

Catolicos Hispanos

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La percepción de que los hispanos eran católicos marginales condujo al inicio de un apostolado especial, hace 40 años: un movimiento que la iglesia no ha tomado con ningún otro grupo étnico, en una reunión en Oklahoma City en 1945, 14 obispos establecieron el comité episcopal para los hispano-parlantes.

Los archivos muestran que este comité buscó aliviar problemas de vivienda, malnutrición, mortalidad infantil y maternal altas y delincuencia. En 1946 se distribuyeron etiquetas que decían "somos católicos." Los obispos declararon que "se pidió a los párrocos que solicitaran a los miembros de su grey que colocaran estas etiquetas en las puertas de entrada de sus casas como una forma de desalentar a los testigos de Jehová y a otros que hacían proselitismo de casa en casa."

El tercer encuentro es un esfuerzo sofisticado para descubrir que piensan los hispanos sobre su fe. Se inició con la selección de equipos móviles diocesanos en 1983. Estos equipos analizaron los resultados del segundo en-

cuentro realizado en 1977; hicieron consultas con vars movimientos eclesiales como el cursillo y con comunidades cristianas de base y entrevistaron a católicos alejados.

El Padre Mario Vizcaino, director de la oficina regional del sudeste para hispanos, dijo que solamente en el área de Miami se contactaron 11,000 personas.

En la primavera de 1984, 400 dirigentes apostólicos diocesanos se reunieron en Chicago para fijar las prioridades, escogiendo la evangelización, liderazgo, educación integral, jóvenes y justicia social. Los equipos diocesanos se reunieron luego con grupos de base para preparar las recomendaciones para los encuentros diocesanos y regionales. Después de la reunión de Washington, un comité de edición revisará las resoluciones aprobadas por la asamblea para presentarlas a los obispos con un plan pastoral.

Pese a que este plan pastoral no será obligatorio para los obispos, los hispanos confían en que los ayudaran. El Padre Juan Romero, coordinador nacional del tercer encuentro, dijo: "lo necesitamos para alentar a las parroquias y diócesis

que no tienen un plan pastoral para los hispanos y para dar direcciones a quienes si lo tienen." Dijo que sabía de solamente seis o siete diócesis que tienen un plan pastoral para los hispanos. Director de la oficina para hispanos de la costa oeste. "Todos necesitan un plan pastoral, porque les da la oportunidad de ver cuales son las necesidades y cómo responder de acuerdo a lo que tiene que ofrecer el evangelio."

En el proceso del encuentro, los hispanos enfocaron algunos de sus expectativas en sí mismos, pero la mayoría en la iglesia. Resolvieron "mantener nuestras tradiciones, nuestra religiosidad popular, redescubrir nuestra identidad y compartir nuestra cultura y talentos con toda la iglesia."

Algunas de las cosas que pidieron a la iglesia requerirá una gran inversión. Por ejemplo, los hispanos recomendaron la creación de un centro nacional de pastoral, radios y estaciones de televisión en español y publicaciones bilingües; una respuesta a las "necesidades básicas de seguridad, dignidad, salud, vivienda, alimento y empleo;" centros diocesanos de formación en justicia

social y programas bilingües en las escuelas católicas. Pero otros creen que los hispanos deben depender más de sí mismos.

"Es un error pedir y pedir," dijo el Obispo de las Cruces, N.M., Ricardo Ramirez. "Yo creo que nuestra evangelización debe depender de nuestro propio esfuerzo. Necesitamos ser responsables de nosotros mismos. Tiene que ser un esfuerzo total."

"El objetivo es cambiar el modelo de la iglesia de un lugar donde uno recibe ciertos paquetes, a uno que es una comunidad a la que pertenece y participo." Dice la hermana Dominga Zapata, directora del Instituto de Pastoral del Medio-oeste. "La efectividad del plan será determinada por quienes tienen el poder y por la comunidad hispana. La mayoría de nuestra gente no se beneficiará si solamente es un bonito libro en un estante. Esto es lo que sucedió con el segundo encuentro. La comunidad, que implementará el plan, no quiere uno totalmente hecho."

Sandoval, editor de la revista de maryknoll, ha realizado un estudio sobre los hispanos en américa.

Hispanic Catholics

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Stickers saying "somos Catholicos" (we are Catholics) were passed out in 1946. The bishops declared: "Pastors will urge members of their flock to display these stickers on their front doors as a means of discouraging Jehovah's witnesses and other house-to-house proselytizers."

The third encuentro process is a sophisticated effort to find out what Hispanics think about their faith. It began with a selection of mobile diocesan teams in 1983. These analyzed the results of the second encuentro, held in 1977, consulted with various church movements such as the Cursillo and with basic Christian communities, and then interviewed alienated Catholics.

Father Mario Vizcaino, director of the Southeast Regional Office for Hispanics, said that in the Miami area alone, 11,000 persons were contacted.

In the spring of 1984, 400 diocesan apostolate leaders gathered in Chicago to set the priorities, choosing evangelization, leadership, integral education, youth and social justice. The diocesan teams then met with grass-roots groups to prepare recommendations for the diocesan and regional encuentros. After the Washington meeting, an editing committee will shape resolutions approved by the assembly into a pastoral plan to submit to the bishops.

Though the pastoral plan will not bind any bishop, Hispanics are confident it will help them. Father Juan Romero, national

coordinator of the Third Encuentro, said: "We need it to encourage parishes and dioceses that do not have pastoral planning for Hispanics and to give direction to those that do." He said he knew of only six or seven dioceses that have pastoral plans for Hispanics.

"This isn't only for Hispanics," said Father Ricardo Chavez, director of the West Coast Office for Hispanics. "Everybody needs a pastoral plan because it provides the opportunity to see what needs are and to respond according to what the Gospel has to offer."

In the encuentro process, Hispanics focused some of their expectations on themselves, but the vast majority on the Church. They resolved to "maintain our

traditions and popular religiosity, rediscover our identity and share our culture and talents with the entire Church."

"The goal is to change the model of the Church from a place where you go to get certain packages to one that is a community where I belong, participate," said Sister Dominga Zapata, director of the Midwest Pastoral Institute. "The Plan's effectiveness will be determined by those in power and by the Hispanic community. The majority of our people will not benefit if it is just a nice booklet to put on a shelf. That is what happened with the second encuentro. The community, which will implement the plan, does not want one ready-made."

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