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Formation for Ministry in the Hispanic Community in the Context of Deportations: A Renewed Praxis for the Southeast Pastoral Institute's *Escuelas De Ministerios*

Maria Mercedes Hoffmann

FORMATION FOR MINISTRY IN THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY IN THE
CONTEXT OF DEPORTATIONS: A RENEWED PRAXIS FOR THE SOUTHEAST
PASTORAL INSTITUTE'S *ESCUELAS DE MINISTERIOS*

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To my family:

To the ones that are here with me,

And to the ones that are already in heaven.

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ABSTRACT

Part of the daily struggles for many in the Latino community revolves around the issue of deportation. This in turn has become an important pastoral concern of ecclesial ministers in the Hispanic community. As a teacher of the Southeast Pastoral Institute's *Escuelas de Ministerios*, I have experienced the pain and sorrow of families who have been separated by deportation and I have seen the suffering of undocumented immigrants who live with the constant fear of deportation. The ministerial concern addressed in this Thesis-Project is the following: Is the Southeast Pastoral Institute, adequately responding to the real needs of pastoral agents in their ministry to Hispanics who are often faced with the effects of deportation? My intuition was that it was not, and that theologies of reconciliation could be helpful in the formation of pastoral agents who minister in communities that have been wounded by the deportation of many of their members.

The students who attend the *Escuelas de Ministerios* are mainly pastoral agents who minister to communities that are vulnerable to the effects of deportations. As a result, I realized that there was a need for a renewed praxis in the *Escuelas de Ministerios* that provided an adequate formation to Hispanic pastoral agents who minister to undocumented people.

In the thesis-project I followed the U.S Hispanic/Latino Practical Theology methodology of "See, Judge, and Act," by using the terminology of Liberation Theology to describe the three mediations that relate to the traditional stages of seeing, judging and acting. I used SurveyMonkey to gather data from pastoral agents and teachers of the *Escuelas de Ministerios*. The information collected from the questionnaires was analyzed to identify the major concerns, problems, and challenges that exist in the different dioceses with regard to the effects of deportations.

In the socio-analytical mediation ("see") I presented a thick description of the ministerial context including the history of Hispanic Ministry at the national level, a description of programs of the Southeast Regional Office for Hispanic Ministry and the Southeast Pastoral Institute, the realities of immigration, the lived experiences of undocumented immigrants, and the questionnaire results. In the hermeneutical mediation ("judge") I focused on the theological perspective of migration by looking to the Bible, ecclesial documents, Catholic social teaching, theologies of migration, Christology from a Latino perspective, and some missiological dimensions of pastoral care among immigrants. In addition, I explored the topics of spirituality, solidarity, reconciliation, and hope. Finally, in the practical mediation ("act") I proposed a theological and ethical framework for *Escuelas de Ministerios* based on the insights discovered throughout the thesis project and outlined some specific strategies and actions for a renewed praxis for *Escuelas de Ministerios*.

INTRODUCTION

“All we can do is commend ourselves to God whenever we leave the house and when we return, thank the Lord that we made it safe and sound.”¹

I have been working with *Escuelas de Ministerios* (Schools of Ministries) at SEPI (Southeast Pastoral Institute) for the last few years. In this ministry I give classes to groups of Hispanic leaders in the region several times during the year. I enjoy this ministry because it gives me the opportunity to serve the Hispanic community that is in need of formation and spiritual growth. At the same time, I receive a lot from them as I learn from their humility, simplicity, wisdom, and experiences. I am motivated by their interest in learning, the efforts and sacrifices that they make in order to attend classes, and especially by their love, joy, and commitment to the mission and their strong sense of community.

The Southeast Regional Office for Hispanic Ministry was created in 1978 to assist the United States Catholic Bishops from Ecclesiastical Regions V & XIV in their pastoral services to Hispanic Catholics. The Southeast Pastoral Institute (SEPI) is the educational branch of the Regional Office. It was established in 1979 as a pastoral response to the need for formation programs for Hispanic Catholics in the United States. SEPI's mission statement is rooted in the *National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry*'s mandate, “To provide leadership formation adapted to the Hispanic culture in the United States that will help people to live and promote a style of Church which will be a leaven of the Kingdom

¹ Words of Sara García, an undocumented immigrant from Nicaragua, in reference to the fear she had of being deported. Timothy Matovina, *Latino Catholicism: Transformation in America's Largest Church* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 32.

of God in society”.² SEPI has been involved in the formation of Hispanic leaders for over thirty five years, providing courses and different programs at regional and diocesan levels within the nine states of the Southeast region.³

Hispanic ministry in the United States has called for an integral formation of Hispanic leaders that includes civic responsibility, ethics, human growth and development, as well as theological and ministerial formation.⁴ These leaders or pastoral agents are in contact with the everyday life of the people they serve and they need to be prepared to deal with the challenges and struggles of their people. Hosffman Ospino states that one of the signs of vitality in ministry among Hispanics is neither a homogeneous nor a static reality.” Moreover he claims that “the vast diversity of experiences, backgrounds, contributions, and needs of this population is an invitation for pastoral leaders to constantly explore creative approaches to pastoral care and accompaniment.”⁵

Part of the daily struggles for many in the Latino community revolves around the issue of deportation. This in turn has become an important pastoral concern of ecclesial ministers in the Hispanic community. The deportation of undocumented Hispanic

² National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry* (Washington, D.C.: USCCB, 1987), 69.

³ The states are Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

⁴ Integral education is “a global formation in the economic, political, social, cultural, family and church aspects of life, which leads to maturity of faith and a sense of responsibility for history...Integral education will prepare the person to observe, judge, and act with the mind of Christ, in the heart of the Church, for the promotion of the peace, justice, love and truth of the Kingdom of God.” *Prophetic Voices, Document on the Process of the III Encuentro Nacional Hispano de Pastoral* (Washington, D.C.: NCCB/USCC, 1986), Chapter IV: Commitments.

⁵ Hosffman Ospino, *Hispanic Ministry in Catholic Parishes: A Summary Report of the Findings from the National Study of Catholic Parishes with Hispanic Ministry*, (Boston: Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, 2015), 42.

immigrants has existed for many years. However, in recent years it has become more of an issue because of a dramatic rise in the number of deportations. In fact, the number of people who have been deported has tripled in the last 15 years. Of these, over 95% are from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador.⁶ As a result of deportations thousands of families are being separated. Many of those who are deported are parents who leave behind children who are then raised by one parent, by extended family members, or by foster parents. As I see it, the pastoral leaders who must deal with these problems in their communities should be better equipped to respond to the pastoral concerns that are raised by these deportations.

There is great concern about deportations among pastoral agents because they share the suffering of the community. I know that being a pastoral agent in the region means much more than teaching a class. It is sharing with the people; it is accepting the hospitality that they offer me when I stay in their homes; it is hearing their narratives. I have experienced the pain and sorrow of families who have been separated by deportations; the struggles they endure to survive as they cannot work because of the raids that take place. I have seen the suffering of undocumented immigrants who live one day at a time, not knowing what will happen to them that night or the following day; the fear of deportation is ever present. I have experienced how simply listening and creating

⁶ The Office of Immigration Statistics of the Department of Homeland Security reports a continuous increasing trend as evidenced by totals of removals: 577,295 in 2014; 438,000 in 2013; 419,384 in 2012; 396,906 in 2011; 387,242 in 2010; 395,165 in 2009; 319,382 in 2007; 280,974 in 2006; 246,431 in 2005; 240,665 in 2004; 211,098 in 2003; 165,168 in 2002; 189,026 in 2001; and 188,467 in 2000. As reported in "Homeland Security, 2012 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics", <http://www.dhs.gov/publication/yearbook-2012> (accessed June 12, 2015); "Homeland Security, Immigration Enforcement Actions 2013", <http://www.dhs.gov/publication/immigration-enforcement-actions-2013> (accessed June 12, 2015); and "DHS releases end of year statistics", <http://www.ice.gov/news/releases/dhs-releases-end-year-statistics> (accessed June 12, 2015).

the space where they can share their narratives is a helpful process to them. They need to talk and they need to be heard. They need to heal.

The ministerial concern that this thesis project will address can be encapsulated in the following question: Are we, as a Pastoral Institute, adequately responding to the real needs of the pastoral agents in their ministry to Hispanics who are often faced with the effects of deportation? My intuition is that we are not, and that theologies of reconciliation can be helpful in the formation of pastoral agents who minister in communities that have been wounded by the deportation of many of its members.

My own personal narrative is one that mirrors the cultural diversity and migration patterns of many in the Hispanic community. My father was half Spanish and half German. My mother is from Puerto Rico and she also has some Spanish ancestors. I am the youngest of four siblings. My sister was born in Peru, my two brothers in Cuba, and I was born in Puerto Rico. Due to my father's job in the hotel and hospitality industry, I was raised in many different parts of the world. I lived in San Juan, Puerto Rico; Santiago, Chile; Malaga, Madrid, and Barcelona in Spain; and Panama City, Panama, before moving to Miami over twenty years ago. In each of these places I was considered an immigrant. Moving from one place to another was very hard, especially as a child, given that each time we relocated I had to leave the friends I had just made. I know how hard it is to leave behind family and friends and to go to new places, facing uncertainties about how you will be received by the dominant culture.⁷ I have experienced the hardships related to being apart from loved ones. I have suffered discrimination, loneliness, fear of rejection, and anxieties created by family separations. All these

⁷ Despite the fact that I lived in many Spanish speaking countries, culture varies from country to country as language is not the only issue related to culture.

experiences created wounds that at some point in my life needed healing and reconciliation. Some of these issues are also part of the realities faced by the undocumented immigrants here in the United States. Hispanic immigrants face a wide variety of suffering, struggles, discrimination, oppression, abuse, persecution, and the threat of deportation. Many work very long hours for a little more than a plate of food a day. They work in the shadows of a society that has denied their dignity and even their existence. Many families are being separated, and the children are being raised by foster parents. I remember the first time I met one of these children. I saw his sadness and loneliness. I saw his shy smile as he was trying to please others and looking for acceptance. I felt his wounds and knew that those wounds would have to be healed one day just as mine were also healed.

The Catholic bishops in the United States recently referred to this situation in a document released in May 2015:

As Catholic bishops in the United States, we approach immigrant detention not so much as a public policy issue, but as pastors concerned with the well-being of those we love and serve. Each day, we witness the baleful effects of immigrant detention in our ministries, including our pastoral and legal work in prisons and detention centers. We experience the pain of severed families that struggle to maintain a semblance of normal family life. We see traumatized children in our schools and churches. We see divided families that are struggling to support themselves in our parishes, food pantries, soup kitchens and charitable agencies. We host support groups for the spouses of detained and deported immigrants. We lament the growth of “family” detention centers which undermine families and harm children. We see case after case of persons who represent no threat or danger, but who are nonetheless treated as criminals.⁸

⁸ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (Migration and Refugee Services) and The Center for Migration Studies, *Unlocking Human Dignity: A Plan to Transform the U.S. Immigrant Detention System*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2015), 4. <http://www.usccb.org/about/migration-and-refugee-services/upload/unlocking-human-dignity.pdf> (accessed May 14, 2015).

In my ministerial practice I work with people who face similar situations to what I experienced living in a country away from my homeland. As a teacher in the *Escuelas de Ministerios* I have the opportunity to serve Catholic leaders in Hispanic communities that are in need of theological and spiritual formation. These leaders are immigrants themselves and in their ministries serve communities where many lack legal status in our nation.

The students who attend the *Escuelas de Ministerios* are mainly pastoral agents who minister in their communities but there are also other participants who are not involved in ministries but want to receive formation. The pastoral agents minister to communities that are vulnerable to the effects of deportations. There is a need for a renewed praxis in the *Escuelas de Ministerios* that provides an adequate formation to the Hispanic pastoral agents who minister to undocumented people.

My goal for this thesis-project is twofold. First, I hope to develop some strategies for the theological and ministerial formation of Hispanic leaders as they attend to the pastoral needs of faith communities affected by the deportation of some of their members; and second, to suggest ways of improving the theological and ministerial formation of the pastoral agents who attend the *Escuelas de Ministerios* in order to serve a growing Hispanic population in their dioceses.⁹

⁹ In 2012 there were 52.4 million Hispanics in the United States. As reported by the US Census Bureau, <http://www.census.gov/population/hispanic/files/2012/CPS-2012-table49.xls> (accessed June 17, 2015). In 2010, the population of Hispanic or Latino origin in the Southeast region was almost 7 million. See "Hispanic Population by Episcopal Regions Based on 2010 Census", as reported by the USCCB's Webpage, <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/cultural-diversity/hispanic-latino/demographics/hispanic-population-by-episcopal-region.cfm> (accessed June 17, 2015). Hispanics account for 71% of the growth of Catholic Church since 1960. As reported on USCCB's Webpage, <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/cultural-diversity/hispanic-latino/demographics/hispanic-ministry-at-a-glance.cfm> (accessed June 18, 2015). It is important to mention that these figures are based on registered parishioners, but the actual number is probably higher. Latinos don't often register thus they are undercounted in ecclesial demographic statistics. Many Hispanics do not register out of fear of deportation.

Ministerial Question

My ministerial question is: how can the *Escuelas de Ministerios* help to provide competencies to pastoral agents in their ministry to communities containing undocumented people? In the past, Hispanic leadership has identified challenges such as proselytism of Hispanic Catholics, the need for more continuity in ministry, limited access to leadership positions, limited resources and low educational attainment, among others.¹⁰ As I have noted above, Hispanic families are experiencing deportation and separation in unprecedented numbers, and as a result, many have been traumatized by these experiences. As I see it, one negative outcome of deportations is the creation of a generation of wounded children who are forced to grow up without parents.¹¹ What can the *Escuelas de Ministerios* do about this? How can we better prepare Hispanic leaders and pastoral agents in their ministry to communities containing undocumented people? I envision a formation program that will help pastoral agents become agents of reconciliation for the people they serve, and agents in social-pastoral action in their communities.

¹⁰ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Encuentro & Mission, A Renewed Pastoral Framework for Hispanic Ministry* (Washington, D.C.: USCCB: 2002), 21-24.

¹¹ In 2007 the national Council of *la Raza* (NCLR), the largest national Hispanic civil rights and Advocacy organization in the United States, published a very complete and detailed study that evaluated the consequences of the raids on Hispanic Children. Children experienced family separation, economic hardship, schooling interruption, and mental health trauma. *Paying the price: the Impact of Immigration Raids on America's Children*, A Report by the Urban Institute for The National Council of *La Raza*, 2007, http://issuu.com/nclr/docs/49166_file_payingtheprice_errata_fnl/19?e=1871004/2454353 (accessed June 18, 2015).

Theological Issues and Disciplines

The first theological issue is Christological and is concerned with Jesus' preferential option for the poor. Jesus proclaimed the kingdom of God and showed compassion for the poor and the oppressed, which today can be seen in the faces of undocumented people. The second theological issue is missiological because the church's mission as continuation of Jesus' mission should also include compassion and solidarity with the poor in the here and now, given that "the fruits of the kingdom of God can be enjoyed within history".¹² A third theological issue has to do with social ethics because as believers we must remember that when a brother or sister is in crisis the whole body of Christ is in crisis.

My ministry has always been within the U.S. Hispanic community. Therefore, the thesis-project will be grounded in U.S. Hispanic/Latino Theology. The primary theological discipline within U.S. Hispanic/Latino Theology that I will draw from is migration theology as a source for understanding the roots and causes of social issues such as immigration, deportation, social justice and human rights of undocumented people. More broadly, liberation theology will help me to address the anthropological situations experienced by the people who are being oppressed by the injustices of immigration laws in the United States of America. I will also explore the theology of the laity in order to better identify the roles of Hispanic pastoral agents who attend the *Escuelas de Ministerios*. Finally, the theology of reconciliation will be a source as it

¹² Leonardo & Clodovis Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1987), 49.

pertains to the competencies that pastoral agents need so that they are better equipped to accompany the people they serve.

The results of this investigation will be a revised ministerial praxis that more adequately responds to the social and ecclesial impact of deportations in the Latino community. The *Escuelas de Ministerios* will have an enhanced curriculum to provide competencies to pastoral agents in their ministry to undocumented people and their communities. I expect that the proposed renewed praxis will benefit not only SEPI, but also many other pastoral institutes and formation ministries that work with Hispanic people.

As a minister, I will benefit from this investigation as I gain new insights that will make me a more effective minister and teacher. It will also reinforce my commitments to minister to the Hispanic Community of immigrants and to continue Jesus' mission. I do not consider my ministry to be one of only teaching. My ministry is that of accompaniment.¹³ When I travel, I stay in people's homes. I spend a weekend with them and they open their hearts to me. I know their joys, their sadness, and their fears. I know what they are going through. Being able to work on a program that will help them in the current context of deportations will help me to better minister to them.

¹³ For Roberto Goizueta "to accompany another person is to *walk with* him or her. It is, above all, by walking with others that we relate to them and love them." *Caminemos con Jesús: Toward a Hispanic/Latino Theology of Accompaniment* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2003), 206.

Method of Practical Theology and Research Technique

I will use the U.S Hispanic/Latino Practical Theology methodology of “See, Judge, and Act”. This has been the methodology used in the *Encuentro*¹⁴ processes and documents of Hispanic Ministry in the United States, as well as in documents of the Latin American Episcopal Conference. I will utilize the terminology of Liberation Theology to describe the three mediations that relate to the traditional stages of seeing, judging and acting.¹⁵

The method begins with a precondition of a radical solidarity with the community, commitment that I have and that I have already expressed above. It is followed by three mediations: (1) Socio-analytical or historic-analytical mediation (seeing), that operates in the world of the oppressed; (2) Hermeneutical mediation (judging), that confronts *la realidad* with the World of God, Tradition, and Social Sciences; and (3) Practical mediation (acting), that looks for a renewed praxis.

For the research of this thesis-project I used SurveyMonkey to send questionnaires to pastoral agents, Hispanic ministry diocesan directors and coordinators of *Escuelas de Ministerios* in the different dioceses of the Southeast Region since they are representatives of the communities they serve. A questionnaire was also sent to the teachers of the *Escuelas de Ministerios*. Both questionnaires were available in English (see Appendix A) and in Spanish (see Appendix B). The information collected from the

¹⁴ The Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs has held three national *Encuentros* of pastoral leaders ministering among Hispanic Catholics in the United States in which “Hispanic Catholics voiced their ministerial needs and vision, as well as numerous efforts to promote Hispanic leadership and ministry at the parish, diocesan, regional and national levels”. Timothy Matovina, “Hispanic Ministry and U.S. Catholicism,” in *Hispanic Ministry in the 21st Century: Present and Future*, ed. Hosffman Ospino (Miami: Convivium Press, 2010), 37.

¹⁵ Leonardo & Clodovis Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology*, 22-42.

questionnaires was analyzed to identify the major concerns, problems, and challenges that exist in the different dioceses with regard to the effects of deportations.

The thesis-project has five chapters. The first two chapters present the Socio-analytical mediation, by providing a thick description of the ministerial context in Chapter 1, and the immigration issues, lived experiences and questionnaire results in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3 I begin the Hermeneutical mediation, where I confront *la realidad* with the Word of God, Tradition, and Social Sciences. I explore the Church's perspective on immigration issues, including theology of migration in the conversation. Chapter 4 introduces Hispanic spirituality and theology of reconciliation into the mediation. Finally, in Chapter 5, I present the Practical mediation or suggestions for a renewed praxis.

CHAPTER 1: SOCIO-ANALYTICAL MEDIATION: SEEING LA REALIDAD

*The vitality of Catholicism in the United States of America in the twenty-first century will depend largely on how Catholics throughout the country embrace the growing Hispanic presence and respond to the pastoral needs of this community.*¹⁶

As stated in the introduction of this thesis-project, I will use the See-Judge-Act Method of U.S Hispanic/Latino Practical Theology by making use of the terminology of Liberation Theology to describe the three mediations that relate to the stages of seeing, judging, and acting. Leonardo and Clodovis Boff explain that liberation theology uses the term “mediation” because “the three stages represent means or instruments of theological process.”¹⁷

Chapter 1 and 2 will address the Socio-analytical mediation (seeing) that “tries to find out why the oppressed are oppressed.”¹⁸ In the ministerial context where this thesis-project is grounded, the oppressed are the undocumented immigrants that suffer the effects of deportations in their personal, social, and ecclesial life. In this chapter I will provide a thick description of the ministerial context by looking at Hispanic ministry and the Southeast Pastoral Institute's *Escuelas de Ministerios*. First, I will give an overview of the recent history of Hispanic ministry in the United States, exploring widespread challenges and describing national responses to these challenges, giving particular attention to the National *Encuentros*. After considering the state of Hispanic ministry at the national level, I will then examine the Southeast Pastoral Institute's responses to the

¹⁶ Hosffman Ospino, *Hispanic Ministry in Catholic Parishes: A Summary Report of the Findings from the National Study of Catholic Parishes with Hispanic Ministry*, (Boston: Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, 2015), 4.

¹⁷ Leonardo & Clodovis Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology*, 24.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

needs of Hispanic ministry at the regional level. I will give an overview of the Institute's programs in order to focus more particularly on the *Escuelas de Ministerios*. These thick descriptions of the institutional and programmatic context of Hispanic ministry at the national and regional level will provide the framework for a deeper examination of the ways pastoral ministers accompany immigrant populations facing deportations. In the second chapter, I will look into the realities of immigration, lived experiences, and questionnaire results, deepening the socio-analytical mediation and paving the way for "judging" and "acting" mediations, which will follow in later chapters.

Hispanic Ministry

History

The origins of Hispanic ministry in the United States go back to 1945, when the National Catholic Welfare Council sponsored an office for Spanish-speaking people in San Antonio, Texas. The Division for the Spanish Speaking moved to Washington, D.C. in 1971, and became in 1974 the Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs under the National Conference of Catholic Bishops/United States Catholic Conference.¹⁹ The Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs held three national *Encuentros* of Hispanic ministry: (1) the *I Encuentro Nacional Hispano de Pastoral* was held on June 19-22, 1972, at Trinity College in Washington, D.C.; (2) the *II Encuentro Nacional Hispano de Pastoral*, was held on August 18-21, 1977, at Trinity College, Washington, D.C.; and (3) the *III*

¹⁹ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "History of Hispanic Ministry", <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/cultural-diversity/hispanic-latino/resources/history-of-hispanic-ministry-in-the-united-states.cfm> (accessed June 26, 2015).

Encuentro Nacional Hispano de Pastoral was held on August 15-18, 1985, at The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.²⁰

The Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs also assisted in the organization of *Encuentro 2000*, which was held on July 6-9, 2000 at the Los Angeles Convention Center in Los Angeles, California. *Encuentro 2000* was “an opportunity for the Church in the United States to gather, to engage in profound conversations about life and faith, to worship together, to learn from each other, to forgive one another and be reconciled, to acknowledge our unique histories, and to discover ways in which we, as Catholic communities, can be one Church yet come from diverse cultures and ethnicities.”²¹

One of the most important characteristics of the Hispanic processes has been the methodology used: “from its emergent stages, the primary concern of the *Encuentro* processes and of the methodology of Hispanic Pastoral planning was that the ministries respond directly to the concrete reality of Latinos/as and the participation of *la base* (the grassroots) in the pastoral planning be prioritized.”²² It is a methodology of pastoral discernment where “pastoral planning and ministry are conducted with the people, not for the people.”²³ The process consists of consultations and participation of the people at the diocesan, regional, and national level.

²⁰ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “Encuentro”, <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/cultural-diversity/hispanic-latino/resources/encuentro-in-united-states-hispanic-ministry.cfm> (accessed June 26, 2015).

²¹ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “History of Hispanic Ministry”, <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/cultural-diversity/hispanic-latino/resources/history-of-hispanic-ministry-in-the-united-states.cfm> (accessed June 26, 2015).

²² Jorge Presmanes and Alicia Marill, “Hispanic Ministry and Theology,” in *Hispanic Ministry in the 21st Century: Present and Future*, ed. Hosffman Ospino (Miami: Convivium Press, 2010), 90.

²³ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Encuentro & Mission, A Renewed Pastoral Framework for Hispanic Ministry* (Washington, D.C.: USCCB: 2002), 44.

The same methodology from the *Encuentros* was used years later in the process that ended in 2006 with the celebration of the *I Encuentro Nacional de Pastoral Juvenil Hispana* (First National Encounter for Hispanic Youth and Young Adult Ministry), known as PENPJH its acronym in Spanish. One thousand six hundred eighty delegates attended the National *Encuentro*, representing over 40,000 young adults that had previously participated over the course of two years in parish, diocesan, and regional *Encuentros*.²⁴

Some of the most important documents for Hispanic ministry are related to the *Encuentro* processes: (1) “The Hispanic Presence, Challenge and Commitment” (1984), where the US Bishops call for the celebration of the *III Encuentro Nacional Hispano de Pastoral* and recognize “the Hispanic community among us as a blessing from God.”²⁵; (2) “Prophetic Voices” (1986), that documents the process of the *III Encuentro* and include the conclusions that were used as a guide to formulate the National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry; (3) “The National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry” (1987); (4) “*Encuentro* and Mission: A Renewed Pastoral Framework for Hispanic Ministry” (2002), and (5) “Conclusions from the First National Encounter for Hispanic Youth and Young Adult Ministry” (2008).

On January 1, 2008, a reorganization of the USCCB went into effect creating one of the largest committees of the bishops’ conference, the Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church, and its corresponding Secretariat. This committee is currently

²⁴ National Catholic Network de Pastoral Juvenil Hispana – La Red, *Conclusions: First National Encounter for Hispanic Youth and Young Adult Ministry*, (Washington, D.C.: USCCB, 2008), 11.

²⁵ National Conference of Catholic Bishops, “The Hispanic Presence: Challenge and Commitment,” in *Hispanic Ministry, Three Major Documents* (Washington, D.C., USCC, 1995), 1.

chaired by Bishop Daniel E. Flores and directed by María del Mar Muñoz-Visoso.²⁶ The Committee's Mandate states that:

The Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church assists the bishops in instilling the vision of Encuentro 2000 and Ecclesia in America throughout the Church by working collaboratively with all the committees of the Conference and with bishops and their dioceses to bring Catholics from various culturally diverse communities into a fuller participation in the faith, life, and evangelizing mission of the Church. The committee especially works to promote an awareness of cultural diversity within all the committees and offices of the USCCB. This mandate includes the following responsibilities: Pastoral care of Hispanic Catholics, African American Catholics, Native American Catholics, Asian Catholics, African Catholics, Pacific Islander Catholics, Catholic migrants and refugees and people on the move.²⁷

Prior to its current structure there was a bishops' Committee and Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs which was eliminated almost 34 years after its creation.²⁸ In its place the Subcommittee of Hispanic Affairs (SCHA) was established as one of the five Subcommittees under the Committee on Cultural Diversity.²⁹ The Subcommittee mandate states that: "The Subcommittee on Hispanic Affairs is under the direction of and assists the Committee on Cultural Diversity within the Church by working

²⁶ Bishop Jaime Soto was the first chairman of the Committee, and Fr. Allan Figueroa Deck was the first Executive Director.

²⁷ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "Cultural Diversity Committee Mandate", <http://usccb.org/issues-and-action/cultural-diversity/cultural-diversity-committee-mandate.cfm> (accessed June 27, 2015).

²⁸ The U.S. Bishops decision to structurally subsume the Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs under a new Office for Cultural Diversity in the Church was not well received by The National Catholic Council of Hispanic Ministry (NCCHM), that responded with a symposium and a Nov 11, 2007 statement addressed to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Subcommittee on Hispanic Affairs. In the statement, the NCCHM expressed its concern about how the reorganization divided the church into two groups, whites and non-whites, asked for clarification, and offered suggestions for the USCCB. See: National Catholic Council for Hispanic Ministry, "Response to the USCCB Reorganization," *Origins* 37, no. 30 (January 10, 2008): 486-487.

²⁹ The other Subcommittees are: African American Affairs (SCAAA), Asian and Pacific Island Affairs (SCAPA), Native American Affairs (SCNAA), and Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees and Travelers (PCMRT).

collaboratively with the committee and other USCCB committees to affirm the gifts and contributions of Hispanic Catholics and to provide more opportunities for Hispanic Catholics to engage in the life of the Church and help shape its evangelization mission.³⁰

Challenges of Hispanic Ministry

Hispanic ministry has faced challenges since its beginning. I will now describe some of these challenges such as the pastoral care for Hispanics, the quest for an ecclesial identity of communion and participation, and the reality of being part of a cultural-diversity structure at the level of the USCCB.

In the face of a growing Hispanic Catholic population, the Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs had since its inception the challenge of assisting the Church in responding to their pastoral care.³¹ The response to this first challenge was the celebration of the *I Encuentro Nacional Hispano de Pastoral*. Its conclusions called for “the establishment of regional and pastoral centers, to be established and coordinated nationally, for the purpose of research and reflection and the development of programs for Christian leadership formation at all levels of the Church.”³² Regional offices for Hispanic ministry were opened in the Southwest, Southeast, Northwest, Northeast, California, and Mountain States between 1974 and 1984. Pastoral institutes were also founded. In 1984, the Mexican American Cultural Center (MACC), the Southeast

³⁰ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “Hispanic/Latino Affairs”, <http://usccb.org/issues-and-action/cultural-diversity/hispanic-latino/index.cfm> (accessed June 27, 2015).

³¹ National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *The Hispanic Presence in the New Evangelization in the United States* (Washington, D.C.: NCCB Publishing, 1996), 45.

³² *Ibid.*

Pastoral Institute (SEPI), the Northeast Pastoral Center (NEPC), the Midwest Pastoral Institute (MWPI), the Northwest Pastoral Institute (NWPI), and the Catholic Hispanic Institute of California (CHIC) founded the Federation of Pastoral Institutes (FIP).³³ The Regional offices and the Pastoral Institutes assisted the bishops in their response to the Hispano/Latino presence, and their commitment to evangelization and leadership formation.

The challenge of defining a model of church of communion and participation that would take into account the grassroots was first addressed at the *II Encuentro Nacional Hispano de Pastoral*, which defined a process that “would serve as a historic move from a Church of the masses to a Church of basic Christian communities.”³⁴ The *Encuentro* process allowed the reflection of small groups of their faith and lives, encouraging each faithful to participate in the church’s life and mission.

The Hispanic presence in the United States has challenged the Church to be “more catholic, more open to the diversity of religious experience.”³⁵ The Hispanic voice in the *II and III Encuentros* has called for integration and participation in the life of the Church, while emphasizing the concept of unity in pluralism. The process and celebration of *Encuentro 2000* allowed Catholics in the United States to embrace a Catholic vision that recognizes the many faces present in God’s house and celebrate the cultural diversity within the church.

³³ Southeast Pastoral Institute, “*Esquema Histórico del Ministerio Hispano*”, <http://sepi.us/pdfs/Esquema%20Histórico%20del%20Ministerio%20Hispano%20en%20los%20EE.%20U..pdf> (accessed August 20, 2015).

³⁴ National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Proceedings of the II Encuentro Nacional Hispano de Pastoral* (Washington, D.C.: NCCB Publishing, 1978), 65.

³⁵ National Conference of Catholic Bishops, “The Hispanic Presence: Challenge and Commitment,” in *Hispanic Ministry, Three Major Documents* (Washington, D.C., USCC, 1995), 1

Hispanic leadership that participated at the National Symposium to Refocus Hispanic Ministry held in 2001 identified ten challenges to the development of Hispanic Ministry in all regions of the country. These challenges were mentioned in *Encuentro & Mission: A Renewed Pastoral Framework for Hispanic Ministry*:³⁶

1. Proselytism of Hispanic Catholics.
2. The growth of the Hispanic population and the impact of fewer priests.
3. Need for more continuity in ministry.
4. A multicultural model that promotes a one-size-fits-all approach to ministry.
5. Need for diversity of ministry models serving youth and young adults.
6. Need for more consistent ministry models.
7. Pastoral planning in isolation.
8. Complexity of Hispanic population.
9. Limited access to Leadership positions.
10. Limited resources and low educational attainment.

Fourteen years have passed since these challenges were defined, but many of the challenges are still relevant today. The Hispanic population keeps growing and the Hispanic ministry needs to respond to a constant changing population that includes an influx of new immigrants from many Latin American countries and U.S. born Hispanics. Hispanic ministry is still negatively affected by limited access to resources and leadership positions, and continued changes in leadership that have not been trained and formed on the values and principles that have guided the development of Hispanic ministry.³⁷ While these challenges were defined at regional levels, they also reflect the challenges Hispanic ministry faces at the parish level today.

³⁶ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), *Encuentro & Mission, A Renewed Pastoral Framework for Hispanic Ministry* (Washington, D.C.: USCCB Publishing, 2002), numbers 63-76.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, numbers 13, 23.

The Hispanic presence in parish life also entails challenges. In concluding a recent study of Hispanic Ministry in Catholic Parishes, Hosffman Ospino, identifies twelve areas that require immediate pastoral attention:³⁸

1. Parishes with Hispanic Ministry will be notably impacted by major transitions during the next decade as thousands of culturally competent pastoral leaders approach the age of retirement.
2. Most pastoral leaders overseeing Hispanic ministry observe that integration into the life of the parish among Hispanic Catholics of all ages- immigrants and U.S. Born- remains at a minimal level.
3. Resources for ministry in parishes serving Hispanic Catholics are limited and, by and large, unequally distributed.
4. Offertory giving from parishioners at Spanish language masses is significantly low compared to the size of the Hispanic population in the parish.
5. The percentage of U.S. born Hispanic pastoral leaders in parishes and dioceses remains noticeably small.
6. The nature of the engagement of volunteer pastoral leaders in parishes with Hispanic ministry needs to be carefully assessed.
7. About one in five pastoral leaders serving Hispanic Catholics in major ministerial positions in parishes and dioceses are not compensated.
8. Pastoral outreach to Hispanic youth, particularly U.S. born Hispanics, is minimal in parishes (and dioceses) compared to the size of the population.
9. A widening distance between parishes with large Hispanic population and Catholic schools may undermine the development of a “Catholic school culture” among Hispanic Catholics.
10. Besides families, parishes are the most readily available resources for the vast majority of Hispanic Catholic children and youth not enrolled in Catholic schools to formally learn their faith formation.
11. Very few Hispanics participate in adult faith formation programs despite the fact that most parishes serving Hispanics offer initiatives in this area.
12. Few efforts are dedicated in parishes to developing programming and resources to consistently reach out to non-traditional Hispanic catholic populations.

In general, we can conclude that some challenges that have been mentioned in the past, such as the growth in Hispanic population, integral education, leadership formation, pastoral outreach to Hispanic youth, lack of compensation for Hispanic leadership, and

³⁸ Hosffman Ospino, *Hispanic Ministry in Catholic Parishes: A Summary Report of the Findings from the National Study of Catholic Parishes with Hispanic Ministry*, (Boston: Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, 2015), 43-44.

limited resources for Hispanic ministry are still a challenge for Hispanic ministry today. Some of these challenges might be addressed in the *V Encuentro Nacional Hispano/Latino de Pastoral* that emphasizes the involvement of young, second, and third generation Hispanics.³⁹

Toward a *V Encuentro*

The Subcommittee on Hispanic Affairs and the Committee on Cultural Diversity approved in June 2013 the convening of a *V Encuentro Nacional Hispano/Latino de Pastoral*, which will take place in September 2018.⁴⁰ Alejandro Aguilera-Titus, the Assistant Director of the Subcommittee on Hispanic Affairs, oversees the *V Encuentro*, which will receive priority recommendation for the USCCB strategic plans that will begin in 2017.

This *Encuentro* will engage 14 Episcopal Regions, 175 Dioceses, 7,000 Parishes, 17 Organizations, 13 Lay Ecclesial Movements and an estimated 1 million Pastoral Leaders, in a three-year process of pastoral-theological reflection that will culminate in a national event, followed by the distribution and implementation of its conclusions.⁴¹ Missionary discipleship is the central theme for the *Encuentro*, emphasizing a spirituality

³⁹ National Team of Accompaniment Toward the *V Encuentro*, <http://enahve.org/> (accessed July 12, 2015). This Website was launched on Feb 17, 2015, and contains valuable information in reference to the *V Encuentro*.

⁴⁰ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "One Church, Many Cultures: The Good News of Cultural Diversity," *The Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church newsletter*, Volume 1, Issue 3 (Winter/Spring 2015), under "News from the Subcommittee on Hispanic Affairs (SCHA)," 12-13, <http://usccb.org/issues-and-action/cultural-diversity/resources/index.cfm> (accessed June 27, 2015).

⁴¹ National Team of Accompaniment Toward the *V Encuentro*, <http://enahve.org/> (accessed July 12, 2015).

of *encuentro* and accompaniment based on Jesus' accompaniment of the disciples on the way to Emmaus found in Luke 24, 13-35.⁴²

The *Equipo Nacional de Acompañamiento hacia el V Encuentro – ENAHVE* (National Team of Accompaniment Toward a V *Encuentro*), had their first meeting in February 2014. *ENAHVE* members come from 17 national and regional Catholic organizations that serve the Hispanic/Latino community.⁴³ The fact that they come from different institutions and parts of the country, enhances the pastoral vision and perspective in the development of a *pastoral de Conjunto*⁴⁴. The *V Encuentro* will be organized by a regional structure based on the 14 Episcopal regions. Each region will be led in their work towards the *V Encuentro* by a Bishop, an Episcopal Regional Chairperson, and one anchoring institution.

Consistent with the call made by bishops for a III *Encuentro* that would form leaders in its process,⁴⁵ the *V Encuentro* aims to form 20,000 leaders during its

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Asociación de Religiosas Hispanas en los Estados Unidos (ARHEU), Secretariat for Cultural Diversity in the Church (USCCB), Catholic Association of Latino Leaders (CALL), Catholic Extension Society, Catholic Migrant Farmworker Network, Catholic Relief Services, Colecta para la Iglesia en América Latina, Federación de Institutos Pastorales, Federation of Catechesis with Hispanics, Instituto Nacional Hispano de Liturgia, National Catholic Association of Diocesan Directors for Hispanic Ministry, National Catholic Council for Hispanic Ministry (NCCHM), National Catholic Network de Pastoral Juvenil Hispana (La Red), National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM), Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States, Renovación Carismática Católica, Sección Hispana de National Association of Catholic Family Life, Secretariat of Divine Worship (USCCB), Secretariat of Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth (USCCB). *Who is ENAHVE?* <http://enahve.org/about-us/> (accessed July 24, 2015).

⁴⁴ Pastoral de Conjunto is “the harmonious coordination of all elements of the pastoral ministry with the actions of the pastoral ministers and structures in view of a common goal: the Kingdom of God. In is not only a methodology but the expression of the essence and mission of the Church, which is to be and make communion.” National Conference of Catholic Bishops, “National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry,” in *Hispanic Ministry, Three Major Documents* (Washington, D.C., USCC, 1995), 97

⁴⁵ “The III *Encuentro* would be: first, Evangelizing; second, capable of forming leaders in the process itself; third, developing by necessity from the grass-roots level; and, fourth, giving emphasis to the diocesan and regional dimensions of the process”. National Conference of Catholic Bishops. *Prophetic Voices in Hispanic Ministry: Three Major Documents* (Washington, D.C.: 1998), 31.

development. It began the process of formation and training of teams and leadership at the Episcopal Regional level in 2015, and will continue in 2016 by training Diocesan and Parish Teams. The methodology used in the *V Encuentro* will be the same used in the II and III *Encuentro*: see, judge, act, celebrate, and evaluate. This methodology has proven to be a very valuable asset during past *Encuentros*, particularly when developing and performing a *pastoral de Conjunto* seeking to identify and respond to the needs of the grassroots communities.

Now that we have considered the recent history of Hispanic ministry at the national level, including ongoing challenges and responses to these challenges, I now turn our attention to a regional organization whose history closely follows the history of national Hispanic ministry and whose work continues to respond to the needs of Hispanic ministry in the southeastern United States.

The Southeast Pastoral Institute (SEPI)

History

The Southeast Regional Office for Hispanic Ministry was created in 1978 to assist the United States Catholic Bishops from Ecclesiastical Regions V & XIV in their pastoral services to Hispanic Catholics. SEPI, the Southeast Pastoral Institute, is the educational branch of the Southeast Regional Office for Hispanic Ministry. It was established in 1979 as a result of the recommendations of the *II Encuentro Nacional Hispano* that called for the creation of pastoral institutes that would provide formation programs for Hispanic

Catholics in the United States.⁴⁶ Mario Vizcaíno, SchP. was the director of SEPI for three decades. Rafael Capó, SchP. has been its director since 2011. While the role of many regional structures and pastoral institutes originally established diminished in numbers, SEPI's work has continued to be robust for over thirty five years. In reference to this, Bishop Joe S. Vásquez of Austin, Texas stated:

The growth of Hispanic ministry at the local level has shifted the focus and role of the USCCB's Hispanic ministry staff, now housed under the Secretariat for Cultural Diversity in the Church, and of the Regional Offices for Hispanic Affairs, most of which have given way to regional associations of diocesan directors. In the case of SEPI, they have been able to establish themselves as an institution and continue their regional ministry with a strong focus on formation and leadership development. Structures change over the years, but the mission of the Church continues.⁴⁷

The Regional Office for Hispanic Ministry and SEPI coordinate, provide programs and resources, and collaborate in the evangelizing work of Hispanic ministries within the 30 dioceses of the Southeast region.⁴⁸ SEPI's goal is to facilitate the participation of Hispanics from the Southeast region, as disciples and missionaries, in church's life and society in general. This is done through evangelization, communion, and formation: first, SEPI evangelizes through programs and resources in order to transform the lives of Hispanics within a multicultural reality; second, SEPI creates

⁴⁶ National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Proceedings of the II Encuentro Nacional Hispano de Pastoral* (Washington, D.C.: NCCB Publishing, 1978), 69.

⁴⁷ Opening remarks given by Bishop Joe S. Vásquez of Austin, Texas, at the "Emerging Hispanic Catholic Leadership: A Process of Discernment with National and Regional Organizations" meeting at the Mexican American Catholic College, San Antonio, TX, September 26-28, 2011, <http://usccbmedia.blogspot.com/2011/10/happy-50th-hispanic-affairs.html> (accessed August 19, 2015).

⁴⁸ SEPI currently serves 30 dioceses in nine southeastern states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Kentucky. The Dioceses are Alexandria, Atlanta, Baton Rouge, Biloxi, Birmingham, Charleston, Charlotte, Covington, Houma-Thibodaux, Jackson, Knoxville, Lafayette, Lake Charles, Lexington, Louisville, Memphis, Miami, Mobile, Nashville, New Orleans, Orlando, Owensboro, Palm Beach, Pensacola-Tallahassee, Raleigh, St. Augustine, St. Petersburg, Savannah, Shreveport, and Venice.

communion by building communication and bridges of cooperation among ecclesial structures; and third, SEPI supports and strengthens leadership in Hispanic ministry in order to contribute to the church's mission by offering integral formation in pastoral leadership.⁴⁹

SEPI seeks the promotion of the dignity of the human being and family values; the evangelization and formation of Hispanic leaders; and the promotion of communication and cooperation among different cultures as an expression of solidarity and catholicity. Since its foundation, SEPI has been instrumental in the establishment of over 600 Hispanic communities and has also in the organization of the Hispanic Pastoral Ministry in the 30 dioceses of the Southeast region.

SEPI is very active in communications, publishing over sixty editions of *Sureste*, which reaches more than 9,000 leaders nationwide. *La Voz del SEPI*, a weekly radio program is transmitted every week by *Radio Católica Mundial* and the Internet. In social media, SEPI can be found on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

Over the years SEPI has established relationships with Hispanic Ministry Associations at the national level, such as the National Catholic Council for Hispanic Ministry, Inc. (NCCHM); The National Catholic Association of Diocesan Directors for Hispanic Ministry (NCADDHM); *La Red*, National Catholic Network of *Pastoral Juvenil Hispana*; The Federation of Pastoral Institutes; and *La Red Católica del Campesino Migrante* (CMFN - Catholic Migrant Farmworker Network).⁵⁰ SEPI has also established partnerships for formation programs with Barry University, The University of Notre

⁴⁹ As stated in Southeast Pastoral Institute's web page, <http://sepi.us/ourmission.aspx> (accessed July 1, 2015).

⁵⁰ SEPI serves currently as an advisor of *La Red*, and in the Board of Directors of CMFC and FIP.

Dame, The Pontifical Mission Society, and the Catholic Association of Latino Leaders (CALL).

SEPI has been and continues to be part of the Encuentro processes. Father Mario Vizcaíno and the Southeast region chaired the Press and Communication Committee of the II *Encuentro*.⁵¹ Vizcaino was a member of the III *Encuentro* Executive Committee⁵² and also “chaired the *Encuentro* writing committee that worked closely with the bishops’ drafting subcommittee for the National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry, chaired by Bishop Ricardo Ramírez, C.S.B., of the diocese of Las Cruces, New Mexico.”⁵³ He was also member of the *Encuentro 2000*’s Steering Committee⁵⁴ and a coordinator of the National Process Committee of the *Primer Encuentro Nacional de Pastoral Juvenil Hispana*.⁵⁵

SEPI’s current director Father Rafael Capó is a member of the *Equipo Nacional de Acompañamiento hacia el V Encuentro – ENAHVE* and SEPI is the Anchoring Institution for Episcopal Regions V and XIV. The Episcopal regional chairpersons, Olga Villar (for Region V), and Angelica Viviana Iglesias (for Region XIV), have been associated with SEPI’s programs for many years in their respective roles as Associate

⁵¹ National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Proceedings of the II Encuentro Nacional Hispano de Pastoral* (Washington, D.C.: NCCB Publishing, 1978), 65.

⁵² National Conference of Catholic Bishops, “Prophetic Voices,” in *Hispanic Ministry, Three Major Documents* (Washington, D.C., USCC, 1995), 54

⁵³ Timothy Matovina, *Latino Catholicism: Transformation in America’s Largest Church* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 85.

⁵⁴ Hispanic Affairs Archives, “National Steering Committee”
<http://web.archive.org/web/20010702040549/http://www.nccbuscc.org/hispanicaffairs/steering.htm>
(accessed on August 20, 2015).

⁵⁵ National Catholic Network de Pastoral Juvenil Hispana—La Red, *Primer Encuentro Nacional de Pastoral Juvenil Hispana (PENPJH): Conclusiones* (Washington, D.C.: USCCB Publishing, 2008), 40.

Directors of Hispanic Ministry of the Archdiocese of Mobile and the Diocese of St. Petersburg.⁵⁶

Hispanic Family Life *Encuentro* Process

In addition to an active participation in the V *Encuentro*, the Southeast Regional Office for Hispanic Ministry and the Southeast Pastoral Institute, together with its network of diocesan leaders of Hispanic ministry, began in 2014 a Hispanic family life pastoral reflection and formation process. This process was designed as a preparation for the General Synod of 2015 focused on the family as an evangelization priority, and Pope Francis' visit to the U.S. with the World Meeting of Families held in September 2015. The process will provide pastoral resources to evangelize Hispanic families, and help develop a pastoral response to the challenges of the Hispanic family in the context of the new evangelization.

The Hispanic Family Life *Encuentro* Process began with a consultation and planning with diocesan directors at a regional meeting in Miami, in August 2014. The process continued with five Provincial *Encuentros* held during 2015, where leaders engaged in reflection leading up to participation in the World Meeting of Families.

Between March and May 2015, SEPI conducted a Hispanic Family Ministry Online Survey as part of the Hispanic Family Life Process. The survey was announced on SEPI's Facebook page and was also sent to diocesan directors of Hispanic ministry so

⁵⁶ National Team of Accompaniment Toward the V *Encuentro*, "Episcopal Regions Map" <http://enahve.org/episcopal-regions/> (accessed August 14, 2015).

that they could promote participation in their dioceses. A total of 1,062 responses were collected.⁵⁷ The results of the surveys were presented in each Provincial *Encuentro*.

The region will hold in 2016 both Diocesan *Encuentros* and a Regional *Encuentro* in order to provide a pastoral implementation process following the work of the Synods and the fruits of the World Meeting of Families. The process will continue with Workshops to train family life ministers and prepare for the *V Encuentro*.

Programs

SEPI has been a renowned and successful catalyst in the Southeast region for its programs such as the clergy and leadership formation in Spanish and Hispanic Culture, Youth programs, and Latino Leadership formation.⁵⁸ It offers regional and diocesan programs. The regional programs are designed to serve the Southeast Region and are offered throughout the year, primarily at SEPI's office in Miami. They include: Migrant Workers Program, Immersion in Spanish language and culture program,⁵⁹ Regional and Provincial Encounters every two years,⁶⁰ Pastoral Seminars,⁶¹ Programs for adult facilitators of Hispanic Youth and Young Adults Ministry, and *Pascua Juvenil*.⁶²

⁵⁷ Some of the answers collected in this survey that apply to the subject of this thesis will be taken in consideration in the next chapter.

⁵⁸ See Timothy Matovina, *Latino Catholicism: Transformation in America's Largest Church* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 93, 156, 158, 181, 227, 233, 241.

⁵⁹ Annual program for non Hispanic priests, religious, and laity that serve the Hispanic community.

⁶⁰ On an annual basis SEPI has either a Regional or a Diocesan Encounter where a limited number of delegates appointed by each diocese spend a weekend sharing experiences and learning about leadership and other topics related to Hispanic Ministry. The majority of these delegates are leaders or pastoral agents that head various ministries within their communities. When the delegates return to their dioceses they share what they learned and experienced with their faith communities.

SEPI works with each diocese in the organization and implementation of pastoral programs and workshops for pastoral planning in accordance with the National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry. The diocesan programs are designed to respond to the specific requirements of a diocese and are offered *in situ*. They include: *Escuelas de Ministerios*, Pastoral planning and evaluation workshop, workshops for the creation, planning and evaluation of youth groups, youth retreats, and young adult workshops on the Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church (Youcat)⁶³.

In addition to these programs, SEPI also offers a Master of Arts Program in Pastoral Ministry with Hispanics from Barry University, and *Camino* which is an online theology program in association with The University of Notre Dame. All courses in both programs are conducted in Spanish.⁶⁴

From the brief sketch of ministerial and educational programs mentioned above, one can get a sense of the scope of SEPI's pastoral programs among Hispanic immigrant communities of the southeastern United States, as well as the organization's regional and national networks in Hispanic ministry. For the purposes of this thesis, I will focus on one longstanding program offered by SEPI, the *Escuelas de Ministerios*.

⁶¹ Annual formation program for pastoral agents, consisting of three levels of leadership formation with emphasis in the technical, biblical, pastoral, and spiritual aspects of leadership.

⁶² Every year since 1980, Hispanic youth representatives from the different dioceses participate in 4 meetings during a 10 month process that ends in the elaboration of a book that will be used by youth groups during lent and paschal time.

⁶³ The YOUCAT workshops are given by a SEPI missionary young adult team that was formed after their pilgrimage trip to the 2013 World Youth Day in Brazil.

⁶⁴ Information about the MA in Pastoral Ministry with Hispanics can be found at <http://sepi.us/hispanicministrymaster.aspx> and <https://www.barry.edu/theology-philosophy/academic-programs/pastoral-ministry-hispanics-ma.html>. Information about the Camino online program can be found at <http://sepi.us/theologyonline.aspx> and <http://camino.nd.edu/>.

The Ministerial Context

Escuelas de Ministerios

Escuelas de Ministerios, one of SEPI's formation programs, was first offered to the southeastern dioceses in 1983. The curriculum was revised in 1987, when it became a 10-course program given over a two-year period. The program entails a total of 150 study hours. The ten courses offered in the program are: Christian Vocation and Mission; The Bible: its message and pastoral use; Christology; Ecclesiology; U.S. Catholic Church History; Hispanic Pastoral Principles; Liturgy and Sacraments; Pastoral Methodologies; Basic Ecclesial Communities; and Evangelization Techniques. Reading and study material for each course is provided in a booklet that is sold to the students for a minimum cost.

The curriculum was revised and expanded to 26 courses on both theological and pastoral aspects in 2008 to add a second level of formation which adds two additional years to the program. From these 26 courses the dioceses choose 10 based on their interests and pastoral needs.

A total of 144 Schools of Ministries (1,440 courses) were completed between 1988 and 2014. There have been a total of 34,000 students and 2,298 have graduated from the ten course programs.⁶⁵

The majority of the professors of *Escuelas de Ministerios* are graduates of the MA in Hispanic Pastoral Ministry program from SEPI/Barry University: "This way the

⁶⁵ Information obtained from *Escuelas de Ministerios* ' records.

formative action in Miami has a multiplying effect in the region.”⁶⁶ Throughout the years many people have served as professors of *Escuelas de Ministerios*. The number of active professors varies with time, but there is usually a team of 12-14 professors.

After a more general description of the program of *Escuelas de Ministerios*, I will now turn our attention to more specific details about the present praxis of the program, evaluating some areas that, based on my experience, might be improved.

Present Praxis

The courses are given on weekends every two months during a two-year period. Classes are usually from 9AM to 7PM on Saturdays, and 9AM to 3PM on Sundays. The ending times on Saturday and Sunday are flexible depending on whether a Mass is scheduled or the professor’s travel schedule requires an earlier departure, and based on that the Saturday class may be extended one or two hours. During a one day period the professor has to attend to 5, 6 or 7 different subjects, and even though the methodology is participative, and students interact in small and large groups, at the end of the day everybody is very tired.

The fact that the professor has to travel back and forth from Miami to the different places makes the schedule quite intense. The course can only last two days as professors usually have full time jobs requiring them to return to work on Monday. The students also have to travel sometimes, as they come from different cities within the diocese. The organizers provide lodging for the SEPI professors. “This way costs are kept down,”

⁶⁶ José P. Burgues, Sch.P, *SEPI 1978-2009 30 años de Evangelización en el Sureste y en la Nación* (Miami, 2008), 87.

states Burgues, adding that in doing so “the welcome spirit of the catholic community is revived in a pure Pauline style.”⁶⁷

During the program, the 10 different courses are given by 10 different professors. While this gives the students a variety and diverse perspectives and learning methods, from the professor’s perspective there is no continuity or follow up on the participants, which might be needed sometimes.⁶⁸ The professors usually specialize in one or two subjects, and then give the same class in different dioceses. I agree with specialization to a certain degree, but I also think that professors should be able to prepare for other courses as that would also enhance their knowledge of the whole *Escuelas de Ministerios’ program*.

In the last 5 years there have only been two meetings of the *Escuelas de Ministerios’ faculty*. It has been suggested to have more frequent meetings, so that there could be an exchange of experiences and feedback among the faculty and suggestions can be made to improve the program.

The students are Hispanic immigrants from Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. Some are documented and some are not. They work in construction, restaurants, cleaning houses, taking care of the elderly, and the like. Depending on the area and their social and economic situation, some might be professionals. Some are young and are still studying in high school. They are usually ministers in their parish churches. They are often ushers, catechists, or extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist,

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 88.

⁶⁸ In my experience, when you share with a community over the weekend you get to know them in a more personal way. Even if the professor has the desire to accompany them much further in their quest for formation and growth, the fact that professors only go once to each community does not allow this to happen.

and they feel great pride in what they do. They all share the joy of serving and a great thirst to learn about God and their faith. They do not mind the long hours, as they feel privileged to be able to participate in the class. They start the program with great enthusiasm, but sometimes their economic, working or legal immigration status does not allow them to complete it. My experience with these ministers is one that has led me to believe that it is the responsibility of the faculty to not only to transmit the content of their courses, but to share their faith in the good news of Jesus Christ through words and deeds. Moreover, I have come to the conclusion that our students not only need content, but they also need accompaniment in their lives.

Conclusion

In this chapter I began the Socio-Analytical mediation by presenting a thick description of the ministerial context. I began with the history of Hispanic Ministry at the national level, its challenges, and a general description of what the *V Encuentro Nacional Hispano/Latino de Pastoral* is expected to accomplish. I continued with the history and description of programs of the Southeast Regional Office for Hispanic Ministry and the Southeast Pastoral Institute, which organizes the *Escuelas de Ministerios*. In the next chapter I will analyze in more detail *la realidad* of ministering to immigrants.

CHAPTER 2: LA REALIDAD OF MINISTERING TO IMMIGRANTS

Our unauthorized immigrants are the ones suffering daily with this inaction. Many millions live in fear that somewhere during the day they will be stopped and identified as being here without proper documents. Their children, mostly USA citizens, fear the abrupt apprehension of their parents and their sudden deportation--leaving them all alone in our country without mother or father.⁶⁹

In this chapter I continue to attend to the socio-analytical mediation (seeing) that “tries to find out why the oppressed are oppressed.”⁷⁰ I stated above that in the ministerial context where this thesis-project is grounded, the oppressed are the undocumented immigrants who suffer the effects of deportations in their personal, social, and ecclesial life. Here I look into the realities of immigration, the lived experiences of undocumented immigrants, and questionnaire results, in order to deepen the socio-analytical mediation.

First, I give an overview of immigration issues at the national level, including a review of current developments in relation to immigration reform, political campaigns, and the political debate about immigration giving particular attention to deportations. I continue with a description of the impact and consequences that deportations have on Hispanic families and their children. Finally, I examine immigration issues at the ministerial level by providing in-depth examination of the ways pastoral ministers accompany immigrant populations. These observations will be based on the immigrant’s lived experiences within the context of the *Escuelas de Ministerios* as delineated in

⁶⁹ Cardinal Roger Mahony, “Immigrants held Hostages by Politics, September 10, 2014” <http://cardinalrogermahonyblogspot.com/2014/09/immigrants-held-hostage-by-politics.html> (accessed August 23, 2015).

⁷⁰ Leonardo & Clodovis Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology*, 24.

responses to the questionnaires. After concluding the socio-analytical mediation in this chapter, I then address the hermeneutical mediation in chapters three and four.

Immigration Issues at the National Level

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that in 2015 there is an estimated population of 56.7 Million Hispanics in the United States, which represents 17.66% of the total population.⁷¹ By 2060, the projected Hispanic population doubles to 119 Million, close to 29% of the total estimated population in the United States.⁷² Hispanics/Latinos can be found in every state in the United States, but larger concentrations are in California, Texas, Florida, and New York. According to the 2011-2013 American Community Survey, the Hispanic population by origin is as follows: approximately 64% Mexican, 9% Puerto Rican, 4% Cubans, 3% Dominicans, 9% Central American, and 6% South American.⁷³ Among the Central Americans, 42% are Salvadorans and 21% are Guatemalan; Colombians represent 32% of the South American population living in the United States.⁷⁴

⁷¹ For the U.S Census Bureau, “Hispanic refers to people whose origin is Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Spanish-speaking Central or South American countries, or other Hispanic/Latino, regardless of race.” Census Bureau, Population Division, “Table 13. Projections of the Population by Nativity, Hispanic Origin, and Race for the United States: 2015 to 2060 (NP2014-T13), Released Date: December 2014”, and “Table 11. Percent of the Projected Population by Hispanic Origin and Race for the United States: 2015 to 2060 (NP2014-T11), Released Date: December 2014,” <http://www.census.gov/population/projections/data/national/2014/summarytables.html> (accessed June 17, 2015).

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ US Census Bureau, U.S. Census Bureau, Hispanic or Latino Origin by Specific Origin, 2011-2013 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_13_3YR_B03001&prodType=table (accessed June 17, 2015).

⁷⁴ Ibid.

The term immigrant refers to “a foreign-born individual who has been admitted to reside permanently in the United States as a Lawful Permanent Resident.”⁷⁵ A foreign-born person can become a “Lawful Permanent Resident” through family-sponsored immigration, through employment-based immigration, or by winning an immigrant visa. Many different names are used for the individuals who reside in the United States without the permission of the U.S. government. Sometimes they are referred to as “illegal immigrants” or “illegal aliens,” “undocumented immigrants,” or “unauthorized immigrants.” This group of people either entered the country without valid documents, or entered the country with valid visas but violated their admission terms, or stayed in the country after the visa expired. While many people, media, and politicians prefer the term “illegal immigrants” or “illegal aliens,” in the church the term “undocumented immigrant” is preferred since it does not criminalize the immigrants. Research centers prefer the term “unauthorized immigrants.”

A 2014 report by the Pew Research Center⁷⁶ that analyzes data from the U.S. Census Bureau estimates that 11.2 million unauthorized immigrants live in the United States, and 8.8 million of them (79%) are Hispanic. From this number, 66% are from Mexico; 19% are from Central America; 8% are from South America, and 6% are from

⁷⁵ Justice for Immigrants, “Immigrations Basics,” <http://justiceforimmigrants.org/immigration-basics.shtml> (accessed June 12, 2015).

⁷⁶ The Pew Research Center is a nonpartisan center that specializes in demographic research, and follows closely Hispanic trends in the United States. Jeffrey S Passel, a senior demographer who has authored many studies on immigrant population, recently presented a written testimony to U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, for a March 26, 2015 hearing on “Securing the Border: Defining the Current Population Living in the Shadows and Addressing Future Flows.” http://www.pewhispanic.org/files/2015/03/2015-03-26_passel-testimony.pdf (accessed June 20, 2015).

the Caribbean.⁷⁷ Politicians and many immigrant-advocate groups conclude that outdated immigration laws and a broken immigration system are to be blamed for the large undocumented population.

A Broken Immigration System

Politicians have been debating for years about the need for immigration reform, yet they are divided over how it should be achieved. There are strong opponents to any project of immigration reform that want all “illegal aliens” out of the country. Given that there are 11.2 millions undocumented immigrants living in the United States, that task would be almost impossible to accomplish.

There was a failed attempt to reach an immigration reform in 2007. The U.S. Senate passed a comprehensive immigration reform bill on June 27, 2013, but the House of Representatives never approved it. The reform was mainly based on a gradual process to legalize the status of undocumented immigrants (which opponents to the plan considered “amnesty”), and on securing the nation’s borders.

In November of 2014, President Barak Obama announced that he was taking executive action to fix the broken immigration system. The executive action on immigration, which has been challenged by a coalition of 17 states as unconstitutional, benefit undocumented immigrants by revising removal priorities, expanding the Deferred

⁷⁷ Jeffrey S. Passel and D’Vera Cohn, “*Unauthorized Immigrant Totals Rise in 7 States, Fall in 14: Decline in Those From Mexico Fuels Most State Decreases*,” (Washington, D.C. Pew Research Center’s Hispanic Trends Project, November 2014) http://www.pewhispanic.org/files/2014/11/2014-11-18_unauthorized-immigration.pdf (accessed June 17, 2015).

Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program,⁷⁸ and expanding provisional waivers to spouses and children of Lawful Permanent Residents.⁷⁹

There is currently great uncertainty as to what will happen with immigration laws in the future. The national conversation about the need for immigration reform increases in the midst of presidential campaigns, and now until the 2016 presidential election, the topic of immigration is very important for all presidential candidates. One presidential candidate has already issued a plan for immigration reform that includes the reversal of President Obama's executive action on immigration, promotes the deportation of all undocumented immigrants, and challenges the right to U.S. Citizenship of children born to undocumented parents.⁸⁰ This plan has prompted all other presidential candidates to express their positions on the national immigration debate, including their views about birthright citizenship and the controversial use of the term "anchor babies." The national immigration debate is frequently in the news, and the public reaction to Hispanic undocumented immigrants does not appear to be very amicable to comprehensive immigration reform.⁸¹

State Laws also affect undocumented immigrants. In April of 2010, the Arizona Governor signed SB 1070 into law; in September of 2011, the State of Alabama

⁷⁸ The DACA program was originally established in 2012, to give temporary work permits to young immigrants that were children when their parents brought them to the United States, and meet certain eligibility criteria.

⁷⁹ For more detail on Executive Action see: Department of Homeland Security, "Fact Sheet: Fixing Our Broken Immigration System Through Executive Actions." <http://www.dhs.gov/news/2014/11/21/fact-sheet-fixing-our-broken-immigration-system-through-executive-action> (accessed June 12, 2015).

⁸⁰ Donald Trump, "Immigrations Reform that will make America Great Again," <https://www.donaldjtrump.com/positions/immigration-reform> (accessed August 18, 2015).

⁸¹ This is the prediction of many political commentators who keep a pulse on public opinion and the politics of the debate.

implemented the HB 56 law. These two radical anti-immigrant laws seek to remove undocumented immigrants from their states. Cardinal Roger M. Mahony, Archbishop Emeritus of Los Angeles is a strong critic of these laws. In reference to the Alabama law he wrote:

On Sept. 23, 2011, when H.B. 56 came into effect, it cut off all state and local services to the undocumented. No driver's licenses, no registration for cars, no scholarships, no hiring without a document check. Enrolling in one of Alabama's public colleges requires proof of legal residency in the United States. Hiring, renting property to or simply "harboring" undocumented foreigners is illegal. H.B. 56's one-signature provision—deputizing local police officers to turn traffic stops into deportation proceedings—assumes powers long reserved to the federal government.⁸²

In summary, both federal and state laws affect the lives of undocumented immigrants in the United States. Yet even if laws change in favor of this segment of the U.S. population the memories and negative effects of what undocumented families have experienced due to deportations will remain.

Deportations

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is responsible for immigration enforcement actions. Within DHS, the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) undertakes the enforcement, detention, and removal of aliens⁸³ who have violated U.S. immigration laws. The Directorate of Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) is

⁸² Cardinal Roger Mahony, "Hunted in Alabama, February 28 2012," http://cardinalrogermahonyblogsla.blogspot.com/2012_02_01_archive.html (accessed August 23, 2015).

⁸³ "Aliens" and "illegal aliens" are the terms used by DHS and ICE to describe their work.

the specific division within ICE in charge of identifying, apprehending, and removing illegal aliens from the country.⁸⁴

The DHS annual reports indicate that the number of deportations has doubled over the course of the last ten years, from 240,665 in 2004, to 577,295 in 2014, representing a 139.87% increase.⁸⁵ Prior to deportation, undocumented immigrants undergo detention processes, in which they are considered detainees and not inmates, something that the Migration and Refugee Services/United States Conference of Catholic Bishops describes as follows:

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) lacks the authority to imprison criminals and does not hold anybody awaiting trial or serving a criminal sentence. Congress and DHS use the anodyne language of “processing” and “detention” to describe this system. Yet each year, DHS’s Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency (ICE) holds hundreds of thousands of non-citizens and the occasional U.S. citizen, many for extended periods, in prisons, jails, and other secure facilities where their lives are governed by standards designed for criminal defendants. Detention brands immigrants as criminal in the public’s eye and contributes to the sense that they deserve to be treated as such.... The system’s physical infrastructure consists of a sprawling hodgepound of state and local jails, for-profit prisons, BOP prisons, Border Patrol holding cells, and prison-like “service processing centers” administered by ICE. It holds noncitizens – more than three quarters of whom are subject to mandatory detention – in a diverse mix of roughly 250 facilities.⁸⁶

The detentions centers are part of the resources available to the Detention Management Division to manage the influx of undocumented immigrants in the nation.

⁸⁴ ICE, “Who we are.” <http://www.ice.gov/about> (accessed June 18, 2015).

⁸⁵ As reported in “Homeland Security, 2012 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics,” <http://www.dhs.gov/publication/yearbook-2012> (accessed June 12, 2015); “Homeland Security, Immigration Enforcement Actions 2013,” <http://www.dhs.gov/publication/immigration-enforcement-actions-2013> (accessed June 12, 2015); and “DHS releases end of year statistics,” <http://www.ice.gov/news/releases/dhs-releases-end-year-statistics> (accessed June 12, 2015).

⁸⁶ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (Migration and Refugee Services) and The Center for Migration Studies, *Unlocking Human Dignity: A Plan to Transform the U.S. Immigrant Detention System*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2015), 7, 13. <http://www.usccb.org/about/migration-and-refugee-services/upload/unlocking-human-dignity.pdf> (accessed May 14, 2015).

Some detention centers are run by DHS/ ICE, while others are contract facilities. Among some of those run by the Department of Homeland Security there is also an immigration court system. People who are detained in facilities where there is a regional court are shuffled around the different systems of holding facilities so they can be taken in and out of court, thus creating a constant movement of detainees among detention facilities. This movement of detainees around the peripheral of detention holding places creates additional stress to detainees and their families.

The mayhem that the immigration and naturalization process is faced with is extremely overwhelming, particularly to someone who is not familiar with the many variables and/or options that may be available during the incarceration process. The person who has been identified as “priority” and subjected to the detention process is viewed in terms of “civil” detention in contrast to “criminal” imprisonment. It is very hard to see the differences between one and the other because of the many similarities in practice between detention and imprisonment.

The “Enforcement and Removal Operations National Detainee Handbook” from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement,⁸⁷ gives information and instructions to people who are apprehended by DHS/ ICE. Detainees housed at DHS/ ICE facilities are given instructions about basically all aspects of life in detention such as showers, housing, medical, work, dinner, recreation, religious services, appeals, denials, grievances, classification reviews, inspections, property, mail, attorney/ clergy/ family visits, appeals, disciplinary process, and telephones access. The life of the incarcerated

⁸⁷ U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, *Enforcement and Removal Operations/ National Detainee Handbook: Detention Management Division*, (03/2011), 3.

or detainee is almost totally controlled by the Department of Homeland Security, which is ironic considering that the process is called civil-detention and not criminal-detention.

Many outside agencies proactively have taken on the task to intervene in the national debate for immigration issues because of their concern for the safety and welfare of the families impacted by immigration laws and consequent detention. The Migration and Refugee Services/United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has given attention to this critical issue by seeking to transform and reform the U.S. Immigrant Detention System, denouncing that “the U.S. detention system deprives persons of liberty, divides families, inhibits integration, and prevents participation in the broader society.”⁸⁸

The Report “Unlocking Human Dignity: A Plan to Transform the U.S. Immigrant Detention System,” not only denounces the misuse and abuse of the immigrant detention system, but it also proposes alternatives to the detention process:

In January 2014, the U.S. Conference of Bishops (USCCB), along with its Catholic Charities partners, launched a small pilot program with DHS to accept detainees and help them in the community. Though small, the pilot worked to provide legal and community-based case management to released detainees and integration into the community for those provided immigration relief. USCCB will now take families into the program in the hope of demonstrating the effectiveness of the model and expanding it.⁸⁹

The Refugee Services/United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ report represents the shared sentiments of many civil and religious institutions that are witnessing and echoing the public uproar, not only for the unjust detention of family

⁸⁸ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (Migration and Refugee Services) and The Center for Migration Studies, *Unlocking Human Dignity: A Plan to Transform the U.S. Immigrant Detention System*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2015), 15. <http://www.usccb.org/about/migration-and-refugee-services/upload/unlocking-human-dignity.pdf> (accessed May 14, 2015).

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.

members, but also the growing number of family detentions centers throughout the nation, where in many instances whole families are being detained.

After reviewing the status of immigration at the national level, including deportations and life in detention centers, I now continue with an analysis of the consequences of deportations in the lives of families affected by them.

Consequences of Deportations

Deportations have personal, sociological and psychological effects on people affected by them. There have been continued workplace *redadas* (raids) all over the country in the past few years, especially in the mid-2000. However, after a while the riots and deportation stories were not considered news worthy by the media. The society has become in many instances insensible to the pain and stories of deported immigrants. Immigrant communities are living in constant fear of *la migra* (ICE). They are afraid and anxious about going to work, being on the streets, and taking their children to school. Living in fear has emotional and social consequences.

Removal and detention policies separate parents from their children. Some children have been at school when their parents are arrested, and at the end of the day nobody came to pick them up. Much work done in silence has been done by teachers, school districts, neighbors, and communities to help these children.

Other times the *migra* comes to their houses and arrest parents in front of the children, who are left by themselves or in the care of a relative. Children are being left without their mother, their father, or both. If they still live with one of them, they are

afraid that the *migra* will come back to take the other one away. Now more than ever, they are forced to live in hiding, in the shadows of society. Many of the children who have been separated from their parents were born in the United States. In 2013, 72,000 persons who were deported claimed to have U.S.-born children.⁹⁰

According to Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, raids have psychological and economical consequences,

Raids separate both children and adults from the support systems they most need. Psychologically, children experience great anxiety after a raid, which can take the form of depression, separation anxiety, or even trauma. Their stress may manifest itself in the loss of appetite and weight, inability to sleep, and acting out. Economically, the families will need food and daily provisions, and may need help with paying rent or utility bills. Some may have to pay heavy fines in order to gain a temporary release.⁹¹

The psychological effects mentioned coincide with the ones that the National Council of *la Raza* (NCLR), the largest national Hispanic civil rights and Advocacy organization in the United States, published in a 2007 study that evaluated the consequences of the raids on Hispanic Children.⁹² The study was conducted in three communities where over 900 adults were arrested in large-scale worksite raids in 2007: Greeley, Colorado; Grand Island, Nebraska; and New Bedford, Massachusetts. The adults had over 500 children. In two of the locations, 80% of the children were ages ten and

⁹⁰ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (Migration and Refugee Services) and The Center for Migration Studies, *Unlocking Human Dignity: A Plan to Transform the U.S. Immigrant Detention System*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2015), 16. <http://www.usccb.org/about/migration-and-refugee-services/upload/unlocking-human-dignity.pdf> (accessed May 14, 2015).

⁹¹ Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, *Listen to the Children: Conversations with Immigrant Families* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2011), 60-61.

⁹² *Paying the price: the Impact of Immigration Raids on America's Children*, A Report by the Urban Institute for The National Council of *La Raza*, 2007, http://issuu.com/nclr/docs/49166_file_payingtheprice_errata_fnl/19?e=1871004/2454353 (accessed June 18, 2015).

younger; in the other location, fifty percent were ages five and younger. Children experienced family separation, economic hardship, schooling interruption, and mental health trauma:

After the arrest or disappearance of their parents, children experienced feelings of abandonment and showed symptoms of emotional trauma, psychological duress, and mental health problems. Many lacked stability in child care and supervision. Families continued hiding and feared arrest if they ventured outside, increasing social isolation over time. Immigrant communities faced the fear of future raids, backlash from non-immigrants, and the stigma of being labeled “illegal.” The combination of fear, isolation, and economic hardship induced mental health problems such as depression, separation anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, and suicidal thoughts. However, due to cultural reasons, fear of possible consequences in asking for assistance, and barriers to accessing services, few affected immigrants sought mental health care for themselves or their children.⁹³

Another aspect to be considered about the family separations, are the traumas experienced by children when they enter the foster care system as a result of the detention and/or deportation of their parents. On November 2011, the Applied Research Center (ARC)⁹⁴ published a report called “Shattered Families: The Perilous Intersection of Immigration Enforcement and the Child Welfare System.”⁹⁵ When the study was conducted in 2011, there were at least 5100 children in foster care whose parents had been detained or deported. Seth Freed Wessler, the report’s author and principal investigator, followed the stories of different families, like the story of two undocumented sisters who were arrested after a false accusation of drug possession. Their children went into the foster care system and they could not see them for months.

⁹³ Ibid., 4.

⁹⁴ On November 6, 2013 the Applied Research Center (ARC)’s name was changed to “Race Forward: The Center for Racial Justice Innovation.”

⁹⁵ Seth Freed Wessler, The Applied Research Center (ARC), “*Shattered Families: The Perilous Intersection of Immigration Enforcement and the Child Welfare System*”, November 2011, <https://www.raceforward.org/research/reports/shattered-families> (accessed on March 27, 2015).

Even worse, siblings were separated as they went into different foster homes. Many months after being deported to Mexico, they were able to reunite with their children.

In many instances parental rights are terminated and children stay in the foster system with no reunification of the family. Immigrants do not have the economic resources to retain legal counsel to help them maneuver through the judicial system to recuperate their children. This leaves a trail of what Luis H. Zayas, a mental health clinician and researcher, calls “orphan children by deportation”:

The term *orphan* in this book refers primarily to the loss of physical presence, love, and attention of a parent or both parents, even though the parents are alive but living in another country. When parents are forcibly separated from their children and unable to physically minister to their children’s needs, as in the case when parents are detained and deported without their children, they are involuntarily orphaning their children. The very fact that parents may have no resource other than to leave a child in the care of others does not diminish the child’s sense of loss, even if the child remains in the community and home to which he or she is emotionally attached. Therefore, orphans by deportation are children who are unnecessarily deprived of parent’s care and affection.⁹⁶

The terror, anxiety, loneliness, and all other aspects described are also perceived by pastoral agents who minister in Hispanic communities in the Southeast. After looking at the impact and consequences that deportations have on Hispanic families and their children, I now proceed with how deportations and immigration issues play out at the ministerial level.

⁹⁶ Luis H. Zayas, *Forgotten Citizens: Deportation, Children, and the Making of American Exiles and Orphans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 5.

Immigration Issues at the Ministerial Level

The Southeastern states served by SEPI had in 2012 an estimate of 1,680,000 undocumented immigrants, representing 15% of the nation totals.⁹⁷ Mexico is the largest country of birth for all states with the exception of Louisiana, where the largest population of undocumented immigrants come from Honduras.⁹⁸ The Southeastern states have also been affected by deportations and their consequences.

In the first chapter I noted that between March and May 2015, SEPI conducted a Hispanic Family Ministry Online Survey as part of the Hispanic Family Life Process. This survey (see Appendix D) is completely independent of the questionnaire that I used as part of the research methodology for this thesis-project, however, some of the questions that SEPI posed in the survey also help to evaluate the reality of the pastoral ministry to immigrants in the Southeastern states. In reference to evaluating the pastoral realities of Hispanic ministry in their diocese and/or parish (Section 4 of SEPI's survey), almost 75% had a negative response⁹⁹ in regards to the existence of a ministry for wounded families, and 65% indicated a negative perception of how their diocese and/or parish was welcoming immigrant families. We have seen how deportations are creating wounded families, but there seems to be a lack of appropriate pastoral care for them or

⁹⁷ The estimates of unauthorized immigrants (in thousands) by state in the Southeast region are as follows: 65 in Alabama, 925 in Florida, 35 in Kentucky, 55 in Louisiana, 25 in Mississippi, 350 in North Carolina, 95 in South Carolina, and 130 in Tennessee. See Jeffrey S. Passel and D'Vera Cohn, "Unauthorized Immigrant Totals Rise in 7 States, Fall in 14: Decline in Those From Mexico Fuels Most State Decreases," (Washington, D.C. Pew Research Center's Hispanic Trends Project, November 2014) http://www.pewhispanic.org/files/2014/11/2014-11-18_unauthorized-immigration.pdf (accessed June 17, 2015).

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ For the purpose of analyzing the responses, "Unknown", "Poor" and "non-existent" are all considered negative answers, while "Excellent" and "Good" are considered positive answers.

for welcoming immigrant families. In addition to this, 30% of the respondents identified immigration restrictions as one of the five areas that represented the greatest challenges for Hispanic ministry in the Southeast region. However the areas that were selected by the majority of responses were: (1) faith crisis; (2) communication among family members; (3) lack of time for being with the family; (4) maintaining our Hispanic traditions; and (5) language used when raising children. The data was also analyzed based on the location of the participants, and in this analysis only the responses from the State of Alabama identified immigration restrictions as one of the major challenges, probably as a result of the State law against undocumented immigrants.

Nevertheless, my personal experience indicates that there are major concerns about the impact of immigration issues in the personal and ecclesial lives of the communities I have visited. The questionnaire's qualitative answers—to be examined later—also attest to the challenges caused by immigration laws and their consequences on undocumented Hispanic families.

Lived Experiences

As a teacher of *Escuelas de Ministerios* I have heard many testimonies from participants and priests about the effects of immigration laws in their communities. During the weekend courses I have the opportunity to stay with a family, and the home environment lends itself to families' sharing their experiences, which I will reflect upon now.

Most undocumented immigrants do not have a driver's license. In one of the communities that I visited, the person who usually provided transportation to the airport

for the teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios* was sick, and the priest had a very hard time finding someone with legal status who could pick me up at the airport. Among all parishioners, only a few could provide me with transportation. Sadly, even though many parishioners volunteered themselves and had the disposition to serve, they could not do it because of the risk involved.

Participants have shared with me their fears about being deported and how families are separated. There are fathers or mothers who stay behind in this country with their children when their spouse has been deported. Then they have to make decisions: Should they stay? Should they leave? Many of the children came to the United States at a very young age and countless numbers of them were born here. If the spouse of the deported father or mother decides to stay because of the children, the marriage and family life is gravely distressed. If the spouse decides to go with the deported spouse and leave the children to be raised in the United States, then it would be as if he or she is abandoning the children. It is a very delicate situation, and decisions made by the father or mother affect the future of the family. The church might help in terms of referring families to immigration attorneys, but there is almost no pastoral care to help them cope with these difficult decisions. Another problem is the wounds caused by the deportation of a loved one and the resentment against those who accused the family member of being in the country illegally.

I have been told about raids after Sunday mass in certain communities. Immigration agents closed all access surrounding the parish and waited for the Mass to end to apprehend the undocumented immigrants as they left the church. Because of

incidents like these, no activities can be planned in the evenings as people will not attend out of fear.

Undocumented immigrants are being excluded from their call to service in the church. The Virtus¹⁰⁰ program, a program that checks the background of church employees and volunteers was originally designed to be implemented for those who worked with children and the elderly. The program requires background checks and finger prints of those who serve in the church. As a result of the “Dallas Charter” Virtus training and background checks are required for all church volunteers, independently of whether they work with children or not. Therefore, undocumented immigrants are being excluded from their baptismal responsibility to service in the church. They cannot be lectors, extraordinary ministers of the Eucharistic or sing in the choir. Undocumented immigrants are being excluded from the church’s ministry and a result of this type of discrimination many feel wounded and frustrated, and leave the church.

Many parishes do not offer child care during parochial activities because of the lack of volunteers who can comply with Virtus. This affects the participation of married couples in events and/or meetings, since one of the spouses has to stay home with the children. This is not the case however, in other Christian churches in the area. These churches do not require background checks so the undocumented immigrants do not feel rejected and are rather encouraged to serve.

¹⁰⁰ The Virtus Program is a training and certification program implemented in many dioceses and church institutions as a result of the “Dallas Charter” which was established by the USCCB in response to the child-abuse scandal. , “VIRTUS is the brand name that identifies best practices programs designed to help prevent wrongdoing and promote "right doing" within religious organizations. The VIRTUS programs empower organizations and people to better control risk and improve the lives of all those who interact with the church.” http://www.virtus.org/virtus/virtus_description.cfm (accessed September 3, 2015).

Many parishioners and students from *Escuelas de Ministerios* want to serve, but they can only be passive recipients of the ministry of the church. Undocumented immigrants attend Mass, courses, and retreats, but they are not allowed to participate other than sitting and listening. That makes the students very appreciative and thankful of those who travel to give classes or any type of formation. The undocumented immigrants feel rejected by the institution, but they feel welcomed by the one who comes to teach and minister to them.

After sharing personal experiences lived while ministering to immigrants, I now look into the results of the questionnaires given to *Agentes de Pastoral* and to the professors of *Escuelas de Ministerios*.

Questionnaire Results

For the research of this thesis-project I used SurveyMonkey to send questionnaires to pastoral agents, Hispanic ministry diocesan directors and coordinators of *Escuelas de Ministerios* in the different dioceses of the Southeast Region, since they are representatives of the communities they serve. A questionnaire was also sent to the teachers of the *Escuelas de Ministerios*. Both questionnaires were available in English (see Appendix A) and in Spanish (see Appendix B). The questions were designed to identify the major concerns, problems, and challenges that exist in the dioceses with regard to the effects of deportations.

As I move forward in the socio-analytical mediation, I present now responses to the questionnaires given to Pastoral Agents and Teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios*.

These questionnaires are not only a source of sociological information, but also a *locus theologicus*. Hispanic/Latino theology refers to *lo cotidiano*¹⁰¹ (daily living) as a source for theological reflection. In the words of Peter C. Phan, we need to “dig deep into the humus of the immigrants’ lives to find resources for their reflection.”¹⁰² I concur with many theological scholars who contend that all theology is local and that the stories of people are invaluable in contextualizing theology. Thus, the answers to the questionnaires are an integral component of describing this reality and giving context to our theological reflections.

I obtained information from Pastoral Agents and Teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios* by using a questionnaire with six open-ended questions that provided qualitative answers. In order to know the reality of the communities we need to analyze the stories and the experiences that describe specific situations they are enduring in relation to deportations. As Carmen Nanko-Fernández observes, “to reflect on migration abstractly, removed from the context of real people and communities in complex situations, is counterintuitive and unproductive.”¹⁰³ The answers in the questionnaires shed light on ways pastoral agents reflect upon their experience, and ground the theological reflection in this thesis project.

¹⁰¹ See: Maria Pilar Aquino. “Theological Method in U.S. Latino/a Theology: Toward an Intercultural Theology for the Third Millennium,” in *From the Heart of Our People*, edited by Orlando O. Espín and Miguel H. Díaz (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1999), 38-39.

¹⁰² Peter C. Phan, “The Experience of Migration as Source of Intercultural Theology,” in *Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology*, edited by Elaine Padilla and Peter C. Phan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 192.

¹⁰³ Carmen M. Nanko-Fernández, *Theologizing in Espanglish* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2010), 111.

Responses from Pastoral Agents

The questions addressed to the *Agentes de Pastoral* can be grouped in two main areas: first, *la realidad*, how are the deportations affecting their communities and what has been done about it (questions 1-4); and second, what else can be done (questions 5 and 6) to make their lives better.

Before examining the responses of the pastoral agents in detail, it is worth noting that the pastoral agents have identified a number of real-life issues in the lives of those they serve who are affected by deportations, such as isolation, lack of cultural and social integration and alcoholism. Pastoral agents describe reality of the undocumented peoples they teach as one which varies from one place to the other and also varies with the passing of time. The responses to the first four questions demonstrate the impact deportations have on families, in the ministerial and ecclesial life, and the need to address the social issues faced by the undocumented immigrants.

The first question in the survey given to the *Agentes de Pastoral Hispana* was: “Has your Dioceses been affected by deportations?” They all answered affirmatively but one of the answers stated the following: “*Por supuesto ya que se ha perdido, mucho talento que podría estar siendo útil a nuestra Iglesia.*”¹⁰⁴ (“Of course, because a lot of talent that could have been useful in our church has been lost.”)

The answer provided by this individual alluded to the loss suffered by the church as a direct result of deportations. People are valuable to the church’s mission, and if they get deported not only can they no longer contribute in tangible ways to ministry, but the community loses a person whose Spirit-given charisms have intrinsic value and worth.

¹⁰⁴ Survey for *Agentes de Pastoral Hispana*; Question #1 Person #2.

The second question to the survey was: “Describe the situation in detail. What are the current problems?” The answers to this question explained that many people are being deported and this leaves a “hole” because of their sudden disappearance from the community: “*Primero ha afectado a nuestra comunidad que hacen falta, como también a la separación de las familias, y matrimonios.*”¹⁰⁵ (“First, our community has been affected [because] we need them, as well as the separation of the families, and marriages.”)

The answer given by another of those surveyed was as follows:

Las personas que llegan a nuestra comunidad y que en la mayoría de los casos llevan 10 a 15 años residiendo en la localidad [sic] constituyen una [sic] grupo de personas de mucha diversidad cultural, económica [sic] y diferentes en los aspectos de educación [sic]. Por este motivo su adaptación [sic] a la cultura alglo [sic] es muy difícil [sic] o casi imposible; en su mayoría [sic] provienen de México [sic] y centroamérica [sic] son en general campesinos, con poca educación [sic] y a los que no les importa adaptarse a la nueva cultura, su finalidad es más [sic] económica [sic] que otra. Los otros grupos están [sic] conformado con suramericanos [sic] la mayoría [sic] con algún [sic] nivel de educación media, técnica [sic] y profesional, los cuales por lo regular llegan en grupos familiares completos, cosa que no ocurre en los grupos migrantes de centroamérica [sic], los cuales llegan hombre[sic] y mujeres solos [sic], algunos más [sic] tarde logran traer sus parejas e hijos, otros no lo logran conformando nuevos núcleos [sic] familiares en este país [sic]. Lo anterior crea muchos problemas: Desarraigo cultural, les importa poco desarrollarse como personas [sic] es decir [sic] educarse, solo quieren ganar mucho dinero para enviar a sus países [sic] pensando en la posibilidad de un regreso [sic] cosa que se prolonga en el tiempo o que nunca sucede; la soledad y el desarraigo cultural es aprovechado por las sectas protestantes para robarles sus creencias religiosas. La nueva generaciones [sic] que llegaron siendo pequeños [sic] o los nacidos en EU son niños [sic] o jóvenes [sic] que normalmente no logran integrarse socialmente a la comunidad anglo [sic], ellos aunque sean estadounidenses no se sienten [sic] ni de aquí [sic] ni de sus propios país[sic], me parece que sienten algún [sic] complejo. Cuando se a [sic] logrado alguna estabilidad que algunos [sic] casos es muy frágil [sic] y cuando se está [sic] desarrollando algún [sic] trabajo pastoral o ayuda espiritual [sic] muchas veces se presentan deportaciones que truncan la ya debilitada estructura familiar, dejando familias

¹⁰⁵ Survey for *Agentes de Pastoral Hispana*; Question #2 Person #2.

rotas en todos los aspectos y la perdida de algunos miembros de la cominidad [sic] que han logrado iniciar procesos [sic] de desarrollo.”¹⁰⁶

(The people that come to our community have been living here in most cases for ten to fifteen years and they are a group of people with a lot of cultural and economic diversity and different levels of education. Because of this situation their adaptation [immigrants'] to the American culture is something very difficult or almost impossible. The majority comes from Mexico and Central America, they are usually peasants, with low educational level, and they do not care about adapting to the new culture; their finality is more economic than any other. The other groups are made of South Americans and the majority has some level of intermediate, technical and professional education, and they usually come with the whole family, which is not the same that happens with the migrants from Central America, as they usually come men or women by themselves. Some of the Central American migrants bring their spouses and children later, but others can't so they end up starting new families in this country. What has been described creates many problems, such cultural uprooting, no desire to develop as persons (get educated), all they want is to earn money to send to their families, thinking about returning to their countries, something that takes a long time or does not happen at all. The solitude and the lack of cultural identity have been taken advantage of, by the Protestant sects who at the same time steal their religious beliefs. The new generations that came to the country when they were children or the ones that were born here are kids that usually can not integrate socially to the Anglo community; even if they are U.S. citizens, they do not feel that they are from here or from their own countries, I believe they feel some type of complex. It is very hard as when some stability has been accomplished and when some type of pastoral activity or spiritual guidance is being provided, deportations truncate the already debilitated family structure, creating broken families in all aspects, and causing the loss of community members that had initiated formation process.)

This answer contains a number of useful insights. First, a good number of the people who are being caught by immigration enforcement have already been living in the United States for many years. Second, the answer also addresses the cultural, economical, and educational diversity within the immigrant population by explaining the differences between immigrants from Central and South America. The account appears to also suggest that in general, the level of education from the immigrants coming from South America is somewhat higher than the ones coming from Central America, and that

¹⁰⁶ Survey for *Agentes de Pastoral Hispana*; Question #2 Person #3.

the immigrants who possess a higher educational level will more than likely have a different experience than those with lower or no education when migrating to the U.S. The immigrant experience is not uniform and pastoral agents have to be aware that no generalizations can be made about people in the community where each person might come from a different context. Third, in reference to the immigrants' adaptation to the American culture, the response also comments that for the immigrants with lower level of education the adaptation is very difficult and many times impossible. The immigrants come to the United States to fill the gaps caused by poverty, political unrest, and the inability to resolve the challenges in their native lands, but are unable to overcome the cultural obstacles that confront them. Many of the immigrants are from rural areas with little or no education, and their primary concern is to survive and to have enough left to send home to their families: "...*su finalidad es más económica que otra.*"¹⁰⁷ ("Their purpose is more economic than any other.") Another insight provided by the response is that many social and religious entities are also helping because they have been touched by the needs of immigrant communities, but pastoral agents see this as a threat: "...*la soledad y el desarraigo cultural es aprovechado por las sectas protestantes para robarles sus creencias religiosas.*"¹⁰⁸ ("...the solitude and the lack of cultural identity have been taken advantage of, by the Protestant sects who at the same time steal their religious beliefs.") The respondent expresses his or her concern that the Catholic church is losing membership because other Christian denominations are meeting the needs of these migrants better than the Catholic church. This is maybe in part due to the overall lack of understanding by Catholic leaders or *Agentes de la Pastoral Hispana* of the needs

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

of the immigrants and how a pastoral response to these needs is integral to the mission of the church.

Another point made by some of the participants to the same question #2, was their concern of the use and abuse of alcohol, and as result they were driving while intoxicated and without a license. This appeared to account for a good number of people who eventually were deported after being processed and prosecuted by officials: *“Las personas de las cuales hablo en la respuesta anterior han sido deportados por manejar en algunos casos en exceso de velocidad, sumando que estan en estado de ebriedad.”*¹⁰⁹ (“The people of whom I am speaking in the preceding answer have been deported for driving in excess of the speed limit, compounded by being drunk while driving.”)

Another survey also adds to the same situation in question #5: *“Pienso que tratar de educar a estas personas que se arriesgan a conducir en estado de alicoramiento inclusive arriesgándose a causar accidentes peligrando la vida de otras personas.”*¹¹⁰ (“I believe to try to educate people that are taking chances while driving drunk and even risking an accident and endangering the lives of other people.”)

The same survey on another question states: *“Considerando la falta de aportar la licencia de conducción, y debido a esto hay que conducir porque en nuestra comunidad necesitamos transportarnos porque no hay modo de transporte”*¹¹¹ (“Considering the lack of having a driver’s license, because of this we have to drive in our community [without a driver’s license] so we can move since there is no other mode of

¹⁰⁹ Survey for *Agentes de Pastoral Hispana*; Question #2 Person #1.

¹¹⁰ Survey for *Agentes de Pastoral Hispana*; Question #5 Person #4.

¹¹¹ Survey for *Agentes de Pastoral Hispana*; Question #2 Person #4.

transportation.”) Here we see two important situations related to driving. First, the need for transportation in order to provide for one’s family, even if that means driving without a driver’s license,¹¹² and second, the need to equip pastoral agents to be able to better respond to the needs of the membership of their communities.

The answers to the following two questions continue assessing *la realidad* from the pastoral agents’ perspective. The third question in the survey addresses the consequences of deportations to the local church: What are the effects of deportations in the community and in the church’s life? One response explains how the deportations are affecting church communities: “*En principio en la comunidad, dentro del ámbito de amigos es de [sic] temor por [sic] salir a manejar sin licencia y eso conlleva a que la gente deja[sic] de asistir a misa o cualquier otra actividad que se lleve a cabo fuera o dentro de la iglesia, y pues eso [sic] a largo plazo los lleva [sic] enfriar su fe, su voluntad por querer buscar a Dios.*”¹¹³ (“At the beginning, in the community within the circle of friends, they are afraid to drive without a valid driver’s license to any activity that is being held outside or inside the church, and as a consequence they become reluctant to seek and follow God’s will.”)

In question four I asked the *Agentes de Pastoral Hispana* about what has been done to ease the situation: “What programs have been established to assist the immigrants and families affected by deportations?” To this question, a response states the following:

¹¹² In many states undocumented immigrants cannot obtain a driver’s license, but the reality is that they need to drive in order to go to work and school. An exception is the State of California that in January 2, 2015 allowed over a million California undocumented residents to legally apply for a driver’s license.

¹¹³ Survey for *Agentes de Pastoral Hispana*; Question #3 Person #1.

Dentro de mi parroquia si algún familiar es deportado se pide ayuda a la misma iglesia, convocando a los feligreses a cooperar voluntariamente con despensas de alimento, dinero para ayudar a pagar gastos de renta, y otros. Esto a través de los distintos ministerios que hay en ella, y a nivel diocesano está la oficina hispana dentro de las oficinas de Caridades Católicas las cuales también brindan el mismo apoyo. Además de asesoría de abogados voluntarios que asistirán a muy bajo costo o gratis según sea el estado de la familia afectada. La parroquia ha traído a abogados para que den charlas donde se puede consultar, preguntar, y asesorarse según el caso, aunque es esporádicamente son de mucha utilidad.¹¹⁴

(In my parish if a family member is deported, we ask for help in the church by asking the community of believers to cooperate voluntarily with a food pantry and money to help pay the rent, as well as other expenditures. This is done through the different parish' ministries, and at diocesan level we have a Hispanic office within Catholic Charities that also provides support. In addition to volunteer lawyers that will assist families for a very low cost or no cost at all. The parish has also brought lawyers to give talks where people can ask questions and get advice. Even though these talks are sporadic, they are very helpful.)

The information provided by this survey indicates clearly that a number of the parishes are taking action by addressing some of the issues that abound in the lives of the undocumented immigrants. This church community responded to the specific needs of their parishioners by working together to solve specific problems of its membership.

In questions number five and six, I asked “What else can be done? What can SEPI do to assist you?” In general the responses denote the need for pastoral agents to be better equipped to accompany their communities.

A response stated the following: “*Tener más abogados que puedan prestar servicios inmediatos en estos casos, a veces es lenta la respuesta y por parte de la Iglesia Católica presionar más al gobierno para una reforma migratoria justa.*”¹¹⁵ (“To have more attorneys that can provide immediate services in these cases, because sometimes the answer is too slow and for the Catholic church to pressure the government more seeking

¹¹⁴ Survey for *Agentes de Pastoral Hispana*; Question #4 Person #1.

¹¹⁵ Survey for *Agentes de Pastoral Hispana*; Question #5 Person #3.

a more just immigration reform.”) Another response stated: “*Yo pienso que informar más a la gente sobre las leyes de este país, para tomar precauciones esta [sic] que llegue alguna reforma; también tratar de que como agentes evangelizadores dar confianza (fe) para que lleven una vida según las leyes de Dios.*”¹¹⁶ (“I think that we need to inform people more about the laws of this country, so we can be careful until an immigration reform is enacted; and also to try as agents of evangelization to give confidence (faith) so they can lead a life according to God’s laws.”) The survey indicates that there is an urgent need to develop a comprehensive approach to the legal challenges faced by undocumented immigrants. The second participant, again, is also concerned about the pastoral agents’ need to better proclaim the hope of the Gospel and by helping them grow in the life of faith.

In summary, from the *Agentes de Pastoral Hispana* surveys I discovered the following: First, the necessity for the *Escuelas de Ministerios* to be more aware of the needs of migrants found in the communities they serve. Second, that pastoral agents become aware of the impact that deportations have on their communities as regards the loss of the valuable contribution of undocumented immigrants in the church’s mission and projects. Third, the same communities have identified a number of real-life issues in the lives of those they serve who are affected by deportations, and expressed their solidarity through a series of pastoral responses that seek to attend to the challenges faced by undocumented immigrants. Fourth, the pastoral agents perceived the need for informational classes and resources that deal with everyday life issues, including the use and abuse of alcohol, drugs, and knowledge of the laws that can negatively affect them.

¹¹⁶ Survey for *Agentes de Pastoral Hispana*; Question #5 Person #1.

Fifth, pastoral agents also seek a formation that encourages them in their service to the church.

Responses from Teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios*

The teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios* also participated in the survey with questions that were relevant to the type of ministerial service they provide when in contact with some of the immigrants in their communities. The perspectives provided by the professors of the *Escuelas de Ministerios* in their answers were very insightful. Although the experience with the community is relatively limited, a wealth of information is gathered during the time the teachers spend with their host families.

The questions addressed to the teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios* can be grouped in two main areas: first, *la realidad*, how are the deportations affecting their communities and what has been done about it (questions 1-4); and second, what else can be done (questions 5 and 6).

La realidad is not static; it varies among communities and also with time. The survey underlines the point that, in general, Hispanic communities are very involved in church activities. The survey responses assert that family separations caused by deportations are perceived as a major problem that is negatively affecting their communities. The teachers' responses point to the fact that faith, devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe, sense of family and community, and a great desire to serve are assets of the Hispanic communities they serve. I now consider several survey responses that demonstrate how the teachers perceive the different aspects of *la realidad*.

Question number one in the survey asked the following: “What has been your experience with the Hispanic families that are part of the *Escuelas de Ministerios*?”

Person number one provides the following answer:

Generally, they are poor. Some are middle class and have some education. The vast majority are involved in some sort of church activity, lay ministers, lectors, choir, CCD etc. I have found them to be very welcoming into their home and/or communities and fairly open to outsiders. Most of them are willing to talk about their problems, including their immigration status or lack thereof. The most gratifying thing I have seen is how they try very hard to make sure you feel comfortable while in their midst.¹¹⁷

In general, this response casts a positive light on the migrants’ desire to be useful in their church community, and their willingness to share what they have as demonstrated by the hospitality they offer to the teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios*. Other survey participants explain how the Hispanic families are very involved and willing to learn:

“*Muy satisfactoria. Siempre demuestran mucho interés en las clases y se muestran deseosos de aprender. En general son muy constantes a pesar de las muchas dificultades que a menudo presentan.*”¹¹⁸ (“Very satisfactory. They always demonstrate a lot of interest in the classes and they are excited to learn. In general, they are very constant in spite of the many difficulties they are often presented with.”)

The second question of the survey for the professors of the *Escuelas de Ministerios* deals more with personal experience: “What has been your experience with undocumented immigrants?” The following statement by one of the professors shows great sensitivity when speaking about how real families are impacted by the difficulties of being undocumented:

¹¹⁷ Survey for teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios*; Question #1 Person #1.

¹¹⁸ Survey for teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios*; Question #1 Person #3.

*En realidad, en las clases ellos no se identifican como tal. A veces uno detecta su situación por comentarios que ellos mismos hacen acerca de las dificultades en sus vidas. También, cuando sale a relucir el tema de la educación, siempre enfatizo que deben motivar a sus hijos jóvenes para que estudien y si pueden vayan a la Universidad. Sin embargo, se detecta en sus miradas la frustración de que sus hijos no puedan hacerlo por ser ellos indocumentados. De repente también me presentan sus situaciones fuera de clase a ver si yo puedo ayudarlos en alguna forma.*¹¹⁹

(In reality, in the classes they do not identify themselves as undocumented. Sometimes you can detect their situation because of the comments they make about the difficulties in their lives. Also, when the topic of education comes out, I emphasize that they should motivate their children to study and go to college if possible. However, I can see their frustration as their children cannot study because they are undocumented. Sometimes, they also present to me their specific situation outside the classroom to see if I can assist them.)

The first bit of information as to how we can identify who may be undocumented in our classroom is not so obvious *a priori*: “*En realidad, en las clases ellos no se identifican como tal.*”¹²⁰ (“In reality, in the classes they do not identify themselves as undocumented.”) However, *a posteriori* and as the students get to know the teachers they will start opening up: “*A veces uno detecta su situación por comentarios que ellos mismos hacen acerca de las dificultades en sus vidas.*”¹²¹ (“Sometimes you can detect their situation because of the comments they make about the difficulties in their lives.”) This hints at a culture of silence and an underground society that continues to live in the shadows, not by their own choosing but by necessity. Another aspect that we can identify is the suffering and sadness they feel as a result of the fact that their children are also subjected to the limitations and consequences of living in the shadows.

¹¹⁹ Survey for teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios*; Question #2 Person #3.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid.

The third question asked has to do with the assets the immigrant community brings to the church. One of the professors explains:

Assets are their faith, their devotion to Mary Mother of God (especially Guadalupe); their humble approach to life, their sense of family and their sense of the festive, specially, their celebrating the many occasions in their journey. They are plain spoken and are sincere. They have a thirst for knowledge specially, as they want to minister to others; they want to grow in the knowledge of the Lord.¹²²

Another professor in the same question answered the following:

*Fuerte vinculación a la Iglesia reforzada por su sentimiento religioso fiel a sus tradiciones, sobre todo devocionales. Deseo de mejora (nivel de vida, formación, vivencia de su fe). Disponibilidad para el servicio humanitario y eclesial. Arraigo en su religiosidad popular. Fuerte deseo de mantener su identidad religiosa y cultural.*¹²³

(Strong connection with the church, strengthened by their religious sensibilities, fidelity to their traditions, especially the devotional traditions. The desire to improve life status, formation, and faith expression. Availability for humanitarian and ecclesial service. Love for popular religiosity. Strong desire to maintain religious and cultural identity.)

The surveyor highlighted the immigrants' strong relationship with the church and their faith and popular religiosity as assets. Another response explains: "*Nuestra gente tienen muchos valores. Una fe increíble. Una gran devoción a la Virgen (sobre todo a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe), tienen también un gran sentido de comunidad y un deseo muy grande de servir en la Iglesia.*"¹²⁴ ("Our people have many values. An incredible faith! A great devotion for Our Lady of Guadalupe, and they also have a great sense of community and a great desire to serve in the church.") Popular religiosity is an important

¹²² Survey for teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios*; Question #1 Person #3.

¹²³ Survey for teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios*; Question #3 Person #4.

¹²⁴ Survey for teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios*; Question #3 Person #3.

aspect in the lives of the poor and the oppressed, and the Hispanic community, is deeply devoted to Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The following question had to do with the problems that the teachers perceive that the community is experiencing: “What are the problems that you perceive that they are experiencing in these communities?” To this question one of the professors answered:

Discrimination at every level. Discriminated by authorities, by business people and sometimes even by church principals. Lack of steady and meaningful employment. Lack of education. Poor housing. Misunderstandings how a Pastor allowed a School of 2 days for about 65 people to be conducted in 23 degree weather with NO heat, and thinking that was alright. I have also been told by another Pastor (this one very friendly and supportive of Hispanics) that his diocese charged the Hispanics to use facilities until we [sic] became a Pastor and stopped that practice, actually absorbing that cost in his own Budget [sic], as the Diocese insisted in getting paid.”¹²⁵

As I analyzed this answer, I discovered that bigotry is not only found outside the church walls but is also found inside. Another of the professors surveyed on the same question explains:

Las comunidades en las mismas que me ha tocado enseñar a lo largo de estos 20 años como maestro en las Escuelas de Ministerios presentan problemáticas diversas. Quizás algo común a todas es la situación de indocumentados de la mayoría. Esta situación a veces se hace apremiante. Recuerdo en una ocasión cuando ofrecía un taller sobre el Plan Pastoral que una de las religiosas presentes tomó la palabra para precaver a las personas que no fueran al festival del domingo en la Iglesia pues la Migra iba a aparecer. Todos quedaron muy atemorizados. Otro problema es el poco interés por aprender inglés. Sólo los más jóvenes y alguno que otro profesional consigue hablar el idioma. Esto es importante, pues los limita en el proceso de integración en la Iglesia local. Ellos parecen sentirse muy cómodos con sus servicios en español y nada más... Otra realidad que se hace manifiesta es el bajo nivel de educación de la mayoría, lo cual tampoco les ayuda para mejorar su situación económica. En un tiempo se hizo muy latente la presencia de muchos hombres en las clases. La mayoría estaban acá solos y habían dejado sus familias en sus países. Algunos me compartían su difícil situación y me confiaban que habían comenzado nuevas relaciones por acá y se sentían culpables con esta situación. Hoy día la

¹²⁵ Survey for teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios*; Question #4 Person #1.

*problemática mayor son las deportaciones, que están separando a nuestras familias.*¹²⁶

(The communities where I have served during the last 20 years as teacher of Escuelas de Ministerios have different problems. Something they all have in common is the situation of the undocumented. This is a pressing matter. I remember one occasion when I was giving a workshop about the Pastoral Plan, and one of the sisters told the participants not to attend the church festival on Sunday, since the Migra was coming. All participants were afraid. Another problem is the lack of interest in learning English. Only the young ones and some professionals speak English. This is important, as it limits the process of integration within the local church. They seem to be just comfortable with the church services in Spanish and do not want anything else. Another issue is the low educational level that the majority has, which does not help them to improve their economic situation. At some point there were more men in class. They were mainly alone in the United States and had left their families in their countries. Some of them used to share their difficult situations and confide in me that they had started new relationships here and they felt guilty about it. The main problem today is the deportations, which are separating our families.)

Looking at the answer provided by the teacher of *Escuelas de Ministerios* I see that even when *la realidad* changes from time to time, family separations and deportations are constant.

Another very important observation is the immigrants' desire to preserve their cultural roots away from their country of origin, and the rejection of and even lack of desire to learn the English language. There are several reasons that can be attributed to this. First, the lack of desire to learn the language could be due to the limited amount of education among many of these persons, thus making the learning of a different language a very difficult task. Second, the resistance to learning a new language could be interpreted as an issue of identity. Language is integral to identity and the fear of losing the language that defines their identity might be perceived as a threat to their desire to preserve their cultural roots and even their traditions and religious beliefs. The third reason we could consider to explain why they are hesitant to learn English could be that

¹²⁶ Survey for teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios*; Question #4 Person #3.

in “the underground” of communities of undocumented people, English is never spoken. If the language regularly spoken in the daily living is Spanish, then the need for learning another language will not be a priority.

The one aspect highlighted in the responses to the survey points to the reality that many undocumented people stay away from a proactive integration into the U.S. culture, is fear. The fear is a result of their experience of bigotry, rejection, alienation, and xenophobia.

With regards to the question “what else can be done” the pastoral agents believe that the teachers also need formation to be more aware of the immigration issues affecting the communities to which they are sent to teach.

The last two questions in the survey ask: “how are the problems perceived being addressed?” and “how could the *Escuelas de Ministerios* assist in the formation of pastoral agents that minister to undocumented people?” One of the survey participants specifically explain how these problems are being addressed and consequently, what recommendations he or she has in how the *Escuelas de Ministerios* can help:

In various ways; Many Pastors are engaging the higher ups in trying to secure a dignified role and place for “their” Hispanics. Many Parishes have outreach educational programs besides the normal apostolic movement activities. Pastoral Councils including Hispanic leaders are educating our Anglo brethren in our way of celebrating our faith. Obviously SEPI is a transforming agent thru contacts at every level in the Dioceses it serves. Beyond that, I have no knowledge of what’s being done.¹²⁷

On the last question the same person also makes a number of recommendations to assist the immigrants by way of *Escuelas de Ministerios*:

Assuming that professors are motivated by Matthew 25 among other inspirations, I would recommend the following: Understanding of Immigration Laws; Full

¹²⁷ Survey for teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios*; Question #5 Person #1.

knowledge of the DSI (church social doctrine) relating specifically to the immigrants; Continue to live within the communities you visit for School, [sic] the in home contact becomes very important; Study *Pastoral Penitenciaria*, as many of those in Detention Centers are relatives of the people we serve; One such course [should] be part of SEPI's curriculum as most of the detainees in Krome Detention Center are Hispanics and have lived in the Southeast; Deepen knowledge of how undocumented people feel, maybe have one such person that has now obtained papers and possibly certifications, teach a Seminar at SEPI.¹²⁸

Another response values the role of *Escuelas de Ministerios* as a formation program, but realizes the need for the faculty to be well informed so that they can properly advise the pastoral agents. The same response also calls for a greater sensitivity of the teachers for the situation of the undocumented immigrants.

*Las Escuelas de Ministerios han venido acompañando a los agentes de pastoral por muchos años ofreciéndoles formación teológica pastoral. Ahora bien, respecto a la problemática de los indocumentados creo que una forma de ayuda sería que los profesores nos mantengamos informados sobre la actualidad de inmigración y recomendar a todos aquellos estudiantes que son ciudadanos que hagan oír sus voces con sus representantes para favorecer una reforma migratoria que resuelva un poco la inestabilidad en la que vive nuestra pobre gente. Así mismo, yo pienso que para graduarse del programa de Maestría del SEPI los alumnos deberían de servir al menos por un par de semanas a manera de intership en alguna de las diócesis de la región sureste, y así poder empaparse mayor de la realidad hispana fuera de Miami. Esto a la vez los sensibilizaría aún más sobre la problemática de los indocumentados de nuestra Región.*¹²⁹

(The Schools of Ministries have been accompanying the pastoral agents many years by offering theological and pastoral formation. In regards to the situations faced by undocumented people, I believe it would help if we the teachers are well informed about current immigration issues and recommend to the students who are citizens to voice their opinion to their representatives to favor an immigration reform that would resolve somewhat the instability in which our poor people live. Also, in order for students to graduate from the Master's program at SEPI, they should complete a two-week internship program in one of the dioceses in the southeastern region and thus be able to absorb more of the Hispanic reality outside Miami. This in turn would make them more aware of the problems faced by undocumented people in our region.)

¹²⁸ Survey for teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios*; Question #6 Person #1.

¹²⁹ Survey for teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios*; Question #6 Person #3.

This response addresses the fact that some of the teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios* are not aware of (or are sensitive to) the realities faced by undocumented people.

In summary, from the answers to the questionnaires given to teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios* I discovered the following: First, there is a need for the teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios* to be more aware and sensitive to the needs of immigrants found in the communities they serve. Second, the teachers perceive that their students have an understanding of the mission of the church and are committed to that mission. Third, the communities they visit have a strong faith in God, a deep devotion to Mary, treasure family values, have a rich sense of community, and hold a desire to learn and grow in faith. Fourth, the teachers indicate the necessity of becoming more familiar with the actual problems faced by the communities and to be more knowledgeable and better equipped to serve in their capacity as teachers and ministers.

Conclusion

In this chapter I continued the socio-analytical mediation by examining the realities of immigration at the national and ministerial levels, by exploring my experiences, and by delving into the questionnaires results. Through the socio-analytical mediation I have shown that in this ministerial context the oppressed are the undocumented immigrants who suffer the effects of deportations in their personal, social, and ecclesial life. My personal experiences and the questionnaires insightfully identify some of the most pressing needs of the communities that the Southeast Pastoral Institute serves *vis-à-vis* the *Escuelas de Ministerios*.

In the following chapter and as part of the hermeneutical mediation I will look into how the theological and doctrinal tradition of the church illuminates *la realidad* of immigration and the pastoral care to immigrants.

CHAPTER 3: THEOLOGICAL AND DOCTRINAL TRADITION OF THE CHURCH

“In advocating on behalf of migrants, immigrants, and refugees, it is important to understand that the Catholic position is based on Catholic social teaching, which is derived from the Gospels and the words of Christ; statements and encyclicals of the Popes; and statements and pastoral letters of bishops around the world, including the U.S. bishops.”¹³⁰

As stated earlier in the introduction, the ministerial concern that this thesis project addresses is: how can the *Escuelas de Ministerios* adequately respond to the needs of pastoral agents in their ministry to Hispanics who are often faced with the effects of deportation? In the previous chapters I addressed the socio-analytical mediation (seeing) by looking at *la realidad* of ministering to Hispanic immigrants within the context of *Escuelas de Ministerios*. In the quest for a renewed praxis that will address the ministerial concern at hand, I will now look at the theological aspects of migration and the pastoral care of immigrants. Here I will review several theological areas of study that will illuminate the pastoral response to the issue at hand.

In this chapter I address the hermeneutical mediation (judging) that confronts *la realidad* with what Leonardo and Clodovis Boff call the “World of God” and Tradition: “the hermeneutical mediation operates in the sphere of God’s world. It tries to discern what God’s plan is for the poor.”¹³¹ The chapter is laid out in two parts. Part one focuses on a theological perspective of migration by looking to the Bible, ecclesial documents, Catholic social teaching, and theologies of migration. Part two examines the

¹³⁰ Justice for Immigrants, “Immigration and Catholic Social Teaching,” <http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/documents/immigration-and-catholic-social-teaching.pdf> (accessed June 12, 2015).

¹³¹ Leonardo & Clodovis Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology*, 24.

Christological and missiological dimensions of pastoral care among immigrants. At the end of the chapter, I identify additional themes that will enhance the formation of Hispanic/Latino pastoral agents.

Theological Perspective on Migration

Migration has always existed as a part of human history. The U.S. and Mexican bishops define a migrant as “a person on the move, either voluntarily or involuntarily, in the person’s own country, internationally, or both. Unlike refugees, migrants are commonly considered free to return home whenever they wish because their lives are not in danger there.”¹³² A migrant becomes an immigrant when the person moves to another country to take up permanent residence.¹³³ People leave their homelands for many different reasons such as violence, persecution, natural disasters, economic or political circumstances. Some people are forced to leave while others chose to migrate looking for better and greater opportunities and for prosperity in their lives. In this section I will focus on the theological perspective of migration by looking to the Bible, ecclesial documents, Catholic social teaching, and theologies of migration.

¹³² United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and *Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano*, “Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope, A pastoral letter concerning Migration” (Washington: USCCB, 2003), <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/strangers-no-longer-together-on-the-journey-of-hope.cfm> (accessed June 10, 2015).

¹³³ Ibid. Definitions can be found at the end of the pastoral letter.

Migration in the Light of the Word of God

Migration is a part not only of human history but of salvation history as well. In the Bible God is present in each story of migration. God's people were in many instances aliens, exiles, and pilgrims. In Genesis 12:1-9 Abraham followed God's instructions and migrated to the land God showed him. Abraham responded in faith to God's call and his journey was not easy. He had to leave his prior life behind and endured the hardships that come with migration.

Jacob's story also entails migration. Jacob's children migrated to Egypt in the midst of scarcity and recognized themselves as aliens: "They said to Pharaoh, 'We have come to reside as aliens in the land; for there is no pasture for your servants' flocks because the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. Now, we ask you; let your servants settle in the land of Go'shen.'"¹³⁴ In the midst of the Pharaoh's entourage was Joseph who was one of Jacob's sons. He had been rejected earlier by his brothers and sold as a slave to a caravan of merchants. Joseph's brothers were jealous because God's favor was with him and because his father favored him.

Justo González proposes an interpretation of the Bible through a Hispanic perspective which is a reading of the Scriptures from the hermeneutics of Latinos' and Latinas' struggles in their desire for the fulfillment of God's plan for their lives.¹³⁵ He refers to the story of Joseph, noting that even before Joseph's awful experience, the Lord had a plan. God eventually redeems Joseph out of his precarious circumstances and that of his family. González explains:

¹³⁴ Genesis 47:4 (New Revised Standard Version).

¹³⁵ Justo L. González, *Santa Biblia* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1996), 28-29.

A biblical point of reference that immediately comes to mind when we think of alienness in these terms is the story of Joseph in Egypt. Joseph himself—like so many of us—did not have a very clear idea why he was in Egypt. Yet it turns out that he was there for the salvation both of Egypt and of his own original people. Had Egypt not been able to discover and utilize Joseph’s gifts, Egypt would have suffered grave loss along with Israel and with Joseph. Had Joseph remained quiet and submissive, allowing himself to be seduced by Potiphar’s wife, or telling the Pharaoh what he wanted to hear, both Joseph and Egypt would have also suffered great loss. It took a Joseph who was willing to use his gifts, even when it meant speaking a word that the Pharaoh would rather not hear, as well as a Pharaoh who was willing to accept and to use the gifts of an alien slave to avert the threatening famine.¹³⁶

God’s intervention is clearly marked in the passage about Jacob and Joseph. In a similar way today, God also intervenes in the lives of immigrants who are nameless in a society that often does not honor them as people. Instead, the dominant culture should seek the will of God by searching and discovering the many gifts that other cultures offer so we can all be enriched. According to González, the dominant culture and many Christians distance themselves from properly understanding the story of Joseph in Egypt because of an incomplete interpretation. At first, Joseph is seen as the paradigm and the hero of the story. However, another way, and perhaps a more profound way of understanding it is found in the climax or emphasis of the story where people find themselves not being “in the sandals of Joseph, but rather in the shoes of Pharaoh.” The Pharaoh discovered the gifts offered by Joseph the alien, and through those gifts he was able to save Egypt and the “world” from a certain catastrophe (famine). At the same time Joseph not only saved himself and his family, but in the process he also saved Egypt.¹³⁷

¹³⁶ Justo L. González, “Exiles and Aliens” in *Santa Biblia* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1996), 96.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 96-97.

The Hebrews were aliens in Egypt, and once again migrated to the Promised Land. God’s concern for the aliens and strangers found in the midst of the Israelites was evidenced by the norm¹³⁸ given to ancient Israel about how to treat the aliens: “You shall not oppress a resident alien; you know the heart of an alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt.”¹³⁹ Furthermore, in Leviticus 19:33-34 we find instructions and laws protecting the alien residing in the midst of the Hebrew community: “When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.”¹⁴⁰ Another passage is found in Deuteronomy 10:17-19 that describes Israel’s love for strangers as an imitation of God’s love: “For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribes, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing. You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.”¹⁴¹ In these biblical passages, the Hebrew word “*gērîm*”¹⁴² is used to refer to resident aliens who were considered among the poor and the oppressed. Richard J. Clifford explains that:

¹³⁸ They are considered norms or admonitions instead of laws as no penalties are prescribed. See: J. Philip Hyatt, *Commentary on Exodus*, New Century Bible (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, Ltd., 1971), 242.

¹³⁹ Exodus 23:9 (New Revised Standard Version).

¹⁴⁰ Leviticus 19:33-34 (New Revised Standard Version).

¹⁴¹ Deuteronomy 10:17-19 (New Revised Standard Version).

¹⁴² Some authors use “*gēr*” instead of “*gērîm*”, and explain that *gēr* referred to a foreigner living among the Israelites. In English versions of the Bible, *gēr* has been translated as “stranger,” “sojourner,” “alien,” and “resident alien.” See: M. Daniel Carroll R., *Christians at the Border: Immigration, the Church and the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2008), 101 and J. Philip Hyatt, *Commentary on Exodus*, New Century Bible (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, Ltd., 1971), 242.

“resident aliens (*gērîm*), people living more or less permanently in a community other than their own, were often classed with widows and the fatherless as needing protection. As outsiders, often without clan protection, they were vulnerable and often poor. Special access to Yahweh is their protection.”¹⁴³

God’s norm on how to treat the aliens can also be read from the perspective of marginality, that González presents in his book “*Santa Biblia*,” where being at the margins represents exclusion from the center.¹⁴⁴ González considers that in the many passages of the Old Testament, God reminds Israel about its past marginal condition in order to instruct them to care for those who are at the margins: the widow, the poor, the orphan, and the alien.¹⁴⁵

The Old Testament prepared the way for understanding God’s concern and care for migrants. In the New Testament we find in the life of Jesus a paradigm for the migrants’ life. Mary and Joseph were migrating when Jesus was born. Later, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph were refugees in Egypt: “From this account the Holy Family has become a figure with whom Christian migrants and refugees throughout the ages can identify, giving them hope and courage in hard times.”¹⁴⁶ During his public life, Jesus traveled and was constantly moving from one place to another, to the point of not having

¹⁴³ Richard J. Clifford, S.J., “Exodus,” in *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, ed. Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Roland E. Murphy (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1990), 54.

¹⁴⁴ Justo L. González, “Marginality” in *Santa Biblia* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1996), 33.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 40-41.

¹⁴⁶ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and *Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano*, “Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope, A pastoral letter concerning Migration” (Washington: USCCB, 2003), number 26 <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/strangers-no-longer-together-on-the-journey-of-hope.cfm> (accessed June 10, 2015).

anywhere to lay his head (Mathew 8:20). Jesus not only welcomed and healed strangers with his actions, but he also commanded his listeners to do the same:

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.¹⁴⁷

In this passage of Matthew, the basis for the division among people is a person's compassionate action toward the weak and the poor. The reading must be done from the context of the *parousia* where the coming of the Messiah, according to this final discourse of Jesus' public life, will be marked by judgment based on one's behavior with those in need.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ Matthew 25: 31-46 (New Revised Standard Version).

¹⁴⁸ See: Bruce J. Malina and Richard L. Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels*, Second edition (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 126; and Benedict T. Viviano, O.P., "The Gospel According to Mark," *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, ed. Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Roland E. Murphy (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1990), 668.

Matthew's audience is made up of the representatives of the "establishment" in the times of Jesus: Pharisees, Scribes, Sadducees, Zealots, and most recent studies also suggest and mention the Essenes. Günther Bornkamm explains that the Pharisees appeared for the first time during the time of the Maccabees and they were known for their piety (*hassidim*) and the way they followed the Torah, in a very rigorous and orthodox manner, while the Sadducees wanted to preserve the priestly cast.¹⁴⁹ The Scribes were also leaders, copyists and teachers, and were versed in Jewish religious literature and tradition.¹⁵⁰

The rabbinical literary genre or *haggada*¹⁵¹ can be understood in terms of the *midrash*,¹⁵² or story telling. However, a second way to interpret it is the *midrash halakha*, which attempts to take biblical texts that are general and unclear and tries to clarify their meaning in light of Jewish Law. In the eschatological body of the text mentioned above, attributed to Jesus, a number of moral fiats are mentioned as a result of rabbinical traditions as well as Jewish laws, very well known to the Jewish religious establishment. The Rabbis have hundreds of commandments when speaking about the poor and the oppressed: "When a poor comes to your door, the Mighty One is at his right hand; if you give him charity, know that the one at his right will reward you. But if you do not practice charity, the one who is at his right hand will punish you."¹⁵³ However,

¹⁴⁹ Günther Bornkamm, *Jesús de Nazaret* (Salamanca: Ediciones Sígueme, 1996), 40-41.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 41.

¹⁵¹ Christian Duquoc, *Cristología: Ensayo dogmático sobre Jesús de Nazaret, el Mesías* (Salamanca: Ediciones Sígueme 1992), 32.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ Adam Clarke, *Comentario de la Santa Biblia.*, (Kansas City, MO: Casa Nazarena de Publicaciones, 1976), 69.

there is a difference between the teachings of the Rabbis and Jesus' teachings, and that is because Jesus taught with authority or *exousia*.¹⁵⁴ The authority of the words spoken by Jesus and the miracles that followed him will eventually create a divide between Jesus and the establishment.

According to González, the passage found in Matthew provides the list of people that Jesus wants his followers to serve, and he insists that service to the needy is not optional.¹⁵⁵ In that list, the stranger is included with the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, and the sick. Migrants are those who are in need regardless of where they come from and regardless of their condition.

The parable of the “Rich Man and Lazarus” from Luke 16:19-31 also teaches the urgency of helping those in need:

There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. He called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames.’ But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.’ He said, ‘Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father's house—for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.’ Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.’ He said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from

¹⁵⁴ *Exousia* is Jesus's authority as he teaches above and beyond traditional understandings of God's revelation. See: Christian Duquoc, *Cristología: Ensayo dogmático sobre Jesús de Nazaret, el Mesías* (Salamanca: Ediciones Sígueme 1992), 76.

¹⁵⁵ Justo L. González, *Tres Meses en la Escuela de Mateo* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1996), 143.

the dead, they will repent.’ He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’¹⁵⁶

The parable allows a better understanding of the point of departure of God’s concern for the less fortunate. The parable does not imply that the rich man was condemned because of his wealth, but because he did not recognize or acknowledge that, very near to him, Lazarus was in dire need. The rich man ignored Lazarus’ needs and did not do anything to ease his suffering.

The rich man, who doesn’t need to work, organized daily banquets with sumptuous food, and dressed up with clothes of much worth. Evidently, the main emphasis in describing the rich man is the way he goes about his life of lavish feasts, while having no concern for the poor person (Lazarus) who stood at the very door of his palace. Lazarus, who witnessed the rich man’s outrageous gluttony, desired some of the crumbs that fell down from the table. Jeremias explains “what fell from the rich man’s table” as follows:

After the meal the remains of bread lying on the floor should be gathered up; he who neglects this duty, falls into the hands of the Prince of the poor (on account of his waste of bread.) Hence the proverb, ‘Waste of bread in a house brings in poverty’. In the houses of scholars they were very especially careful. “If a scholar is serving at table, he gathers up fragments as small as an olive’. But in general people were very careless. “One should not bite a piece of bread (which has been dipped in the dish) and then dip it in again, on account of danger to life’ (from infectious disease), but the rest of it should be thrown under the table.¹⁵⁷

The parable continues to make a clear point as to the social status of Lazarus, when adding that the dogs were even licking his wounds as he stood at the front door of the wealthy man. Jesus tells the story not necessarily for his listeners to feel pity for

¹⁵⁶ Luke 16: 19-31 (New Revised Standard Version).

¹⁵⁷ Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, Revised edition (London: SCM Press LTD, 1972), 184.

Lazarus, but for them to understand and see the rich man's condition through the eyes of God. He sees Lazarus every day in this condition and he does not do anything about it because he has been blinded by living the abundant life with little or no regard for others like Lazarus. One more interesting observation is that the name of the wealthy man is never given, while the name of the beggar (Lazarus) is. According to Jeremias the parable is not to announce how bad things were going for Lazarus, but rather the condition of the rich man and his family:

Lazarus is the only figure in the parables who is given a name; the name (God helps) thus has a special significance. Lazarus is a cripple, suffering from a skin-disease. As a beggar he has his pitch in the street, at the gate of the rich's man's mansion where he begs for a gift from the passers-by.... According to the outlook of late Judaism, his miserable condition would have indicated that he was a sinner being punished by God. Hence the sequel must have been wholly unexpected by the audience.... Lazarus occupies the highest place in the assembly of the righteous. He has experienced a complete reversal of fortune... He has discovered that God is the God of the poorest and most destitute.¹⁵⁸

Jeremias sees the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus as an example of the people who have the "power" or the "ability" to do something about those who are in need. Jeremias suggests that the parable should be called the parable of the six brothers, since it teaches and advises the remaining five brothers that they should not live a careless life but rather take care of the needy.¹⁵⁹

Bruce J. Malina and Richard L. Rohrbaugh also comment about the contrast between the rich man and Lazarus, by explaining how expensive the rich man's clothes were and how the degraded persons were allowed to beg in the city during the day but

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 184.

¹⁵⁹ Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, Revised edition (London: SCM Press LTD, 1972), 186.

had to stay outside the city walls during the nights.¹⁶⁰ The rich man knows Lazarus name, and tries to persuade Abraham to allow Lazarus to alleviate his agony by dipping his fingertip to cool the rich man's tongue. Malina and Rohrbaug explain that the rich man's attitude when asking Abraham to allow Lazarus to warn his brothers shows only concern for the rich ones and not for the poor ones like Lazarus who remain in the city.¹⁶¹

The parable, in so many words, makes a categorical twofold statement: first, about people who are in position to help others and do not offer assistance to those in need; and second, about people who are viewed as high-ranking members of society who are unconcerned about the needs of the poor because they are too busy enjoying life with those of a similar social status or who belong to the "establishment."

Another passage of the Bible that also alludes to the bread crumbs that fall from the masters' tables is found in Mark 7:24-30. It reads as follows:

From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." But she answered him, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." Then he said to her, "For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter." So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.¹⁶²

The emphasis of this passage is the dialogue between Jesus and the gentile woman, where the faith of the woman shows that Jesus' healing power was not exclusively for the

¹⁶⁰ Bruce J. Malina and Richard L. Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels*, Second edition, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 295.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Mark 7: 24-30 (New Revised Standard Version).

Jews.¹⁶³ In this passage, a gentile woman whose daughter is tormented by an unclean spirit seeks Jesus' favor so that the young daughter may be delivered from her terrible situation. According to Malina and Rohrbaugh the woman heard about Jesus, possibly because his presence had been noticed beyond Galilee.¹⁶⁴ The passage tells us where the woman was from to make us aware of how Jesus was expected to answer her according to her relative social status.¹⁶⁵ Falling at the feet of another person was a gesture of a client seeking favor from an intermediary noble.¹⁶⁶ Jesus answers accordingly and reminds her that he is bound to serve first those who belong to the family which is a reference to Israel.¹⁶⁷ At this point, Jesus assumes a posture towards the woman that a Pharisee would assume if faced by a similar situation. The mention of a "dog" in the narrative would have been considered an insult in the Mediterranean world, since dogs were considered to be scavengers and not domesticated.¹⁶⁸ However, it is very interesting that the diminutive used in the original language refers to a "puppy" or "little dog."¹⁶⁹ Even though the term may have been used in reference to a little girl, it still would have

¹⁶³ Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel According to Mark*, The New Jerome Biblical Commentary, ed. Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Roland E. Murphy (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1990), 612.

¹⁶⁴ Bruce J. Malina and Richard L. Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels*, Second edition, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 177.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

been considered an insult.¹⁷⁰ The rebuttal by the child's mother demonstrates her faith and assurance that Jesus would eventually heal the girl.

In this passage there are a number of factors that were detrimental to the Syrophenician woman who sought God's favor in a world of injustices and tension between social classes, especially when dealing with issues of social status or religious correctness. The passage presents a contrast between Jesus and his traditions, and a woman who was willing to give everything to find a cure for her child. The passage speaks of urgency, the need to find the answer for her daughter's precarious situation, here and now. The woman was not passive or waiting to be satisfied by the correctness of tradition or the world's limitations, but she took action.

González explains that the concept of marginality permits us to understand that the ones in the center do not always have Gospel values. Furthermore, González states that in Jesus' teachings, "those who thought they belonged in the center, he put at the edges; and those who were usually condemned to look in from the sidelines, he placed at the center of his ministry."¹⁷¹ In the two parables discussed above, both Lazarus and the Syrophenician woman were put at the center, representing God's care for the marginalized.

The Word of God gives us two major insights in reference to migration. First, we have seen that migration has been part of salvation history and that God is present in each story of migration found in both the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament portrays how God's people were in many instances aliens, exiles, and pilgrims, and the

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Justo L. González, "Marginality" in *Santa Biblia* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1996), 43.

New Testament presents Jesus' life as a paradigm for the migrants' life. Second, God's concern and care for foreigners is demonstrated in the fact that they are included with the poor and marginalized: widows, orphans, the sick, and aliens are under God's special protection. In the Old Testament God instructed the Hebrew people on how to treat foreigners, and in the New Testament, Jesus teaches and gives example by his actions on how to welcome and take care of strangers. After looking at migration in the Bible, I now turn to the church's teaching on migration.

Ecclesial Documents and Catholic Social Teaching on Migration

Modern Catholic social teaching is always a response to historical events that cause human or environmental suffering. This body of literature begins in 1891 when Pope Leo XIII wrote the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* to address the exploitation of laborers during the Industrial Revolution. Catholic social teaching has also addressed the issue of the suffering caused by migration. In 1952, Pope Pius XII wrote the Apostolic Constitution *Exsul Familia Nazarethana*, the magisterial Magna Carta on migration that explains how the church has provided solicitous care to migrants through the centuries and establishes specific norms for the pastoral care of migrants. The apostolic constitution affirms that people have the right to migrate when conditions worthy of human life do not exist. In its introduction Pope Pius XII compares the exiled experience of the family of Nazareth to the experiences lived by migrants:

The family of Nazareth in exile, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, emigrants and taking refuge in Egypt to escape the fury of an evil king, are the model, the example and the support of all emigrants and pilgrims of every age and every country, of all refugees of any condition who, compelled by persecution and need, are forced to abandon their

homeland, their beloved relatives, their neighbors, their dear friends, and move to a foreign land”¹⁷²

In 2007, fifty five years later, Pope Benedict XVI referred to *Exsul Familia* and resumed the comparison between the difficulties that the family of Nazareth experienced and the hardships and humiliations experienced by migrants. However, Pope Benedict adds another important element in the relation between the family of Nazareth and migrants when he explains that the image of God is not only present in the family of Nazareth, but it is also present in all families, including migrant families.¹⁷³ The dignity of each member of a migrant family is based on the image of God.

The Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People issued in 2004 the instruction *Erga migrantes caritas Christi* (the love of Christ toward migrants). The main purpose of the instruction is to revise the pastoral care of migrants based on their spiritual and pastoral needs. *Erga migrantes caritas Christi* is very important to this research project: first, it confirms that the church has always seen the image of Christ in migrants; and second, it specifically addresses different aspects of the role of the lay faithful in reference to migrants. The lay faithful should welcome migrants and see that the migrants’ rights are respected (especially the rights of the family and family unity). The lay faithful are also called to be involved in the evangelization of migrants through witness and proclamation of the Word of God.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷² Pope Pius XII, *Exsul familia*
<http://repository.berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/1952ExsulFamilia.pdf> (accessed August 31, 2015).

¹⁷³ Message of the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI (2007) ‘The Migrant Family’
https://cliniclegal.org/sites/default/files/papal_messages_for_the_world_day_of_migrants_and_refugees.pdf (accessed August 31, 2015).

¹⁷⁴ See Articles 2 and 3 of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, “*Erga migrantes caritas Christi*” (the love of Christ towards migrants).

The church has celebrated the annual World Day of Migrants and Refugees since 1914. Every year the Pope issues a statement that reflects the church's concern for the pastoral care of migrants and illustrates the church's teaching in regards to migration.¹⁷⁵ The annual message takes into consideration the signs of the times, as migration patterns and flows are in constant evolution. Important issues have been raised at the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, such as: the commitment of the church in favor of the migrant and his or her family and the need to create awareness of the hardships and suffering of migrant families; the importance of respecting the migrant's faith and culture; the right to migrate; the need to listen to immigrants in order to understand their situation; the pastoral challenges of young and minor immigrants; and the need for "the globalization of charity and cooperation."¹⁷⁶

In a more local context, The U.S. Catholic bishops (USCCB) have also stated their views on immigration through many campaigns and documents. In 1983 the U.S. bishops recognized the Hispanic community as a blessing from God.¹⁷⁷ Since then, they have continued expressing their support of Hispanic immigrants and have advocated for the need of a just immigration reform. The USCCB established in 1988 the Catholic

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/migrants/documents/rc_pc_migrants_doc_20040514_erga-migrantes-caritas-christi_en.html (accessed August 31, 2015).

¹⁷⁵ For a compilation of all Papal messages from 1995 to 2015 see "Papal Messages for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees" <https://cliniclegal.org/resources/world-migration-day-message> (accessed on August 31, 2015).

¹⁷⁶ Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 101st World Day of Migrants and Refugees (2015): "Church without frontiers, Mother to all" http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco_20140903_world-migrants-day-2015.html (accessed on October 6, 2015).

¹⁷⁷ National Conference of Catholic Bishops, "The Hispanic Presence: Challenge and Commitment," in *Hispanic Ministry, Three Major Documents* (Washington, D.C., USCC, 1995), 1.

Legal Immigration Network (CLINIC), an organization that provides legal resources for undocumented immigrants. Its mission is: “embracing the Gospel value of welcoming the stranger, CLINIC promotes the dignity and protects the rights of immigrants in partnership with a dedicated network of Catholic and community legal immigration programs.”¹⁷⁸ CLINIC provides bilingual resources with valuable information for immigrants and their families about their legal rights, Catholic social teaching, and many other aspects.

In November 2000 the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) issued the pastoral letter titled “Welcoming the Stranger among Us: Unity in Diversity”. The pastoral letter follows the structure of the Exhortation *Ecclesia in America* from John Paul II, by calling individual Catholics and church organizations to conversion, communion, and solidarity so that they can have empathy with and be responsive to the contemporary plight of immigrants.

In January 2003, the Catholic bishops of Mexico and the United States jointly issued the pastoral letter concerning migration “Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope.” This was the first joint letter of both Episcopal conferences. It proposed immigration principles based on both the Scriptures and Catholic social teaching. The elements of comprehensive immigration reform outlined by the bishops are: first, addressing root causes of immigration; second, an earned legalization program with a path to citizenship; third, family-based immigration reform; fourth, future worker programs; fifth, humanitarian enforcement of immigration laws; and sixth, restoration of

¹⁷⁸ Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc., <https://cliniclegal.org/about-us/history> (accessed August 29, 2015).

Due Process rights.¹⁷⁹ The bishops emphasize that immigration laws must be family-based. They ask that: first, more visas be given to the families of permanent residents; second, more reasonable waiting times be granted for the legal reunification of husbands and wives and parents and children, in order to discourage illegal immigration; and third, the children of immigrants be protected at all times and their right to citizenship maintained if they were born in the United States.¹⁸⁰ The reality of what has transpired in recent years is quite the opposite of what the bishops expressed. As noted in previous chapters, families are being separated more than ever and children stay behind with relatives or in the foster care system.

The 2003 pastoral letter lays out five principles that emerge from the church's teachings in regard to migration, which guide the church's view on migration issues:¹⁸¹

1. Persons have the right to find opportunities in their homeland.
2. Persons have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families.
3. Sovereign nations have the right to control their borders.
4. Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection.
5. The human dignity and human rights of undocumented migrants should be respected.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁹ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and *Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano*, "Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope, A pastoral letter concerning Migration" (Washington: USCCB, 2003), numbers 56-100. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/strangers-no-longer-together-on-the-journey-of-hope.cfm> (accessed June 10, 2015).

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, numbers 64-67.

¹⁸¹ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and *Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano*, "Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope, A pastoral letter concerning Migration" (Washington: USCCB, 2003), numbers 33-39. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/strangers-no-longer-together-on-the-journey-of-hope.cfm> (accessed June 10, 2015).

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

1. Persons have the right to find opportunities in their homeland.

This principle refers to an ideal situation in homelands that is not always easy to achieve, as Pope John Paul II said: “It is a basic human right to live in one’s own country. However these rights become effective only if the factors that urge people to emigrate are constantly kept under control.”¹⁸³ For the majority of Hispanic immigrants that come to the United States, the economic and political conditions in their countries of origin do not allow them to properly sustain and provide for their families, forcing them to move to a new land and seek new opportunities. Pope Leo XIII in *Rerum Novarum* stated that: “No one would exchange his country for a foreign land if his own afforded him the means of living a decent and happy life.”¹⁸⁴ If feasible, Hispanic immigrants would have rather stayed in their own countries instead of having to emigrate. The U.S. bishops emphasize the importance of addressing the root causes of migration as a way to improve the migrants’ countries’ living conditions so that the need to migrate is reduced or eliminated.

2. Persons have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families.

Catholic social teaching explains that persons have the right to migrate in order to seek a dignified life. Many papal and other church documents have made contributions

¹⁸³ Address of the Holy Father Pope John Paul II to the Congress on Pastoral Care of Migrants, Friday on October 9, 1998 http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1998/october/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19981009_migranti.html (accessed August 31, 2015).

¹⁸⁴ Pope Leo XIII, “*Rerum Novarum*” http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum.html (accessed August 29, 2015).

to Catholic social teaching in reference to the right to migrate.¹⁸⁵ José H. Gomez,

Archbishop of Los Angeles explains the right to migrate as follows:

The natural right to immigration flows from the basic human right to life. In Catholic teaching, if you and your family are unable to secure life's necessities in your home country – due to political instability, economic distress, religious persecution, or other conditions that offend basic dignity – you must be free to seek these things in another country. That does not mean that we have an absolute right to live wherever we want whenever we want. But in a world divided by war, famine, persecution, and chronic economic dislocations, the right to immigration becomes a crucial guarantee of our rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.¹⁸⁶

The Catholic Catechism teaches that in reference to immigration, nations have the responsibility to welcome the foreigner that migrates in search of protection or better life conditions that are not found in his or her country of origin: “The more prosperous nations are obligated, to the extent they are able, to welcome the foreigner in search of the security and the means of livelihood which he cannot find in his country of origin.”¹⁸⁷ Historically, the United States is a country of immigrants. In the last two centuries the country has welcomed migrants from many parts of the world as they seek new opportunities for themselves and their families. Allan Figueroa Deck considers a first and second wave of immigrants. While the first wave came mainly from Europe, the

¹⁸⁵ In reference to the right to emigrate and the responsibility to welcome migrants see: numbers 25, 98 and 106 of *Pacem in Terris* (1963) from Saint Pope John XXIII; numbers 67 and 69 of *Populorum Progressio* (1967), and number 17 of *Octogesima Adveniens* (1971) from Pope Paul VI; and number 23 of *Laborem Exercens* (1981) from John Paul II.

¹⁸⁶ José H. Gomez, *Immigration and the Next America: Renewing the Soul of Our Nation* (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 2013), 89-90.

¹⁸⁷ Catechism of the Catholic Church, <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catechism/catechism-of-the-catholic-church/epub/index.cfm#> (accessed on August 30, 2015), number 2241.

second wave of immigrants is composed of Latin American and Asia-Pacific peoples.¹⁸⁸

In addition to the obligation of prosperous nations to welcome the foreigner, the church recognizes that the faithful community also shares that responsibility. In “Welcoming the Stranger: Unity in Diversity” the U.S. Bishops recognize the presence of a “new immigration” that requires pastoral care.¹⁸⁹

The right to migrate imposes on the other hand certain responsibilities for the immigrants in relation to the receiving country. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that “immigrants are obliged to respect with gratitude the material and spiritual heritage of the country that receives them, to obey its laws and to assist in carrying civic burdens.”¹⁹⁰ Illegal immigration does not comply with the responsibility of obeying the law of the receiving country. In many instances, society perceives and the media presents undocumented immigrants as criminals as they break U.S. laws by arriving or staying in the country without legal permission. In addition, there is a problem caused by the rising numbers of undocumented individuals who are also committing other crimes from petty theft to murders which affect the well-being of society here in the United States. However, from a moral perspective, the church considers that any immigration policy,

¹⁸⁸ Allan Figueroa Deck, *The Second Wave: Hispanic Ministry and the Evangelization of Cultures* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1989), 1.

¹⁸⁹ See: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), “*Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity*” (Washington: NCCB/USCC, 2000).

¹⁹⁰ Catechism of the Catholic Church, <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catechism/catechism-of-the-catholic-church/epub/index.cfm#> (accessed on August 30, 2015), number 2241.

which criminalizes and imprisons immigrants whose only “crime” is to seek a place where they can make a living while supporting their families, is immoral.¹⁹¹

3. Sovereign nations have the right to control their borders.

As seen above, people have the right to move, but at the same time countries have the right to regulate and decide how many immigrants their country can accept and what is needed in order to prevent illegal immigration. Catholic social teaching recognizes that a sovereign nation has the right and authority to control its territories. Donald Kerwin defines sovereignty as “the authority of a nation-state to constitute itself, to repel intrusions by other states, and to govern those within its territory.”¹⁹² The sovereignty of a nation also has to do with its history, traditions, culture, and the respect of the nation’s laws or supreme authority. To undermine a nation’s sovereignty constitutes a grave disrespect to territorial integrity, as well as to the people who reside there. A country is not required to open its borders. On the contrary, “the Church recognizes the right of sovereign nations to control their territories but rejects such control when it is exerted merely for the purpose of acquiring additional wealth. More powerful economic nations, which have the ability to protect and feed their residents, have a stronger obligation to accommodate migration flows.”¹⁹³

¹⁹¹ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), “Catholic Social Teaching on Immigration and the Movement of Peoples,” <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/catholic-teaching-on-immigration-and-the-movement-of-peoples.cfm> (accessed October 1, 2015).

¹⁹² Donald Kerwin, “Rights, the Common Good, and Sovereignty in Service of the Human Person,” in *And you welcomed me: Migration and Catholic Social Teaching*, ed. Donald Kerwin and Jill Marie Gerschutz (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009), 105.

¹⁹³ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and *Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano*, “Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope, A pastoral letter concerning Migration”

The United States as a sovereign nation has the right to regulate its borders and to control immigration. As a result of the flagrant illegal migration at the U.S. borders, a building of a wall in the southern border has become a major issue in the immigration debate for many years. Whether this is feasible or not, it has been used as an excuse in the past to impede legislation for immigration reform. The flow of undocumented persons continues especially through the Southern borders at the Rio Grande and the desert. Migrants decide to cross the river and the desert out of desperation. They know the risks associated with such a dangerous journey, but the need to support themselves and their families is greater than the risk of dying in the process. Thousands of people have died in the process of seeking a more dignified life.

4. Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection.

Refugees and asylum seekers leave their home countries because of armed conflict or out of fear of death or harm due to persecution for racial, religious, or political reasons. When people leave their countries because of these reasons they should be able to find safety in other countries. According to the Pontifical Council “*Cor Unum*” and the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, refugees and asylum seekers should be given access to work and rapid legal procedures. The Pontifical agencies also recommend that asylum seekers should not be interned unless they represent a real danger to society or it is known that he or she will not report as

(Washington: USCCB, 2003), 36. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/strangers-no-longer-together-on-the-journey-of-hope.cfm> (accessed June 10, 2015).

requested for due examination of his or her case.¹⁹⁴ In general terms, an asylum system should facilitate the process by which people can obtain safety.

5. The human dignity and human rights of undocumented migrants should be respected.

Immigrants who enter or stay in the country without permission should be treated with respect and dignity because of their inalienable dignity as human persons created in God's image. In the pastoral letter "Strangers no Longer," the U.S. and Mexican bishops firmly oppose any treatment that violates human rights: "Regardless of their legal status, migrants, like all persons, possess inherent human dignity that should be respected. Often they are subject to punitive laws and harsh treatment from enforcement officers from both receiving and transit countries. Government policies that respect the basic human rights of the undocumented are necessary."¹⁹⁵ Furthermore, the pastoral letter states that undocumented immigrants should not be treated as criminals: they should not be detained in unacceptable detention centers, and they should have access to medical, legal and spiritual care.¹⁹⁶

The Catholic church provides pastoral and social services regardless of legal status emphasizing that all human beings are to be treated with dignity and respect. The church advocates for the rights of immigrants through programs and campaigns such as

¹⁹⁴ See: Pontifical Council "*Cor Unum*" and Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, "Refugees: A Challenge to Solidarity (1992)." http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/corunum/documents/rc_pc_corunum_doc_25061992_refugees_en.html (accessed August 31, 2015),

¹⁹⁵ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and *Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano*, "Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope, A pastoral letter concerning Migration" (Washington: USCCB, 2003), 38. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/strangers-no-longer-together-on-the-journey-of-hope.cfm> (accessed June 10, 2015).

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 94.

the Justice for Immigrants Campaign launched by the USCCB in 2007. Its primary objectives are: “To educate the public about Church teaching on migration and immigrants; to create political will for positive immigration reform; to enact legislative and administrative reforms based on the principles articulated by the bishops; and to organize Catholic networks to assist qualified immigrants obtain the benefits of the reforms.”¹⁹⁷ The “Justice for Immigrants” website is one of the best resources to learn about the status of immigration in the country and the church’s advocacy for a comprehensive immigration reform.

Through the years, the states’ conferences of Catholic bishops (such as Arizona, Georgia, Pennsylvania, and Florida) also issued their own statements in reference to the issue of immigration.¹⁹⁸ Individual bishops have also issued pastoral letters within their dioceses, press statements, and even open and public letters to the members of the Senate and Congress.

On December 12, 2011, on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, thirty-three Hispanic/Latino bishops issued a Letter to Immigrants.¹⁹⁹ In the letter the bishops expressed their concerns for the undocumented immigrants and welcomed them as members of the Catholic family, offering spiritual nourishment through the sacraments

¹⁹⁷ Justice for Immigrants, “About Us,” <http://justiceforimmigrants.org/about-us.shtml> (accessed June 12, 2015).

¹⁹⁸ See: “Family Beyond Borders: An Open letter from the Bishops of the Border Region of Mexico, Texas and New Mexico, dated November 28, 2013”, <http://justiceforimmigrants.org/documents/Family-Beyond-Borders.pdf> (accessed August 29, 2015); and “Florida Catholic Conference Statement on Immigration Reform, dated June 5, 2013,” <http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/documents/Florida-Bishops-Immigration-Reform-Statement-2013.pdf> (accessed August 29, 2015).

¹⁹⁹ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, USSCBLOG, “*Estas son las Mañanitas...of the Hispanic Bishops: Letter of the Hispanic/Latino Bishops to Immigrants, December 12, 2011*” http://usccbmedia.blogspot.com/2011/12/estas-son-las-mananitasof-hispanic_12.html (accessed August 28, 2015).

and pastoral care through available resources in the parishes and dioceses. The bishops also committed to continue advocating for all immigrants, and comfort immigrants with words of encouragement:

We see Jesus the pilgrim in you migrants. The Word of God migrated from heaven to earth in order to become man and save humanity. Jesus emigrated with Mary and Joseph to Egypt, as a refugee. He migrated from Galilee to Jerusalem for the sacrifice of the cross, and finally he emigrated from death to life in the resurrection and ascension to heaven. Today, he continues to journey and accompany all migrants on pilgrimage throughout the world in search of food, work, dignity, security and opportunities for the welfare of their families.²⁰⁰

The examples of migration provided by the U.S. Hispanic/Latino Bishops (the incarnation; the Holy Family's flight to Egypt, Jesus' pilgrimage from Galilee to Jerusalem where he was killed, and the movement from his death to resurrection to ascension to heaven), inspire immigrants as they journey in search of better opportunities, knowing that Jesus accompanies them. There is hope for a better life.

Ecclesial documents and Catholic social teaching delineated above provide several insights into the church's teaching on migration. First, Catholic social teaching affirms that people have the right to find opportunities in their homelands, but when those opportunities are not available, people have the right to migrate in order to seek a dignified life. Nations have the responsibility to welcome the foreigner that migrates in search of protection or better life conditions not found in his or her country of origin, but at the same time, Catholic social teaching recognizes that a sovereign nation has the right and authority to control its territories. Second, immigrants who enter or stay in the country without permission should be treated with respect and dignity as they also have

²⁰⁰ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, USSCBLOG, "*Estas son las Mañanitas...*of the Hispanic Bishops: Letter of the Hispanic/Latino Bishops to Immigrants, December 12, 2011" http://uscbbmedia.blogspot.com/2011/12/estas-son-las-mananitasof-hispanic_12.html (accessed August 28, 2015).

the inviolable dignity of the human person created in God's image. From a moral perspective, the church considers immoral any immigration policy that criminalizes and imprisons immigrants whose only "crime" is to seek a place where they can make a living while supporting their families. The church has always seen the image of Christ in migrants. The dignity of each member of a migrant family is based on the image of God in the family. Finally, the U.S. Bishops propose immigration principles based on both the Scriptures and Catholic social teaching, emphasizing that immigration laws must be family-based. The bishops call for a just immigration system that does not criminalize or discriminate against the migrant's attempt to seek a place where they can prosper with their family. Furthermore, they call individual Catholics and church organizations to conversion, communion, and solidarity so that they can have empathy with and be responsive to the contemporary plight of immigrants. After considering some of the most salient points regarding migration from ecclesial documents and Catholic social teaching, I now turn to theologies of migration.

Theologies of Migration

As noted earlier, migrants go from one place to another looking for security and for the life they cannot have in their own countries. People are fleeing from hunger and wars. People are on the move from Asia, Africa and the Middle East to Europe, from the Caribbean and South and Central America to North America, from Haiti to Dominican Republic, from Colombia to Venezuela, and many other places in the world. Migration has become more than ever a global experience. Peter C. Phan explains:

Migration has been an ever-present worldwide fact of life, but demographers are now referring to it as a new global phenomenon to highlight the increasing

number of people who leave their homeland, by force or by choice, because of economic poverty, violence, war, and political and/or religious persecution, in search of better living conditions and freedom elsewhere, legally or illegally.²⁰¹

The experience of migration has become a significant source for theological reflection in recent years. Gioacchino Campese, C.S. considers that social, theological, and pastoral-practical factors have influenced the study of migration in theology.²⁰² Among the social factors are the globalization of resources, communications, and transportation which have facilitated migration in recent times. The theological factors have to do with a shift in the priorities of theological reflection. According to Campese, the Bible and Tradition have usually been the sources for reflecting on faith, but the hardships and realities encountered by migrants have become a source for a new theological thinking that pursues transformation.²⁰³ Campese states that “the goal of theology is not simply to understand, but to understand in order to transform the reality of oppression, violence and sin in which people live as they journey toward the realization of the reign of God.”²⁰⁴ Finally, the pastoral-practical factors emerge from the needs of pastoral agents for resources to deal with the realities caused by migration in their communities, a reality that Campese explains as follows:

²⁰¹ Peter C. Phan, “The Experience of Migration as Source of Intercultural Theology,” in *Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology*, ed. Elaine Padilla and Peter C. Phan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 179.

²⁰² Gioacchino Campese, “The Irruption of Migrants: Theology of Migration in the 21st Century,” *Theological Studies* 73, no.1 (March 2012): 4-7.

²⁰³ What Campese describes as a new way of doing theological reflection based on the migration experience, is what has been done by contextual theologies. Feminist theology which uses the experience of women in a patriarchal societies, Latin American Liberation theology done from the prism of wretched poverty, Black theology done from the experience of racism in societies of white privileges, and U.S. Hispanic Theology are examples of contextual theologies that depart from the realities of marginalized and oppressed peoples.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

Pastoral workers and faithful believers are asking for the necessary spiritual and theological resources that can sustain them in a society that is undergoing a rapid and deep process of transformation, a society that is becoming increasingly multicultural and multireligious due to migration. But as the church and theology struggle with these matters in Western Countries, it cannot be forgotten that the migrants themselves are trying to read their own experiences in the light of faith and to give theological answers to the numerous challenges they face.²⁰⁵

While the church tries to respond to the pastoral needs of immigrants and theologians reflect on the migrant's experiences, immigrants are faced with daily living in a society that is constantly changing and that doesn't always welcome them. Immigrants also look for a pastoral accompaniment, and pastoral agents are challenged by the need to provide spiritual care and accompaniment to the immigrants in their communities.

While Campese refers to theological and pastoral-practical factors, Daniel G. Groody uses also a similar terminology—pastoral, spiritual, and theological—to define three inter-related levels of a theology of migration.²⁰⁶ The pastoral level looks at how to assist migrants in their various needs. This is followed by a spiritual level that assists migrants in seeing and talking about how God accompanies them and how they respond to God.²⁰⁷ The theological level for Groody merges the pastoral and spiritual levels by considering human life as a pilgrimage in the world that originates and ends in God.²⁰⁸

Groody defines four foundations for a theology of migration: *imago Dei* (crossing the Problem-Person Divide), which defines the migrants' dignity as created in God's image; *verbum Dei* (crossing the Divine-Human divide), which defines how God

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 7.

²⁰⁶ Daniel G. Groody, "The Spirituality of Migrants: Mapping an Inner Geography," in *Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology*, ed. Elaine Padilla and Peter C. Phan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 140-141.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 140.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

migrated into the word through the incarnation of Jesus; *missio Dei* (crossing Human-Human Divide), which “restores the *imago Dei* in every person through the redemptive work of the *verbum Dei*”²⁰⁹; and *visio Dei* (crossing the Country-Kingdom Divide), which looks at how the kingdom of God is lived in this world.²¹⁰

The *imago Dei* refers to the fact that migrants, like all human beings, are created in the image and likeness of God, therefore deserving to be treated with respect and dignity, as Groody explains: “*imago Dei* is a two-edged sword that positively functions as an affirmation of the value and worth of every person, and evaluates and challenges any tendencies to dominate or oppress the poor and needy, or degrade them through various manifestations of racism, nativism, and xenophobia.”²¹¹ Sin disfigures the *imago Dei* creating a world of injustices where human beings are not treated with respect and dignity. The *imago Dei* lost by sin is restored by the *verbum Dei*.

The *verbum Dei* is the movement from divinity to humanity through Jesus out of God’s love: “Through the *verbum Dei*, Jesus’ kenosis and death on the cross, God overcomes the barriers caused by sin, redraws the borders created by people who have withdrawn from God, and enters into the most remote and abandoned places of the human condition.”²¹² The incarnation is an essential aspect for the theology of migration

²⁰⁹ Daniel G. Groody, “Crossing the Divide: Foundations of a Theology of Migration and Refugees,” *Theological Studies* 70, no. 3 (Sep 2009): 653.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 642-664.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 648.

²¹² *Ibid.*, 649.

according to Groody, since God entered human territory in order to help humanity find the way back to God.²¹³

The *missio Dei* restores the *imago Dei* in every person through the redemptive work of the *verbum Dei*.²¹⁴ Jesus goes beyond borders reaching out Gentiles, sinners and poor people, showing God's love and mercy for those who have been forgotten by the world. Groody explains the importance of the ministry of reconciliation within Jesus' mission: "A central dimension of this mission is Jesus' ministry of reconciliation, which deals largely with overcoming human constructions that divide the insider from the outsider, particularly those constructions generated by law in its various forms."²¹⁵ The mission of Jesus was and is to seek-out the people who have been marginalized, and to break the laws of inadequacy for the people who could not defend themselves.

The *visio Dei* is based on the person of Jesus and the kingdom he proclaimed which was a kingdom of truth and life, a kingdom of holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, love and peace. Groody also explains that *visio Dei* demands individual and social conversion, involves creating communion in this world, and it is lived not only from an eschatological perspective, but also from a living perspective.²¹⁶

Another very important aspect of theology of migration has to do with reflection on the relationship between mission and migration. In reference to this, Groody explains how mission can be seen from the perspective of a theology of migration as follows:

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Ibid., 653-659.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 653-54.

²¹⁶ Ibid, 661-663.

A theology of migration is a way of speaking about the mission of the church within the context of a disordered political economy. It seeks to foster human dignity in the poor and vulnerable, to challenge any structures and systems of society that divide and dehumanize, and to uplift all efforts to build a more just and humane world. Reducing people to their legal or political status not only denies dignity to those in need but also dehumanizes those who have the opportunity to help.²¹⁷

Mission then entails working toward restoring in migrants the dignity of being made in the image of God. Current theology of migration provides new pastoral challenges for migration and mission. According to Stephen B. Bevans, mission among migrants needs to be carried out with great sensitivity: “How might the church carry out mission among migrants? It of course needs to be done with great sensitivity to the dignity of the people, among whom the church ministers, with a basic attitude of ‘bold humility or ‘prophetic dialogue...’²¹⁸ Bevans identifies six elements that need to be considered in mission among migrants: (1) witness and proclamation; (2) liturgy, prayer and contemplation; (3) justice, peace and the integrity of creation; (4) interreligious dialogue; (5) inculturation; and (6) reconciliation.²¹⁹ The six elements can be seen both independently and in relation to each other, as seen when migrants are welcomed with hospitality in the faith community, when they have a space to celebrate liturgies in their own languages, when the community witnesses to the world the dignity of the human beings made in God’s image, when interreligious faith communities work together in the advocacy of the

²¹⁷ Daniel G. Groody, “Crossing the Divide: Foundations of a Theology of Migration and Refugees,” *Theological Studies* 70, no. 3 (Sep 2009): 666.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 162.

²¹⁹ Stephen B. Bevans, “Migration and Mission: Pastoral Challenges, Theological Insights,” in *Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology*, ed. Elaine Padilla and Peter C. Phan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 162-168.

immigrants' rights, and when the traumas and spiritual needs of the migrants are taken into account.

Theologies of migration offer some important insights. First, we have seen that the experience of migration has become a significant source for theological reflection influenced by the needs of pastoral agents for resources to deal with the realities caused by migration in their communities, as they provide spiritual and pastoral care to the immigrants. Second, Groody's four foundations for a theology of migration—*imago Dei*, *verbum Dei*, *missio Dei* and *visio Dei*—reflect on theology and migration as a way to see how God crosses borders and what that means to us as humans: migrants are created in God's image; in Jesus, God migrates to the world; the participation in the mission of God; and what the kingdom of God represents as we journey through life. Finally, in reference to mission and migration, Bevans has proposed new pastoral challenges: witness and proclamation; liturgy, prayer and contemplation; justice, peace and the integrity of creation; interreligious dialogue; inculturation; and reconciliation. Some of these challenges—such as the topics of inculturation, liturgy, and prayer—have been addressed by Hispanic ministry in the past. However, the pastoral care of immigrants can be enhanced by taking into account the challenges of justice (solidarity), and reconciliation that will be furthered explored in the next chapter.

So far I have focused on the theological perspective of migration by looking to the Bible, ecclesial documents, Catholic social teaching, and theologies of migrations. In the next section I will examine how the theologies of migrations along with the perspective of church documents for Hispanic Ministry and the work of many other theologians inform the Christological and missiological dimensions of pastoral care to immigrants.

Christological and Missiological Dimensions of Pastoral Care to Immigrants

At the heart of the Christological dimension of pastoral care to immigrants is Jesus' preferential option for the poor. From the very beginning of his ministry, Jesus proclaimed the kingdom of God and announced his preferential option for the poor and the oppressed which today can be seen in the faces of undocumented people. At the synagogue he opened the scroll and read the words of the prophet Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."²²⁰ After reading this, he sat down and said: "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."²²¹ God's concern for the marginalized of the world becomes apparent by Jesus' affirmation after reading the scriptural passage, and his commitment to the poor and the oppressed. The poor, widows, orphans, and strangers were among those whom Jesus came to set free.

The preferential option for the poor has been strongly proclaimed in Latin American ecclesial documents. It was first mentioned in 1968 in the concluding document of Medellín, the second Conference of the Latin American Episcopate. The expression was confirmed in 1979 in Puebla, the third Conference, and was also to be important in the fourth and fifth Latin American Episcopate Conferences held in Santo Domingo (1992) and Aparecida (2007). Since in Latin America the concept of the preferential option for the poor was linked to liberation theology, the church in the United

²²⁰ Luke 4:18 (New Revised Standard Version).

²²¹ Luke 4:21 (New Revised Standard Version).

States was initially very cautious about using the term.²²² Donald Kerwin summarizes the understanding of the preferential option for the poor as follows: “This principle does not connote a preference for one group over another or an optional course of conduct. In fact, the term ‘option’ might better be translated to mean a ‘decision’, and the ‘poor’ encompasses all persons whose rights have been threatened or denied.”²²³

Hispanic ministry documents have always showed a preferential option for the undocumented, including them among the poor and marginalized:

In the midst of a competitive society that protects the privileged, the ecclesial style of our *Encuentro*—following in the footsteps of Vatican II, Puebla, the magisterium of the popes, and specially of Jesus himself—makes an option for the poor, youth, women, for the rights of the unborn, the undocumented, farm workers, and all the marginalized in society.”²²⁴

Undocumented people have been included among the poor and marginalized not only because they are forced to live in the shadows of society, but also because they are poor in its most literal sense. Immigrant families experience poverty not only economically, but also in the lack of opportunities for their children to pursue studies after high school, and in the impossibility of finding jobs to provide adequate living conditions for their families. Moreover, they are marginalized by a society that criminalizes them without exception; for even though U.S. laws consider remaining in the country without proper documentation only a civil offense, society perceives the undocumented as criminals.

²²² For a detailed analysis on how the concept of the preferential option for the poor evolved in the United States see: Carmen M. Nanko-Fernández, “Justice Crosses the Border: the Preferential Option for the Poor in the United States” in *Theologizing in Espanglish* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2010), 120-152.

²²³ Donald Kerwin, “Rights, the Common Good, and Sovereignty in Service of the Human Person,” in *And you welcomed me: Migration and Catholic Social Teaching*, ed. Donald Kerwin and Jill Marie Gerschutz (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009), 98.

²²⁴ National Conference of Catholic Bishops, “Prophetic Voices,” in *Hispanic Ministry, Three Major Documents* (Washington, D.C., USCC, 1995), 51

For Gustavo Gutiérrez, the relationship between poverty and immigration can be seen from the perspective of the preferential option for the poor. First, from a socio-pastoral perspective, the option for the poor begins with a commitment to the poor that fosters solidarity with them, thus creating the urge to proclaim the kingdom of God to them. Secondly, from a theological perspective, the option for the poor provides room for theological reflection on migration, and finally, the spiritual perspective allows us to continue Jesus' mission and become his disciples.²²⁵ Furthermore, he states that “a preferential commitment to the poor is at the very heart of Jesus' preaching of the Reign of God,”²²⁶ and “the option for the poor means an option for the God of the Reign as proclaimed to us by Jesus.”²²⁷

The preferential option for the poor articulated by Gutiérrez influences the work of U.S. Hispanic Latino theologian Roberto S. Goizueta. In *Caminemos con Jesús: Toward a Hispanic/Latino Theology of Accompaniment*, Goizueta contributes to the understanding of God's preferential option for the poor from a U.S. Hispanic perspective: “This preferential option for the poor, or identification with the least significant, reveals 1) a God who is identified with the poor, who in turn reveals 2) the injustice and idolatry of those who, seeking God elsewhere, deny the poor the dignity bestowed on them by

²²⁵ Gustavo Gutiérrez, “Poverty, Migration and the Option for the Poor,” in *A Promised Land, a Perilous Journey: Theological Perspectives on Migration*, ed. Daniel G. Groody and Gioacchino Campese (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), 76-86.

²²⁶ Gustavo Gutiérrez, “Option for the Poor,” in *Mysterium Liberationis: Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology*, ed. Ignacio Ellacuría and Jon Sobrino, trans. Robert R. Barr (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1993), 235.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 240.

God.”²²⁸ Goizueta suggests that Latino popular Catholicism, as *locus theologicus* of U.S. Hispanic theology, can only be understood from the perspective of the preferential option for the poor, as God’s love is revealed in the symbols and rituals of popular Catholicism.²²⁹ The pastoral care to immigrants needs to recognize how Jesus accompanies them in their daily living, and also how the immigrants accompany the crucified Jesus in his suffering. For Goizueta, the preferential option for the poor is understood as a process of accompaniment: “Consequently, the act of accompaniment is never the act of autonomous individuals; it is by definition a walking “with.” Human interpersonal action is never simply a “doing” but is also always, at the same time, a “being with” and an “interacting with.” It is a communal action: “let *us* walk *with* Jesus.”²³⁰

A theology of accompaniment finds its roots in social justice, seeking the transformation of social and church structures:

The struggle for social justice will, in the long run, simply perpetuate the dehumanization of poor persons if not undertaken *together with the* poor persons. Unless social transformation is rooted in an everyday accompaniment of the poor, that is, in the everyday act of walking with, living with, breaking bread with particular poor persons in the concreteness of the poor person’s everyday struggle for survival, the transformation of social structures will, in the long run, simply perpetuate the oppression of the poor.²³¹

The theology of accompaniment proposed by Goizueta truly seeks the realization of a church that is willing to engage the poor and the oppressed at the margins. Goizueta

²²⁸ Roberto S. Goizueta, *Caminemos Con Jesús: Toward a Hispanic/Latino Theology of Accompaniment* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1995), 180.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 175.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 206.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 207.

reminds us that marginality is not only a social condition; it also involves physical space. Therefore, the preferential option for the poor must also include a preference for the geographical margins: “Once again, one cannot make a preferential option for the poor without making an option for the physical place where the poor live....”²³² Therefore, according to Goizueta the poor remain in many ways “geographically confined.”²³³ The need for a proactive approach to the dilemma of the poor is at the forefront of Goizueta’s theology of accompaniment:

If affective, aesthetic union with the poor is the most profound way of knowing the poor as persons, and if this affective, aesthetic union can only take place between and among concrete, particular persons, then one *cannot* know the poor or perceive reality from the perspective of the poor unless he or she is literally and physically walking with particular poor persons.²³⁴

In answering the call for social justice, and the pursuit of happiness of those who have been oppressed by society, Goizueta recognizes that walking with Jesus is the way for the liberation of the poor and oppressed. Immigrants seek to fulfill their lives by preserving cultural identity and religious traditions, and by offering better opportunities to future generations. However, life for immigrants is full of difficulties and struggles as they hope for the advent of a new life.

Mujerista theology, a theology done from the experience of struggle of marginalized *Latinas* in the United States, has also its own Christological understanding.²³⁵ The *mujerista* Christological approach attempts to foster a new frame

²³² Ibid., 198-99.

²³³ Ibid., 199.

²³⁴ Ibid., 207.

²³⁵ Ada María Isasi-Díaz, “*Identificate con Nosotras: A Mujerista Christological Understanding*,” in *Jesus in the Hispanic Community: Images of Christ from Theology to Popular Religion*, eds. Harold J. Recinos and Hugo Magallanes (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009).

of mind or a new perspective on people who struggle against oppression. The questions that Ada María Isasi-Díaz, one of the founders of *mujerista* theology poses are the following: Who is God for us who are pushed to the margins? How do we encounter God at the margins? Who is Christ for us, and how do we present Christ from the margins and to the margins?²³⁶ *Mujerista* theology, by seeking to provide answers to Latinas' dilemmas, will at the same time provide insights into the migrants' predicament, not only because many of the problems confronted by *Latinas* are very similar to the daily problems confronted by migrant women, but because the answers offered to the dilemmas that Latina's are experiencing, could assist us in creating the framework for a theology that will help to alleviate the migrants' daily struggles.

Isasi-Díaz points out that a *mujerista* Christology is a historical one, however it emphasizes that Jesus came to create not dogmas but a daily living where liberation and fullness of life could be achieved. According to Isasi-Díaz *Mujerista* Christology seeks to elaborate three key principles:

Our Christology revolves around three key elements that emerge from the daily praxis of Latinas in the United States, that is, they are rooted in the way Latinas face everyday struggles for their fullness of life. First, Latinas hunger for deep, personal relationships to sustain us in our daily struggles. Second, we need God to help us take care of our people, not expecting God to solve our problems but rather asking God to be our faithful companion in our struggles. Finally, we know that only insofar as we become part of God's family can we really say that we believe in *Jesucristo*.²³⁷

The same is true for the migrants who have crossed the border, in the way they struggle to survive while seeking to live fullness of life. The migrants have to seek shelter where there is no place to rest, and where there is no place for true privacy, where friends are

²³⁶ Ibid., 39.

²³⁷ Ibid., 40-41.

not necessarily true friends, and where disease and hunger abound. However, the migrants know that God takes care of them and that they are part of God's family.

Virgilio Elizondo has also reflected on Jesus' life as a paradigm of liberation for the poor and oppressed from the perspective of the Mexican American experience, departing from the perspective of the Galilean identity of Jesus and what that means to Mexican Americans. Elizondo says that Christology emerges as we try to respond to the question that Jesus poses to us—"Who do you say that I am?"—which is a question that requires a response from Mexican Americans and all Christians.²³⁸ Many theologians have defined who Jesus is from their perspective, but the Mexican American Christian has to respond to the question in light of the new life Jesus brings to their experience of suffering, marginalization, and struggles for liberation.²³⁹ In *Galilean Journey: The Mexican American Promise*,²⁴⁰ Elizondo captures the Mexican American experience from a *mestizo* Christian perspective. He develops three principles born out of the marginalized: "The Galilee Principle," "The Jerusalem Principle," and the "Resurrection Principle."²⁴¹ I will discuss these Christological principles in some detail, since they illuminate an understanding of the person of Jesus in relation to the migrant.

In the "Galilee Principle", Elizondo describes the way Jesus entered "the world of the voiceless, the sick, the hungry, the oppressed, the public sinners, the emarginated, the

²³⁸ Virgilio Elizondo, "Elements for a Mexican American Mestizo Christology," in *Jesus in the Hispanic Community: Images of Christ from Theology to Popular Religion*, eds. Harold J. Recinos and Hugo Magallanes (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 3.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁰ Virgilio Elizondo, *Galilean Journey: The Mexican-American Promise* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1983).

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 91.

suffering.”²⁴² Jesus, by becoming and being one with the poor and the oppressed, enables them to have a new beginning, a new life in Christ.²⁴³ The Galilean principle takes its name from a city whence, in biblical parlance, “nothing good could come.” These were very strong words to refer to the people of Galilee in the times of Jesus, and they are very strong words for the people who are subjected to bigotry and injustices today. Elizondo’s principle for the option of the poor demonstrates that the need for conversion not only necessarily belong to the poor, but also to those who have the desire to follow Jesus’ footsteps in the pursuit of living a holy life:

The poor will not be liberated from their misery by becoming wealthy but by discovering a new image of humanity that is now possible in Jesus. The religious freely chooses the scandal of poverty so as to enter into solidarity with the victims of injustice. This witness of the church is very powerful; it challenges the social norms of “acceptability” based on wealth, power, and prestige. It tells the poor that they, even though deprived by the world, are beautiful, desirable, and worthy of respect. It is the most powerful proclamation of the gospel—to proclaim the fundamental dignity of the undignified of the world, and not by words only but by freely and joyfully choosing to live among them and share their lot in life, not as strangers or distant “do-gooders,” but truly as one of them.²⁴⁴

Elizondo offers an insight into the lives of those who are considered to be “*mestizos*,” who have endured great suffering and have also stood in solidarity with others who have been victimized.²⁴⁵ The greatest challenge is how to eliminate the “root causes of the evils that cause suffering,”²⁴⁶ addressed by Elizondo in the “Jerusalem Principle,” to which we now turn our attention.

²⁴² Ibid., 92.

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., 93.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 100.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., 101.

In the “Jerusalem Principle,” Elizondo portrays Jesus on the way from Galilee to Jerusalem.²⁴⁷ In Jerusalem, Jesus will challenge and confront the power structures—religious and political leaders—in a confrontation that would entail suffering.²⁴⁸ Many Hispanic people face today similar struggles with structures of oppression that need to be challenged in accordance with Jesus’ way:

In fidelity to his way, Mexican-American Christians are challenging the oppressive powers of today, both within the Latin American world and in the U.S.A. They do not want to inflict violence on others, but they know they have the mission to make known in no uncertain terms the injustice and violence that the establishments are inflicting on the “little people” on the fringes of human belonging, or outside it altogether.²⁴⁹

The pastoral care to immigrants has to take into account that the poor and oppressed are still being challenged today as they continue to face realities of prejudice and bigotry, just as Jesus faced in Jerusalem. Immigrants have to become aware of their mission to confront structures of oppression, and that there is new life in the Resurrection of Christ.

Elizondo’s “The Resurrection Principle” speaks about the joy of the resurrection and the paradox of death unto life.²⁵⁰ Elizondo explains:

We arrive thus at the third principle of interpretation and re-creation, the *resurrection principle*: only love can triumph over evil, and no human power can prevail against the power of unlimited love. Out of suffering and death, God will bring health and life. The more that sinful world tries to crush and destroy the ways of unstinted love, the greater will be love’s triumph.²⁵¹

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 103.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 104.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 104.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., 115.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

The triumph of love that the resurrection brings to the poor and oppressed is celebrated with joy: “It is in the truly Christian fiesta—the *agape*—that all experience themselves for what they truly are: children of the same father, without need for distinctions or explanations.”²⁵² The *comunidades de bases* (Christian base communities)—where God’s word, prayer, service and faith celebration meet—provide an environment where the poor and oppressed can celebrate their new life in Christ.²⁵³

The Christological dimensions discussed so far provided a crucial understanding of important aspects in the pastoral care to immigrants. First, Jesus’ preferential option for the poor is the basis for the ministry to immigrants. Secondly, the pastoral care to immigrants calls for an accompaniment in their daily living and struggles. Thirdly, Jesus incarnates in the reality of the poor and oppressed, showing them how to walk with the poor, how to denounce and confront oppression, and how to live a new life. Following Jesus’ example, the pastoral care to immigrants has to be sensitive to the immigrants’ realities and struggles, affirm them in their mission and give them hope. Finally, the experience of ecclesial community is important in the pastoral care to immigrants, as it provides an environment conducive to celebrate new life in Christ. After considering the Christological aspects, I now turn to the missiological dimension of the pastoral care to immigrants.

The proclamation of the kingdom of God in word and deed was specifically the mission of Jesus. The missiological dimension of pastoral care to immigrants views the church’s mission as the continuation of Jesus’ mission, expressed in compassion for and

²⁵² Ibid., 122.

²⁵³ Ibid., 118.

solidarity with the poor in the here and now, given that “the fruits of the kingdom of God can be enjoyed within history”.²⁵⁴ The kingdom of God was the central theme of Jesus’ message: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”²⁵⁵ Jesus proclaimed the kingdom not only with words, but also with his actions, miracles, and healings that were a demonstration that the kingdom of God had arrived with his own person. The kingdom is not only a post-mortem eschatological goal or concept. It is also God’s project in history as Leonardo and Clodovis Boff explain: “The kingdom or reign of God means the full and total liberation of all creation, in the end, purified of all that oppresses it, transfigured by the full presence of God.”²⁵⁶ The kingdom is present where God’s justice, solidarity, forgiveness, and peace is made concrete in human experience and in social constructs.

Jesus’ life and message became the seed for what would be the church’s mission by preaching the kingdom of God, a kingdom that according to *Lumen Gentium*, “shines out before humanity in the words, the works and the presence of Christ.”²⁵⁷ The mission of the church is to proclaim and establish the kingdom of God, and to be on earth “the seed and the beginning of that kingdom.”²⁵⁸ Hispanic ministry documents also refer to the mission of the church as a continuation of Jesus’ mission. The National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry states that:

²⁵⁴ Leonardo and Clodovis Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1987), 49.

²⁵⁵ Mark 1:15 (New Revised Standard Version).

²⁵⁶ Leonardo & Clodovis Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology*, 52.

²⁵⁷ *Lumen Gentium*, 5. All Vatican II citations come from Flannery’s Vatican Council II: Constitutions, Decrees, Declarations (Completely Revised Translation in Inclusive language).

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

The mission of the church is the continuation of Jesus' work: to announce the kingdom of God and the means for entering it. It is the proclamation of what is to come and also anticipation of that plenitude here and now in the process of history. The kingdom which Jesus proclaims and initiates is so important that in relation to it, all else is relative.

The church, as community, carries out the work of Jesus by entering into the cultural, religious, and social reality of the people, becoming incarnate in and with the people, "in virtue of her mission and nature she is bound to no particular form of human culture, nor to any political, economic, or social system," Therefore, she is able to preach the need for conversion of everyone, to affirm the dignity of the human person, and to seek ways to eradicate personal sin, oppressive structures, and form of injustice.²⁵⁹

The understanding of Jesus' mission prompts an ecclesiology defined in the objective of the National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry states: "to live and promote... by means of a *Pastoral de Conjunto* a model of church that is: communitarian, evangelizing, and missionary, incarnate in the reality of the Hispanic people and open to the diversity of cultures, a promoter and example of justice... that develops leadership through integral education... that is leaven for the kingdom of God in society."²⁶⁰ Therefore, the pastoral action described in the Hispanic ministry documents is transforming, communitarian and missionary, with a preferential option for the poor and the marginalized. The goal of all pastoral action is the proclamation of the kingdom of God and the conversion that the kingdom entails.

The missiological dimension of the pastoral care to immigrants denotes that ministry to immigrants, as part of the church's mission, is a continuation of Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom of God in word and deed. A Christology grounded in the

²⁵⁹ National Conference of Catholic Bishops, "National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry," in *Hispanic Ministry, Three Major Documents* (Washington, D.C.: USCC, 1995), number 13

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, number 17

preferential option for the poor is followed by an ecclesiology that incarnates into the cultural, religious, and social reality of the immigrants, and promotes their dignity.

Conclusion

In Chapter three I began by addressing the hermeneutical mediation (judging) by confronting *la realidad* with the Word of God and Tradition. I focused first on the theological perspective of migration by examining the Bible, ecclesial documents, Catholic social teaching, and theologies of migration. The theological insights of Catholic social teaching, in reference to the migrant community, clearly state the church's profound concern for migrants who are not being treated with respect and honor. The biblical story also presents a concern for the welfare and protection of people who were migrants in the Old and New Testaments. The theologies of migration delineate the experience of migration as a significant source for theological reflection influenced by the needs of pastoral agents that provide spiritual and pastoral care to the immigrants. In addition, Groody's four foundations for a theology of migration—*imago Dei*, *verbum Dei*, *missio Dei* and *visio Dei*—define how God crosses borders and what that means to us as humans.

In the second part of the chapter I examined how church documents for Hispanic Ministry and U.S. Hispanic theologians informed the Christological and missiological dimensions of the pastoral care to immigrants that is based on Jesus' preferential option for the poor. Goizueta's theology of accompaniment presented a preferential option for the poor understood as a process of accompaniment, and Elizondo identified the poor and

oppressed with the Galilean Jesus. The missiological dimension defined the pastoral care to immigrants as a continuation of Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom of God in word and deed. As such, the pastoral care to immigrants has to be sensitive to the immigrants' realities and struggles, has to accompany them in their daily living, affirm them in their mission and give them hope. In the next chapter I argue that this hope which pastoral care provides is fruit of the work of solidarity and reconciliation.

CHAPTER 4: TOWARD AN ENHANCED FORMATION OF HISPANIC/LATINO(A) PASTORAL AGENTS

“Like the disciples of Emmaus, believers, supported by the living presence of the risen Christ, become in turn the traveling companions of their brothers and sisters in trouble, offering them the word which rekindles hope in their hearts. With them they break the bread of friendship, brotherhood and mutual help. This is how to build the civilization of love. This is how to proclaim the hoped-for coming of the new heavens and the new earth to which we are heading.”²⁶¹

In the previous chapter I began attending to the hermeneutical mediation. This chapter explores a series of ethical principles that will guide us toward an enhanced formation of Hispanic/Latino(a) pastoral agents. My reflections on migration and mission have identified solidarity and reconciliation as key themes to be considered in improving the theological and ministerial formation of the pastoral agents who attend the *Escuelas de Ministerios*, in order to better respond to the pastoral needs of Hispanic faith communities affected by the deportation of some of their members.

This chapter is laid out in four parts. Part one will explore the area of spirituality and, more specifically, elements of Hispanic spirituality as described by U.S. Hispanic theologians. Spirituality nurtures the lives of the Hispanic immigrants as they face joys and sorrows. Part two will examine the topic of solidarity as a result of the Christological dimension of pastoral care to immigrants. Solidarity with undocumented immigrants and their families mirrors Jesus’ life in terms of his option for the poor. Part three will look into the area of reconciliation as a critical pastoral challenge of mission with undocumented immigrants. The topic of reconciliation will provide additional

²⁶¹ “Homily of his Holiness John Paul II on the Jubilee of Migrants and Itinerant people, June 2, 2000” http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/2000/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_20000602_jubilimmigrants.html (accessed September 20, 2015), 4.

insights for an enhanced formation for Hispanic pastoral agents. Finally, part four will reflect on the theme of hope as it relates to immigrants and the formation of ministers in the Hispanic Catholic community.

Spirituality

Orlando O. Espín explains how spirituality is belief praxis: “Within the Catholic tradition, a spirituality seems to be an understanding that emerges as the result of the way the same basic gospel dimensions are combined in the daily life of Christians.”²⁶² He explains that different spiritualities emerge based on the combination and relation of four dimensions derived from the perceptions about God, the life and message of Jesus, the relationships among people, and how Christians’ options and lifestyles are influenced by these perceptions.²⁶³ Espín argues that “how these elements are interpreted, related and therefore combined with one another will provide the shape of any spirituality.”²⁶⁴ Therefore, by Hispanic spiritualities I refer to how the Spirit of God fills, works, and guides many people of Hispanic origins in the United States, and how they live and act according to their beliefs. There is not a single Hispanic spirituality, but several, as beliefs vary and therefore their corresponding praxis is necessarily different. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to refer to spiritualities of Hispanic people in lieu of saying

²⁶² Orlando O. Espín, *The Faith of the People* (Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1997), 26-27.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 27.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

Hispanic spiritualities, but the second term is more commonly used by the vast majority of writers.

I have found that in many Hispanic cultures spiritual experiences differ depending upon their national origin and this is because there is an inseparable link between spirituality and culture. Espín defines culture as “the dynamic sum of all that a human group does and materially and symbolically creates in order to prolong its life in history within geographical contexts. It is culture that allows any human group, and its individual members, to discover meaning and act accordingly. Society and culture dialectically create and modify each other.”²⁶⁵ As noted above, the praxis of beliefs will vary according to the culture of the believer. For example, Caribbean people do not have the same spirituality as people from Central America. Each culture has a particular way to relate and respond to God. Espín also explains how God’s grace is mediated by culture and what it means for Latinos/as:

Culture is a necessary prism through which we perceive God’s grace and through which we respond to it. Therefore, to be Latino/a, for example, is not a superficial accident of birth, but rather the very condition within and through which we can hear the gospel and respond to it in faith. Those of us who are Christian are not just Christians who happen to be Latino/a—we are Christian in a Latino/a way, and we cannot be Christian in any other way. Our Latino/a cultures make us experience the grace of God in specific ways not available to us were we not Latino/a.²⁶⁶

God’s revelation is mediated by culture, and spirituality is affected by how the immigrants’ culture relates to other cultures. Juan-Lorenzo Hinojosa suggests that

²⁶⁵ Orlando O. Espín, “Grace and Humanness: A Hispanic Perspective, in *We Are A People!: Initiatives In Hispanic American Theology*, ed. Roberto S. Goizueta (Eugene, OR.: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001), 143.

²⁶⁶ Orlando O. Espín, “Constructing a Conversation: Culture, Ecumenical Dialogue, and a Renewed Pneumatology,” in *Building Bridges, Doing Justice: Constructing a Latino/a Ecumenical Theology*, edited by Orlando O. Espín, (Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 2009), 4.

spirituality differs depending on the different levels of acculturation and assimilation.²⁶⁷

The first generations of immigrants bring spiritualities from their countries of origin.

Because the second generation of immigrants has been exposed to the processes of acculturation and assimilation, they are often caught somewhere between the culture of

their parents and the dominant culture. They might practice some elements of the

spirituality of their parents or might look for something different. The higher the level of

acculturation/assimilation that a person has been exposed to, will create distance from the

spirituality of the first generation. For those who have come to terms with being

Hispanics living in a different culture, new forms of spirituality emerges, something that

might be considered as a *mestizo* spirituality.²⁶⁸

Rosa María Icaza defines spirituality as “the sum of values and ideas that animates and fosters the actions of a group in search for God.”²⁶⁹ According to Icaza, a Hispanic spirituality that characterizes how Hispanics relate to God animated the process of the *III Encuentro* and inspired the National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry.²⁷⁰

The National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry also defines spirituality as a result of faith and relationship with God:

The spirituality or *mística* of the Hispanic people springs from their faith and relationship with God. Spirituality is understood to be the way of life of a people, a movement by the Spirit of God, and the grounding of one’s identity as a Christian in every circumstance of life. It is the struggle to live the totality of

²⁶⁷ Juan-Lorenzo Hinojosa, “Culture, Spirituality, and the United States Hispanics,” in *Frontiers of Hispanic Theology in the United States*, ed. Allan Figueroa Deck (Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 2006), 156-158.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ Rosa María Icaza, “Spirituality-Mística-Liturgy,” in *Prophetic Vision: Pastoral Reflections on the National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry*, ed. Soledad Galerón, Rosa María Icaza and Rosendo Urrabazo (Missouri, Sheed & Ward, 1992), 240.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

one's personal and communitarian life in keeping with the Gospel; spirituality is the orientation and perspective of all the dimensions of a person's life in the following of Jesus and in continuous dialogue with the Father.²⁷¹

Many Hispanics have an intimate relationship with God, who is often called *Diosito*, *Papá Dios* or *Papito Dios* (dear God, papa God, daddy God). These names express the proximity and total confidence in a God who is constantly present in their lives, and who is loyal to his promises. From childhood, many Hispanics learn from their parents expressions that are part of their language and culture such as *si Dios quiere* (God willing), *gracias a Dios* (thanks be to God), *con el favor de Dios* (with God's favor), *Bendición* (Blessings), *que Dios te bendiga* (God bless you), *primero Dios* (God first), and *vaya con Dios* (go with God), among others. This sense of the presence of God in the lives of Hispanics is explained in the National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry as follows:

One of the most important aspects of the spirituality of the Hispanic people is a sense of the presence of God, which serves as a stimulus for living out one's daily commitment. In this sense the transcendent God is nevertheless present in human affairs and human lives. Indeed, one might go so far as to speak of God as a member of the family, with whom one converses and to whom one has recourse, not only in moments of fervent prayer but also in one's daily living. Thus, God never fails. He is Emmanuel, God-with-Us.²⁷²

On some occasions the migrants' journey is accompanied by religious items that express their confidence in God, as Gemma Tulud Cruz observes: "migrants may also use religious icons or practices for protection on their often perious journeys."²⁷³ Moreover Cruz holds that many migrants believe that God is with them on their journey:

²⁷¹ National Conference of Catholic Bishops, "National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry," in *Hispanic Ministry, Three Major Documents* (Washington, D.C., USCC, 1995), number 16.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, number 93.

²⁷³ Gemma Tulud Cruz, "Between Identity and Security: Theological Implications of Migration in the Context of Globalization," *Theological Studies* 69, no. 2 (June 2008): 364.

Migrants, constituting a pilgrim community, can have a profound experience of God. As they move from one reality to another, so does their God, who is not established in a solid temple but shares in their provisional life. God walks alongside them and becomes a pilgrim on the roads of this uneven world, nurturing and blessing them by the power of renewed relationships and community within the household of life.²⁷⁴

God accompanies the migrants on their journey, as explained by Cruz, and in their new lives as immigrants. God is experienced in the Hispanic community not as a distant God, but a close, personal, and communal God that accompanies people in their daily joys and struggles. In *Caminemos con Jesús: toward a Hispanic/Latino Theology of Accompaniment*,²⁷⁵ Roberto Goizueta argues that Jesus is the source of communal life, solidarity and liberation.²⁷⁶ Goizueta understands accompaniment as a relational reality that necessarily opts in favor of the poor. Using Latino popular Catholicism as *locus theologicus*, U.S. Hispanic theology can only be understood from the perspective of the preferential option for the poor, as God's love is revealed in the symbols and rituals of popular Catholicism.²⁷⁷ He believes that the accompaniment of the suffering is affirmed by many of popular religious practices of Holy Week. For example, during Good Friday processions, many Hispanics accompany the crucified Jesus and Mary in prayer and solidarity, in gratitude for the way Jesus and Mary accompany them in their struggles.

Espín defines Hispanic popular religiosity as: “a parallel complex of symbols, rites, experiences, and beliefs that our peoples, feeling themselves marginalized from the mainstream of society and church, have developed and sustained in order to communicate

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 369.

²⁷⁵ Roberto S. Goizueta, *Caminemos Con Jesús: Toward a Hispanic/Latino Theology of Accompaniment* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1995).

²⁷⁶ Ibid., 211.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 175.

with God and experience salvation.” These popular religious expressions are locus for discerning the *sensus fidelium* of those who practice them. For him the *sensus fidelium* are the faith-filled intuitions of Christians that are fruit of the Holy Spirit’s presence in their lives.²⁷⁸ He holds that popular Catholicism is an expression of Hispanic spirituality where both the crucified Christ and Mary are the main protagonists.²⁷⁹ These intuitions, he holds, must be tested for authenticity following a process that calls for at least three confrontations: the Bible, the texts of the tradition, and the historical and sociological contexts.²⁸⁰ Popular Catholicism allows immigrants to respond to God’s revelation in their lives in a way that is accessible to them and that speaks to the daily struggles that they face.

Justo L. González describes spirituality as living *in* and *out* the gospel. This means that faith is both the foundation for life (living *in* the gospel), and the foundation of action and structure (living *out* the gospel).²⁸¹ He contends that the basis for Christian spirituality is the presence of the Holy Spirit that allows the faithful to live a spirituality of *Mañana* (tomorrow): “*Mañana* is possible by the death and resurrection of Jesus, made present by the Spirit, and made certain by the power and the promise of none other than God Almighty!”²⁸² This implies living a spirituality of the Reign of God through the presence of the Holy Spirit by which we begin living, here and now, what the Reign

²⁷⁸ Orlando O. Espín, “Tradition and Popular Religion: An understanding of the *Sensus Fidelium*,” in *Frontiers of Hispanic Theology in the United States* (Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1992), 78.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 69-76.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 62-87.

²⁸¹ Justo L. Gonzalez, “Life in the Spirit,” in *Mañana: Christian Theology From a Hispanic Perspective* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 157.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, 166-167.

represents. In the spirituality of the Kingdom the proclamation of the good news is evidenced by love of neighbor and work on behalf of justice, peace, and care for the poor.²⁸³

As stated earlier, many Hispanic people have a strong Marian spirituality. This observation is affirmed by the National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry: “Hispanic people find God in the arms of the Virgin Mary. That is why Mary, the Mother of God, as goodness, compassion, protection, inspiration, and example ... is at the heart of the Hispanic spirituality.”²⁸⁴ For many, Marian devotions mediate God’s presence in the Hispanic community.

In addition to recognizing the strong Marian devotion of the Hispanic community, Sixto J. García and Carmen Nanko-Fernández reflect on how Mary contributes to the pneumatological dimension of Hispanic Trinitarian theology. According to García, “Mary becomes the sign of the Spirit of holiness and healing for suffering and marginalized Hispanic faith communities. She points away from herself to the Spirit, who has made her its privileged place of indwelling in salvation history.”²⁸⁵ Nanko-Fernández suggests that the presence of the divine manifested through the prompts of the Holy Spirit can be found in *lo cotidiano*²⁸⁶ (daily living), and it “reminds us that we have

²⁸³ Ibid., 167.

²⁸⁴ National Conference of Catholic Bishops, “National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry,” in *Hispanic Ministry, Three Major Documents* (Washington, D.C., USCC, 1995), number 94.

²⁸⁵ Sixto Garcia, “A Hispanic Approach to Trinitarian Theology: The Dynamics of Celebration, Reflection, and Praxis,” in *We are a People*, edited by Roberto Goizueta (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1992), 123.

²⁸⁶ *Lo cotidiano* (daily living) is the theological source for *mujerista* theology. Isasi-Díaz defines *lo cotidiano* as “Hispanic women’s experience of struggling every day.” See: Ada María Isasi-Díaz, *Mujerista Theology* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1996), 66.

obligations to one another in the company of those across time and space who are animated by the Spirit and move in solidarity, especially with those who are with us, vulnerable and struggling on the margins.”²⁸⁷ Mary, the one filled with the Holy Spirit, is a model of the Spirit dwelling in the faith community that denounces oppression and acts in solidarity with the poor and oppressed.

The Trinitarian God whose very nature is communion inspires many to embrace a spirituality of communion or spirituality of relationships. For González, an essential way of understanding the Trinity can be gleaned by taking note of God’s revelation and God’s relationship with the world. The Trinity constitutes the model and goal of creation so it is an example that all believers in the Trinity are called to follow. God’s life of love and sharing should be imitated by those who believe in him.²⁸⁸

With his understanding of *fiesta* (a festive celebration) Goizueta holds that the fruit of the triune God’s presence in the midst of the immigrants’ existence is their celebration of life. Goizueta develops this concept of *fiesta* as a thanksgiving act from both a theological and anthropological perspective.²⁸⁹ The *fiesta* is where thanks is given for life and expresses the relationship between human persons and the person’s relationship with God.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁷ Carmen Nanko-Fernández, “From *Pájaro* to Paraclete: Retrieving the Spirit of God in the Company of Mary,” in *Building Bridges, Doing Justice: Constructing a Latino/a Ecumenical Theology*, edited by Orlando O. Espín, (Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 2009), 25.

²⁸⁸ Justo L. Gonzalez, “The One Who Lives as Three,” in *Mañana: Christian Theology From a Hispanic Perspective* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 115.

²⁸⁹ Roberto S. Goizueta, “Fiesta: Life in the Subjunctive,” in *From the Heart of Our People*, edited by Orlando O. Espín and Miguel H. Diaz (Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1990), 90.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 91.

Goizueta explains that the celebration of *fiesta* from a theological perspective implies that the person is constituted by relationships, not only within the human community, but also with the Triune community whose love is life. To be opened to that life is to be freed to celebrate.²⁹¹ In other words, human and divine relationships meet in the *fiesta*.

According to Zaida Maldonado Pérez, the Trinity also has ramifications for *lo cotidiano* (daily living) through the importance that many Latinos give to the *familia* (family).²⁹² She proposes that the Trinity, seen as *La Santa Familia* (the Holy family), is “to be continued” in the midst of the family’s existence: “The dynamism of the Trinity as relationship is to be lived out; it is “to be continued” in our very existence, in our *luchas*, in the *meollo* of life and the joy and pains of being-in-*familia*.”²⁹³ For Maldonado, the Latino understanding of the Trinity is not focused around the ontological dogmatic constructs of the patristic period, but from an understanding of what the Trinity means from the perspective of *familia* (family), *lo cotidiano* (daily living) and *las luchas* (struggles) that mark the lives of many Latinos. The Trinity as *la Santa Familia* (the Holy family) reinforces the Latino concept of *familia* (family) as extended family that includes all marginalized ones. The Trinity also reaffirms the conception of being as *being-in-familia*. This means that life is perceived as relationships and that *lo cotidiano*

²⁹¹ Ibid., 96.

²⁹² Zaida Maldonado Pérez, “The Trinity,” in *Handbook of Latina/o Theologies*, edited by Edwin David Aponte and Miguel A. De La Torre, (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2006), 32-39.

²⁹³ Ibid., 38-39.

(daily living), and *la lucha* (struggles) are sanctified by the very nature and active presence of the Trinity in the midst of life.²⁹⁴

By exploring the work of U.S. Hispanic theologians we have seen that how the triune God, Mary, and popular Catholicism are all part of Hispanic spiritualities that nurture the lives of Hispanic immigrants. As discussed above, the triune God generates a spirituality of accompaniment, where Jesus and Mary accompany the Hispanic community, and the Hispanic community accompanies Jesus and Mary through their participation in processions and celebrations. In addition, the Trinitarian God is theological grounding for a spirituality of communion or spirituality of relationships, a spirituality of *Mañana* or the kingdom, a spirituality of *Fiesta*, and a spirituality of family, and *lo cotidiano*. I also noted that popular Catholicism is an integral element of Hispanic spirituality where both the crucified Christ and Mary are the main protagonists in the drama of salvation. The reflection of the popular religious practices points to a God that animates, accompanies, sustains, advocates, consoles, and counsels immigrants in their daily living. Finally, in addition to the Marian devotion, Mary contributes to the pneumatological understanding of the Hispanic Trinitarian theology, where the Holy Spirit that filled Mary is also present in the faith community, thus engendering a spirituality of service and solidarity.

Many of the teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios* have observed the elements of Hispanic spiritualities mentioned above in response to the questionnaires posed to them. The survey of these teachers confirm many of claims as regards Hispanic spirituality noted earlier; mainly that the Hispanic communities they visit demonstrate a profound

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 32-39.

faith, devotions to Mary (especially Guadalupe), love for popular religiosity, strong desire to maintain religious and cultural identity, a humble approach to life, a sense of family and community, a great desire to serve in the church, and the sense of the festive, especially by celebrating life through the practice of *fiesta*. From my personal ministerial experience as a teacher of *Escuelas de Ministerios* I have discovered that God's Spirit is present in the Hispanic community not only in their worship and liturgy, but also in their daily lives. When I travel to give classes to Hispanic immigrants, I feel the presence of the Spirit in the hospitality that they offer me in their homes; in the way they relate as family, and even when they bring food to share at a community gathering or for a lunch break during the class. It becomes a *fiesta* where everyone shares what they have with such joy and happiness that only the Spirit can inspire. I also see the presence of the Spirit in the songs and activities that take place before we begin the class, in their participation when they share in small groups or with the whole group as they share their struggles, and in the joy and pride they feel in their service to God.

After describing the elements of Hispanic spirituality from a theological and ministerial perspective, the next section focuses on a spirituality of solidarity with the immigrants who mirror Jesus' life in terms of his option for the poor.

Spirituality of Solidarity

As indicated in the previous section, the faith and relationship with God expressed in the life of many Latino immigrants engenders a spirituality of accompaniment, which is evidenced by both God accompanying the migrants in their journey and the immigrants

in their new life and their accompaniment of Mary and Jesus in their lives. Hispanic spirituality emphasizes the humanity of Jesus, especially in his passion and death, which is represented in popular Catholicism through the crucified Christ who immigrants accompany in solidarity.

The Jesus who is accompanied by Hispanics brings a double message: a theological message as he reveals who God is, and an anthropological message as he reveals who the human being is.²⁹⁵ Jesus is the message and the messenger of God; he is the revelation and the revealer of God. He is image of the invisible God (Col 1:15); whoever sees him has seen the Father (John 14:9); whoever listens to him hears the word of the Father (John 14: 24). The God that Jesus presents is a God of love and mercy who is revealed in the three parables of Luke 15—the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son and his brother. However, Jesus not only reveals who God is but he also reveals who the human being is. Mathew 5:1-48, begins with the beatitudes and continues with Jesus' commands to fulfill the law or the prophets, presenting the anthropology revealed by Jesus where a human being is capable of working towards perfection: "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly father is perfect."²⁹⁶ Jon Sobrino states that "to be truly a human being is to be what Jesus is. To live with spirit, to react correctly to concrete reality, is to re-create, throughout history, the fundamental structure of the life of Jesus."²⁹⁷ As a consequence, when I refer to a spirituality of solidarity with

²⁹⁵ Jon Sobrino states that "in Jesus, God has been revealed, and the human being has been revealed." Jon Sobrino, "Spirituality and the Following of Jesus," in *Mysterium Liberationis: Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology*, ed. Ignacio Ellacuría and Jon Sobrino, trans. Robert R. Barr (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1993), 686. Also see: Albert Nolan, *Jesus Before Christianity* (Maryknoll, New York: 2001), 167.

²⁹⁶ Matthew 5:48 (New Revised Standard Version).

immigrants in the U.S., I am referring to a spirituality that mirrors the structure of Jesus' life in terms of his option for the poor. Such is a spirituality that emerges from faith in Christ, as Pope Francis explains: "Our faith in Christ, who became poor, and was always close to the poor and the outcast, is the basis of our concern for the integral development of society's most neglected members."²⁹⁸

Michelle A. Gonzalez explains that faith in the crucified Jesus is based on the experiences of faith and the lived experiences of their communities. For González, Jesus' identity shows his solidarity with the marginalized: "For Latino/a theology, Jesus' mestizo and border identity exemplifies his solidarity with the marginalized, his liberative message for the poor and oppressed, and the calling for Christians to be critical of dominant sectors of society and power."²⁹⁹ This represents a call to Christians to be critical of oppressive structures of society and to remember that when a brother or sister is in crisis the whole body of Christ is in crisis. Jesus accompanies the community in their suffering and struggles, and his suffering on the cross is present in the suffering of the people today.³⁰⁰ The spirituality that emerges from this strong relationship and identification with Jesus makes us relate in solidarity to the immigrants who also suffer. For Groody, solidarity is part of who Christians are: "Because we are all interrelated,

²⁹⁷ Jon Sobrino, "Spirituality and the Following of Jesus," in *Mysterium Liberationis: Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology*, ed. Ignacio Ellacuría and Jon Sobrino, trans. Robert R. Barr (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1993), 686-687.

²⁹⁸ Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html#In union with God, we hear a plea](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html#In%20union%20with%20God,%20we%20hear%20a%20plea) (accessed September 21, 2015), 186.

²⁹⁹ Michelle A. Gonzalez, "Jesus," in *Handbook of Latina/o Theologies*, edited by Edwin David Aponte and Miguel A. De La Torre (Missouri, Chalice Press, 2006), 19.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 17-24.

solidarity connects us with those most disconnected from the human family. In a time when there is such emphasis on upward mobility, solidarity, as an expression of Christian charity, is a form of downward mobility that expresses itself concretely in the preferential option for the poor.”³⁰¹ By being in solidarity with the immigrant, Christians follow Jesus’ solidarity with the poor. Pope John Paul II defined solidarity as a Christian virtue by which the stranger becomes the living image of God:

Solidarity is undoubtedly a Christian virtue. In what has been said so far it has been possible to identify many points of contact between solidarity and charity, which is the distinguishing mark of Christ’s disciples (cf. Jn 13:35). In the light of faith, solidarity seeks to go beyond itself, to take on the specifically Christian dimension of total gratuity, forgiveness and reconciliation. One’s neighbor is then not only a human being with his or her own rights and a fundamental equality with everyone else, but becomes the living image of God the Father, redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ and placed under the permanent action of the Holy Spirit. One’s neighbor must therefore be loved, even if an enemy, with the same love with which the Lord loves him or her; and for that person’s sake one must be ready for sacrifice, even the ultimate one: to lay down one’s life for the brethren (cf. 1 Jn 3:16).³⁰²

In addition, Patricia A. Lamoureux relates solidarity with other virtues: “solidarity is integrally related to the virtues of charity, mercy, and justice, and as a Christian virtue, it is linked to the Christian ideal of communion.”³⁰³ What this means for us Christians is that a spirituality of solidarity entails justice, charity, and mercy. Christians following Jesus’ selfless solidarity with the poor in their historical context must demonstrate a preference for those immigrants who are oppressed in our society. For example,

³⁰¹ Daniel G. Groody, *Globalization, Spirituality, and Justice* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2007), 254.

³⁰² Saint Pope John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_30121987_sollicitudo-rei-socialis.html (accessed September 21, 2015), 40.

³⁰³ Patricia A. Lamoureux, “Immigration Reconsidered in the Context of an Ethic of Solidarity,” in *Made in God’s Image*, eds. Regis Duffy, O.F.M. and Angelus Gambatese, O.F.M. (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1999), 126.

documented immigrants have a responsibility to manifests the works of mercy in relationship to their undocumented brothers and sisters. At some point documented immigrants came to this country for various reasons, and were able to work, study, legalize their status, and become part of society. Now, in solidarity with those who have recently arrived or who lack a legal status in the country, the documented immigrants can help the undocumented ones in their various needs, as solidarity “is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all....”³⁰⁴ A spirituality of solidarity grounded in Jesus’ preferential option for the poor entails many different programs that can be done to assist undocumented immigrants. However, as Pope Francis explains, solidarity goes beyond assistance as it is an expression of true love:

Our commitment does not consist exclusively in activities or programs of promotion and assistance; what the Holy Spirit mobilizes is not an unruly activism, but above all an attentiveness which considers the other “in a certain sense as one with ourselves”. This loving attentiveness is the beginning of a true concern for their person which inspires me effectively to seek their good. This entails appreciating the poor in their goodness, in their experience of life, in their culture, and in their ways of living the faith.”³⁰⁵

The commitment to assist undocumented immigrants is born out of God’s calling to take care of the stranger. Solidarity that results out of true love for a person, respects the

³⁰⁴ Saint Pope John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_30121987_sollicitudo-rei-socialis.html (accessed September 21, 2015), 38.

³⁰⁵ Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html#In union with God, we hear a plea](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html#In%20union%20with%20God,%20we%20hear%20a%20plea) (accessed September 21, 2015), 199.

immigrants' faith, culture, and their expressions of popular religiosity. Even more, a spirituality of solidarity allows to value and love immigrants as Jesus does.

By exploring the topic of solidarity we have seen that a spirituality of solidarity that reproduces the structure of Jesus' life in terms of his option for the poor, emerges from faith in Christ, who became poor, and that by being in solidarity with the immigrant, Christians follow Jesus' solidarity with the poor. As mentioned above, solidarity is a Christian value related to the virtues of charity, mercy, and justice. Solidarity entails a commitment to the good of each person, by promoting the dignity of immigrants and advocating for their rights. In addition, a spirituality of solidarity will provide out of compassion, loving care to the Hispanic immigrants who become the living image of God, by respecting the immigrants' faith, culture, and their expressions of popular religiosity.

Reconciliation

As I see it, reconciliation is a critical pastoral challenge for ministry among immigrants. I will now explore the topic of reconciliation as we continue looking for an enhanced formation for ministry in the Hispanic community in the context of deportations. John Paul Lederach understands reconciliation as a journey, as encounters, and as a place: a journey toward and through conflict; encounters with self, with God, and with others along the way; and finally reaching a place in a specific time and space where everything comes together in the journey.³⁰⁶ In other words, there is a road to

³⁰⁶ John Paul Lederach, *The Journey toward Reconciliation* (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1999), 22-26.

reconciliation with many steps along the way. Reconciliation is needed at several levels. Stephen Bevans describes four levels of reconciliation in the context of mission among immigrants: personal, cultural, political, and ecclesial.³⁰⁷ At a personal level, healing is needed for traumatic experiences. Cultural reconciliation refers to the healing needed for the conflicts experienced with the host culture, such as discrimination, persecution, and xenophobia. Political and ecclesial reconciliation entails the healing of problems caused by political systems and laws, and ecclesial authorities or communities that reject the immigrants' expressions of faith.

Robert Schreiter sees the need for healing and reconciliation in several stages of migration: leaving the homeland entails traumatic memories caused by family separation and the fear of losing loved ones; there might be physical dangers and safety concerns during the migrant's journey that come back in nightmares; and the settlement of the migrant in a new location also presents another set of issues such as rejection, discrimination, and lack of hospitality.³⁰⁸ In the context of deportations, we can add a new list of experiences that will need reconciliation and healing. Family separation, the memories of the painful arrest of a loved one, the many days and nights of sorrow that followed, the solitude they feel, the insecurities, the blaming, the resentment against the communities, politics, and laws, are examples of what deportations cause in the lives of immigrants.

³⁰⁷ Stephen B. Bevans, "Migration and Mission: Pastoral Challenges, Theological Insights," in *Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology*, ed. Elaine Padilla and Peter C. Phan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 168.

³⁰⁸ Robert J. Schreiter, "Migrants and the Ministry of Reconciliation," in *A Promised Land, a Perilous Journey: Theological Perspectives on Migration*, ed. Daniel G. Groody and Gioacchino Campese (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), 108-111.

Reconciliation can be seen as a goal which depends on various events in order to become a reality: “It is not only a matter of healing memories and receiving forgiveness, it is also about changing the structures in society that provoked, promoted, and sustained violence.”³⁰⁹ Schreiter explains that reconciliation today calls for two faces: one social, and one spiritual. While the social has to do with coming to terms with the past, punishment of wrongdoers, and reparation to victims, the spiritual face has to do with rebuilding shattered lives, so that social reconciliation can take place.³¹⁰ According to Schreiter, no reconciliation efforts will be achievable without liberation: “reconciliation can only come about if the nature of the violence perpetrated is acknowledged, and its conditions for continuing or reappearing are removed. Liberation is not just liberation from the violent situation, but also liberation from the structures and processes that permit and promote violence.”³¹¹ For the families affected by the consequences of deportations of family members, social reconciliation might not be possible since there will always be deportations. Many undocumented immigrants live in the shadows with the continuous fear of being deported. The church and civic entities have an important role in the possibility of a social reconciliation as they continue advocating for a just immigration reform, that will be more thoughtful in how the deportations of the immigrants who do not have any criminal records are separating families.

John W. De Gruchy states that the word “reconciliation” has several meanings in Christian tradition, but it is used in two fundamental ways. The first one is to express

³⁰⁹ Robert J. Schreiter, *Reconciliation, Mission & Ministry in a Changing Social Order* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1992), 1.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 4.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, 22.

God's saving activity in the world through Jesus Christ; and sometimes salvation, redemption, deliverance, atonement and reconciliation are used interchangeably. The second way in which reconciliation is used is derived from the letters of Paul, where reconciliation is one of the words he uses to describe God's redemptive action in all aspects.³¹² Schreiter considers both the Pauline and the Deuteropauline³¹³ letters as the principal biblical resource for the concept of reconciliation.³¹⁴ The Pauline letters describe three levels of reconciliation: (1) A Christological level, where God reconciles the world through Christ; (2) an ecclesiological level, where Jews and Gentiles are reconciled also through Christ; and (3) a cosmic level, where all things are reconciled in Christ.³¹⁵ God reconciled the world through Christ, and now Christians are ambassadors of Christ to continue the ministry of reconciliation:

So if anyone is in Christ there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new. All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.³¹⁶

³¹² John De Gruchy, *Reconciliation: Restoring Justice* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 45.

³¹³ "According to the classic canonical order, the Pauline pseudepigrapha are Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus. Using the analogy of the Old Testament's deuterocanonical books, some scholars designate these six epistles as deuteropauline. The designation is useful provided that it is not taken to mean that the works are less canonical. The category of deuteropauline simply indicates that a work is attributed to Paul in some derived fashion." Raymond F. Collins, *Letters that Paul Did Not Write: The Epistle to the Hebrews and the Pauline Pseudepigrapha* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2005), 246.

³¹⁴ Robert J. Schreiter, *Reconciliation: Mission & Ministry in a Changing Social Order* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1992), 41-42.

³¹⁵ Schreiter uses as a reference the work of Jose Comblin that suggested that there are three levels in the theology of reconciliation based on the combination of Romans and 2 Corinthians with the usages in Romans and Ephesians. Robert J. Schreiter, *Reconciliation, Mission & Ministry in a Changing Social Order* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1992), 42.

³¹⁶ 2 Corinthians 5: 17-20 (New Revised Standard Version).

In this respect reconciliation has both an ontological implication, and also a pragmatic application. The ontological part deals with the inherent need that human beings have to be reconciled with God, and the pragmatic element deals with acting as ambassadors of Christ. God's Grace brings reconciliation to the person so that he or she can become a new creation:

As the thorough conversion of the soul is compared to a new creation, and creation is the proper work of an all-wise, almighty Being; then this total change of heart, soul, and life, which takes place under the preaching of the Gospel, is effected by the power and grace of God: this is salvation, and salvation must ever be of the Lord; and therefore men should apply to him, who alone can work this wondrous change.³¹⁷

After being reconciled through Christ, Christians are given the ministry of reconciliation, a ministry that prolongs the mission of Christ. The New Jerome Biblical Commentary explains:

Paul now spells out the process whereby God's saving love touches human lives. In the divine plan human agents mediate grace (see I Corinthians 3:5-9). Paul cites and interprets a traditional formula (v 19ab), which mentioned the initiator (God), the agent (Christ), and the means of reconciliation (forgiveness of sins). Only when restored to authenticity is humanity at peace with God. Paul answers the question how, arising out of the...[ministers of reconciliation]...in the formula, by introducing the mediators who make the action of Christ real to their contemporaries...*ambassadors for Christ*: Ministers are not merely official representatives (I Corinthians 1:17; Romans 10:15) but prolong the mission of Christ in a unique way.³¹⁸

The ambassadors for Christ are called to action so others can also receive God's gracious gift of reconciliation: "Having given Jesus Christ to die for sinners, they have through him access unto God; for his sake and on his account God can receive them; and it is only

³¹⁷ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Holy Bible* (Kansas City, Missouri: Nazarene Publications, 1967), 442-443.

³¹⁸ *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, ed. Raymond E. Brown, S.S., Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., Roland E. Murphy, O. Carm. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1990), 822.

by the grace and Spirit of Christ that the proud, fierce, and diabolic nature of men can be changed and reconciled to God, and by and through this sacrifice God can be propitious to them.”³¹⁹

The memory of past situations that were inflicted by deportations entails traumatic stories that need to be told as part of the process of reconciliation. The people who are subjected to violent experiences need to be heard: “Violence tries to destroy the narratives that sustain people’s identities and substitute narratives of its own. These might be called narratives of the lie, precisely because they are intended to negate the truth of a people’s own narratives.”³²⁰ As part of the reconciliation process, narratives need to be told and retold until healing takes place allowing the victim to remember the past differently: “In a way that frees the victim from the bondage of the past and allows the victim to integrate the memory into a life story in a constructive manner.”³²¹

Schreiter explains that reconciliation takes place by virtue of God’s healing presence since “God is the agent of reconciliation.”³²² While the telling and retelling of narratives is very important for the victims, it requires a compassionate listener who hears with the heart and can feel what the victim’s pain and suffering. The places where these stories are told and heard are sacred spaces of confidence where everything can be discussed

³¹⁹ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Holy Bible* (Kansas City, Missouri: Nazarene Publications, 1967), 442-443.

³²⁰ Robert J. Schreiter, *Reconciliation: Mission & Ministry in a Changing Social Order* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1992), 34.

³²¹ Robert Schreiter, “Migrants and the Ministry of Reconciliation,” in *A Promised Land, a Perilous Journey: Theological Perspectives on Migration*, ed. Daniel G. Groody and Gioacchino Campese (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), 119.

³²² Robert Schreiter, “Migrants and the Ministry of Reconciliation,” in *A Promised Land, a Perilous Journey: Theological Perspectives on Migration*, ed. Daniel G. Groody and Gioacchino Campese (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), 114.

without fear of repression or any other negative consequences. It is the space where God speaks in the victim's heart and opens the door to healing and reconciliation.

Schreiter argues that the spirituality of reconciliation is marked by three characteristics: an attitude of listening and waiting, attention and compassion, and living a post-exilic stance.³²³ An attitude of listening and waiting, entails hearing the stories as many times as needed and learning to wait for God's reconciling grace. Attention and compassion develops the ability to be and walk with the victim through the reconciliation process. Schreiter explains that living a post-exilic existence originally refers to the liberation experienced by the victims in South Africa where theologian Charles Villavicencio, compares the post-apartheid experience, to the one experienced by Israel when they returned to Jerusalem.³²⁴ The post-exilic stance also addresses the importance of the post-exile biblical literature for today's spirituality of reconciliation.

Lederach understands reconciliation as the dynamic meeting place of Truth, Mercy, Justice, and Peace, and Hope: "A polychromic approach to time and reconciliation calls for a view of Truth, Justice, Mercy, Peace, and Hope as personal and social energies. We have tended to understand these phenomena as principles or values, as if they were static and abstract. Instead, we need to recognize them as continual sources of power and activity that impact individuals and relationships."³²⁵ In the context of deportations Lederach would say that society needs to know the truth as revealed in the narratives of victims, and the church can be a forum where those voices are heard.

³²³ Robert J. Schreiter, *Reconciliation, Mission & Ministry in a Changing Social Order* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1992), 70-73.

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Jean Paul Lederach, *The Journey toward Reconciliation* (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1999), 79.

Mercy means the acceptance of immigrants and compassion for their suffering and struggles. Justice requires immigration laws that allow families to stay together, and permits a reasonable number of new immigrants to enter the country every year. Hope is the desire for a better future for all immigrants, where they can be treated equally and their dignity as human beings is recognized.

For Schreiter, the stories of resurrection are stories of reconciliation where the risen Lord as victim and reconciler enables persons to come out of despair with hope.³²⁶ Based on the narratives of the empty tomb,³²⁷ Schreiter describes how the women felt on their way to Jesus' tomb:

Dawn is just breaking. Three women walk hurriedly down a road, paying little attention to anything around them. It has been a difficult three days. On Friday they had been witnesses to an execution—a slow, painful, and humiliating death. They were living in an occupied country, and the state power maintained itself by these fearsome deeds of violence. They were staged in public places, along a road, or sometimes in the garbage dump, to mark those executed as human rubbish. There they would be taunted by passers-by, to be humiliated even more. The condemned were hanged on a cross until they became so weakened that they asphyxiated.³²⁸

Hope for the future appeared to have been taken away: “The man executed...had been good to them. He had been a teacher, and had permitted them to follow (the women) in his company, something usually allowed only to men. ...He had changed the life of one of them, Mary Magdalene, by healing her of a great affliction.”³²⁹ Peter went back to his labor, uncertain and probably thinking that everything may have been lost. Others

³²⁶ Robert J. Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation: Spirituality & Strategies* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1998), 22.

³²⁷ Mark 16:1-8; John 20:1-18.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

³²⁹ *Ibid.*

disciples found Jesus' death so difficult to grapple with, that only the women went to Christ's tomb to try to anoint the Anointed one:

The women reach the goal of their short journey, and an outcropping of rock that had been allowed out of for a tomb. There on Friday night they had watched the hasty interment of the executed man. Usually the bodies of the executed were cut down from their crosses and thrown into the garbage dump, the final humiliation: they were not even accorded a simple, decent burial.³³⁰

When everything appeared to have been lost, unexpectedly the women found that the tomb was empty, and hope was found again. The women who witness the empty tomb and shared their experience with the twelve were not seen as reliable because they were women in a patriarchal society. This brings about a warning for us today since many of the institutions who can listen to the testimonies of immigrants who are living in a state of fear, are not willing to objectively listen to the narratives of the people who have been impacted by the punishment inflicted to them by those in power. However, when Schreier talks about the women and his resurrection he explains how Jesus cared for the women:

Jesus had treated them differently. He had allowed them to travel with him in his itinerant preaching, seeing to the feeding and care of that little band. He treated them with dignity and respect that they had not often experienced. He even taught them, showing respect for their minds and their thinking. He had insisted that in the reign of God to come, things would be reversed. Those at the margins would take center stage. Those considered to be the least would become the greatest.³³¹

The new perspective in life is discovered by the women in the person of Jesus. The spirituality of reconciliation became one of hope by the understanding that after the

³³⁰ Ibid.

³³¹ Ibid., 24.

women and the disciples witnessed the death of Christ, they are now the witnesses of the resurrection.³³²

The topic of reconciliation provided insights for the ministry of reconciliation among immigrants. As discussed above, John Paul Lederach understands reconciliation as a journey, as encounters with self, with God, and with others along the way, and as a place where everything comes together in the journey. In addition, Robert Schreiter understands that reconciliation is twofold where one aspect is social, and the other is spiritual. The first one (social) alludes to the past experiences, while the second (spiritual) gives life and transformation to the devastated lives of the victims. I also noted that John W. De Gruchy elucidates that the word “reconciliation” is used in two primary ways, the first one is to communicate God’s saving action in the world by Jesus Christ, while in the second it is entertained by the letters of Paul that describe God’s redemptive action in all aspects of the human experience. In that respect I pointed out that reconciliation has an ontological implication and also a pragmatic function. While the ontological component deals with the inherent call those human beings have to be reconciled with God, the pragmatic component deals with action of becoming ambassadors of Christ in the ministry of reconciliation. I also noted that Schreiter explains that telling and retelling their narratives is very important for the victims, but it requires a compassionate listener who understands the victim’s pain and suffering, knowing that this process will be conducive for the victim’s healing. Finally, Lederach envisions reconciliation as the vibrant place where Truth, Mercy, Justice, Peace, and Hope come together. This is the place where hope is the desire for a better future for all

³³² Ibid., 25.

immigrants, where they can be treated equally and their dignity as human beings is recognized.

Hope

The faith in a risen Christ is the grounding of Christian hope. It is this Easter hope that sustains many immigrants as they leave their homelands behind. This Easter hope manifests itself in hope for a better life, hope to better provide for their families, hope to live with dignity, and hope for a life of justice, peace, and security. However, when immigrants come to the United States they do not always find all that they have hoped for. As I see it, the role of the church community is critical in restoring hope through solidarity and reconciliation.

Hosffman Ospino reflects on Christian hope from the perspective of the migrants' experience: "The presence of the migrant constantly invites the Christian community to revisit how the gift of hope, in its human and religious dimensions, is interpreted, lived, and appropriated here and now—of course, without losing sight of its transcendent dimension."³³³ The process by which people decide to migrate in order to overcome their precarious situation is guided by hope. According to Ospino there are three moments of hope in the migrant journey: preparation, transit, and arrival.³³⁴ When migrants are preparing for the journey, there is hope that God listens as they seek the blessing of the

³³³ Hosffman Ospino, "Glimpses of Christian Hope along the Migrant Journey" in *Hope: Promise, Possibility, and Fulfillment* eds. Richard Lennan & Nancy Pineda-Madrid (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2013), 100.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*, 102.

elders and of many other religious figures including the local priest or pastor.³³⁵ Hope is also present during the journey: “It is hope to be safe, to stay alive as one traverses dangerous paths; hope to change the circumstances that prevent many from living life to the fullest. It is hope that reminds us that prayer binds Christians together in unique ways, that communion is something that we already enjoy but still need to pursue, and that God is the companion par excellence of those on the move.”³³⁶ As the migrant settles in a new life as an immigrant, he or she will have to confront new situations. However, for the new immigrant there is hope even after the journey: “Christian hope becomes actualized in the life of the community. It is hope that strengthens relationships and creates new ones as the migrants are welcomed into a new home. It is a hope that has a prophetic dimension and continues to denounce sin; hope that longs for healing after a long journey; and hope that anticipates a better, perhaps somewhat difficult, future than the past left behind.”³³⁷ Hope accompanies migrants who have faith in the resurrection on their journey and is part of their lives as they become immigrants.

I have previously stated throughout the thesis-project how undocumented immigrants face suffering, struggles, discrimination, oppression, abuse and persecution. The journey to come to the United States is in most instances a horrifying and traumatic experience where immigrants are subjected to abuse and inhuman conditions. Many have died and many continue dying everyday as they seek for a better life. Most immigrants face a very hard life once they arrive in the United States. Undocumented people have

³³⁵ Ibid, 103-104.

³³⁶ Ibid., 107.

³³⁷ Ibid, 109.

been included among the poor and marginalized not only because they are forced to live in the shadows of society that has denied their dignity and even their existence, but also because they are poor in its most literal sense. Undocumented immigrants suffer as they live one day at a time, not knowing what will happen to them that night or the following day, as the constant fear of deportation is present. Every single day they suffer crucifixion and every day they resurrect to a new life.³³⁸ Even in the midst of their suffering there is the hope of resurrection.

Nancy Pineda-Madrid explains that hope materializes when situations of oppression are confronted, creating solidarity and thus supporting the resurrection of many:

Hopes takes on flesh when we directly face real situations of ongoing crucifixions and then act on behalf of those who are being crucified today, demanding an end to their crucifixion. We experience a tangible account of hope when those who suffer nonetheless actively work to bring about a realization of the reign of God that is fuller than what they have known. This work, when born out of prayer, directs our attention toward God's final destiny for human beings. When we work to bring the crucified down from the cross, we give hope expression and support the resurrection of the many....³³⁹

Moreover, for González, hope comes in the new and affirming way in how the Hispanic experience interprets the Bible: "The Bible tells us, no matter how crushed we might be, that we are royal priesthood! The Bible tell us, no matter how rootless and homeless society might make us feel, that we are part of God's own family, and of the great home

³³⁸ Campese explains that the undocumented immigrants are among the groups of people that are crucified today in the United States., and the lives of the crucified immigrants represent the incarnation of the Crucified Christ in history. Furthermore, with their crucified lives they denounce sin but also announce resurrection. See: Gioacchino Campese, "¿Cuántos más?" in *A Promised Land, a Perilous Journey: Theological Perspectives on Migration*, eds. Daniel G. Groody and Gioacchino Campese (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), 287-294.

³³⁹ Nancy Pineda-Madrid, "Hope and Salvation in the Shadow of Tragedy" in *Hope: Promise, Possibility, and Fulfillment* eds. Richard Lennan & Nancy Pineda-Madrid (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2013), 123.

that God is building. The Bible tells us, no matter whether we have green cards or not, that we are citizens of the New Jerusalem.... the Bible has been good to us!”³⁴⁰

The preaching of the Kingdom brings hope to those who hear it. Christians are called to carry out Jesus’ mission, by announcing and building the kingdom of God here and now. Hispanic ministry has emphasized the importance of evangelization—the announcement of the good news of Jesus—as an ongoing process of encountering Christ, “a process generates a *mística* (mystical theology) and a spirituality that lead to conversion, communion, and solidarity, touching every dimension of Christian life and transforming every human situation.”³⁴¹ The fruit of evangelization is signs of the kingdom of God among us: “changed lives and a changed world—holiness and justice, spirituality, and peace.”³⁴² When we serve in solidarity to those who are suffering, and promote an environment where reconciliation can take place, the seeds of the kingdom will find fertile ground. The presence of the signs of the kingdom gives hope to those who can witness them.

Conclusion

This chapter concludes the hermeneutical mediation (judging) by exploring a series of ethical principles that guide us toward an enhanced formation of

³⁴⁰ Justo L. González, “We call this Book Good” in *Santa Biblia* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1996), 118.

³⁴¹ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), *Encuentro and Mission: A Renewed Pastoral Framework for Hispanic Ministry* (Washington, D.C.: USCCB Publishing, 2002), 26.

³⁴² United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), *Go and Make disciples: A National Plan and Strategy for Catholic Evangelization in the United States* (Washington, D.C.: USCCB Publishing, 1996), 3.

Hispanic/Latino(a) pastoral agents. First, I explored the area of spirituality and more specifically the elements of Hispanic spirituality that nurtures the lives of the Hispanic immigrants as they face joys and sorrows. Second, I examined the topic of solidarity as a result of the Christological dimension of the pastoral care to immigrants. A spirituality of solidarity with migrants mirrors Jesus' life in terms of his option for the poor. Third, I looked into the area of reconciliation as a critical pastoral challenge of mission with immigrants in the context of deportations. Finally, I reflected on the theme of hope as it relates to undocumented immigrants and to the formation of Hispanic pastoral agents. In the next and final chapter, I will present recommendations for a renewed praxis of *Escuelas de Ministerios*.

CHAPTER 5: A RENEWED PRAXIS FOR *ESCUELAS DE MINISTERIOS*

*Each individual Christian and every community is called to be an instrument of God for the liberation and promotion of the poor, and for enabling them to be fully a part of society. This demands that we be docile and attentive to the cry of the poor and to come to their aid.*³⁴³

As stated earlier in the introduction, the ministerial concern that this thesis project addresses is: How can *Escuelas de Ministerios* adequately respond to the needs of pastoral agents in their ministry to Hispanics who are often faced with the effects of deportation? I also posed the question: How can we better prepare Hispanic leaders and pastoral agents in their ministry to communities of undocumented people? I said that I envisioned a formation program that would help pastoral agents become agents of reconciliation among the people they serve, and agents in social-pastoral action in their communities. In this chapter I will provide specific guidelines to respond to the needs of pastoral agents.

In chapters one and two I addressed the socio-analytical mediation (seeing) by looking at *la realidad* of ministering to Hispanic immigrants within the context of *Escuelas de Ministerios*. In chapters three and four I addressed the hermeneutical mediation (judging) in which I explored the theological aspects of migration and the pastoral care of immigrants. In this chapter I move to the practical mediation (acting), which looks for a renewed praxis. According to Leonardo and Clodovis Boff, the practical mediation takes us back to action: “From analysis of the reality of the

³⁴³ Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*
http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html#In_union_with_God,_we_hear_a_plea (accessed September 21, 2015), 187.

oppressed, it passes through the word of God to arrive finally at specific action.”³⁴⁴ In this chapter I provide a pastoral response for formation for ministry in the Hispanic community in the context of deportations, as a renewed praxis for the Southeast Pastoral Institute’s *Escuelas de Ministerios*.

As mentioned in chapter two, Gioacchino Campese explains that the experience of migration as a source for theological reflection is influenced by social, theological, and pastoral-practical factors that emerge from the needs of pastoral agents as they face migration in their communities.³⁴⁵ Daniel G. Groody defines three interrelated levels of a theology of migration using a similar terminology—pastoral, spiritual, and theological.³⁴⁶ The pastoral level looks at how to assist immigrants in their various needs, and is followed by a spiritual level that assists immigrants in seeing and talking about how God accompanies them and how they respond to God.³⁴⁷ This thesis-project began with the theological and pastoral-practical factors explained by Campese as the theological reflection sought to illuminate a pastoral response envisioned for pastoral agents. In reference to Groody’s levels, the thesis-project embraces the pastoral and spiritual levels, while moving toward the theological level in its quest to provide a renewed praxis for *Escuelas de Ministerios*.

³⁴⁴ Leonardo & Clodovis Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology*, 39.

³⁴⁵ Gioacchino Campese, “The Irruption of Migrants: Theology of Migration in the 21st Century,” *Theological Studies* 73, no.1 (March 2012): 4-7.

³⁴⁶ Daniel G. Groody, “The Spirituality of Migrants: Mapping an Inner Geography,” in *Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology*, ed. Elaine Padilla and Peter C. Phan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 140-141.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 140.

The chapter is laid out in two parts. In part one I propose a theological and ethical framework for *Escuelas de Ministerios* based on the insights discovered throughout the thesis project. In part two I propose specific strategies for a renewed praxis for *Escuelas de Ministerios*.

Theological and Ethical Framework for *Escuelas de Ministerios*

Throughout this thesis project I have mentioned numerous insights that were discovered through the socio-analytical and hermeneutical mediations. In the socio-analytical mediation, I examined immigration issues at the ministerial level by providing in-depth examination of *la realidad* and how pastoral ministers accompany immigrant populations. These observations were based on personal experiences and the thoughtful responses that pastoral agents and teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios* provided in the questionnaires. In the hermeneutical mediation, insights emerged through the investigation of theological perspectives of migration, as well as the Christological and missiological dimensions of pastoral care among immigrants. The Bible, ecclesial documents, Catholic social teaching, theologies of migration, the work of U.S. Hispanic theologians, and additional research on spirituality, solidarity, and reconciliation, shed light on how to interpret *la realidad*.

In light of this research I propose the following elements for an enhanced theological and ethical framework for *Escuelas de Ministerios*: First, from a biblical perspective, *Escuelas de Ministerios* as a formation program is based on God's concern and care for the poor and marginalized and Jesus' teachings and examples about

welcoming and caring for strangers. Second, from a Christological perspective, Jesus' preferential option for the poor is at the heart of *Escuelas de Ministerios*. Just as Jesus takes flesh in the reality of the poor and oppressed, showing us how to walk with the poor, how to denounce and confront oppression, and how to live a new life, *Escuelas de Ministerios* are "incarnate" in the reality of the Hispanic community and provide accompaniment to pastoral agents as they seek to be better equipped for ministry in Hispanic communities. The pastoral care provided by *Escuelas de Ministerios* is sensitive to the immigrants' realities and struggles, recognizes that the dignity of each person is based on the image of God, and affirms people in their mission.

Third, the mission of *Escuelas de Ministerios* is a continuation of Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom of God in word and deed, expressed in compassion for and solidarity with the poor in the here and now, so that "the fruits of the kingdom of God can be enjoyed within history".³⁴⁸ Following the footsteps of Jesus, the mission of *Escuelas de Ministerios* is to proclaim the kingdom of God and promote the conversion that the kingdom requires.

Fourth, *Escuelas de Ministerios* foster an experience of ecclesial community that provides an environment conducive to celebrating new life in Christ, by means of a spirituality that nurtures the lives of Hispanic immigrants as they face joys and sorrows. Fifth, *Escuelas de Ministerios* incarnate a spirituality of solidarity grounded in the life and mission of Jesus. The spirituality of solidarity promotes accompaniment in the immigrants' communities. It also entails hospitality, love, advocacy, and the promotion of human dignity. Sixth, *Escuelas de Ministerios* recognize reconciliation as a critical

³⁴⁸ Leonardo and Clodovis Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1987), 49.

pastoral challenge of mission with immigrants. Seventh, *Escuelas de Ministerios* as a formation ministry is a source of hope. In the process of accompanying, the ministry provides hope to pastoral agents and gives encouragement by sharing the gospel with the Hispanic communities that are both recipients and agents of evangelization.

After proposing an enhanced theological and ethical framework for *Escuelas de Ministerios*, comprised of the seven elements I have listed above, I now proceed with the specific action plan for the new praxis.

Strategies for a Renewed Praxis

I propose the following five strategies in order to provide formation for ministry in the Hispanic communities in the context of deportations. Within each strategy I will also suggest some specific actions.

1. Provide training and formation to the teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios*

I previously mentioned that in the last five years there have only been two meetings of the *Escuelas de Ministerios*' faculty. It has been suggested to have more frequent meetings, so that there could be an exchange of experiences and feedback among the faculty and suggestions can be made to improve the program. There is a need for regular meetings, sharing, and training.

From the answers to the questionnaires given to teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios* I discovered that: there is a need for the teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios* to be more aware and sensitive to the needs of immigrants found in the communities they

serve. The teachers indicated the necessity of becoming more familiar with the actual problems faced by the communities, and to be more knowledgeable and better equipped to serve in their capacity as teachers and ministers. One way to become more familiar is by having biannual meetings to share the experiences that teachers encounter when they give courses.

In light of the research presented in the previous chapters, the faculty of *Escuelas de Ministerios* would benefit from a workshop to learn about immigration and the resources that are available to the undocumented community. The workshop could provide advanced knowledge of immigration laws, scripture, theological, and psychological and sociological training in relation to trauma of deported people. The more the faculty knows about immigration, the better they will be able to assist pastoral agents in how to find adequate help and how to look for informational resources such as the ones provided by the Catholic Legal Immigration Network (CLINIC) and the Justice for Immigrants Campaign.

2. Teach Competency in Accompaniment

Escuelas de Ministerios serves Catholic leaders in Hispanic communities that are in need of theological, ministerial and spiritual formation. These leaders are immigrants and in their ministries they serve undocumented immigrants that are vulnerable to the effects of deportations. The pastoral agents are in contact with the everyday life of the people they serve and they need to be prepared to deal with the challenges and struggles of their people. I mentioned in the introduction that Hispanic ministry in the United States has called for an integral formation of Hispanic leaders that includes civic

responsibility, ethics, human growth and development, as well as theological and ministerial formation.³⁴⁹ In order to respond to the need for ministerial formation and as a taking in consideration the research presented in the previous chapters, I propose that *Escuelas de Ministerios* teach competency in accompaniment by way of a workshop that fosters theological-pastoral reflection for pastoral ministers who accompany the people in the pastoral process. The proposed workshop follows a see-judge-act methodology. The content of this workshop is shown in the following outline.

Workshop on Pastoral Accompaniment

Objective: To provide pastoral agents with competencies to accompany the people to whom they minister.

Introduction: What is Pastoral Accompaniment?

1. Analysis of the Local Reality
 - Immigration
 - Personal, ecclesial, and social effects of deportations
 - Group Discussions
2. Theological Reflections on Accompaniment
 - Accompaniment in the Scriptures
 - Christological and Missiological Dimensions
 - Group Discussions
3. Spirituality of Accompaniment
 - Evangelization
 - Culture
 - Solidarity
 - Reconciliation
 - Hope
 - Group Discussions
4. Practical Implications
 - Constant reassessment of the local reality
 - Build relationships, friendship and communion

³⁴⁹ *Prophetic Voices, Document on the Process of the III Encuentro Nacional Hispano de Pastoral* (Washington, D.C.: NCCB/USCC, 1986), Chapter IV: Commitments.

- Respect culture
- Promote Solidarity and Justice
- Encourage Immigrants in their Mission
- Group Discussions

5. Celebration

3. Promote Spirituality

Hispanics have a profound respect for the dignity of each person; a deep and reverential love for family life, where the entire family discovers its roots, its identity, and its strengths; a marvelous sense of community that celebrates life through *fiesta*; and an authentic devotion to Mary, the Mother of God.³⁵⁰ These values have to be taken into account as we think about spirituality.

In addition to the intensive studies of a weekend course, prayer, music, *Lectio Divina*, group reflections, and faith-sharing are resources that can be used to allow expressions of spirituality. Also, whenever possible, there should be a celebration of the Eucharist where the group can attend together. In this way pastoral agents will view theological reflection and spirituality as an integrative whole.

Another very important aspect is the spiritual preparation of the teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios*. We should get to know each other, pray together as a team, and have an annual retreat.

³⁵⁰ National Conference of Catholic Bishops, "The Hispanic Presence: Challenge and Commitment," in *Hispanic Ministry, Three Major Documents* (Washington, D.C., USCC, 1995), 3.

4. Promote Solidarity

Even though the church has been very vocal and outspoken about the rights of the immigrants, and the need for a just immigration reform, little pastoral action has been taken at the parish or base levels to take care of the families that are suffering from the consequences of deportations of loved ones. By the questionnaire responses, we saw that in some cases parishes have some types of organized help to immigrants and their families, and in other cases, the community of the faithful offers help but not in an organized manner. In general, survey respondents did not identify any other resources outside the parish.

What we are seeing happening with families that are hurt by the deportation of a family member, and the uncertainty as to how they will survive without their mother or father, does not represent a country that respects the human rights of the undocumented. Programs such as Justice for Immigrants are very vocal about the rights of immigrants (independent of their legal status), but my perception is that only a few students of *Escuelas de Ministerios* know about all the resources available to them in this program.

Due to logistical reasons, *Escuelas de Ministerios* is not able to be involved with the specific activities of Church leaders or church ministries to provide assistance to families affected by deportations. However, what *Escuelas de Ministerios* can do is to train pastoral leaders on how to look for solutions, how to organize, and help them become aware of the available resources in the area, so that they can direct people to the appropriate places when they need help. In general, families affected by deportations need to be helped with their basic necessities such as food and clothing, but they also need assistance in their day-to-day living. To this end, pastoral agents can be encouraged

to organize, according to their communities' realities, pastoral activities such as: 1) Set up a day care children; 2) Provide daily assistance with studies and homework; 3) Encourage families to "adopt" children whose parents have been deported, not in a legal way, but by supporting them emotionally through play dates and celebrating birthdays and religious celebrations as if they were all one family; 4) Organize a volunteer program to provide English classes, and medical and psychological services; 5) Provide in Church extra-curricular activities such as singing, dance and drama classes, or other activities such as summer and winter camps, and sports in general, all of which help with children's development; 6) Find out information about assistance programs available in the community and help with the application forms; 7) Involve the women of the parish in the planning of activities and programs, because "women, and women's experience, are essential to the spirituality and the ministry of reconciliation,"³⁵¹ 8) Integrate undocumented immigrants in parish faith activities and celebrations such as mass, youth groups, and *Fiesta de Guadalupe* (Our Lady of Guadalupe's Feast); 9) Provide transportation if needed; and 10) Facilitate processes that will enable the church to become the center of their religious, social, and extracurricular activities.

5. Train Pastoral Agents to Facilitate the Process of Reconciliation

Reconciliation is a critical pastoral challenge of mission with immigrants.

Pastoral agents' formation will be enhanced by understanding the importance of the theology of reconciliation and how it applies in their ministerial context, where families

³⁵¹ Robert Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation: Spirituality and Strategies* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1998), 30. Schreiter explains that women are usually the victims and they are left behind and have to reconstruct a new society. They find non-violent ways as a response to violence.

have been affected by deportations. Family members need to find reconciliation in their lives and the pastoral agents that minister to them are called to be ministers of reconciliation. Reconciliation is first and foremost the grace of God.³⁵² Grace, telling and retelling the narratives, healing, sacred spaces, truth, mercy, justice, peace, hope, and spirituality are all important elements in reconciliation, that pastoral agents as ministers of reconciliation need to be trained on.

I propose that *Escuelas de Ministerios* train ministers to facilitate the process of reconciliation in their communities by way of a workshop based on theology of reconciliation. The content of the workshop is shown in the following outline:

Workshop on Reconciliation

Objective: To provide pastoral agents with competencies to facilitate the process of reconciliation.

Introduction

1. Analysis of the Local Reality

Reconciliation and Immigration

Personal, ecclesial, and social effects of deportations

Group Discussions

2. Theological Reflections on Reconciliation

Reconciliation in the Scriptures

The Ministry of Reconciliation as Ambassadors of Christ

Group Discussions

3. Reconciliation

Personal and Social Reconciliation

Who is involved in the Reconciliation Process?

Healing of Memories: Grace, Narratives, Sacred Spaces

Characteristics of a Spirituality of Reconciliation

Group Discussions

³⁵² Robert J. Schreier, *Reconciliation, Mission & Ministry in a Changing Social Order* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1992), 59.

4. Practical Implications
Compassionate Listening of Narratives
Provide Safe Spaces for Reconciliation
Wait for God's action
Celebrate the New Life in Christ
Group Discussions

Conclusion

In this last chapter, I have presented a pastoral response for the formation for ministry in the Hispanic community in the context of deportations, as a renewed praxis for the Southeast Pastoral Institute's *Escuelas de Ministerios*. The chapter was laid out in two parts. In part one I proposed seven elements for a theological and ethical framework for *Escuelas de Ministerios* based on the insights discovered throughout the thesis project: 1) Biblical mandate to welcome the stranger (Mt. 25); 2) Jesus' preferential option for the poor; 3) Proclamation of the Kingdom; 4) Celebration in communion; 5) Spirituality of solidarity through accompaniment; 6) Formation for reconciliation; and 7) Ministry as a source of hope. In part two, I proposed five specific strategies for a renewed praxis for *Escuelas de Ministerios*. These strategies are: 1) Provide training and formation to the teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios*; 2) Teach competency in Accompaniment; 3) Promote Spirituality; 4) Promote Solidarity; and 5) Train pastoral agents to facilitate the process of reconciliation.

I believe that the proposed renewed praxis will benefit not only SEPI, but also other pastoral institutes and formation ministries that work with Hispanic people. Many theological, ethical and pastoral areas have been considered in this thesis-project in order to provide a renewed praxis for *Escuelas de Ministerios*. However, further research in

the area of pedagogy for adult faith formation, the final document of the 2015 synod of the family, and proceedings from the upcoming *V Encuentro Nacional de Pastoral Hispana* must be taken to reflection by the faculty of the *Escuelas de Ministerios* to better form ministers for Hispanic communities.

CONCLUSION

“Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and we welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did to me.”³⁵³

Part of the daily struggles for many in the Latino community revolves around the issue of deportation. This in turn has become an important pastoral concern of ecclesial ministers in the Hispanic community. The deportation of undocumented Hispanic immigrants has existed for many years, but in recent years it has become more of an issue because of the dramatic rise in the number of deportations. As a teacher of the Southeast Pastoral Institute’s *Escuelas de Ministerios*, I have experienced the pain and sorrow of families who have been separated by deportation, and have heard stories of their struggles to survive without work because of the raids that take place. I have seen the suffering of undocumented immigrants who live with the constant fear of deportation. I have witnessed how simply listening and creating the space where the victims of deportations can share their narratives is a helpful and healing process. They need to talk and they need to be heard.

At the beginning of this thesis-project I stated that my ministerial concern could be encapsulated in the following question: Are we, as a Pastoral Institute, adequately responding to the real needs of pastoral agents in their ministry to Hispanics who are often faced with the effects of deportation? My intuition was that we were not, and that theologies of reconciliation could be helpful in the formation of pastoral agents who

³⁵³ Matthew 25:37-40 (New Revised Standard Version).

minister in communities that have been wounded by the deportation of many of their members. The students who attend the *Escuelas de Ministerios* are mainly pastoral agents who minister to communities that are vulnerable to the effects of deportations. Since there is great concern about deportations among pastoral agents, I realized that there was a need for a renewed praxis in the *Escuelas de Ministerios* that provided an adequate formation to Hispanic pastoral agents who minister to undocumented people.

My ministerial question was: how can the *Escuelas de Ministerios* help to provide competencies to pastoral agents in their ministry to communities containing undocumented people? I envisioned a formation program that would help pastoral agents become agents of reconciliation for the people they serve, and agents in social-pastoral action in their communities.

In the thesis-project I followed the U.S Hispanic/Latino Practical Theology methodology of “See, Judge, and Act,” by using the terminology of Liberation Theology to describe the three mediations that relate to the traditional stages of seeing, judging and acting.³⁵⁴ I used SurveyMonkey to send questionnaires to pastoral agents and teachers of *Escuelas de Ministerios*. The information collected from the questionnaires was analyzed to identify the major concerns, problems, and challenges that exist in the different dioceses with regard to the effects of deportations.

In chapter one I began the socio-analytical mediation by presenting a thick description of the ministerial context. I outlined some salient moments of the history of Hispanic Ministry at the national level, its challenges, and a general description of what the *V Encuentro Nacional Hispano/Latino de Pastoral* is expected to accomplish. I continued with the history and description of programs of the Southeast Regional Office

³⁵⁴ Leonardo & Clodovis Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology*, 22-42.

for Hispanic Ministry and the Southeast Pastoral Institute, which organizes the *Escuelas de Ministerios*. In chapter two I looked into the realities of immigration, the lived experiences of undocumented immigrants, and questionnaire results, in order to deepen the socio-analytical mediation.

Chapters three and four addressed the hermeneutical mediation, where I confronted *la realidad* with the Bible and Tradition. In chapter three I focused on the theological perspective of migration by looking to the Bible, ecclesial documents, Catholic social teaching, and theologies of migration; and in the Christological and missiological dimensions of pastoral care among immigrants. Chapter 4 explored a series of ethical principles that would guide us toward an enhanced formation of Hispanic/Latino(a) pastoral agents: spirituality, solidarity, reconciliation, and hope. Finally, in chapter 5, I presented the practical mediation where I proposed a theological and ethical framework for *Escuelas de Ministerios* based on the insights discovered throughout the thesis project; and specific strategies and actions for a renewed praxis for *Escuelas de Ministerios*.

Every research is subject to evaluation and validation. The findings and renewed praxis will be validated as it is implemented by *Escuelas de Ministerios*. However, at a personal level, there is also an evaluation to be done. I stated in the introduction that as a minister, I would benefit from this investigation as I gained new insights that would make me a more effective minister and teacher. I also thought that the thesis-project would reinforce my commitments to minister to the Hispanic Community of immigrants and to continue Jesus' mission. Both statements still ring true. Just as the processes of the *III Encuentro* and the upcoming *V Encuentro* were supposed to be formative, I decided that

this thesis-project would also be a formative process for me. I have gained many insights and I have discovered more than ever that Jesus is present in the lives of the immigrants, walking with them. My commitment to the formation of pastoral agents has been reaffirmed.

When I was in the process of finalizing this thesis-project, Pope Francis was in the midst of his Apostolic Journey to Cuba and the United States.³⁵⁵ On September 24, 2015, the feast of Our Lady of Mercy, he addressed the joint session of the United States Congress in an historic and unprecedented event.³⁵⁶ I was able to watch the event live on television, and while I was listening to him I had the urge to grab paper and pen to take notes on some of the things he was saying. I did not realize that I was not writing complete sentences until the end of his address. When I looked at the notes, all I had was a list of very familiar terms and short sentences from what he said, such as: mission, dignity of the human being, image and likeness of God, spirit of solidarity, common good, response, hope, healing, peace, justice, and immigrants. I also wrote: search of better opportunities, do not see them as numbers, see the faces and listen to the stories, do unto others as you would have them do unto you, let us seek for others the same opportunities, and help others to grow. In the list of words and thoughts that came out of Pope Francis's address, I read an index of this thesis-project.

³⁵⁵ Apostolic Journey of his Holiness Pope Francis to Cuba, the United States of America and visit to the United Nations Organization Headquarters on the occasion of his participation at the Eighth World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia, 19-28 September 2015
<http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/travels/2015/outside/documents/papa-francesco-cuba-usa-onu-2015.html> (accessed September 24, 2015).

³⁵⁶ Visit to the Joint Session of the United States Congress, Address of the Holy Father, United States Capitol, Washington, D.C., Thursday, 24 September 2015
http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/september/documents/papa-francesco_20150924_usa-us-congress.html (accessed September 24, 2015).

APPENDICES

Appendix A Questionnaire

For pastoral agents, Hispanic ministry diocesan directors, and coordinators of the *Escuelas de Ministerios* in the Region

1. Has your Dioceses being affected by the deportations?
2. Describe the situation in detail. What are the current problems?
3. What are the effects of the deportations in the community and in the church's life?
4. What programs have been established to assist the immigrants and families affected by the deportations?
5. What else can be done?
6. What can SEPI do to assist you?

For teachers of the Escuelas de Ministerios

1. What has been your experience with the Hispanic families that are part of *Escuelas de Ministerios*?
2. What has been your experience with undocumented immigrants?
3. What do you think are the assets of the Hispanic communities you go to as part of this program?
4. What are the problems that you perceive that they are experiencing in these communities?
5. How are those problems being addressed?
6. How could the *Escuelas de Ministerios* assist in the formation of pastoral agents that minister undocumented people?

Appendix B
Questionnaire in Spanish

For pastoral agents, Hispanic ministry diocesan directors, and coordinators of the
***Escuelas de Ministerios* in the Region**

1. ¿Ha sido afectada su Diócesis por las deportaciones?
2. Describa la situación en detalle. ¿Cuáles son los problemas?
3. ¿Cuáles son los efectos de las deportaciones en las comunidades y en la vida de la Iglesia?
4. ¿Qué programas se han establecido para ayudar a los inmigrantes y a las familias afectadas por las deportaciones?
5. ¿Qué más se podría hacer?
6. ¿Qué puede hacer el SEPI para ayudar?

For teachers of the Escuelas de Ministerios

1. ¿Cuál ha sido su experiencia con las familias hispanas que participan en las *Escuelas de Ministerios*?
2. ¿Cuál ha sido su experiencia con los inmigrantes indocumentados?
3. ¿Cuáles son los valores de las comunidades hispanas que visita?
4. ¿Qué problemas están experimentando las comunidades?
5. ¿Cómo se está trabajando en la solución de estos problemas?
6. ¿Cómo podrían las *Escuelas de Ministerios* ayudar en la formación de agentes de pastoral que ministran a inmigrantes indocumentados?

Appendix C Cover Letter

Barry University
College of Arts & Sciences
Department of Theology & Philosophy

Dear Research Participant:

Your participation in a research project by completing an online survey is requested. The title of the study is “Formation for Ministry in the Hispanic Community in the Context of Deportations: A Renewed Praxis for the Southeast Pastoral Institute’s *Escuelas de Ministerios* (SEPI)”

The research is being conducted by María M. Hoffmann, a doctoral student in the theology department at Barry University, and it is seeking information that will be useful in the field of Hispanic ministry. The aim of the research is to examine the problems faced by Hispanic pastoral agents when dealing with the effects of deportations in their communities. In accordance with this aim, the following procedure will be used: A link to a questionnaire follows this letter. You have the option of accessing the questionnaire either in English or in Spanish. I anticipate the number of participants to be 40.

If you decide to participate in this research, you will be asked to do the following: Answer the questions in a narrative way. The questionnaire is estimated to take no more than 15 minutes to complete.

Your consent to be a research participant is strictly voluntary and should you decline to participate or should you choose to drop out at any time during the study, there will be no adverse effects.

The risks of involvement in this study are minimal. The only real risks are the participants’ possible disclosure of their own undocumented status, and the possible identification of other undocumented individuals. These risks will be handled by de-identifying the responses (removing any identifying information). There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study; however, your participation will contribute to research in the area of lay ecclesial formation.

As a research participant, information you provide is anonymous, that is, no names or other identifiers will be collected. SurveyMonkey.com allows researchers to suppress the delivery of IP addresses during the downloading of data, and in this study no IP address will be delivered to the researcher. However, SurveyMonkey.com does collect IP addresses for its own purposes. If you have concerns about this you should review the privacy policy of SurveyMonkey.com before you begin.

By completing and submitting this electronic survey you are acknowledging that you are at least 18-years-old and that you voluntarily agree to participate in the study.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the study or your participation in the study, you may contact me, María M. Hoffmann. You may also contact the Institutional Review Board point of contact, Barbara Cook, by phone at (305) 899-3020 or by email at bcCook@mail.barry.edu.

The link to the survey in English is:

The link to the survey in Spanish is:

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

María M. Hoffmann

Appendix D
SEPI'S Hispanic Family Ministry Survey
(Independent Survey conducted by SEPI in 2015)



HISPANIC FAMILY MINISTRY SURVEY

Diocese: _____ **Parish:** _____

What language(s) do you speak fluently? ___English ___Spanish ___English and Spanish

Age: ___18-25 ___ 26-35 ___ 36-45 ___ 46-55 ___ 56-65 ___ 66+

Male ___ **Female** ___

1. Evaluate the following pastoral reality of the Hispanic ministry in your parish:

	Excellent	Good	Unknown	Poor	Non-existent
Availability of Spanish Mass at your parish.					
Availability of a priest/deacon who speaks Spanish at your parish.					
Availability of a Hispanic priest/deacon at your parish.					
Pastor support to the Hispanic ministry.					
Available facilities for Hispanic meetings.					
Openness to Hispanic devotions (popular religiosity).					
Catechism for children at your parish (Spanish).					
Catechism /Christian initiation for adults at your parish (Spanish).					
Available ministries / prayer groups and/or faith formation at your parish (Spanish).					
Available ministries / youth groups (approximate ages 13-17) at your parish					
Available ministries / young adult groups (older than 18 years old) at your parish (Spanish).					



HISPANIC FAMILY MINISTRY SURVEY

2. Evaluate the following pastoral reality of the Hispanic ministry in your diocese:

	Excellent	Good	Unknown	Poor	Non-existent
Bishop support to Hispanic ministry.					
Diocese support to Hispanic ministry.					
Available resources for Hispanic ministry.					
Available movements, ministries or groups (Spanish).					
Communication and coordination (pastoral de conjunto) between present ministries / movements or groups.					
Communication / coordination between groups or movements of Hispanic Youth Ministry in your diocese.					
Hispanic Youth Ministry (approx. age 13-17) in your diocese.					
Hispanic Young Adult Ministry (older than 18 years old) in your diocese.					
Available formation opportunities for Hispanic lay people.					
Available committed lay leaders in the Hispanic community.					
Missionary and welcoming attitude to reach Hispanics who are distanced from the church.					
Presence of Hispanics approaching the parishes.					



HISPANIC FAMILY MINISTRY SURVEY

3. Select the 5 main challenges for Hispanic families in your diocese. Please choose only 5.

Communication among family members	
Individualism	
Crisis of Faith	
“Macho” culture	
Language used when raising children	
Maintaining our Hispanic traditions	
Alcoholism / Drugs	
Pornography/Prostitution	
Domestic violence	
Living together before marriage	
Lack of time	
Incorrect use of technology	
Transmitting the Catholic faith in a hostile culture	
Economic situation /Money management	
Immigration restrictions	
Culture of Death (Abortions/euthanasia/suicides)	
Lack of academic education/difficulties for studying	
Distance from a parish with Hispanic ministry	
Other: (write it here) _____	



HISPANIC FAMILY MINISTRY SURVEY

4. Evaluate the following pastoral realities of Hispanic ministry in your diocese and/or parish:

	Excellent	Good	Unknown	Poor	Non-existent
Pastoral initiatives for engaged couples preparing for marriage					
Pastoral initiatives for promoting and educating about the virtue of chastity.					
Formation on methods for natural family planning.					
Pastoral initiatives with married couples in the first years of their marriage					
Pastoral care for couples who are cohabitating or in civil marriages					
Marriage groups who provide witness and support to transform and educate about Christian family values					
Ministry with hurt families (separated, divorced non-re-married/remarried, single parent families).					
Ministry with families who are facing drug situations (drugs/alcohol/pornography).					
Ministry with families who are facing periods of financial / work / health crisis.					
Ministry with families who are suffering domestic violence.					
Access to information and assistance for recognizing marriage annulment cases.					
Pastoral attention to persons with					

homosexual orientation					
Pastoral attention to families with children or relatives with homosexual orientation.					
Pastoral attention for children facing this new concept of “family” (same sex unions)					
Promotion and formation on methods for natural family planning.					
Pastoral ministry on respect for life.					
Pastoral attention for families with disabled children.					
Pastoral attention for families suffering infertility.					
Pastoral attention for promoting and supporting adoption.					
Parent groups or ministry with families to face the challenge of educating the children.					
Ministry to support and educate the family about the virtues of a Christian life.					
Ministry with families to work together in evangelization.					
Availability of initiatives or facilities for the family to share or to spend recreational time at the parish together.					
Welcome to immigrant families					
Pastoral care to the elderly					

*Thank you for taking your time to complete this survey.
Your answers are of great value to be able to know better our present reality so that we
can better respond to the needs of families in the Southeast.*

*Please submit to LLOPEZ@SEPI.US or send to SEPI (7700 SW 56 St. Miami, FL
33155) by April 20, 2015.*

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