments of Latin American religions are undergoing an indigenization and Pentecostalizing process that is having a profound impact on the texture, tempo, and ethos of Catholicism and Protestantism. Whether or not this is simply a religious fad or a trend that will have a long-term structural impact on Latin American Catholicism remains to be seen. Third, the growth of religious pluralism is contributing to the disestablishment of Roman Catholicism in many countries, the democratizing of Latin American politics, and the revitalization of Latin American Catholicism by making it more competitive. Fourth, these trends are contributing to the re-



Christianization, de-Europeanization, Catholicization, Pentecostalization, heterodoxization, and Latinization of American religions and politics. Fifth, these trends indicate that the U.S. Latino community's religiosity is in many ways a composite of Latin America, but with a predictably strong Mexican orientation. Sixth, these trends indicate that far from being controlled by Anglo-American missionaries or the CIA, Latin American Pentecostalism has gone through an indigenization and fragmentation process that has given birth to over 1,700 independent denominations and *concilios* that are beginning to not only transform the religious marketplace, but also the political and social structure of Latin American society. Seventh, we have seen that an increasing proportion of the non-Catholic growth in Latin America and in the U.S. is Jehovah's Witness, Mormon, Spiritist, and, to a lesser extent, other world religion. Although their short-term impact is minimal because of their small numbers, many believe that in thirty or forty years they may make major contributions to Latin America. Eighth, a small but noticeable number of Latino Pentecostals are joining Mainline and Evangelical Protestantism. Ninth, we are beginning to see Catholics and Pentecostals begin to work together on key moral, social, and political issues on behalf of the Latino community. Tenth, we are seeing the rise of transdenominational forms of spirituality and religiosity that are producing new combinative and hybrid religious traditions. Finally, this study invites scholars of Latin American and U.S. Latino religions to rethink their disciplinary boundaries and to begin seeking ways to produce scholarship that is transnational, comparative, and non-sectarian in scope and vision in the twenty-first century. Perhaps by doing so, scholars will begin to figure out why a growing number of Guatemalan Pentecostal pastors like Rev. Romo are arriving in the U.S. proclaiming that "we preach the truth."

## NOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> Rev. Pedro Romo, "Latino Religion in Santa Barbara," interviews by author, in-person and telephone interviews, Goleta, California, Spring and Summer 1995.
- <sup>2</sup> I visited Rev. Pedro Romo's Friday evening church services in the spring and summer of 1995. The services, which were held in the Anglo-American Open Bible Church building on 329 W. Canon Perdido, ran from 6–10 P.M.
- <sup>3</sup> David Martin, *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1993); David Stoll, *Is Latin America Turning Protestant? The Politics of Evangelical Growth* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990); Christian Lalive d'Épinay, *Haven of the Masses: A Study of the Pentecostal Movement in Chile* (London: Lutterworth, 1969); Elizabeth Brusco, "The Reformation of Machismo: Asceticism and Masculinity among Colombian Evangelicals," in *Rethinking Protestantism in Latin America*, eds., Virginia Garrard-Burnett and David Stoll (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993); John Burdick, *Looking for God in Brazil* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993); R. Andrew Chestnut, *Born-Again in Brazil* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1997); Edward L. Clearly, O.P., and Hannah Stewart-Gambino, eds., *Conflict and Competition: The Latin American Church in a Changing Environment* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 1992); Phillip Berryman, *Stubborn Hope: Religion, Politics, and Revolution in Central America* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1994); Phillip Berryman, *Religion in the Megacity: Catholic and Protestant Portraits from Latin America* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1996); Walter Altmann, "Religious Pluralism in Latin America," *Latinamerica Press* 28, no. 42 (November 14, 1996); T.E. Evans, *Religious Conversion in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala*, Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1990; Kurt Bowen, *Evangelism & Apostasy: The Evolution and Impact of Evangelicals in Modern Mexico* (Buffalo: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996); Anne Motley Hallum, *Beyond Missionaries: Toward an Understanding of the Protestant Movement in Central America* (New York: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, 1996); Paul E. Sigmund, ed., *Religious Freedom and Evangelicalization in Latin America: The Challenge of Religious Pluralism* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1999); Brian H. Smith, *Religious Politics in Latin America: Pentecostal vs. Catholic* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998); Paul Freston, *Evangelicals and Politics in Asia, Africa and Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

<sup>4</sup> Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1973). This influence is evident not only in the scholarship produced by U.S. Latino theologians and religion scholars, but also in Latino Mainline Protestant, Catholic, and in some Evangelical seminary curricula, pastoral institutes, and in some local churches. This has in turn had an impact on Latino clergy from these traditions, although to a much lesser degree.

<sup>5</sup> I distinguish between historic and/or Mainline Protestants (those traditions that trace their origins directly back to the Protestant Reformation in Europe and that are more liberal or progressive in their theological and social views), Evangelicals (those who are more theologically and morally conservative and insist on having a “born-again” experience with Jesus Christ), and Pentecostal Protestants (those who are theologically and morally conservative and emphasize being “born-again,” the baptism with the Holy Spirit, speaking in unknown tongues, and the spiritual gifts listed in I Corinthians 12 and 14). While all Pentecostals are by definition Evangelical because they insist on having a “born-again” experience with Jesus Christ, not all Evangelicals and Mainline Protestants are necessarily Pentecostal or believe in the practice of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. I distinguish a Charismatic Catholic, Orthodox, Mainline Protestant, or Evangelical Protestant from classic and independent Pentecostals in that most Charismatics remain within non-Pentecostal denominations, like the Catholic or Presbyterian traditions, while most Pentecostals reside in classic and independent Pentecostal denominations, like the Assemblies of God and the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God. David Barrett, George Kurian, and Todd M. Johnson, *World Christian Encyclopedia* (Oxford University Press, 2001). This source will hereafter be cited, Barrett et al, 2001. Gastón Espinosa, Virgilio Elizondo, and Jesse Miranda, *Hispanic Churches in American Public Life: Summary of Findings* (Notre Dame, Indiana: Institute for Latino Studies at the University of Notre Dame, 2003). This source will hereafter be cited, Espinosa et al, 2003. The data in this study were generated and provided by author Todd M. Johnson and data analyst Peter Crossing at the Center for the Study of Global Christianity in South Hamilton, Massachusetts. They are based on the most up-to-date projections of the 2001 edition of the *World Christian Encyclopedia* (hereafter *WCE*). These statistics differ slightly from the *WCE* where more recent projections of freshly incorporated data were available. Despite this fact, I have given the citation of the *WCE* as a reference. Since no data set is one hundred percent accurate, these statistics should only be taken as projections based on the best data available on Christian religious affiliation around the world. For the methodology of the *WCE* data set, please see the methodology section of the *WCE*.

<sup>6</sup> The HCAPL national telephone survey has several important limitations. First, it did not survey Latinos without a telephone, which would include a small but important number of many poor, undocumented, and underrepresented Latinos. Second, it only surveyed Latinos who were at least eighteen years of age. Thus it cannot capture the attitudes of Latino youth. Third, it did not survey Anglos or Blacks for comparability purposes, although it did include questions from the General Social Survey (GSS) and other survey instruments that can be used for such purposes. Finally, the small cell count on many of these survey question responses means that some of the estimates for smaller religious traditions in this essay are suggestive rather than conclusive. Despite these limitations, the HCAPL survey has several advantages over

other national data sets like the GSS, the National Survey of Religious Identification (NSRI), the now dated National Alcohol Survey (NAS) (1984), the Gallup Poll and other national data sets. First, it is Hispanic-framed. The sixty-three-question survey instrument was created with the Hispanic community in mind by a nationally recognized advisory board of seventeen Hispanic and Euro-American scholars in sociology, political science, public policy, religious studies, theology, Latino studies, Latino history, and Latino religious education. Second, it is a very large sample. It surveyed 2,060 Latinos across the U.S. Third, it included a Protestant over-sample, which allows for more in-depth and sophisticated multivariate analyses and comparisons. Fourth, it was completed on October 29, 2000, and is thus more recent than most other national surveys. This is very important given the massive levels of Latin American immigration that took place in the 1990s. Fourth, it was conducted in English (62%) and Spanish (38%). All of the other national surveys mentioned above except the NAS were conducted in English only. Fifth, the religious affiliation survey question include a list of twenty possible response options, including several indigenous Latino Pentecostal traditions, something never done before. Sixth, it allowed for a wider range of country of origin self-identification possibilities than most surveys, including Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Colombia, other Latin America, other part of the world, and more than one ancestry. Seventh, it asked people in national survey question number 23 who identified as “other Christian,” “other religion,” “something else,” or “other religion,” to specify their religious tradition. This has enabled us to ferret out the religious identity of an otherwise very large number of Latino respondents and also to reduce the margin of error to plus or minus one percentage point.

<sup>7</sup> Barrett et al, 14.

<sup>8</sup> Espinosa et al, 2003, 14.

<sup>9</sup> Sigmund, 2; Bowen, 70; Hallum, 61–62; Smith, 98.

<sup>10</sup> Smith, 62–64; Gastón Espinosa, “Demographic Shifts in Latino Religions in the United States,” *Social Forces*, Spring/Summer 2003. The HCAPL national survey question number 25 reads, “From what religious tradition or denomination have you most recently converted, if any?” The 24 possible response options include: “I have always remained a member of my religious tradition,” Roman Catholic, American Baptist, Southern Baptist, Assembly of Christian Churches, Assemblies of God, Disciples of Christ, Episcopalian, Evangelical, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Lutheran, Methodist, Mormon, Pentecostal Church of God, Apostolic Assembly or Oneness Pentecostal, Pentecostal or Charismatic, Presbyterian, Seventh-Day Adventist, Independent/Non-Denominational Protestant, Other Christian, Other Religion Specify, Atheist, Agnostic, Don’t Know/Refused.

<sup>11</sup> For an excellent recent essay on the Latin American Catholic Charismatic movement see, R. Andrew Chestnut, “A Preferential Option for the Spirit: The Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Latin America’s New Religious Economy,” *Latin American Politics and Society*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (Spring 2003). I just came across this essay after completing the semi-final draft of this essay. For other discussions of the Catholic Charismatic movement see, Berryman, *Stubborn Hope*, 168, 210–221; Clearly, 67–71, as cited in Smith, 69–70; Bowen, 58–59; Sigmund, 217–218; Hallum, 71, 76, 82, 84, 87–89, 94; Berryman, *Religion in the Megacity*, 13, 79–87, 122–124, 161–162.

- <sup>12</sup> Hallum, 84, 87–89; Barrett et al 14; Espinosa et al 16.
- <sup>13</sup> Gastón Espinosa, “‘Let the Spirit Fly’: Marilyn Kramer and the Origins of the Latino Catholic Charismatic Movement in the United States,” (Unpublished paper, 2000), 1–30. Sigmund, 2.
- <sup>14</sup> F. A. Sullivan, “Catholic Charismatic Renewal,” in Stanley M. Burgess and Gary B. McGee, eds., *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 111–112; Vinson Synan, *The Twentieth-Century Pentecostal Explosion: The Exciting Growth of Pentecostal Churches and Charismatic Renewal Movements* (Altamonte Springs, Florida: Creation House, 1980), 39–53.
- <sup>15</sup> Sullivan, 111–112.
- <sup>16</sup> Sullivan, 112–114; Edward D. O’Connor, C.S.C., *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church* (Notre Dame, Indiana: Ave Maria Press, 1971), 39–107.
- <sup>17</sup> Espinosa, 2000, 1–30.
- <sup>18</sup> David Barrett, Todd M. Johnson, Christopher Guidry, and Peter Crossing, *World Christian Trends, AD 30 – AD 2200: Interpreting the Annual Christian Mega Census* (Gabriel Resources, 2003) 276–277. This source will hereafter be cited, Barrett et al, 2003; Chestnut, 2003.
- <sup>19</sup> Classic Pentecostal denominations were birthed in the United States and include the Assemblies of God, the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, the Church of God, Cleveland, TN, the Church of God of Prophecy, the United Pentecostal Church, and other similar bodies. Independent Pentecostal traditions are denominations that are either off-shoots of classic Pentecostal bodies or were planted by indigenous Pentecostal denominations from the U.S. like the Latin American Council of Christian Churches, the Apostolic Assembly of the Faith in Christ Jesus, the Assembly of Christian Churches, Victory Outreach International and similar bodies. Examples of indigenous independent Pentecostal bodies include the Pentecostal Church of God, MI, in Puerto Rico, the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God and the God is Love Church in Brazil, the Pentecostal Methodist Church in Chile, and the Light of the World Church and the Union of Evangelical Independent Churches in Mexico.
- <sup>20</sup> Barrett et al, 2001, 131, 135–138; Barrett et al, 2003, 276–277. These findings and all other statistics on Latin America in this essay are based on statistical analyses performed by Todd M. Johnson and Peter Crossing at the Center for the Study of World Christianity in the summer of 2003 and those found in the WCE.
- <sup>21</sup> Moisés Sandoval, *On the Move: A History of the Hispanic Church in the United States* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1990), 84–85; Espinosa, 2000, 1–30; Barrett et al, 2001, 495, 612; Barrett et al, 2003; Espinosa et al, 2003: 14, 27; Chestnut, 2003.
- <sup>22</sup> Barrett et al, 2001, 72, 202; Barrett et al, 2003.
- <sup>23</sup> Barrett et al, 2001, 131; Barrett et al, 2003.
- <sup>24</sup> Phillip Berryman wrote, “The Catholic Charismatic movement renewal, Trigo, and SINE have a number of Evangelical-like features in common. All emphasize the Bible.... They see their primary role as evangelizing Catholics to the point where they accept Jesus as their personal Savior, and they propound a morality centered on the individual and family. Yet their devotion to the Virgin Mary and respect for the Pope mark them as distinctly and conservatively Roman Catholic.” As cited in Smith, 69–70; Hallum, 88–90; Espinosa, 2000, 1–30.
- <sup>25</sup> In discussing the role of the Catholic Charismatic movement in the Church and in Central America, Anne Motley Hallum writes, “The pope sought more control over the charismatic movement by moving the World Catholic Charismatic Headquarters from Belgium to the Vatican. He also appointed ‘shepherd’ coordinators for different countries to direct the local movement. The charismatic meetings and crusades were instructed not to allow Protestant speakers and to demonstrate loyalty to Catholic doctrines by singing songs to Mary and the saints. Ironically the Vatican’s response to the charismatic groups is similar to its response to Christian base communities—initial support, developing ambivalence, and attempts to reassert control.” Hallum, 89–90; Smith, 2–3, 64, 74–75; Bowen, 10; Sigmund, 2; Pedro C. Moreno, “Evangelical Churches,” as cited in Sigmund, 50.
- <sup>26</sup> Bowen, 7, 48, 63–65, 70–75, 225; Barrett et al, 2001, 495, 497, 499.
- <sup>27</sup> Andrew Greeley, “Defection among Hispanics,” *America*, 30 July 1988, 61–62; R. Stephen Warner, “The De-Europeanization of American Christianity,” prepared for Stephen Prothero, ed, *A Nation of Religions: The Politics of Pluralism in the United States* (book in process); Espinosa et al, 2003, 15–16. Jasso Guillermina, Douglas Massey, Mark R. Rosenzweig, and James P. Smith, “Family, Schooling, Religiosity, and Mobility Among New Legal Immigrants to the U.S.: Evidence from the New Immigrant Survey Pilot,” in Lydio F. Tomasi and Mary G. Powers, eds., *Immigration Today: Pastoral and Research Challenges* (Staten Island, NY: Center for Migration Studies, 2000), 52–81; Jasso Guillermina, Douglas Massey, Mark R. Rosenzweig, and James P. Smith, “Exploring the Religious Preferences of Recent Immigrants to the United States: Evidence from the New Immigration Survey Pilot,” in Ivan Yazbeck Haddad, Jane I. Smith, and John L. Esposito, eds., *Religion and Immigration: Christian, Jewish, and Muslim Experiences in the United States* (Lanham, M.D.: Alta Mira Press, 2003), 217–253.
- <sup>28</sup> Smith, 2; Barrett et al, 2001, 131, 134, 186, 256, 327, 356, 612.
- <sup>29</sup> Bowen, 5; Smith, 2, 42, 86; Espinosa et al, 2003, 16, 27. For a good set of essays on U.S. Latino Mainline Protestantism see, David Maldonado, ed., *Protestantes/Protestants: Hispanic Christianity Within Mainline Traditions* (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1999). The national survey questions about being born-again and Pentecostal, Charismatic or spirit-filled read: Q# 24 – “Do you consider yourself a Pentecostal Christian, Charismatic Christian, or spirit-filled Catholic?” Q# 36 – “Do you consider yourself a born-again Christian, that is, have you personally had a conversion experience related to Jesus Christ?” I did not count any Catholics as Charismatic unless they also reported that they were born-again, one of the distinctives of traditional Pentecostal Christians and most Catholic Charismatic Christians. Edwin I. Hernández and Patricia Rodríguez, “Religious Switching Among Latino Religious Leaders,” (Unpublished paper, 2003).
- <sup>30</sup> No author, “C. Juárez, México,” *El Mensajero Cristiano* (January 1927): 24; No author, “Notas del Campo,” *El Mensajero Cristiano*, (January 1938): 10; Bowen, 149–157; No author, “Notas del Campo,” *El Mensajero Cristiano* (September 1938): 6–7, 10–11; No author, “Décima Convención,” *El Mensajero Cristiano* (November 1938): 4–7; Hallum, 30, 50–51; Gastón Espinosa, “Borderland Religion: Los Angeles and the Origins of the Latino Pentecostal Movement in the U.S., Mexico and Puerto Rico, 1900–1945,” Ph.D., diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1999, 117–135, 155–171, 226–227, 252, 255–268. This will be hereafter cited, Espinosa, 1999a.

- <sup>31</sup> No author, "C. Juárez, Mex.," *El Mensajero Cristiano* (January 1927): 24; No author, "Notas del Campo," *El Mensajero Cristiano*, (January 1938): 10; Bowen, 149–157; No author, "Notas del Campo," *El Mensajero Cristiano* (September 1938): 6–7, 10–11; No author, "Décima Convención," *El Mensajero Cristiano* (November 1938): 4–7; Hallum, 30, 50–51; Espinosa, 1999a, 117–135, 155–171, 226–227, 252, 255–268.
- <sup>32</sup> No author, "C. Juárez, Mex.," *El Mensajero Cristiano* (January 1927): 24; No author, "Notas del Campo," *El Mensajero Cristiano*, (January 1938): 10; Bowen, 149–157; No author, "Notas del Campo," *El Mensajero Cristiano* (September 1938): 6–7, 10–11; No author, "Décima Convención," *El Mensajero Cristiano* (November 1938): 4–7; Gastón Espinosa, "El Azteca": Francisco Olazábal and Latino Pentecostal Charisma, Power and Faith Healing in the Borderlands," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 67/3 (September 1999): 597–616. Hereafter 1999b.
- <sup>33</sup> Espinosa, 1999a, esp. 252, 141–160, 170–171, 279–280, 286–287; Barrett et al, 2001, 495–497.
- <sup>34</sup> Espinosa, 1999a, 184–245; Barrett et al, 2001, 612–615. David Ramos Torres, *Historia de la Iglesia de Dios Pentecostal, M.I.* (Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico: Editorial Pentecostal, 1992).
- <sup>35</sup> Barrett et al, 2001, 135–138.
- <sup>36</sup> Barrett et al, 2001, 330.
- <sup>37</sup> The three indigenous Pentecostal traditions are the Assembly of Christian Churches, the Pentecostal Church of God, and the Apostolic Assembly of the Faith in Christ Jesus, Inc. The three largest Latino Protestant traditions in the U.S. are the Assemblies of God, the Assembly of Christian Churches (a Pentecostal denomination), and the Pentecostal Church of God.
- <sup>38</sup> Barrett et al, 2001, 189–190, 205–206, 221, 258, 352, 499, 546; Espinosa et al, 2003, 16.
- <sup>39</sup> Barrett et al, 2001, 14, 131.
- <sup>40</sup> Barrett et al, 2001, 14, 72, 131.
- <sup>41</sup> Gastón Espinosa, "Universal Church of the Kingdom of God," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed., Stanley M. Burgess (Grand Rapids, M.I.: Zondervan, 2002), 1165–1166.
- <sup>42</sup> Espinosa, 1999a, 141–160. Espinosa, "Apostolic Assembly of the Faith in Christ Jesus," "Hispanic Districts of the Assemblies of God," "Victory Outreach International," as cited in Burgess, 320–321, 829–830, 1175. Also see 840–841.
- <sup>43</sup> James A. Beverley stated that John Arnott, the leader of the now famous Toronto Blessing Revival, in Toronto, Canada, was influenced and "anointed" by the Argentine Pentecostal evangelist, Claudio Friedzon. This revival has had a very important impact on other Pentecostal revivals in the United States like the Brownsville and Pensacola Revivals in Florida. James A. Beverley, *Holy Laughter & The Toronto Blessing* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 14.
- <sup>44</sup> Ed Silvano, "When God Came to Argentina: Special Report," *Charisma* (April 1998): 90–92, 110, 112; Billy Bruce, "Pensacola Revival Marks Third Year," *Charisma* (August 1998): 16–17; Cindy Jacobs, "Breaking the Spirit of Death in Argentina," *Charisma* (May 1999): 58–60; Stephen Strang, "Spreading Argentina's Fire," *Charisma* (August 1999): 106; Andy Butcher, "Argentine Revival Leaders Spread Their Fervor at Charisma '99 Meetings," *Charisma* (February 2000): 18.
- <sup>45</sup> "Be at the Epicenter of Global Prayer," *Charisma* (May 1998): 23; "Robertson

- Reaches 1 Million Brazilians," *Charisma* (August 1998): 13; Mauricio Zagari, "Scandal Forces Prominent Brazilian Evangelist Caio Fabio to Resign," *Charisma* (December 1999): 36.
- <sup>46</sup> Smith, 4, 14–19, 62, 92–93; Bowen, 60, 127–128; Hallum, 86. xlviii Smith writes, "Until this thorny constitutional issue of unequal treatment of denominations before the law is settled, there is little hope of any strategic alliance between Catholics and Pentecostal." Sigmund, 23–24; Smith, 14–19, 37, 39–41, 44–45, 57–60, 69–70, 85–99; Hallum, 88–95; Sigmund, 40.
- <sup>47</sup> Espinosa et al, 2003, 13.
- <sup>48</sup> Pedro C. Moreno, "Evangelical Churches," in Sigmund, 57; Barrett et al, 2001, 14.
- <sup>49</sup> For an excellent examination of Evangelicals in Latin American politics, particularly Argentina, Mexico, Chile, Colombia, Peru, Nicaragua, and Guatemala, see Freston; Barrett et al, 2001, 73–75, 133–134, 188, 204, 244, 257; Smith, 60–62.
- <sup>50</sup> Bowen, 4, 212–216; Hallum, 106–112; Freston, 11–60, 263–280; Smith, 43–45.
- <sup>51</sup> Freston, 100–103, Smith, 44–45, 52, 60–64, 80, 92, 94.
- <sup>52</sup> For an excellent analyses of the impact of religious pluralism and proselytism on Latin American Catholicism and society see, Sigmund. Particularly insightful are the chapters on the Catholic Church, Evangelical Churches, El Salvador, Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Colombia. Sigmund, 6–7; Smith, 4, 62, 92.
- <sup>53</sup> Kosmin, Myer, and Keysar claim that 76 percent of Americans maintain Christian allegiances. Barry A. Kosmin, Egon Myer, and Ariela Keysar, *American Religious Identification Survey* (New York: Graduate Center of the City University of New York, 2001). Barrett, Kurian, and Johnson in the *World Christian Encyclopedia* report that the percentage of "professing Christians" is 84.7 percent. Barrett et al, 2001, 14, 772. U.S. Census Bureau, "Facts for Features Press Release: Hispanic Heritage Month 2002," <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02ff15.htm>. Diana Eck, *The New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 2001); Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).
- <sup>54</sup> Robert Wuthnow and John Hyde Evans, *The Quiet Hand of God: Faith-based Activism and the Public Role of Mainline Protestantism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002).
- <sup>55</sup> Espinosa et al, 2003, 14–16.
- <sup>56</sup> Warner, "The De-Europeanization of American Christianity"; Espinosa et al, 2003.
- <sup>57</sup> Espinosa et al, 2003, 14–15.
- <sup>58</sup> Espinosa et al, 2003, 17–24.

## **A Spirituality for a Multicultural Ministry**

Elizabeth Conde-Frazier

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Elizabeth Conde-Frazier is of Puerto Rican descent born in New York City. Ordained by the American Baptist Churches, she was the director of Hispanic and Latin American Ministries at the Andover Newton Theological School in Newton, MA. A former awardee of the Hispanic Theological Initiative, she obtained her Ph.D. degree at Boston College in Theology and Religious Education. She is now assistant professor of religious education at Claremont School of Theology. Dr. Conde-Frazier was awarded the 2002–2003 Hispanic Theological Initiative Dissertation Series Award.

### **A personal story**

**I**t was a cold, icy day—January in New York City. The streets were treacherous with ice falling and cars slipping through it, the tires scratching through ice to get loose. I stood in the entrance of the funeral home and watched as people came in. The funeral home was full, but more people kept coming. The ministers stood together in the front. They were there from every church. A taxi rolled into the parking lot. The door opened and a frail, older woman descended. She needed a walker to move. With ankle high boots she moved as if the ice didn't really make a difference to her sliding with her walker. She was helped up the few stairs into the building and she walked inside looking for a chair in an already too crowded room. Patiently she looked back and forth down every aisle in the dimly lit room—dimness like the eyes of the soul that mourns.

My father saw her and they exchanged words of greeting, she in her soft quivering voice and he in broken English. He quickly made room for her at the end of the row where our family was seated. She and I were the last persons to be seated just before the service began. She sat next to me, a stranger I did not know. The service began. It was my mother's funeral service.

In 1959 my mother returned to work to supplement the family income. She fussed about how she dressed that morning, talking to herself. She was excited and nervous, happy to be working in the Lord's work, which was meaningful for her. She was to be the secretary for the office of the Spanish Department, where new churches were being developed.

We sat at dinner that night in our kitchen where the table took up the center of the room. My mother cried as she ate. She told my father in whispers that the women where she worked had treated her badly. They did not speak to her; there was discrimination and prejudice even in the church. She was surprised and deeply disappointed. My father could not believe it. "*Pero Negra*, but honey, how could it be? This is the church!" His confusion and disbelief questioned the credibility of my mother's observations, her interpretations of the events of her first day at work.

Dinner conversations seemed to be about the new developments in the continuing story of my mother with the women who worked with her. The women wouldn't speak to her but they spoke about her while she was present. Things that hurt her, names, accusations of things she had not done but that proved to them that she had earned the names they called her. These things must have become routine.

During the service a difficult moment made my tears well up and they flowed onto my lap. Silently her white, wrinkled hand slipped over mine. It felt soft and firm with strength and with it she carried me in that moment. It was hard to receive, for I was trying to be strong on my own, but I so much appreciated it. She

quietly reclaimed her hand as she felt me calm down.

At the end of the service she said, "I had to come. I could not stay away. I had to pay my respects." She sat down again to regain her own strength. I sat with her. She then told me her story. "When your mother came to work for the Spanish Department her office space was adjacent to mine. I and the other women who worked there felt insulted that she should come and work alongside of us as if she were like us. We did cruel things. We blamed her if the community kitchen was left dirty and we called her names that I do not wish to repeat for they are lies. We never spoke to her and we used notes to communicate only what was work related. It must have been like hell to work with us. She in turn, started to leave our favorite pastry on the right hand corner of our desk every morning. She used the prison of silence we created for her to listen to our needs and wants. She got to know us very well. She gave us birthday cards and holiday cards. She cleaned and decorated that kitchen all the time. We were relentless in our campaign to keep her in her place lest she believe that she could be like us. The truth was that she was faster at the typewriter, never making mistakes. She took shorthand and could do accounting. Everything she did was done perfectly and we became even angrier. How could a *Spic* be so smart?" She puckered her lips searching for saliva in her mouth to continue. Her eyes looked into a corner in the room where soggy umbrellas stood draining into the thin soiled carpet.

"After the first year she started to write us notes with prayers every morning. Sometimes a scripture verse accompanied them and sometimes a short meditation from somewhere that she had copied. Each one was different, custom made to our needs. Then, I remember a winter that was fierce. It snowed and became icy, much worse than today. Dorothy, a co-worker, had problems with her legs and we had to walk up a hill from the subway station. She complained about it one day and, wouldn't you believe it, your

mother was there waiting for Dorothy the very next morning. Dorothy said your mother offered her arm to her for support and walked with her all the way without one single word. She did that everyday until the snow and ice melted. Who could resist her?"

My storyteller companion was Mrs. Campbell, a woman who had worked with my mother for nine years. She was living in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. and had come all the way from there in a taxi that now waited for her to take her back—pretty penny that must have cost her.

She continued her account of recollections. "All we knew were the habits and patterns of our prejudices, but slowly she taught us new patterns of compassion. She broke the power of our habits and led us into new ways. At first, we could not understand, but we followed and then we began to see with her eyes the love of Christ. The new habits emptied us of our prejudices, of our fears, we made room for all of us." Mrs. Campbell got up slowly and she walked up to the casket. She touched my mother's hand and I saw some words move her lips. Then she turned and left.

I understood the story but I had lived it differently. It is the story of invisibility. Invisibility is to not be seen, to be indistinguishable. It is to be too small to be seen, like a germ. This was what I learned in elementary school. Teachers affirmed white students, seemed able to hear them when they spoke, but the rest of us went unnoticed, hushed. We needed to be taught, controlled. I kept wondering how to be pleasing, to earn the right to be like the others. I hated school, but I loved to learn. It made me feel ill and afraid. I can say now what I could not say as a child. I did not feel safe. Inside of me I felt hurt coming home from school everyday.

Words that told of Dick and Jane were drilled into us, the notion that our worlds were not good enough. It is hard to start the day as a child and go through six hours, somehow knowing in your bones that you are not good enough. It teaches you to be silent lest they see something displeasing. Learn more words,

more rules for spelling those words, more about how to say those words, how they work. We went home to very different words and sounds of words. Home was where you felt safe once more.

The Hispanic Protestant church was where we could express ourselves in art, music, drama, words, poems, jokes, laughter. It was O.K. to be who we were with God. God accepted and celebrated everything with us. Free, free to be real, to exist, to be noisy, breaking out of the prison of silence all week. We were very visible people. God is the God who sees us.

Invisibility is to be incomprehensible, to not be grasped or taken in by the senses. In high school nothing I said in class seemed to make sense. I always felt like I was speaking about another subject. Invisibility makes others blind, unable to see, to trace, to perceive. It renders them without knowledge, without the power to understand or judge. Prejudices blind us. Blindness means there is no opening like a blind wall. Openness to my person, to my world was unimaginable. There was no opening when my high school counselor saw my records of very fine grades but refused to give me information about applying for colleges. In my family, I was the first generation going to college, and I knew absolutely nothing about the process.

Even if I speak English, when I am invisible, there is no sense to what I say. No knowledge of me, no perception of my person and therefore, no receptors to my presence, to my stimuli. Others cannot know my warmth or their own incompleteness without me. There is no understanding, no appreciation, or esteem and no sense of meaning—an inability to make sense. "This essay makes no sense. The reader does not know what you are talking about." I had drawn parallels between the experiences of the author of a short story and my own experiences, but the teacher had no way of relating to them. My grades in that class reflected this "no sense," this having no faculties, no organs for perception, no good judgment, no experience. So, I was relegated to continue invisible, non-existent.

Non-existence is to have no being, one is not real, has no life, no presence, one has not occurred. I haven't taken place, I have no past, present or future. It is as if God had never said, "Let there be Elizabeth." I was given the classical canons of education. I accepted the offer, and appreciated the gift of Shakespeare, the history of the Western World, the renaissance, industrialization, capitalism, and democracy. I learned French and not Spanish, the works of Locke and Hume, Martin Luther and Calvin, Schleiermacher, Nietzsche. I learned to be, to become according to the becoming standards of others. I dressed myself in the visible spectrum of the hues between red and violet rather than the ultraviolet light that, I was told, clothed my culture, my people, and my race.

In seminary I was told to keep my hand movements during the sermon in an imaginary box in front of me. If I preached that way in my church people would wonder if I had an impairment that inhibited my movement. I was to preach for no more than twenty minutes. Heavens, that would mean I hadn't prayed for inspiration! I kept two sets of notes on my page, one were the linear thoughts that would get me an "A" on the exam and the other were the integration of church history with theology and ethics. How very interesting this all was. But the real fun and depth of the discussion were always taken out because we separated everything into sacred little boxes. Two ways of looking at life, two sets of notes to keep my lives flowing alongside each other, talking to each other and making meaning together.

Now I had presence, I was in plain sight, no longer alone but in the company of others. I was perceived as clothed and in my right mind. But I still had no being, for I still spoke of these things with the nuances and from the perspective of a world unknown, a reality still not evident. I was possessed, for I still had to borrow the waves and hues of another light so that I could be seen. I was still outside the consciousness of the institutions that taught me.

I decided to declare that my world was and is. It represents a

reality others had not been taught to perceive. I wanted to make my world present and not absent. We have been absent to one another. Absent is to be away from each other, distant and out of notice. It is to be lacking. I lack you and you lack me. Through my words today I want to present an alternative possibility. I want to present the possibility of a journey that takes us from the habit of being absent from one another, from a lack of awareness and an inability to pay attention to one another, to the habit of presence or being.

God presented Godself to Moses as "I AM." "To be" is a verb used to express future time. Presence is "I amness." I am in Jesus as Jesus is in God and we are in Christ a new creation brought together in Him. This is our future. I want my words to bring a presentation. Presentation is a word used to describe the position taken by the fetus during labor. My hope is that we would create a labor room where we might be born to one another.

### The Census Report

Recently, the United States Census Bureau declared that "Hispanics and Latinos are now the largest ethnic group in the United States." But they did not report it so simply. Their manner of making it known was through comparison with other groups. Hispanics and Latinos have surpassed African Americans and are now the largest ethnic group. Rather than a presentation, which is the action of bringing something forward for consideration, it sounds like a "present-iment" which is a feeling or an impression that something evil is about to happen. Why has the census insisted on drawing this continuous comparison between the Latino and African American communities? Howard Jordan, the political columnist for *Hoy*, asks why the census has not seen it fit to publicize how Italians have surpassed Jews or the Irish have surpassed Italians.<sup>1</sup> This is a divisive, "divide and conquer," report that pits Latinos against African-Americans at a time when coali-



tions need to be built between ours and other groups. The gains of neither one of our groups have reached the point where we can stand up and celebrate the fact that we have indeed arrived.

We are not an empowered people. Our lack of economic power prevents us from making a major impact on policy decisions that affect our quality of life. We still have a poverty rate of 21.2 percent and only eleven percent of us have a college education. One quarter of us are non-citizens. Still, our numbers increased more than 50% since 1990; in the South we account for almost 49% of the growth of N. Carolina for example. We are young people. Our median age is 25.9 and 35% of us are under the age of 18.

But these statistics exist in a broader context. It is a context where the immigrant population as a whole has been growing in the United States. Our present circumstances reflect the fact that the rate of poverty has been increasing in the United States among all groups. Under these circumstances, political efforts to change social policies must be made through a variety of coalitions that represent a diversity of communities and interests. Can the Hispanic community provide a model of leadership at such a time that leads from the bottom up? Can the suffering we have experienced bring creative alternatives by re-conceiving systems so that they will not continue their legacies of oppression to others?

I concur with Virgilio Elizondo that God has graced each culture with some specific aspects of God's goodness. Latinos have much to contribute to "the human betterment of our country," and to the build-up of God's kingdom among us."<sup>2</sup> Present U.S. demographics speak to this dire need. I agree with Elizondo, and others, that one of our gifts is that of our biculturalism, or our *mestizaje*. It permits us to internalize others, their perceptions and realities. Our *mestizaje* has helped us develop the spiritual discipline of seeing with the eyes of others or looking at things from inside of the culture of our neighbor. *Familia* is another gift we have. Hospitality is a tradition of *familia*. The strength of our faith,

many times expressed beyond the parameters of the tradition, also shapes the way we approach these times. From our faith we have the biblical legacy, the legacy of the Spirit and of our popular religiosity. How do these provide guidance or strategies for us?

Whether we are Hispanic, Irish, African American, or Australian, the current circumstances invite us as Christians to know our neighbor. We are invited beyond the role of bystander to that of participant within a pattern of involvement. For this we need a flexibility or openness of spirit and of will that results in obedience. The gap between insight and involvement cannot be filled unless we construct the bridge of surrender to God's will as well as surrender to one another.

We need to stretch toward one another and to restore the connective tissue that makes us neither Jew nor Greek, dominant cultures nor minorities but members of the same body. We need to understand that it is not a glimpse of something "out there"; it is not a rhetorical vision of which we carve out mission statements, it is a call. The call is to follow Jesus into new patterns of living and into Christian spiritual practices that create community.

Our conversation begins with the U.S. census and what it says and doesn't say about Latinos. But we look beyond it to see how the census report and its interpretations are more a reflection of U.S. policy's desire to expand its economic, military and political power in a world that is characterized by massive injustice.

This discussion, therefore, is not about "why can't we be friends?" It is about recognizing that we are connected or related as humans and children of God. I focus on connections, because injustice occurs when types of violence are pitted against one another, and violence is always rooted in a myopic sense of community. It is a fundamental disconnection from our sense of relationship to one another. We need to be concerned with going beyond our tribe, race, class and nation to an all-embracing and unconditional love. I believe that is what is visionary and pro-

phetic about persons like César Chávez. He used the energy of his pathos to understand the connections between persons, communities, systems and structures. His wisdom was derived from his understanding of these connections. His relational knowledge and his love informed and ignited the movement of the people for justice.

Lest we become self-righteous, let us not overlook the fact that the very structures we say we want to transform are also within us and they distort our ability to relate to one another. They must be dismantled internally and interpersonally as well as structurally.<sup>3</sup> To be honest with ourselves is to realize that the power issues involved in these matters are difficult to discern, especially when the oppressed internalizes the oppressor.

The spiritual journey I am about to explore with you is one that does not come out of theoretical know-how. Rather, it stems from my own journey and that of many others who, as congregations and pastors, struggle everyday with issues of power across culture. Culture, in this sense, includes class and gender differences as well as our ethnic particularities. Connection with others at a deep level is important for subverting the power of hegemony. It must be deep enough that it becomes an incarnational relationship. This is the power that subverts all others.

Let's contextualize this a bit by taking a look at the national picture for a moment. When combined, the decades of 1980 and 1990 produced the largest influx of immigrants in any 20-year period that the United States has ever experienced.<sup>4</sup> In his book, *Death of the Church*, Mike Regele asserts that the church is being left behind by the change in neighborhoods created by these ethnic changes in population.<sup>5</sup> Immigration and economic disparities are changing our neighborhoods. The gap between rich and poor is increasing in our nation, and it is not discriminating between race or ethnicity. This has two important results in relation to growing multiculturalism. First, the rich are not from one ethnic group;

wealthy neighborhoods can be multicultural. Second, the masses of the poor are increasing according to factors such as race or ethnicity. The choice space for living is restricted to affordability. It no longer makes sense then, to construct ministry on the basis of ethnicity if the surrounding community is not divided that way.<sup>6</sup>

What are the implications that this might have for the church whose theological/biblical tradition challenges it to be inclusive? Is there something that gives us guidance about these matters from our biblical legacy? Were there not New Testament and early church communities that developed in a multicultural context? Did not the early church cross cultural boundaries?

### **The Biblical Roots for a Christian Spirituality of Multicultural Living**

A Christian way of life is composed of various activities that provide concrete ways for us to flourish. A spiritual practice, therefore, is carried out not because it works but because it is good. It is a way of connecting God to the world around us, of connecting ourselves to our neighbors and to our environment. The outcome of the practice is beyond us.

A practice is something we do together consistently—a way in which we help each other grow. We learn it in small increments of daily faithfulness. A Christian practice of spirituality is one that is part of our daily lives and is “all tangled up with the things God is doing in the world.”<sup>7</sup> To become so entangled makes us partners in God's reconciling love for the world. Becoming multicultural people or congregations fulfills a yearning to be partners with God in the ministry of reconciliation.

The New Testament and early church communities developed in a multicultural context—they crossed cultural boundaries. The Incarnation and Pentecost shaped the New Testament legacy on these matters. The Holy Spirit reveals Jesus Christ, God incarnate to us. The Spirit reveals the word that became flesh and lived

among us, and summons us to continue to incarnate God in the world. What does it mean to be God incarnate today?

Hispanic theologian Samuel Soliván points to the meaning of incarnation by pointing to Jesus' witness in the gospel of John. "The word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's son, full of grace and truth" (Jn.1:14). This shapes our attitudes toward diversity. Solivan posits that the incarnation requires, "that divinity take on a foreign identity as flesh... our human existence."<sup>8</sup> We are called to venture into the world of our neighbor which may be different or even strange to us at times, yet also very much like our own. The incarnation calls us to dislocate ourselves from the familiar and relocate ourselves in fellowship alongside those who are different. It is in the incarnation that we behold the glory of God. As we move to the Pentecost event, the account of the out-pouring of the Spirit of God, we find that it discloses what God wills in the world: unity amidst diversity. "This is not a suspension of difference but the free and liberating inclusion of difference mediated by the Holy Spirit in hope, love and peace."<sup>9</sup>

Pentecost points us towards some of our goals for becoming a multicultural community. It understands the church as a multi-ethnic, multilingual and multiracial body, whose diversity enriches our Christian unity rather than threatens it. The Spirit enables us to value and affirm our own culture while engaging in effective ways with another culture. Pentecost also invites us to appreciate the many ways that Christians from various cultures express their faith.<sup>12</sup>

These goals challenge both the cultural minority, as well as the cultural majority church. First, cultural minority churches need to assist their members to identify themselves as full human beings, people with experiences, histories and aspirations. Second, cultural majority congregations need to become aware of their own cultural imperialism by making a practice of affirming the her-

itage of each person and by teaching attitudes of respect and appreciation toward other cultures. Respect is not demonstrated by becoming blind to cultural differences. This simply renders them invisible. Instead we acknowledge the differences and participate in them. In the book of Acts (16:15), when Lydia met Paul, she challenged him by saying, "If you deem me worthy come to my house." Jesus also placed himself in the position of encountering Gentiles (Jn.4: 4-26; Mt.15:21-28). This is where we need to position ourselves.

Ultimately, when we are exposed to another culture through relationships, we are better able to realize that politics, education and history are culturally influenced. This awareness or consciousness raising will bring us to where we will develop strong analysis and relational skills. It will help us to develop a more balanced approach to cultural diversity that includes a healthy curiosity, appreciation, true valuation and respect of persons and other cultures.<sup>13</sup>

### **Hospitality**

Our first approach to one another is hospitality. It is a practice that brings us into closer alignment with the basic values of the kingdom. It is part of worshipping Jesus. In Matthew 25, to offer food, shelter and protection to one of these little ones is to offer it to Jesus. Luke 14 and the parable of inviting those who cannot repay us to the banquet table is another image of hospitality. During the fourth and fifth centuries the church founded various institutions for the care of pilgrims and the poor. The monastic communities held the demands of hospitality in tension with the ideal of separation from the world as they carried the Christian tradition of hospitality through the Middle Ages.<sup>14</sup>

Hospitality is a place where we are connected to one another. It is a space that is safe, personal and comfortable—a place of respect, acceptance, and friendship. Through hospitality, we offer

each other life-sustaining networks of relations. Older immigrants offer their networks to newer ones—a very important dimension of what the church is for the first generation immigrants.

Writing about the recovery of hospitality as a Christian tradition, Christine D. Pohl notes that because acts of hospitality participate in and reflect God’s greater hospitality, they connect us to the divine, to holy ground. It is worship as well as a life-giving practice.<sup>15</sup>

Hospitality as recognition involves respecting the image of God in another and seeing their potential contributions as being of equal value. Social injustice and suffering takes root when persons are not valued. They become socially invisible and their needs and concerns are not acknowledged. Pohl rightfully points out that hospitality begins a journey toward visibility.<sup>16</sup> It is a spiritual journey that moves us from personal hospitality to a broader field that rearranges our relationships.

When we practice the rearrangement of relationships through even the smallest act of respect and welcome, rather than disregard and dishonor, we point to a different system of values and to an alternate model of relationships. Through this act of resistance we witness to the importance of transcending social differences and breaking with socio-cultural boundaries that are exclusive.

Wesley recognized the importance of intentionally forming relationships that crossed boundaries. He noticed that when persons were in contact with their poor neighbors, they could understand the situation better and could respond more effectively as a personal practice of the ministry of love and care. Dislocating ourselves from our usual places of work, school, worship and residence breaks with domination power and teaches us true power as Jesus exercised it, through self giving and loving service to others. This service is the church’s expression of her life of holiness.

## Encounter

“Who knows one culture, knows no culture. We come to self knowledge on the boundary.”<sup>17</sup>

Encounter is space where we take risks—a place for the collision of worlds and multiplicity of views. It is where various streams meet. It brings together a variety of sources that might not often be placed together, holding together what might be seen as opposite. This is the borderland.

In these spaces, hybrid significations are created requiring the practice of cultural translations and negotiations. It is here that we transcend dualistic modes of thinking of either/or and we come to understand how opposing ideas and knowledge can interact with each other. This place is called *mestizo/a* consciousness. Gloria Anzaldúa describes this term as a continual walking out of one culture and into another.<sup>18</sup> It is the transfer of the cultural and spiritual values of one group to another. It is straddling cultures. It is a consciousness of the struggle of the border. It is hearing multiple voices at times with conflicting messages. It is what Asian theologian Jung Young Lee calls marginality or being “in-both” which restores the balance between the two poles and creates harmony.<sup>19</sup>

## Storytelling and Listening

An encounter with God leads to an encounter with our neighbors. In our encounters, the telling and listening of stories leads us to deeper relationship. To share the stories of our daily pain and hope is to make new meaning that results in deeper ethnic and Christian identities. This movement of storytelling is where we first recognize that those in the dominant culture have constructed the church to fit their needs. Their voice has been heard from the pulpits, theological classrooms, theological books and denominational hierarchies. The Hispanic church can relate to this as we too have created the church to fit the needs of the pious and

to make the impious feel unwelcome. Now it is time for others to be heard as well.

Educators Clandinin and Connelly claim that family stories about the world are usually teaching stories that tell the generations listening about the ways of the world according to the experiences of the elders.<sup>20</sup> In immigrant communities, inter-generational storytelling is necessary since often it is the younger generations and not the elders who may be learning and telling about the ways of a new world. In this manner, the stories also help to forge community identity.

In the midst of our stories we find what James Loder defines as “transforming moments” or “moments of faith transformation.”<sup>21</sup> For Loder, these moments alter our ways of being in the world. A transforming moment is a convictional experience that disrupts our previous assumptions about the world by puncturing our ways of constructing meaning. It discloses dimensions of being not previously attended to that enable us to re-ground and realign our ways of seeing and being. These are the moments that are apparent in our stories.

Listening is an accompanying movement to telling the story. Pastor Brian Parcel, whose church is in a changing neighborhood, led his Anglo congregation through a process of listening to the stories of their Latino neighbors at a cookout that the church offered its neighbors in a nearby park. He encourages us “to listen to our soul where lies the common place we all share with one another. Somewhere deep within our soul, underneath the layers of power, dominance and difference that we hear and see in this world, there is the common place—our humanity. If we listen from this place we can get beyond the impulses to protect ourselves from what we hear, to reject what we hear, and to judge what we hear and then we can just listen to the story of the other person.”<sup>22</sup>

Parcel encourages us to listen to the stories told in demographic information without necessarily looking for a quick solution.

He challenges us to allow the dissonance to be played on the strings of our hearts where our compassion and passion may emerge. We must listen to what our congregation’s stories tell of inward or outward focused ministries and to the stories of the voting district’s monthly meeting or the PTA meetings. What stories do they tell? Who is in need? Who is crying out? Who has gifts to offer? Who is not listened to? What common ground do we see?

Stories can be told through art, music, dance and drama in order to transcend language barriers. They break down the master narrative of our society and the master paradigms begin to shift. Relaying stories of discrimination and racism is difficult. However, if we are to rearrange relationships, then we must deconstruct how our common story was put together. In South Africa, as victims told their stories before their victimizers, the common story of their brokenness permitted the possibility of imagining the possibilities of a different story passing between them.

Most recently in San Diego there was an exhibit of portraits and stories of participants in a national forum called the Arab-Jewish Dialogues. The forum brings together about one hundred and fifty persons in six chapters who meet once a month to talk about their differences and their common fears. Jews and Arabs get to know each other and their long-held prejudices. Participants have confessed that they have learned to stop dehumanizing one another and have come to respect one another. Digesting one another’s personal narratives has been key to this process.<sup>23</sup>

Through our encounters, the Holy Spirit gives birth to new stories. Such was the case when Peter visited Cornelius (Acts 10). The vision Peter received of the loin cloth with all kinds of four footed creatures, reptiles and birds of the air, including those the law prohibited him to eat, expanded the realm of the possible for him. The journey began with great puzzlement (Acts 10:17). As Peter went to Cornelius’ home and shared freely in the hospitali-

ty offered at his Gentile neighbor's home, the Holy Spirit opened him up to new directions. Peter preached and while he was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. Peter and the circumcised believers with him were astonished to see the Holy Spirit poured out "even on the Gentiles" (Acts 10:45) who were not circumcised.

The Holy Spirit had taken them beyond the cultural and religious interpretations that had alienated Jews and Gentiles from one another. Later, Paul is able to reinterpret these events into a new Christian story that includes both Jews and Gentiles in a new relationship.

He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it... So then you are no longer strangers and aliens but you are...members of the household of God (Ephes. 2:13-16, 19 NRSV).

I wonder what new stories the Holy Spirit is birthing today as we visit with our neighbors across cultures, across traditional gender definitions and even across religious experiences? What new directions and possibilities is the Spirit opening up to us?

**Compassion**

The origin of the word compassion is from the words *cum patior*, which means to suffer with, to undergo with. It connotes solidarity. Compassion works from a place of strength of mutuality. It means participating in the sufferings of another from a strength born of awareness of shared weakness.<sup>24</sup> It is this sense of shared weakness that distinguishes compassion from pity. Pity takes more distance from the one suffering and sees him/her as

weak or inferior. In pity, there is less participation in the suffering of the other person.

Compassion and joy are linked. In Romans 12 the eighth verse, the grace of the gift of compassion is cheerfulness. In compassion, as well as in celebration, it is the togetherness that is empowering, sharing our sufferings and our joys. Compassion is passion with, or feeling the passion or suffering with the other. Matthew Fox points out that celebration and compassion are a forgetting in order to remember. We forget or let go of ego and concerns in order to remember the common base that makes another's suffering mine. Together, we can then imagine a relief or solution for that suffering.<sup>25</sup> In celebration we also let go of ego and concerns in order to share in the joy of relief.

Compassion involves imagination and action. The story of the Good Samaritan speaks of the Samaritan's works of mercy. These works make it clear that compassion is not about sentimentalism. Anne Douglas defines sentimentalism as "the political sense obfuscated or gone rancid...(that) never exists except in tandem with failed political consciousness."<sup>26</sup> These works of mercy are described by the prophets (Isa. 58:6-7; Micah 6:6-8) and the Johannine literature, where we are exhorted to love in truth and action (1 Jn. 3:18). Compassion in this action is described as a laying down one's life for another and helping those in need (1 Jn. 3:16-17). The power for healing and doing miracles is the power of compassion.

In the Latino community a great number of us lack health insurance. Health care is a luxury so that prayers for healing are common. One of the names ascribed to Jesus in our community is the most excellent doctor (*el médico por excelencia*). Healing services are not the drama portrayed by tele-evangelists but the prayers of the compassionate poor pooling together their faith on behalf of a beloved one suffering in the community. In one such community a man in a wheelchair sat in the front at every service of his

storefront congregation. One evening, the invited preacher was so overwhelmed by weeping during the sermon that he could not finish it. Instead, he moved with compassion toward the wheelchair and uttered a humble whispered prayer for the man who was sitting in it. The congregation prayed with him although his words could not be heard. At the end of the prayer a closing hymn was sung during which the man in the wheelchair stood up and danced with tears of joy.

On other occasions, compassion takes the form of doing justice. Marcion created a dualism between the good God and the just God creating a polarity between mercy and justice.<sup>27</sup> This separated justice and love. In the United States, before the civil rights movement, churches could speak of love but could not articulate what that love looked like. During the movement, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. equated justice with love. He said: "Justice is love correcting that which would work against love."<sup>28</sup> Before this statement and the actions of the civil rights movement, the relationship between theology and politics in the active life of the church was bifurcated. There were few who claimed that the two could mix successfully and, instead, chose silence. Others advocated a form of gradualism that denounced more radical expressions, such as sit-ins and boycotts. These political, non-violent strategies were the works of mercy or compassion. When we understand the link between compassion and justice, we then also understand its anger. Anger is not considered a positive emotion.<sup>29</sup> Like conflict, it has traditionally been considered a spiritual impediment. Anger in Spanish is *coraje*, which also means courage. Aristotle defined anger as an energy that enables us to face difficulty. Thomas Aquinas integrated Aristotle's view into Christian thinking to give us an expanded and more positive view of anger. Anger is a gift from God and also an emotion that God displays. It brings out resistance rather than helplessness. A person with a healthy sense of self, when hurt in any way, will be

aroused to protest. This expression of protest is anger. It is a necessary part of our survival. Beyond survival, anger also serves social transformation.<sup>30</sup> As today's prophets, we must combine our anger with the spiritual discipline of temperance so that it can be cooled to a productive level and bear the spiritual fruits of justice (love), hope and peace.<sup>31</sup>

Compassion—part of the journey of conversion—brings us from indifference to care. It also helps us redefine our inner parameters so that we go from blood ties, or ties to family and culture, to the created family. Compassion is the internalizing of others to where we no longer feel displaced or dislocated when interacting outside of our culture. Instead, our sense of what joins us to those who had previously been strangers is a common humanity, a new understanding of who we are and who others are to us. It comes from knowledge of the *corazón*. Therefore, compassion is the process whereby we connect to others allowing them to pervade us until they become significant in our lives.

### Passion

Compassion is passionate; it is a movement.<sup>32</sup> The compassionate God is a passionate God. Passion is derived from the Latin word *patior* meaning to suffer or to take on. To stand with Jesus is to share his passion. Similarly, as we enter in some way into the pain of our neighbor, share it and taste it, insofar as is possible, then, we are moved. After listening to each other's stories and getting to know our diverse gifts, we connect by a common wound.

When Jesus irrupts into our history he announces that the time has been fulfilled and God's reign is at hand (Mk.1:9-14). The National Conference of Catholic Bishops, in their pastoral letter on social teachings sees this proclamation as a "summons to acknowledge God as creator and covenant partner."<sup>33</sup> This can only be done when our commitment to God is enacted through love of one's neighbor.

Devotion is the act, or condition, of giving oneself up for another person, purpose or service. It is a sacred and reverent expression of the totality of our person. Setting ourselves apart for this type of deep, steady affection is our spiritual worship. Devotion entails grasping that which is not normally accessible; apprehending the invisible God and the people visible to God who are made invisible through injustices. To reveal these injustices is to reveal those who live under their weight and to see the invisible God visible through them.

### **Shalom**

Shalom is a concept that cannot be captured by a single word for it includes many dimensions: love, loyalty, truth, grace, salvation, justice, blessing, and righteousness. It is a biblical vision of world history where all of creation is one, every creature in community with every other, living in harmony and security and moving towards the joy and well-being of every other creature. Shalom is therefore a vision of connectedness by, and for, a whole community: young, elderly, rich, poor, Latino, Anglo, Native Americans, Asians, African Americans, gay and straight, powerful and dependent. Shalom includes the process of denouncing, announcing and holding persons and structures accountable for responding equitably and compassionately to all.

Shalom is not shifting the center of power from one center to another, but it is distributing power among all equally. Because equity, or reconciliation, is our final goal, we cannot hold metaphors or visions of the center. Asian theologian Jung Young Lee speaks of a multicultural theology. He speaks of marginality as that which overcomes our needs for centrality. He reminds us that centrality is based on hierarchical value, is interested in dominance and vies for control. Marginality is based on egalitarian principle, is interested in service and seeks cooperation.<sup>34</sup> Lee invites us all to the margin rather than to the center. He posits that when everyone

becomes marginal, there is no centrality that can marginalize anyone so that marginality is overcome by marginality.<sup>35</sup>

Latino theologian Orlando Costas also invites us to the margins as he reminds us that Christ died outside the gate and this implies a new place of salvation. The temple had been the central place of salvation and confined to the walls of the city but Jesus dies outside, at the margins. He displaces salvation from the center to the margins.<sup>36</sup>

The journey from hospitality to shalom is one of new spiritual practices that frees us from the inclination to dominate and control. It teaches us to be servants to all people so that all are served as brothers and sisters, equally. It is this spirit that makes us a people guided by the spirit of the incarnation.

### **Conclusion**

While Moses was living in the desert there was a whole people living enslaved in Egypt. It is when God revealed their reality to Moses that he included their world in his. Hearing their story, faceless "others" whom he did not know, were revealed to him. This revelation or encounter helped him discover the connections between the everyday life of his neighbor (their life of slavery) and his own. The historical events of his time, which previously had no meaning for him, now entered into his world with new meaning. Moses had pangs of conscience.<sup>37</sup>

God's revelation is found in God's revealing to Moses the people invisible to Moses, but visible to God. To open himself to them is to open himself to God. To shut out the slave is to shut God out. Storytelling, then, is a medium for the revelation of God. Moses' life was changed upon appropriating the story, not as an event or a memory, but as a moment of conversion where he now internalizes God by internalizing the slaves in Egypt. Moses, God, and the enslaved peoples become intertwined in a story of liberation.

The Census reports that Hispanics are the largest minority in



the United States. This is a burning bush experience: Hispanics are the epiphany of God. Let us internalize each other, let this begin the intertwining of our stories so that none may be called “a minority.” Can we begin to lead others into a journey toward world-wide fellowship in which the life of an African American, a Vietnamese, a Latina, a gay brother or a lesbian sister, an Afghani, a North Korean, an Iraqi, is as precious as my own life? This is a journey toward a vision of the spiritual values of compassion, generosity and community. It is these that make solidarity and shalom materialize among us. May they lead us into new stories that reveal God in our midst.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Howard Jordan, “Census ‘Minority’ Report Has A Divisive Distinction” *Newsday*.
- <sup>2</sup> Virgilio Elizondo, “A Bicultural Approach to Religious Education,” in *Beyond Borders: Writings of Virgilio Elizondo and Friends* ed. Timothy Matovina (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2000), 66.
- <sup>3</sup> See Darren Parker, “Doing the Work,” *The Other Side* January and February 2003: 32-34.
- <sup>4</sup> Mike Regele with Mark Schulz, *Death of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 104.
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.
- <sup>6</sup> Brian Parcel, “Called to be Multicultural” *New Testament and Religious Education Perspectives to Develop Multicultural Churches*, DMIN Project Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, CA., 2002.
- <sup>7</sup> Craig Dykstra and Dorothy Bass, “Times of Yearning, Practices of Faith,” in *Practicing our Faith* ed. Dorothy C. Bass (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1997), 8.
- <sup>8</sup> Samuel Soliván, “The Holy Spirit-Personalization and the Affirmation of Diversity: A Pentecostal Hispanic Perspective,” in *Teología en Conjunto: A Collaborative Hispanic Protestant Theology* eds. José David Rodríguez and Loida I. Martell-Otero (Louisville, KY.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 59.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.
- <sup>10</sup> Samuel Soliván, “The Holy Spirit-Personalization and the Affirmation of Diversity: A Pentecostal Hispanic Perspective,” in *Teología en Conjunto: A Collaborative Hispanic Protestant Theology* eds. José David Rodríguez and Loida I. Martell-Otero (Louisville, KY.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 59.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.
- <sup>12</sup> Adapted from the original goals in “Goals of Multicultural Religious Education,” in *Multicultural Religious Education* ed. Barbara Wilkerson (Birmingham, AL.: Religious Education Press, 1997) 26-27.
- <sup>13</sup> See Kathy Black, *Culturally Conscious Worship* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000).
- <sup>14</sup> Christine D. Pohl, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1999), 6.
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.
- <sup>17</sup> David W. Augsburg, *Conflict and Mediation Across Cultures: Pathways and Patterns* (Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 9.
- <sup>18</sup> Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestizo* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1999), 99.
- <sup>19</sup> Jung Young Lee, *Marginality: The Key to Multicultural Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), chapter 2.
- <sup>20</sup> D. Jean Clandinin and F. Michael Connelly, *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 113.
- <sup>21</sup> See James E. Loder, *The Transforming Moment: Understanding Convictional Experiences* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981).
- <sup>22</sup> Brian Parcel, “A Multicultural Model for Religious Education,” in *Multicultural Models for Religious Education*, ed. Elizabeth Conde-Frazier (Atlanta, GA.: SCP/Third World Literature Publishing House, 2001), 40-41.

- <sup>23</sup> Janet Saidi, "Art Shows Arabs, Jews Reaching Out," Los Angeles Times, Feb. 2, 2003.
- <sup>24</sup> Matthew Fox, *A Spirituality Named Compassion and the Healing of the Global Village, Humpty Dumpty and Us* (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1979), 2.
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.
- <sup>26</sup> Anne Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture* (N.Y.: Knopf, 1977) 54 as quoted in Matthew Fox, *A Spirituality Named Compassion*, 5.
- <sup>27</sup> For further discussion see Hans Jonas, *The Gnostic Religion* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963).
- <sup>28</sup> Martin Luther King, Jr., "Address to the Initial Mass Meeting of the Montgomery Improvement Association," at the Hold Street Baptist Church on Dec. 5, 1955. The tape and printed copy of this address are located in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers, Center for Non-Violent Social Change, Atlanta, GA.
- <sup>29</sup> The following passage is taken from Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, "Hispanic Protestant Spirituality," in *Teología en Conjunto: A Collaborative Hispanic Protestant Theology* eds. José David Rodríguez and Loida I. Martell-Otero (Louisville, KY.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 143.
- <sup>30</sup> James D. Whitehead and Evelyn Eaton Whitehead, *Shadows of the Heart: A Spirituality of the Negative Emotions* (New York: Crossroad, 1994), 46.
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.
- <sup>32</sup> Fox, *A Spirituality Named Compassion*, 20.
- <sup>33</sup> National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice for All: Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the United States Economy* (Washington: United States Catholic Conference, 1986), 41.
- <sup>34</sup> Jung Young Lee, *Marginality: The Key to Multicultural Theology*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 151.
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>36</sup> See Orlando E. Costas, *Christ Outside the Gate: Mission Beyond Christendom* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986).
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## Multicultural Ministry: A Vision of Multitude Response to Elizabeth Conde-Frazier

Gabriel Salguero

Gabriel Salguero is an ordained minister in an independent Pentecostal church. His field of study is Christian Ethics, and he is interested in developing an ethic of resistance to colonizing enterprises. He is completing a Ph.D at Union Theological Seminary, and is a 2003-2004 Special Mentoring awardee of the Hispanic Theological Initiative.

To be Latino in the U.S. is rather to participate in a unique process of cultural syncretism that may become a transformative template for the whole society.  
—Mike Davis, *Magical Urbanism*

My *Sitz im Leben* provides insight into my passion for understanding how spirituality in a multicultural ministry setting works. As both an itinerant preacher and local minister in a continually changing congregation, I have seen a mixed reaction to multicultural ministry in the United States. Reaction has ranged from an overwhelming openness to multicultural ministry to a strong rejection of any implementation of this type of ministry because of its impracticality and inconvenience. Whether or not we embrace multicultural ministry is ultimately tied to how we understand Christian spirituality in our present context. Dr. Conde-Frazier is correct, multicultural ministry has more to do with how Latinas/os understand their call than nicely mapped out vision statements.

I have attended the Spanish Pentecostal Church of God since January 1979. It is there where I learned to *caminar con Jesús*. When my parents began their pastoral ministry, the membership was predominantly Cuban, Dominican and Puerto Rican, with a

smaller contingency of English-speaking members from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. The worship services were always bilingual and we sang both *coritos* and what we often referred to as “shout music.” Our Sunday *culto* was a blend of cultures and languages, there was a strong influence in our song and sermon from the African-American Pentecostal churches in the area, as well as from the Caribbean style worship of our parents and grandparents. In the last seven years, there has been a steady influx of members from all over Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, and an ever-increasing number of second and third generation Puerto Ricans and Cubans with little ability to speak Spanish. In addition, there are several more Italian and African-American families who have now become members. Since the early 1990s, we are no longer the Spanish Pentecostal Church, but rather the Missionary Pentecostal Church. A change in our congregation’s name is a manifestation of the change in local demographics. The changing face of my church community in the last twenty-three years is my initial point of entry into this larger conversation.

My experience as an itinerant preacher is my second point of entry. In the last year I have been invited to over half a dozen Latina/o Pentecostal churches to speak in their English language services. I have also been the guest speaker of the Spanish language service of multiple white English-speaking congregations. There is a genuine sense of ambiguity when I am invited to speak within this context. On the one hand, I am glad to see that the Latina/o Pentecostal churches are trying to serve the non-Spanish speaking members of the community. Still, the segregation and the lack of communication between the English and Spanish-speaking worshippers feel like there is an unhealthy segregation that is not conducive to genuine community building. I affirm the words of Martin Luther King, Jr.,

As a minister of the gospel I am ashamed to have to affirm that eleven o’clock on Sunday morning, when

we stand to sing “In Christ There Is No East nor West,” is the most segregated hour of America, and the Sunday School is the most segregated school of the week.<sup>1</sup>

It is these experiences that have led me to believe that Spirituality for a Multicultural Ministry is an important part of the Church’s conversation with Census 2000.

Before I give my own comments on both Dr. Conde-Frazier’s lecture and the relationship of Census 2000 to spirituality in a multicultural ministry, let me briefly summarize my understanding of her principal points. She begins with a powerful narrative of both her and her mother’s experience, which exposes the anonymity and invisibility to which Hispanics have for too long been relegated. In contrast, the Latino implosion, even if severely understated in Census 2000, underlines a different numerical reality. In light of the tension between invisibility and exponential numerical growth among Latinas/os in the United States, Conde-Frazier claims that there is a divine call to “enter into new patterns of living into Christian spiritual practices that create community.”<sup>2</sup> Uttered somewhat differently: Achieving unity with diversity calls for embracing a spirituality of multicultural ministry. The Pentecost event is a paradigm for these new patterns of living, for this spirituality. Conde-Frazier clearly outlines the makeup of this spirituality—hospitality, encounter, storytelling coupled with listening, compassion, passion and shalom.<sup>3</sup> A spirituality for a multicultural ministry is elsewhere called “a journey from hospitality to shalom.”<sup>4</sup> Hence, spirituality represents a path in which one characteristic pours into the next. Conde-Frazier concludes by asking Hispanics to lead the journey into a “world-wide fellowship” in which none is called “minority.” Essentially multicultural ministry is synonymous with a ministry of reconciliation.

I am particularly engaged by professor Conde-Frazier’s use of the Pentecost event as a starting point for the spiritual agency that

is required for a multicultural ministry. Agency, the power to live toward alternatives,<sup>5</sup> is foundational to effective multicultural ministry. Conde-Frazier clearly notes that the spirituality that fosters multicultural ministry is an active force and should not be reduced to a euphoric or emotional experience. However, the agency of predominantly white, Euro-American churches should not be perceived in the same way as the agency of Black, Latina/o, Asian, Native American and other so-called “cultural minority” churches. Agency viewed from the perspective of the former is often interpreted as paternalism or condescension, the latter is interpreted as beggarliness and unsure self-identity. This distinction is of the utmost importance if we are to understand the implications of the spiritual disciplines of hospitality, encounter, and storytelling on multicultural ministry. The starting point of agency ultimately shapes how Shalom, or a ministry of reconciliation, is to look. Agency as mediated by the Holy Spirit looks quite differently in different cultural and economic context. Conde-Frazier’s insightful working out of the spiritual practices points out that these practices make different demands on you, depending on your social-economic location.

What are the impediments to incorporating these forms of spiritual agency? Conde-Frazier writes that the manner in which Census reports are presented gives an impression “that something evil is going to happen,”<sup>6</sup> there is a suspicion of the growing numbers of Hispanics that inhabit the land. The sense here is that the presentation of the Census report bears an ominous ring to the Pharaoh’s words in the opening of the book of Exodus. “Look the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them” (Ex. 1:9-10). The suspicion with which many in Latino communities view the Census is also prevalent in multicultural ministry dialogues. The challenge that historically justifiable suspicion presents to embarking on a spiritual path of multicultural ministry must be addressed up front. It

is important to recognize that which blocks the path from such a hope-filled ministry if congregations are to implement meaningful and durable change.

Initially, there is the suspicion that multicultural ministry is not a genuine effort to build community, but a token effort to get a few “minorities” in the church to give the impression of multiculturalism. Perhaps we can sing a few verses in two or three different languages or in several different musical styles and we have arrived. It is trying to deal shrewdly rather than in a transparent manner with the changing demographics. The suspicion in, and among, many worshipping communities, is that there will be a superficial addressing of diversity that does not seek to be genuinely transformative and deeply influence the ethos of the worshipping communities. This is something akin to conservative frameworks that ignore cultural and social-political realities by simply saying, “God does not see color or race.” The cultural minority communities see any manifest hospitality, encounter, or storytelling through skeptical eyes. The argument here is not to do away with spiritual practices that promote reconciliation but, rather, confirm from the outset that initial suspicions may exist on many sides. Recognized suspicions should not paralyze movement on this spiritual path toward reconciliation. We should work through the suspicions and fears, entrusting that God’s spirit will empower the community to speak, hear, understand and be transformed. It is in this spiritually empowered acting that we become, in the words of our colleague, “agents rather than victims.”<sup>7</sup>

Let us also consider the national snapshot that professor Conde-Frazier invites us to encounter. She correctly posits, “Our neighborhoods are changing not only due to immigration but also economic necessity.”<sup>8</sup> The economic gap between rich and poor is, without question, an issue that Census 2000 did not engage with any degree of adequacy. Regrettably, congregations are following the governmental trend. More attention needs to be given to the

increase in the number of poor people in the U.S. In addition to multiethnic, intergenerational, and multicultural ministry, there is an urgent need for ministry that challenges class distinctions. Classism and economic disparities should not be reduced to a footnote when speaking of multicultural ministry. An intentional and concerted effort should be made to speak against a classism engendered by the culture of capitalism and consumerism in the U.S. context.

The emergence of a theology of prosperity, which alienates the poor, is one of the manifestations of a how the culture of capitalism has been a foil to truly healthy Church communities. Many congregations have a tendency to become the Church of the upwardly mobile that consistently alienates entire groups based on economics. Congregants may not have a problem worshipping with a middle-class Asian, African-American, Latina/o, but there is a manifest disease and inhospitableness when the poor come to worship. The spiritual practices endorsed by Conde-Frazier have a pastoral, prophetic, timely and empowering word for addressing this unfortunate reality. An intentional spirituality that fosters community between classes can have liberating effects for this society so subsumed in a culture of capitalism. In the words of Otto Maduro,

[P]reaching of equally divine origin, sacred dignity, and the love of God for each and every human being—sung and celebrated in the presence of both wealthy and poor—served to bolster self esteem and mutuality of many people living under oppression. . . . Moreover, sharing the same religious space with the oppressed places elites in a community of accountability with the former.<sup>9</sup>

The spiritual practices Conde-Frazier advocates have a built-in critique and challenge to economic forms of oppression. Any manifestation of multicultural ministry that fails to engage min-

istry on this level, is as myopic as a Census that grossly underestimated the Hispanic presence of our *hermanas y hermanos* in the U.S. Multicultural ministry must not shy away from the distinct prophetic challenges of Wesley and Marx concerning the poor's relationship to the bourgeoisie in both the Church and the larger society.

Dr. Conde-Frazier is cognizant of the difficulty and tediousness of the process of edifying multicultural ministry—healing wrong arrangements of relationship. In her lecture she makes direct reference to the type of commitment that is required of a spirituality that seeks to edify multicultural ministry. She states,

A spiritual practice therefore is carried out not because it works but because it is good. . . . A practice is something we do together consistently. . . . We learn them in small increments of daily faithfulness.<sup>10</sup>

Small increments of daily faithfulness are precisely the hard work that many theologians, ministers, and congregations are not willing to put forth. Before writing a response to this lecture, I spoke to several friends in ministry concerning their feelings about multicultural ministry. Almost all said, "It's extremely hard." Others said, "*Eso no funciona*" or, "Multicultural ministry does not produce growth." I interpreted that to mean "numbers," not maturity. Any aversion to diligently working at multicultural ministry must be coupled with what can be called, to paraphrase Marcia Riggs, "a spirituality of mediation."<sup>11</sup> In spite of the inconvenience and time commitment it takes to build this time of fellowship, it is an important model for moral and faithful Christian living in the twenty-first century and is well worth the effort. We do it because it's good, not because it works. Faithfulness should never be subsumed under convenience. A spirituality of staying strengthens us to *hacer camino al andar*. It is *una espiritualidad de perseverancia* that undergirds our ability to dialogue, challenge,

empathize and seek creative options for more inclusive faith communities.

I would like to further explore the Biblical legacy as a hermeneutical paradigm for spirituality in light of Census 2000 and our multicultural realities in the United States. What are the spiritual implications of Census 2000 in light of how Scripture deals with the theme of census? The peoples of the Bible have a rather long history with census. At times census was a divine mandate to a wilderness leader, Moses (Numbers 1, 26). At other times we are not sure if it is God or Satan who motivate King David to number the people of Israel (II Samuel 24:1 or I Chronicles 21:1). Whatever the case we are certain that King David's census had much to do with God's displeasure with the sovereign. Probably, the most famous of Biblical census is the one that displaced Jesus' soon to be family. Given the multiple ways in which Biblical accounts concerning census are interpreted, how can the Church re-appropriate Census in ways that serve the Church's goal of reconciliation and Shalom? Census is not just a diabolical initiative, a manifestation of God's wrath, or a tool of the Roman Emperor. Census can be a word from God for a people in the Sinai or U.S. wilderness.

The multitudes that gather for worship and community in our congregations cannot just be a token gathering of distinct cultures and classes. The gathering of the worship community must be an authentic spiritual journey that moves beyond numbering people and actually counts them. Congregants are not just numbers they count. *La multitud* that counts, speaks and presents a new reality that challenges and changes existing oppressive and exclusive hegemonic structures. The multitude is a present-day realization of the 19th century proletariat finally engaging the bourgeoisie in this sacred place called the *communio sanctorum*. The Pentecostal song I sang as a child clearly highlights this idea of multicultural ministry of reconciliation, "*Juan vio el número de los redimidos.*"<sup>12</sup> The number of the redeemed must be seen; they must be counted.

Only when the redeemed count, can the invisibility of our mothers, sisters, fathers and brothers be overcome. Ultimately, the vision of multicultural ministry should aspire to the apocalyptic vision of Revelation 9:7, which sees a great multitude from every nation, tribe, peoples and languages. This multitude that gathers together does not lose its voice or distinctiveness, no, not even in the eschaton. This is the type of multicultural ministry that stirs the Census beyond numbering and into realizing that people count and have a voice.

### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Martin Luther King, Jr., "An Address Before The National Press Club," in *A Testament to Hope: The Essential Writings of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, ed. James M. Washington (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), 101.
- <sup>2</sup> Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, "A Spirituality for Multicultural Ministry" (paper presented at the Hispanic Theological Initiative Eastern Regional Conference, Boston, MA, March 15, 2003), 9.
- <sup>3</sup> Much of this analysis of Conde-Frazier's lecture was done in conversation (*en conjunto*) concerning multicultural ministry with Teresa Delgado and several other Ph.D students at Union Theological Seminary.
- <sup>4</sup> Conde-Frazier, "A Spirituality for Multicultural Ministry," 34.
- <sup>5</sup> Cynthia D. Moe-Lobeda, *Healing a Broken World: Globalization and God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 36. This is my modification of Moe-Lobeda's more elaborate and political definition of moral agency.
- <sup>6</sup> Conde-Frazier, "A Spirituality for Multicultural Ministry," 8.
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.
- <sup>9</sup> Otto Maduro, "Notes toward a Sociology of Latina/o Religious Empowerment," in *Hispanic/Latino Theology: Challenge and Promise*, edited by Ada-Maria Isasi-Diaz and Fernando F. Segovia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 156.
- <sup>10</sup> Conde-Frazier, "A Spirituality for a Multicultural Ministry," 12.
- <sup>11</sup> For a more illuminating discussion from which I borrow this type of spirituality, see Marcia Y. Riggs, *Awake, Arise, & Act: A Womanist Call for Black Liberation* (Cleveland, OH.: Pilgrim Press, 1994)
- <sup>12</sup> John *saw* the number of the redeemed. The italics and translation are mine.

## **U.S. Hispanic/Latino Identity and Protestant Experience: A Brief Introduction for the Seminarian**

Zaida Maldonado Pérez

A native of Puerto Rico, Zaida Maldonado Pérez is Assistant Professor of Theological Studies at Asbury Theological Seminary (Florida Campus). She co-authored her most recent publication—*An Introduction to Christian Theology*—with Justo L. González. The former director of the Hispanic Theological Initiative, Dr. Maldonado Pérez was also an awardee of this scholarship program.

### **Introduction**

**G**eographical, socio-political, economic, religious, and I would add cognitive layers work together to help shape and differentiate the Latin American Hispanic/Latino identity from the U.S. born or U.S. reared Latino identity.<sup>1</sup> These layers also differentiate the Latin American church from the U.S. Hispanic/Latino church,—a difference that is not always acknowledged. In this essay, I provide a brief introduction to U.S. Latino identity and Protestant experience.<sup>2</sup> I also highlight historical and theological concerns that, for their sheer magnitude and precedence, demand our critical theological, as well as pastoral attention. I confess that the driving force behind this introductory essay is framed in the form of a question kindled by my experience as a U.S. Latina Protestant: *How might I help to better prepare (my) seminary students to work with, and on behalf of, the Latinos they will inevitably encounter in their parish, classroom and communities?*<sup>3</sup>

I begin with the definition of “race” and “ethnicity” and consider the terms “Hispanic” and “Latino.” This will help shed some light on terms that are used consistently, yet are too often misun-

derstood. Second, I will briefly consider the impact of Latino conversion to Protestantism or the emergence of what David Maldonado has called, *new mestizaje*. Finally, I will consider the challenges we face as Latino Protestants and as the church of God. In this outline, I follow my usual method of exploring the “what” of our topic without precluding the “so what” which, I confess, will have to be limited to what I have deemed important.

### **I. Race and Ethnicity, and Hispanic vs. Latino: Who Are We?**

Is anyone better prepared to deal with this central issue of dealing with the Other than we, the Spanish, the Spanish Americans, the Hispanics [the Latinas and Latinos] in the U.S.A.? We are Indian, black European, but above all mixed, *mestizo*. We are Iberian and Greek, Roman and Jewish, Arab, Gothic, and Gypsy. Spain and the New World are centers where multiple cultures meet—centers of incorporation, not of exclusion. When we exclude, we betray ourselves. When we include, we find ourselves.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Race and Ethnicity: Clarifying the Use of These Terms**

I was always mind-boggled when, as a young girl, I would hear persons refer to me or other Latinos as being of another “race.” “She’s ‘racial’ or ‘ethnic,’” they would say. I had grown up understanding the term “race” anthropologically, that is, as referring to all of humankind and, therefore, felt denigrated by their nomenclature. I thought that they were insinuating that I was something other than “human,” or at least something out of the norm. True intentions aside, history has shown how categories of distinction, whether for scientific, social or political purposes have a tendency of serving our own biases, ideologies and agendas. The same goes

for the term “race” and “ethnicity.” A standard dictionary defines “race” as the whole of humankind. It also points to its use in distinguishing between groups of people bound or classified together by, for instance, a common genealogical lineage, geographical distribution, history, nationality or even vocation (e.g. a race of lawyers or theologians).<sup>5</sup> Invariably, however, in the context of the U.S. it has come to refer to the variety of human skin colors—brown, black, yellow—that mark the boundaries between “norm” and “other” or “white” and “other.” The term “People of Color,” a euphemism for those other than “white,” or “Caucasian,” aptly captures the essence of the common understanding of the term “race” in the U.S.<sup>6</sup>

For those who referred to me and “my kind” as “racial,” of another race, or “ethnic” we really were a different breed, a curious yet suspicious anomaly. What has always been clear to Latinos and other “persons of color,” is that Anglo-Americans or European-Americans too are racial/ethnic. You are different shades of “white” and you practice a particular culture(s) that betrays your own country(ies) of origin and genealogies. Some of you are only just beginning to affirm and celebrate these roots. For others, however, to submit to this reality is to give up an assumed “normative” and privileged status that historically justified the oppression and marginalization of peoples who were other than white-Anglo-Saxon. History has been especially adept in showing the lucrative benefits of classifying people into racially acceptable or inferior groups. The church has not been exempt from this hierarchization of races, at times supporting and profiting from the status quo. We shall address this briefly below.

We are all “racial” and “ethnic.” We are all one—we are the human race—yet diverse. For many of us, our diversity is the result of the mixing of various races. We carry that diversity in our blood, we express it through the creative synergy of those cultures as much as through the color of our skin, the food we eat, our lan-



guages and dialects. That is both the beauty of our existence and the challenge. This challenge is no less yours. The sooner we all acknowledge and affirm our distinctiveness, the sooner we can begin to see this as a point of unity rather than division. To exclude is to betray the “others” that make us who we are as Latinas and Latinos (or otherwise); it is to betray our very being. When we include others, however, we affirm our otherness and in the process we find ourselves.

### Latino vs. Hispanic?

Who we are and what we do appears to us like a man dressed in a long black coat, a bill collector who offers a paper to sign and says we have no choice but to sign it.<sup>7</sup>

The term “Hispanic” comes from the Latin word for España (Spain) and is thus used to refer to persons whose ancestry, speech and culture derives from or is related to Spain or Portugal. It is used only for persons from North, Central, South America and the Caribbean, not for persons who come from Spain, who would be called “Spanish.” The term “Latin,” or “Latino” refers to those peoples, nationalities and countries whose language developed from Latin, also called the Romance languages.<sup>8</sup>

“Latino” and “Hispanic” are really terms that non-Latinos/Hispanics use to refer to those of Spanish ancestry. It is not the term that we Latinos/Hispanics use to refer to ourselves. That is, when someone asks me where I am from or what my nationality is, my response is not “I am Hispanic or Latina” it is “I am Puerto Rican.” In other words, we Latinos or Hispanics identify ourselves by our country of origin or, in the case of many, the countries of origin (e.g. the terms “Nuyorican,” “Chicano,” “Cuban-American,” can refer both to the country of birth and to the cultural heritages with which we identify).<sup>9</sup>

The terms “Hispanic” and “Latino” however, are themselves

problematic. Hispanic, for instance, was a name imposed on us by the U.S. Census Bureau which, with a stroke of genius, managed to lump all Latin-American countries and the Caribbean into one convenient term. (It’s all in the packaging!) Hence, the use of “Hispanic” for some, is symbolic of a painful history of Anglo paternalism and subjugation, which, even today, manages to reinforce itself, if ever so subtly.<sup>10</sup> For others, the term’s relation to the Spanish *conquistadores* that killed, robbed and oppressed our ancestors presents yet another problem.<sup>11</sup> The term “Latino” or “Latina” seems, of late, more widely preferred.<sup>12</sup>

Latinos in the U.S. have a common language, a common history of *conquista*, and overall we share the same socioeconomic and political dilemmas. These commonalities, despite our differences, bind us together in relationship as a “Latino”/“Hispanic” people.<sup>13</sup> Our choice of name, whether Hispanic, Latino, Puerto Rican, Nuyorican, Chicano, etc. is a political act, a subversive act. To say that we are, for example, “Puerto Rican” or “Nuyorican” is to affirm that, while born in the United States or, “mainland,”<sup>14</sup> we hold on to and affirm our Puerto Rican heritage and the familial bonds that keep us going back to *la isla*. It is a statement about identity, about pride for what makes us different. It is a subversive act that claims the right to name ourselves, to validate our experience of struggle, courage and the will to live—honorably. When we name ourselves we raise our head like we raise our *banderas* to embrace our “peoplehood” *por lo que más se quiera* (i.e. “For all your worth,” “For life’s sake” or, literally, “For all that you hold dear.”)

In short, preference for one over the other often depends on one’s political feelings toward the U.S. or toward Spain. One should remember, however, that the term Hispanic is unique to the U. S. and that therefore, one should not call Latinos in Latin America “Hispanos.” “There are no Hispanics in Latin America!”<sup>15</sup> When visiting these countries, one should respectfully call your

hosts by their national identity. A rule of thumb is to ask, when in doubt. I will use the terms interchangeably.

## II. Conversion and the Emergence of a New *Mestizaje*

Scholars studying Latin-American conversion to Protestantism interpret this conversion as:

a protest against a [Roman Catholic] Church that denied freedom of religion, that did not provide the layperson the Bible, that banned Penitentes from the church, and later eroded their self-rule. Conversion was a protest against priests who suspended parishioners for sending their children to Presbyterian [Methodist or Lutheran] schools. It was a protest against a hierarchical structure....Converts were called *herejes* for their protest and *protestantes* for their conversion all in one breath. Under Catholicism, they did not have the Bible to read the Word of God for themselves, and the possibility of having it was intertwined with American ideals about freedom of religion.<sup>16</sup>

In the eyes of their *compatriotas* Hispanic converts were considered “outsiders,” cultural *mestizos* who had betrayed their religious womb, their *Madre Iglesia* and the cultural traditions it propagated and sanctioned.<sup>17</sup> To be Hispanic, after all, was to be *católico*. Hispanics were “Catholic from their birth as a people, and Catholic in all aspects of their lives.”<sup>18</sup> Thus, Hispanic *católicos* questioned their *compatriota’s* very essence by asking whether Hispanics could be Protestants and still be Hispanics!

Despite the socio-economic marginalization that came with conversion to Protestantism, it also had its practical lures. Mainline Anglo missionaries not only brought the joy and freedom of discovering Scriptures for themselves, they established schools, provided for health care and other social services. To their

credit, Anglo missionaries considered these to be an indispensable part of their evangelization. But, for Hispanic converts, these benefits came at a price.

The elation of a newfound community of *hermanas* and *hermanos* and a new conversion experience soon gave way to feelings of marginalization and deception. In reflecting on twentieth century U.S. Latino Protestant church experience, David Maldonado, the first Protestant President of a seminary in the U.S.<sup>19</sup> after more than a century of Latino Protestantism in this country, described it as “a place where Latinos find space to resist oppression,” but also “a place where they feel invisible.”<sup>20</sup> This unholy binary experience of feeling welcome yet marginalized, lifted up yet kept down, has its historical genesis in another unholy paradox—the violent evangelization of Latin America and the Caribbean by Roman Catholics and, in their own way, by Protestants.<sup>21</sup> In Protestant circles, the ambiguity has its particular roots in the assumptions of “Manifest Destiny.”

Manifest Destiny, also described as the theory of “filibustering,” was a creatively contrived syllogism that conveniently, and ‘providentially’ affirmed Anglo rights and claims of superiority.<sup>22</sup> Proponents of this theory sustained “First, that the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, and we [i.e. Anglo-Saxons/Celts in the New World] are the Lord’s people.”<sup>23</sup> From this, it was possible to conclude that, if the earth and its fullness is the Lord’s and, the Lord’s people are the Anglos, then the land they inhabit—all of it—was rightfully theirs. Should theological doubts linger, proponents then appealed to the Anglo assumption of political superiority by claiming that “All Spanish American governments are worthless, and should be reconstructed and that such was [their] mission.”<sup>24</sup> The insidious logic inherent in this statement is quite simple to decipher—if the worthless Spanish American governments were formed and led by Hispanics, which they were, then Hispanics were also worthless, or at the very least, deficient.

Their task then, was not only a reconstruction of Hispanic governments, but also a reconstruction of the Hispanic person.

Latino Protestants soon felt the effects of this “doctrine,” realizing that they were caught in an interstitial conundrum of being neither fully an “insider” nor fully an “outsider,” yet fully both.<sup>25</sup> In their Protestantism, they were insiders—*Protestantes* as sure as they had been *católicos*! But, they were considered outsiders in their refusal to assimilate Anglo culture, which in the eyes of many Anglos was synonymous with a full conversion. If to be Hispanic was to be *católico*, then to be Protestant was to be Anglo, or at least Anglo-like.

Hispanics responded and continue to respond to this kind of “limbo,” or predicament, in a variety of ways. One of these responses includes an in-depth study and religious inter-disciplinary dialogue about what it means to be Hispanic in Anglo-dominant denominations, and Protestant among a majority of Hispanic Catholics. In the introduction to the book which he edits, David Maldonado appropriates the term *mestizaje* or, rather, *new mestizaje* to refer to the predicament of being both Hispanic and Protestant but “not entirely like either.”<sup>26</sup> In its original meaning, the term *mestizaje* refers to the hybridization, the mixture of the Spanish, Native American and/or African races and cultures that resulted from the Spanish conquests of the Americas.<sup>27</sup>

When referring to Latino *mestizaje*, Loida I. Martell-Otero’s depiction of the *sato* experience (re)captures the element of scandal attached to the experience of living as a “hybrid” or “*mestizo*.”<sup>28</sup> Nobody wants a *sato*, a term more commonly used by Puerto Ricans to refer to a dog of mixed breeds. *Satos* usually walk the streets homeless, decrepit and rejected—a feeling often felt by Latinos in the U.S. But, Protestant Latinos—the *new mestizos* or *new sa[n]tos*<sup>29</sup>—however, have created their own abode; it is the place that dwells beyond binary divisions of Anglo and Hispanic, Catholic and Protestant in that other in-between space that both

bridges and redefines Hispanicity and Protestantism. For Latino Protestants, and Latinos in general, this in-between space or interstitial living, is not therefore a homeless, static, or stagnant place, nor is it a pitiable dilemma.<sup>30</sup> On the contrary, we view our in-between status as a dynamic, creative and vibrant existence—much like the undertow under seemingly calm waters. In this space we are, as Moisés Sandoval’s book title suggests *On the Move*<sup>31</sup>; we are being forged and forging this new thing called Hispanic Protestantism. This *new mestizaje*, made up of the *new sa[n]tos*, is both divinely empowered and, in its transformation of Anglo Protestantism, divinely subversive.

Another important aspect of our self-identity as Latino Protestants is that in Spanish, we Protestants tend to refer to ourselves as *evangélicos* (which comes from the Greek word *euangelion* meaning “good news.”) This should not be confused with “evangelical” in English, which has a specific theological connotation. We often prefer the word *evangélico/a*, not only because it distinguishes us as “Protestant” and not “Roman Catholic” but, because it points to God’s Good News for us and for those with whom we are called to share it. We are *evangélicos*; people of The Book.<sup>32</sup>

### III. The Challenges Ahead for Hispanic Protestants and God’s Church

I was recently asked to give a presentation on how to attract more Latinos for a prominent Roman Catholic university’s department of religious studies. Although I was elated about the fact that they wanted to reach out to Latino students, I was nevertheless concerned about their motives. Did they want to discuss the topic because they were truly interested in Latinos and the Latino community? Or, were they being driven by market economy values that see the increase in the Latino population as an opportunity to increase their sales potential? How were they perceiving us?—as *objects* of mission or as *partners* in mission? Had they taken time to

discern the implications of this together, as a department, as a school? Were they including the local community of Latino pastors, lay leaders and other Latino faculty in the area for advice and direction (though highly unusual, there were at least five Latino scholars in the vicinity!)? Had they considered partnering with any Latino leadership or institution?<sup>33</sup>

The answers to these and many more questions I shared with them are important because they will determine whether or not Latinos will again be subjected to other people's understanding of what is best for us, while actually ending up with what works best for them.<sup>34</sup> In his introduction to *Voces: Voices from the Hispanic Church*,<sup>35</sup> Justo L. González warns about this, particularly in reference to the recent interest in developing Hispanic ministries among denominations. At issue is an ecclesio-centrism that "seek[s] to address the needs of the Hispanic community on their own, with little or no recognition of the presence or the plans of other denominations."<sup>36</sup>

The Latino church has much to contribute. Denominations can learn from the *new ecumenism* slowly emerging, especially between Latino Protestants and Latino Roman Catholics.<sup>37</sup> Brought together in the common bonds of oppression and in the desire to work toward justice on all fronts, Latino pastors and theologians have forged ecumenical bridges that have encouraged a *pastoral de conjunto* at the ministerial level and a *teología en conjunto* at the theological level. They have solidified existing bonds, bringing wise counsel to bear on a variety of issues and concerns affecting our Latino communities. The sheer complexity of these issues demands an ecumenical and interdisciplinary approach. According to José David Rodríguez, the main goal of the Hispanic contribution is "to call the entire church to obedience in a radically ecumenical context."<sup>38</sup> And, to quote a good friend, "when things are truly prophetic, they are ecumenical."<sup>39</sup>

The challenges Latinos are facing stress the importance of this

kind of ecumenical *solidaridad*. For instance, what does it mean, for your church, ministry and teaching, that Latinos constitute 13% of the U.S. population and that those numbers will only escalate in the next few decades? What does it mean for the church you will pastor, your community and youth ministry, for instance, that Latinos constitute the youngest of the U.S. population and working force? Will it mean anything that Latinos have the highest high school dropout rate and number of teenage pregnancies?<sup>40</sup> What will it mean to you that the increase in Latino numbers will inevitably also bring about an increase in fear of the "other"? Might we expect as in the past, an increase in discrimination, and the development of hate groups and hate crimes?<sup>41</sup> These are pastoral but also theological issues; for how one understands "faithfulness" will determine how one exercises one's ministry, teaching and calling. What we believe about God shapes the way we act in the world.

Harold J. Recinos aptly calls mainline Protestant churches to confront their past and "deal with the history of American religion that deplorably harmonized the gospel with a racist and conquest-oriented project of nation-building."<sup>42</sup> Latinos invite our Anglo brothers and sisters to join their racial/ethnic members in discerning our path together, one church, one body. Together we must seek forgiveness, healing and a new direction of mutuality, respect and *solidaridad*.

Another challenge knocking at our door is the need to continue to reach beyond our own racial divides to other people of color.<sup>43</sup> This is particularly demanding given the new demographics. The harmful effects that come from the historical practice of pitting one ethnic group against another for denominational (or other) resources can be stopped by a mutual act of reaching out to, and by, our African-American, Asian, Native American and other minority sisters and brothers. We share many concerns in common and there is much that we can learn from, and do with, and

on behalf of, each other in our struggles for parity. Further, it is important that we initiate this mutuality without waiting for denominational initiatives or wading through denominational bureaucracy. In the experience of our Latino leaders, as suggested by González, “the practice of communicating through the channels of the denomination at large, which often have little sympathy or understanding of our issues and concerns, has not yielded expected results.”<sup>44</sup> Moreover, churches are realizing that good stewardship of their resources may mean reaching across denominational lines to share ministry.<sup>45</sup> This kind of *solidaridad* needs to happen not only at the ministerial level, but also at the scholarly, theological levels by opening the dialogue to “other theologies...born out of similar or parallel concerns.”<sup>46</sup>

The Anglo church can change past historical approaches by treating Latinos and their concerns as “as an essential dimension for the church’s unity and life.”<sup>47</sup> Denominations and academic institutions have a tendency to deal with Hispanic, African American, Asian and other racial/ethnic presence and concerns by creating special programs or projects. Usually, these programs or projects are viewed as separate from the “normal” program that constitutes the work and life of the church or academic institution. This kind of “ghettoizing,” gives Latinos the impression that we are a temporary concern, a minor problem or glitch in their normal dealings. “To create a Latino ministry that is seen as ‘special outreach’ or ‘one-time missions project’ is to deny the permanence of diversity in North American society and in North American Protestantism itself.”<sup>48</sup>

On the other hand, the Latino church can exercise a healthy dose of self-criticism. Latinos are quite used to being told, directly or indirectly, right or wrong, what their “faults” are, but they Latinos know how to, as my grandmother used to say, make *de tri-pas corazones* (do the impossible with what is available).<sup>49</sup> And so, we have used this harsh and often ill-intentioned scrutiny as a

springboard for the good intention of critically reflecting on our sins. Airing one’s dirty laundry can be a healthy thing if done in the spirit of healing and community. We are increasingly aware of our own stereotypes of other Latino nationalities, as well as our denigrating sins against our women, that hinder the development of their God-given potentials and ministries, and therefore also, the development of the body of Christ. We are conscious of our sin in not believing in, and developing, our potential because we have dwelled upon what others say of us, and not on what God has said, done, and continues to do for ALL of God’s people. We are aware of our sins of commission, of omission and, at times, of no mission! Our strategy? To work on them as ministers, as leaders and as theologians—*en conjunto*.

Finally, I would like to end with an issue close to my heart, that of preparing future leadership that ministers to our people and to all peoples in their communities and/or halls of academia.<sup>50</sup> Latinos continue to be severely underrepresented both at the student and faculty levels in the academy. This is happening precisely when we need more leadership to help our communities face complex issues now, and in the years to come. We need professors who will prepare us in such a way that when we leave our classrooms, we will not have become alienated from the very communities we seek to serve. We need persons, Latino or otherwise, who will be impassioned enough to seek the questions and the answers where they might least expect to find them.

I realize that I have only begun to touch the tip of the iceberg in my endeavor to “help prepare seminary students to work with and, on behalf of, the Latinos they will inevitably encounter” in their ministerial journeys. Thankfully, I do not bear this call and challenge alone. Others began this task long before me and I have the pleasure of being able to glean from their wisdom and expertise. I would, however, like to invite you to experience what I deem to be the most difficult yet authentic and fruitful way of preparing

for ministry with, and on behalf of, Latinos. In our cultures, the best way to get to know the “other” is not necessarily through information; rather, it is through establishing relationship. “*Vaya y salude*” (go and greet), my mother would say, when we had “strangers” in our midst. Not to do so was to be inhospitable and, therefore also, unchristian. To be the first to *go* and *saludar* (greet) was not only proper, it was the way we understood to imitate Christ. Perhaps the best advice I can leave us with is to challenge us to that divine hospitality that dares to cross the divides in order to “go and greet.”

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> This essay was presented in the form of a lecture at a church history class at Princeton Theological Seminary in 2001 while I was director of the Hispanic Theological Initiative. I want to thank Drs. Elsie McKee and James Moorehead for the invitation to speak to their class.
- <sup>2</sup> I draw largely from the essays in *Protestantes/Protestant: Hispanic Christianity Within Mainline Traditions*, edited by David Maldonado, Jr. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999).
- <sup>3</sup> Students were assigned readings on Latin-American socio-political, literary and artistic history from Carlos Fuentes’ *The Buried Mirror: Reflections on Spain and the New World*, (NY: Houghton Mifflin, 1992) and from their course text, *A World History of Christianity* by Adrian Hastings (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmann, 1999), 328–368.
- <sup>4</sup> Fuentes, *The Buried Mirror*, 348.
- <sup>5</sup> See *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged*. (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster Publishers, 1993), 1870, and *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, edited by William Morris. (Boston: MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1982), 1075.
- <sup>6</sup> The term “ethnic,” has been used synonymously with “race.” Some current tendencies are to use “ethnic” to refer to cultural heritage (e.g. foods) and not to skin color.
- <sup>7</sup> This excerpt is from the poet Jimmy Santiago Baca. I found it in a syllabus in the worldwide web and was unable to relocate it for the source. The author, with whom I communicated concerning the quotation, confirmed that it was in fact his.
- <sup>8</sup> Romance languages include French, Italian Portuguese, Rumanian, and Spanish. See *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged*, 1276 and, *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, edited by William Morris (Boston: MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1982), 1126.
- <sup>9</sup> For more on this topic of identity see Maldonado, *Protestantes/Protestant*, 9–12.
- <sup>10</sup> The 2000 U.S. Census Report changed this to better reflect our heterogeneity. According to this Census, “People of Hispanic origin are those who indicated that their origin was Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or some other Hispanic origin.” It identifies four races—white, Black, American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Asian and Pacific Islander. There is an obvious problem here in regards to those of us who are mestizo. Although, for example, my skin is white, I have African and Spanish blood as part of my heritage. Do I thus, categorize myself as “White” or “Black”? See the U. S. Census Bureau’s report, *The Population Profile of the United States: 2000 (Internet Release)* under the subheading, “Our Diverse Population: Race and Hispanic Origin, 2000” at <http://www.census.gov/population/pop-profile/2000/chap16.pdf>.
- <sup>11</sup> Referring to the term “Hispanic,” one Latino comedian joked that he would just as soon not call himself anything that has the word “panic” in it. This belies a sad note of truth when you consider the flight of white America from neighborhoods that are being integrated by Latinos—the message is that we become “His (e.g. the Anglo’s)—panic.”
- <sup>12</sup> Even so, the term “Latino” is also somewhat problematic for some who claim that if “Latino” refers to the roots of our Spanish language, then, technically, it should also

- be used to refer to those who are Italian or French.
- <sup>13</sup> “The sense of being Puerto Rican, Mexican American, or Salvadoran is important. But on a broad level, there does exist a shared sense of peoplehood—a sense of being Latino.” See Maldonado, *Protestantes/Protestants*, 11.
- <sup>14</sup> The term “Nuyorikan” is generally used to refer to persons of Puerto Rican heritage but born, or reared, in New York or elsewhere in the U.S. Persons visiting or leaving Puerto Rico for the U.S. were said to be going to “Nueva York” or “Nu Yor,”—whether or not this was, in fact, their destination.
- <sup>15</sup> Maldonado, *Protestantes/Protestant*, 12. Maldonado deals with the topic of ethnicity in a very succinct, yet very informative way. See also, 10–12.
- <sup>16</sup> See Tomás Atencio’s chapter, “The Empty Cross: The First Hispano Presbyterians in Northern New Mexico and Southern Colorado,” in *Protestantes/Protestants*, 57–58.
- <sup>17</sup> Atencio and Maldonado both address this issue. *Protestantes/Protestants*, 9–11; 59
- <sup>18</sup> *Protestantes/Protestants*, 9.
- <sup>19</sup> David Maldonado, Jr. is President of Iliff School of Theology, Denver, Colorado.
- <sup>20</sup> Maldonado, *Protestantes/Protestants*, 185. Paul Barton, a Mexican-American American church historian, writing on the mission of the Methodist church in the late 19th and 20th century, remarks that the Southwestern Hispanics “who joined Protestant churches were marginalized within the very institutions designed to minister to them.” See “Inter-ethnic Relations Between Mexican American and Anglo American Methodists in the U.S. Southwest, 1836–1938” in *Protestantes/Protestants*, 62. For a brief yet insightful look at this issue, see *A World History of Christianity*, 362. This feeling of invisibility was also keenly felt by the many Mexican parishioners who suffered terrible violence at the hands of ruthless Texas Rangers who patrolled the borders. Time magazine once portrayed the Rangers as “little more than terrorists, a racist army for the purpose of intimidating Mexicans on both sides of the border.” See Moisés Sandoval, *On the Move: A History of the Hispanic Church in the United States*. (New York: Orbis, 1995), 50.
- <sup>21</sup> For an in-depth study of the violent evangelization of the Americas, see Luis N. Rivera’s *A Violent Evangelism*. (KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990).
- <sup>22</sup> “In the complex relationship between the church, Latinos, and culture, the Protestant ethos gave its sense of divine providence and missionary zeal to the ideology of Manifest Destiny, literally equating Protestant Christianity with democracy, free enterprise, and modern civilization.” See Teresa Chávez Saucedo, “Race, Religion, and la Raza: An Exploration of the Racialization of Latinos in the United States and the Role of the Protestant Church” in *Protestantes/Protestants*, 185.
- <sup>23</sup> See Endnote 1 in Paul Barton, “Inter-ethnic Relations,” 311. Barton cites from *Reminiscences of a Ranger, or Early Times in Southern California* (Santa Barbara: Wallace Heberd, 1927), 214–215.
- <sup>24</sup> Barton, “Inter-ethnic Relations,” 311.
- <sup>25</sup> This sense of being in the interstices or “in-between,” however, is not static, as its definition suggests. For Latinos, it is dynamic; it is the place from which we envision and create new possibilities.
- <sup>26</sup> Maldonado, *Protestantes/Protestants*, 16
- <sup>27</sup> See Virgilio Elizondo who uses and defines the term in *The Future is Mestizo: Life Where Cultures Meet* (NY: Crossroads, 1992).

- <sup>28</sup> See her article, “Of Satos and Saints: Salvation from the Periphery” in *Perspectivas: Occasional Papers* 4 (Summer 2001): 7–38.
- <sup>29</sup> Martell-Otero plays with the word *sato* and *santo* (holy). See especially Loida Martell-Otero, “Of Satos and Saints” 17 ff.
- <sup>30</sup> Alex García-Rivera addresses the violent and unequal encounters of cultures. He identifies the twin principles of cultural encounter as identity and change. His semiotics of culture method is insightful and helpful in understanding culture, insider/outsider perspectives. See Alex Garcia-Rivera, *St. Martín de Porres: The “Little Stories” and the Semiotics of Culture* (New York: Orbis Books, 1995), especially the section on “The Semiotics of Culture” pp. 30–39. For more on the idea of “in-betweenness” see Rudy Busto, “The Predicament of Nepantla,” *Perspectivas: Occasional Papers* 1 (Fall 1998): 7–8. See also Homi K. Bhabha’s use of the term “interstitial” in *The Location of Culture* (New York; Routledge, 1994).
- <sup>31</sup> Moises Sandoval, *On the Move: A History of the Hispanic Church in the United States* (New York: Orbis, 1995).
- <sup>32</sup> David Maldonado recognizes the use of the word evangélico in Spanish but uses “Protestante” in order not to confuse the reader who may understand it to mean “evangelical.” However, he also uses “Protestante” as a “term of confession and affirmation....To affirm the Protestante experience and identity is to claim self-identity as Protestants and to recognize the price paid for being Protestant.” See *Protestantes/Protestant*, 10. See also Justo L. González, *Mañana: Christian Theology from a Hispanic Perspective* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 22–23 and; Loida I. Martell-Otero’s article, “Women Doing Theology: Una Perspectiva Evangélica” in *Apuntes* 14 (Fall 1994): 69. Martell-Otero delves deeper into the subject of evangélica/o in her unpublished lecture given at Messiah College entitled “U.S. Hispanic/Latina Evangélica Theology/Teología de la Mujer Evangélica, April 15, 2003.
- <sup>33</sup> For information on recruiting and retaining Latino students and faculty see my article, “Toward Recruiting and Retaining Latino Students and Faculty: Gauging Commitment,” and “Postscript: Healing and Aversion to Statistics: A Communal Task” in *Perspectivas: Occasional Papers* 5 (Spring 2002): 15–28 and 55–57.
- <sup>34</sup> I appreciated their invitation and the initial steps they were taking in their research. Should they desire long-lasting fruit, they must go from research to a commitment at all levels of the institution. For more on going from “interested but uninformed,” see Zaida Maldonado Pérez, “Towards Recruiting” in *Perspectivas: Occasional Papers*, 15–28.
- <sup>35</sup> Justo L. González, Editor, *Voces: Voices from the Hispanic Church* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1999), 169–171.
- <sup>36</sup> *Protestantes/Protestant*, 169.
- <sup>37</sup> Justo L. González speaks briefly of this emerging ecumenism in his essay, “Hispanics in the New Reformation” in the section entitled “New Ecumenism” in *Mestizo Christianity: Theology from the Latino Perspective* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Press, 1995), 254–255. This new ecumenism is especially emphasized throughout the book *Protestantes/Protestants* and is foundational in the emergence of what Latinos call, *teología en conjunto* and *pastoral de conjunto* (a theology or pastoral ministry that is done together, in community—that reaches and includes those outside your own denominational circles, for example). The Hispanic Summer Program (HSP) has

been a catalyst in fostering and maintaining this new ecumenism in ways previously unimagined.

<sup>38</sup> *Protestantes/Protestants*, 109.

<sup>39</sup> Loida I. Martell-Otero confirmed what I was sharing with her.

<sup>40</sup> According to a report released by the American Association of University Women (2001), Hispanic girls are dropping out of high school at a much higher rate than black or white girls. Furthermore, only 10 percent of Latinas who enter college, also the lowest rate among black and white females, tend to complete the four years. Reasons attributed for low dropout rates among Hispanics includes Latina teen pregnancy rates that are “higher than for black or white girls; financial pressures to get a job sooner rather than later; and cultural pressures that put family needs above academic ambitions.” See “Programs Fight for Hispanic Girls” by David Crary in *The Associated Press*, March 31, 2001.

<sup>41</sup> I was appalled to hear that these kinds of crimes are euphemistically called “bias crimes!”

<sup>42</sup> Harold J. Recinos, *Who Comes in the Name of the Lord?: Jesus at the Margins* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1997), 19.

<sup>43</sup> This is especially highlighted in “The Next Ten Years,” by Justo L. González in the book he edits, *Voces: Voices from the Hispanic Church*, (Abingdon Press), 169–171.

<sup>44</sup> *Voces*, 170.

<sup>45</sup> Just to give one example that I am familiar with, my own church the United Church of Christ shares monetary and personal resources with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to the point that they will be holding, once again, their biennial general assemblies (what we call General Synod) together! It has meant a lot of work and planning for a meeting of at least 10,000 or more persons, but, can you imagine the impact that has had and will have as both discuss, argue, compromise, and worship together?

<sup>46</sup> *Voces*, 170.

<sup>47</sup> Daisy Machado cites David A. Vargas, Executive Secretary of the Department of the Caribbean for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), in “Latinos in the Protestant Establishment: Is There a Place for Us at the Feast Table?” in *Protestantes/Protestants*, 100.

<sup>48</sup> Maldonado, *Protestantes/Protestants*, 100.

<sup>49</sup> It literally means to make hearts out of intestines, or the bowels. It can also mean “to pluck courage” but mostly, I have heard it used in the context of creating possibilities out of difficult situations. The saying to “make lemonade when life hands you lemons” comes close, except that making hearts from intestines strongly conveys the intricacy and complexity of the challenge.

<sup>50</sup> I explore the topic of leadership in the Latino community in “Leadership in the Latino Community: A Brief Look at the Meaning of Leadership for Today.” I have submitted it for possible publication and am waiting for a reply.

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